

Digital Marketing Classes

*The Park Rapids Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce a partnership with the University of Minnesota Extension to offer workshops of the Minnesota Intelligent Rural Communities program for the business community of Park Rapids and surrounding communities. This effort was made possible through a grant from Blandin Foundation. The workshops discuss the changes in doing business in today's world. A good portion of consumers now use the internet to find goods, services and products, if a business or non-profit is not online it's as if they don't exist to this growing group of consumers. **These workshops are free for a limited time to any business including retail, restaurants and resorts, non profits, artists, entrepreneurs and any individual interested in the topic.***

Register Today for these Digital Marketing Classes

Doing Business Online: Tuesday, November 22, 9am-noon, Art Nash

Using Social Media in Business: Thursday, December 8, 8am-11am, Adeel Ahmed

Mobile e-Marketing: Thursday, January 26, 2012, 8am-11am, Adeel Ahmed

All classes are free of charge and open to anyone. There is a \$10 Computer lab fee or donation.

Location: Park Rapids High School, Room 509 Computer Lab

All attendees must pre register by calling the Park Rapids Lakes area Chamber of Commerce at [218-732-4111](tel:218-732-4111) or Emailing: katie@parkrapids.com or jane@parkrapids.com

Class Descriptions:

Doing Business Online

November 22, 2011 from 9am to 11am Teacher: Art Nash

\$10 computer lab fee or donation

Explore options for using the internet in your business and find the best fit for your operation.

This hands-on workshop introduces the many options for businesses to develop their online presence and connect with customers today. On the computer, participants will research what other businesses are doing online, explore the use of a number of online tools, and set a plan in place to take advantage of the internet in your business.

Using Social Media in Business

Thursday, December 8, 2011 from 8am to 11am, Teacher: Adeel Ahmed
\$10 computer lab fee or donation

Explore ways your business can use social media and online networking tools to communicate with customers.

While the Yellow Pages and traditional websites are still useful for advertising your business or community information, many business owners are beginning to interact with their customers through websites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. These methods can help you reach new and hard-to-reach audiences. This class will explore basic fundamentals of popular social networking sites, examples of use for, and the potential benefits social media could bring to your business and community.

Mobile e-Marketing

Thursday, January 26, 2012, 8am to 11am, Teacher: Adeel Ahmed
\$10 computer lab fee or donation

It seems that people everywhere are using mobile devices, like iPhones, Android phones or tablets, to find where to go, what do, and even what to buy. Cisco Systems projects that by the year 2015 there will be 7 billion smart phones in the world. That's one smart phone per person.

Marketing strategies for mobile media are different than regular. In this workshop, participants learn how to connect with customers on this new mobile platform including how to utilize mobile websites, mobile apps, QR codes, location based services, and digital coupons. Don't know what these are? You will once you've attended this class and you will know how to use them in your business.

Watch for Announcements on future classes coming soon:

Roadside Advertising in a Digital Age

Make sure your business is a roadside destination in the digital world.

Does your business have a sign on the digital superhighway? Can people find your business when they search an online map or a GPS device? About 50 million people use GPS units while even more use digital maps like Google Maps to find goods or services. Digital maps not only describe in detail how to reach a destination, but give advice on the goods or services. You will gain the know-how and learn the tools to get on digital maps.

Marketing your Website

Explore strategies for getting your website found by customers. Just having a website is not enough, you need visitors to find and use your site.

This hands-on workshop will help you understand how customers find websites and how you can improve the chances they will find yours. We'll also explore how social media like Twitter and Facebook, online advertising, blogs, and e-newsletters can drive traffic and business to your site.

Blogging for Business

Blogs are simple, inexpensive ways for businesses to gain a credible online presence and reach their current and new customers. There are a variety of blogging tools available for business owners and many are free. Participants will learn the basics of good blogging, the tools available to make and update a blog, and how to promote your blog and your business!

Google Tools

Google Tools for Business—Explore a wide range of tools available free from Google to market your business and run it more efficiently. Tools explored in this three-hour workshop include Google Sites (to make simple web pages), Google Analytics (to learn about traffic to your web site) and more. Participants will learn how to use Gmail, Calendar, Google Docs and Google Talk to make operations more efficient. Participants will set up a Google account and try out the tools hands-on in a computer lab.

Websites from Simple to Complex

Starting a business website doesn't have to be an intimidating process. More than ever before, there are a variety of great options for business owners to explore. For some business people, the free and easy option is best. For others, there is a need to customize with a unique design and features. There are also many options in between. In this 3-hour hands-on workshop, participants will learn about the options available for creating a business website. These options will include the free and easy to use resources, moderately priced customizable websites, and more complex websites. Participants learn tips related to working with web designers and programmers, understanding pricing, understanding costs. Participants will also explore websites created at all levels of complexity and determine the best options for their needs.

Intro to Selling OnLine

From Craig's List to Shopping Carts: Introduction to Selling Online. Businesses are doing more and more transactions online to sell products directly as well as manage their bank accounts. This two-hour hands-on workshop covers the major concerns related to online transactions like security, shipping, and costs. Participants will explore the use of online tools like Paypal and online banking platforms to help make more informed decisions.

Websites DIY

Explore how easy it is to create your own website. Participants will leave the 3-hour, hands-on workshop with a workbook detailing step-by-step instructions on how to create a website on Google sites. If your business or non profit is ready to increase its web presence without investing a lot of dollars, Websites DIY is for you.

Customer Service Online

Want to focus on providing really good customer service online? Looking to increase your customer contacts or bump up the number of times a customer returns to your site? Providing excellent customer service can get you from the minors to the major league in no time. This workshop can be taught as a 45-minute intro or a 2-hour workshop in either a computer lab or a classroom setting.

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery

For small business owners, being prepared can mean staying in business *after* a disaster.

Whether it is a natural disaster or a hacker, a disaster can damage your business irreparably. 68% of businesses who experience a disaster and don't have a plan, go out of business within 2 years. Take action now to preserve your credibility and minimize the cost impact a disaster could have on your business. This 2-hour workshop is taught in a computer lab.

Doing Business Online Tourism Style

It is vital for communities that are tourist destinations to have a presence online. Restaurants, resorts and businesses that have tourists as customers need to be found easily online. I need more for this one.

Using the Cloud for Business

New technologies have made accessing and editing your information from anywhere easier than ever. Small businesses can benefit from using technology called cloud computing. In this series of two, 2 hour, workshops business owners will learn about cloud computing. Participants will learn how to define the "cloud" and learn about the different cloud applications their businesses can use. Business owners will also gain information about storing information in the cloud and business automation. Most importantly, participants will be learn how and when to use these types of services. In the first session, participants will learn about the different types of services offered and the potential benefits of using the cloud. Participants will be asked to complete a short assignment to try out a cloud computing service, prior to the second session. In the second session, business owners will learn about the key principles to use when using cloud computing services. The workshop is designed for business managers and owners with basic computer and Internet skills. It doesn't use highly technical language, but will introduce new terms. It doesn't cover the technical aspects of each program and service. It does offer general guidance and best practices for using cloud based services for businesses.

Using the Internet for Business Intelligence

A critical step in the business planning process is understanding what or who your competition is. Small business owners with an Internet connection have the capability to conduct research about their competition and use that information to make informed decisions about their business.

In this series of two, 2 hour workshops, business owners will learn about several different ways that they can use the Internet to conduct research about their competition. They will learn about efficient ways to search and gather data using search engine tools, sites similar to Yahoo Site Explorer and other related analysis tools. They will also learn strategies for protecting their brand online. They will also learn about the strategies to monitor their competition and the consumer marketplace using alert tools, such as Copernic or Social Mention. In the first session, participants will learn about the different ways to conduct business intelligence research using the Internet. They will be asked to complete a short assignment to utilize their new knowledge before the second session. In the second session, they'll learn about the strategies and best practices that can be used to optimize their competitive intelligence research activities. The workshop is designed for business managers and owners with basic computer and Internet skills. It doesn't use technical language, but will introduce new terms. The workshop doesn't cover the technical aspects of each program or service. It does offer general guidance and best practices for conducting business intelligence activities using the Internet.