



GATEWAY GARDENS, GREENSBORO

gma TRENDS

WHERE BUSINESS AND RESOURCES JOIN TOGETHER

JUNE 2011
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Uptowne and all around, momentum builds in High Point

Festivals, investment, indicate that City Project is moving toward its goals

On Washington Drive, in a historically African American business district, building renovation and reuse is under way.

In Uptowne High Point, along North Main Street, springtime Friday evening festivals draw crowds with live music.

Along South Main, near the campus of Guilford Technical Community College and the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology, momentum builds to create an International Arts District.

High Point's Core City Plan, adopted in 2007, is starting to bear fruit. A coalition of business leaders, city officials, community boosters and entrepreneurs are working toward the common goal of developing and revitalizing key areas of the city. In 2009, the effort became known as the City Project.

In addition to building

up the economy, the City Project emphasizes the social aspects of community. This includes ensuring that business neighborhoods are walkable and that events create opportunities to bring people together in public areas.

That was the case with Party on the Plank, a series of three Friday evening concerts that began in

late April. High Point promoter Elijah Lovejoy, whose Renovo Designs brought ice skating to downtown Greensboro last winter, staged the series.

"It takes a critical mass of people wanting to see something happen for it to actually happen," Lovejoy says. "We want to play a small role in that, to get people in the habit of getting out and enjoying the city."

Party on the Plank refers to the 19th-century plank road that ran from Fayetteville to Bethania. Today, High Point's Main Street



Patrick Harman, executive director of the Hayden-Harman Foundation, which has invested in two Washington Drive properties. The mural, created by local artists, celebrates African American heritage in High Point.



The Spongetones, a Beatles tribute band, played at the first Party on the Plank, April 29 in Uptowne High Point. Two other Party on the Plank events followed on successive Fridays.

runs over part of the plank road's route through Guilford County.

The City Project designates North Main Street as a focus area for retail commerce and dubs the area Uptowne. With furniture market showrooms dominating the city's downtown, the North Main area can provide the retail hub that all cities require, says Wendy Fuscoe, City Project executive director.

"The function of down-

town will be in Uptowne," she says.

Uptowne is the site of the Ilderton Beach Music Blast, a concert series cosponsored by GMA. The third season begins later this year.

Efforts to recruit new businesses to Uptowne High Point are moving forward, Fuscoe says. Residents and visitors soon will see physical evidence that changes are under way. New benches, bike racks and trash receptacles are com-

'The function of downtown will be in Uptowne.'

– Wendy Fuscoe
Executive Director,
High Point City Project

ing to the intersection of North Main and Lexington Avenue. And, Fuscoe says, the N.C. Department of Transportation will upgrade the intersection to make it safer and more pedestrian friendly. The crosswalk will get a brick-like facelift, and pedestrian crossing signals will be installed.

High Point native Patrick Harman, a descendant of the founder of North State Communications, is execu-

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Veteran broadcaster named general manager at WFMY-TV

Larry Audas is the new president and general manager of WFMY-TV. Since 2002, he has been president and general manager of KTHV-TV in Little Rock, Ark., also a Gannett station.

Audas previously served as news director, primary anchor and anchor reporter for television stations in Oklahoma, Texas and South Carolina. He is a graduate of Bob Jones University.

Audas succeeds Deborah Hooper, who left WFMY-TV to become president of the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce.

Sign-A-Rama grows

Sign-A-Rama Greensboro, a full-service franchise sign center, has acquired Sign-A-Rama Winston-Salem. The remodeled Winston-Salem retail store will continue at its South Stratford Road location, says Sign-A-Rama owner Matt Cvijanovic. All production will be performed at the Greensboro facility.

Teleconferencing offered

Space Logix, a collaborative co-working facility on Greensboro's State Street, now offers videoconferencing services.



The teleconference facility includes seating for up to 12 and is linked to more than 40 other Vu Telepresence conference centers across the nation. International service also is available.

For more information, contact Space Logix at 336-550-4020 or send e-mail to info@spacelogix.com.

Fire department officer advances

The Commission on Public Credentialing has designated Battalion Chief Chris Bowman of the Greensboro Fire Department as a Chief Fire Officer. He is one of only 749 individuals worldwide to be awarded the designation. Successful applicants must satisfy an assessment that includes education, experience, professional development and other criteria.

PIP salesman recognized

Lee Whitaker of PIP Printing and Marketing Services in Burlington was named the 2010 Don F. Lowe Salesperson of the

Year, a national award presented by the parent company of PIP and Sir Speedy print shop franchises.

Whitaker has been with PIP for 14 years.

The award, named for the founder of Franchise Systems, was presented at a conference in Philadelphia. PIP, at 825 South Main Street in Burlington, is owned by Jimmy and Judy Brumley.

Seibert honored

Josh Seibert, president of Training and Professional Development Solutions, Inc., has received the 2011

David H. Sandler Award, presented by Sandler Training.

The award is presented to one franchisee annually. There are some 250 Sandler Training affiliates worldwide.

Training and Professional Development Solutions is located at 4000 Piedmont Parkway, Suite 230, in High Point. More information: 336-884-1348.

Tornado relief event

Four semi-trailers of water, food and furniture were collected on April 22-23, as well as \$11,000 in

donations for victims of the April 16 tornados in North Carolina.

WFMY News 2 and Lowes Foods coordinated the Food 2 Families event. Collections took place at Lowes Foods on New Garden Road in Greensboro.

GMA member companies are invited to submit items of general interest for consideration. Send items to Michelle Bolick at mbolick@mygma.org. Include your name and phone number.

Uptowne

Continued from page 1

tive director of the Hayden-Harman Foundation. The foundation purchased two Washington Drive buildings to help kick-start redevelopment in the historically African American business district. He has an office at 613 Washington Drive in a building that also houses the Changing Tides Cultural Center and the High Point Fine Art Guild.

South of downtown, near the GTCC campus and its Larry Gatlin Amphitheatre, the notion of creating an International Arts District is gaining traction.

"So many things are happening that are so invigorating for us," says Aaron Clinard, a High Point attorney and chairman of the City Project board of directors. The efforts, he says, "really are beginning to pay dividends."

Another sign of progress: a Young Professionals group has formed and meets regularly to share information about High Point's progress and to strengthen network ties. The cofounders are sisters Deena and Cristina Qubein, both of whom work



Randy Bishop, music director for Party on the Plank, and Wendy Fuscoe, City Project executive director.

with McNeill Lehman, a marketing and public relations firm in High Point.

"If young people don't enjoy High Point, they're not going to stay here," Deena Qubein says. "Our goal is to create an atmosphere for young professionals to enjoy living, working and serving in High Point."

GMA Chairman Tim Ilderton, general manager of Ilderton Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram in High Point, says the city benefits from a wide variety of efforts designed to create events, stimulate business and bring people together.



Promoter Elijah Lovejoy coaches staff prior to Party on the Plank.

"Things are moving in the right direction," Ilderton says. "There are a lot of synergies going on."

Deena Qubein agrees. "The City Project is getting people talking," she says. "And that's what it takes to make things happen."

gma TRENDS

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The Guilford Merchants Association is a nonprofit organization founded in 1906. The Association's goal is to assist its members and the business community at large to grow and prosper.

Used wisely, social media can power business improvement

As businesses focus on growing relationships with their clients through the social networks, one of the most powerful benefits of using social media is coming to the fore: customer feedback. Never before have businesses had such an effective and economical means to solicit and receive direct feedback from those who use their products and services. Further, our socially engaged customers are more willing



Cregar Jandler

than ever to talk about brand experiences. Smart phones and location-based social networks have added to our 'always on' culture, and further facilitate instant posting of feedback as customers use local services.

A mixed blessing?

Business owners often approach their most vocal customers with caution, unsure whether they want to risk the uncertainty of public review. After all, no business is perfect, and given a public forum, the business is open for both positive and negative remarks. However, there is no denying that if you have an unhappy customer, he will talk, whether or not you choose to acknowledge it.



The upside is that while social media undoubtedly provides a forum for dissatisfied consumers to express their discontent, it also enables the business the opportunity to respond to any claims or complaints made. If someone has a complaint about your product or service, wouldn't you like the opportunity to know about it so that you can address it? *The key to successful mining of social feedback lies in how you choose to deal with the feedback you receive.*

Customer comments provide a fantastic opportunity for companies to see which aspects of their businesses are working, and which are not. Do you have a customer service superstar? Or does service take too long? Is there confusion about a new product offering? Are customers excited about your summer hours?

It's smart business for owners and managers to participate in these conversations, and historically, consumers have rewarded those companies who sincerely seek out – and respond to – feedback.

Mining for gold

There are many sites,

from the general to the industry-specific, which allow consumers to share their ratings and reviews on businesses and their products and services. Here are some quick ways to find what has already been written about your business:

Search for your company name on Google, Yahoo, Bing and other search engines. Expand the search to include the names of any branded products or services you offer, along with adding the word "reviews" ("Companyname Reviews," "Productname Reviews," etc.)

Search for your company name and the names of your products on Twitter.

Visit and search review sites like Yelp, Angie's List, Epinions, CitySearch and Merchant Circle.

Use Google Alerts to set up automated notifications for mentions of your company, branded products and services (<http://www.google.com/alerts>).

Genuinely solicit feedback

In addition to staying abreast of what is being said, directly solicit feedback from your customers and stakeholders. Not only does this provide great insight for continuously improving your business, but it communicates to your customer

base that you are sincerely interested in gaining their input.

A few easy ways to use social media for gaining feedback and inspiring helpful discussion are:

Use your Facebook page or Twitter account to ask for details on new features customers wish your product had, or service enhancements they would like to see.

Post discussions in your LinkedIn groups requesting insights on how customers use the type of services your company provides. (Be mindful to sincerely solicit feedback, and not to appear that you are veiling self-promotion).

Utilize polling or surveying apps (free add-ons to Facebook) to solicit specific feedback on a limited/pre-defined set of options.

Initiate conversations on Twitter; use hashtags to monitor and track them.

Harvest content from your e-mail newsletter, blog or extended social network posts to stir up conversations and get customers talking.

Ask the hard questions. This is the only way to give yourself the chance to build on your successes

and make improvements where needed. Your customers will appreciate that you want their honest opinions.

Most of all – ask! With each post introducing new products, services, or enhancements, include a quick statement requesting feedback ("Let us know what you think!").

Respond and act

One of the easiest, and most powerful ways to respond to feedback is by publicly communicating how you use customer input to inform your business decisions. Have you made product or service improvements based on feedback you've gotten? What happens with the feedback you receive?

Gaining solid feedback is priceless; making good use of the insights provided is the final critical step. Customers pay close attention to how you use the information shared. Your responses, and later follow-through on implementing suggestions will impact how your business is perceived and the future feedback you will get.

Adrienne Cregar Jandler is president of Atlantic Webworks, a strategic Web development and interactive marketing company in Greensboro. Follow her on Twitter at @acjandler and her company at @atlanticwebworx. Contact Atlantic Webworks at 336-855-8572 or www.atlanticwebworks.com.

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Special needs of small businesses are council's focus

GMA's Business Support Council aims to serve small business members, those companies that may not have dedicated personnel to handle marketing, human



Dutch

resources and other necessary functions.

In many small businesses, those duties fall upon the shoulders of the owner-managers. The information and training seminars offered by the Business Support Council are geared to helping small business personnel become more effective, efficient and successful.

"We really target the owners and managers and try to give them the tools they need," says Michael A. Dutch, the council's volunteer chairman. Dutch is chairman of the department of business and economics at Greensboro College, where he's also in charge of the executive MBA program.

The Business Support Council this year is focusing on marketing and

electronic media, Dutch says. "Small businesses are thirsty for marketing information," he says. While the possibilities for marketing exposure through social media are numerous and inexpensive, making effective use of them takes preparation and targeted efforts.

The council also will dedicate one seminar to print media, which is still an important way to reach potential customers.

Other Business Support Council activities include Free Day Fridays and coordinating the Retailer of the Year Award. (Read about this year's winner on page 5.)

Interested GMA members are encouraged to join other volunteers on the Business Support Council. Members may also inquire about making a seminar presentation, Dutch says.

Dutch says the council's seminars are always informative, even for a business professor.

"I have yet to attend a seminar where I haven't learned something," he says.



Applied Roofing Technology founder and president Jim Davis (left); Ron Wiley, account manager; and Rodney Lee, vice president of operations.

Roofing company's niche speciality pays off as economy slogs toward sunnier times

Business success often is all about specialization and serving niche markets.

That's the case with Applied Roofing Technology, Inc., a company with expertise in historic property restoration and renovation.

From a former textile mill in Mebane to a high school covering a city block in Waco, Texas, crews from Applied Roofing Technology travel the nation to stabilize roofs in disrepair and then return, sometimes months or even years later, to complete the jobs.

"We've learned to deal with having to go back," says company founder and CEO Jim Davis. "That's the beauty of our niche and the way we operate."

Davis entered the roofing trade in 1965, selling materials to roofing contractors. In 1977, he bought a roofing company in Danville, Va., and ran it for nine years before selling it. The company remains in business today. In 1990, he started a roofing company that evolved into Applied Roofing Technology.

Based on Holbrook Street not far from the Greensboro Coliseum Complex, Applied Roofing Technology has six salaried personnel. The 18 payroll employees are organized into three crews with



NEW MEMBER PROFILE

specialization in low-slope roofing, high-slope roofing, and metal roofing.

The company prefers to work directly with property owners, Davis says, and is a certified installer of FiberTite-brand roofing membranes. The company installed more than 500,000 square feet of Fibertite for a Greensboro manufacturing plant and also has a long relationship with Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center.

Thanks to developing the historic renovation market, the company has remained strong through the recession.

"We stay busy now, but we don't have the business we had a few years ago when things were good," says Rodney Lee, vice president of operations.

Like Davis, Lee has a long career in roofing. "The knowledge is an important element in the business," he says. "It's saved a few roofs."

Account manager Ron Wiley, who has extensive experience in marketing, is the new member of the management team. It was Wiley who suggested that Applied Roofing Technology join GMA.

"We want to open another set of opportunities," he says. "We want to meet people who are decision-makers."

Through GMA, Wiley says, the company hopes to gain exposure so that when a specialized roofing project arises, property owners will know whom to call.

Applied Roofing Technology got its start with Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center by solving a nagging leak, Davis says. But instead of re-roofing, the company made an inexpensive repair. That created a relationship that led to major projects later on.

"It's so important to do quality work and do it in a timely manner," Davis says.

That's true even on drawn-out restoration projects that are usually accomplished in phases. Sometimes the buildings have been vacant for a decade or more, and the first priority is to stabilize the roof and stop water from pouring in. Then the company's roofing crew leaves, often for months before returning. Finishing the roof then typically is one of the last steps in the restoration process.

"There are peculiarities to this business," Davis says. "It's a niche."

Applied Roofing Technology, Inc.
336-299-1801
www.ArtofRoofing.com

Stay up to date with GMA

GMA keeps members informed about functions, opportunities and developments in a variety of ways.

Trends is published six times a year and welcomes submissions of news by GMA members. *Trends* is mailed to all member companies and appears as an insert in *The Business Journal*. Member Matters, about

GMA events, is published monthly and has a readership of nearly 3,000.

GMA also has a strong online presence. Visit mygma.org for timely updates about GMA functions. You'll also find GMA on Facebook and LinkedIn by searching for Guilford Merchants Association.

GMA makes it easy to stay informed.

Scooternerds takes the high road, gives back while serving customers

Retailer of the Year makes community service a priority

It's hard to say the name without cracking a smile. Try it. Scooternerds.

Silly and self-explanatory at the same time, the name encompasses everything about scooters – enthusiasm, information, sales and service. And, of course, fun.

Just look at the kaleidoscope of colors on the showroom floor, where seven brands of scooters vie for attention. There's Vespa, the Italian brand that introduced scooters to Americans in the 1950s. Hyosung comes from Korea, and the shop also has makes from India and Taiwan.

Spring and summer are prime time in the scooter business, and Scooternerds had nearly 150 machines on hand in early May.

"This time of year, I want every color and every model," says owner John Hill. Sales will be brisk in the weeks ahead. Come Labor Day, Hill expects his inventory to number about 30 machines.

Located on North Eugene Street across from the home of the Greensboro Grasshoppers, Scooternerds is GMA's 2011 Retailer of the Year. The award was presented May 19 at the Small Business Awards Luncheon, hosted by the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by GMA. Scooternerds won



Owner John Hill (left) and General Manager Ryan Hitchcock in the Scooternerds showroom.

the judges' nod thanks to its track record of growth and for the owner's long-time record of community service and involvement.

"I have a personal commitment of giving back," says Hill. "I had mentors as a young person. I like to see people become what they are supposed to be."

Since 1995, Hill has participated in Guilford County Schools' workforce development program and offered apprenticeships to young people interested in automotive service careers.

Jason Brown began that way 11 years ago as an apprentice with AutoTrends, Hill's other business that shares the same building. Brown is now general manager of AutoTrends, which



Helmets and other accessories are available at the shop.

has operated on Battleground Avenue for 30 years.

Scooternerds, which opened on Labor Day Weekend in 2005, is a relative newcomer.

A longtime motorcycle en-

thusiast, Hill didn't do an extensive market study before launching the new venture. He had vacationed in Mexico with his wife, rented a scooter, and had a blast. Returning to Greensboro, he simply wanted to buy a scooter for himself and couldn't find one.

Plus, prices at the pump were rising in 2005 and eventually surged to well over \$3 a gallon.

"I felt a scooter had a bit of a solution for that," Hill says. Most of the machines he sells can achieve more than 100 miles per gallon; some are capable of 130 miles per gallon and more.

It took a couple of years for Hill to acquire all the brands he wanted, an array to appeal to "the true scooterist element that's out there." It's

been a process of educating himself and, in turn, educating his customers.

For instance, engine size does not define a scooter. A scooter can range from a tiny moped to a beefy machine with a 500-cubic-centimeter engine. The difference is the engine placement, Hill says. The rider sits astride a motorcycle and its engine. A scooter has a step-through frame design with the engine placed rearward, directly driving the rear wheel.

And, Hill points out, most scooters have automatic transmissions. Only one model sold by Scooternerds requires shifting gears. Prices range from around \$1,300 to more than \$10,000.

Scooternerds has three full-time employees and two part-timers. Hill and his wife, Dorrie, divide their time between Scooternerds and AutoTrends.

Hill's community involvement extends beyond working with Guilford County Schools. He's active in a Christian ministry called His Laboring Few, serves on the environmental committee for Downtown Greensboro, Inc., and is a longtime member of the Piedmont Blues Preservation Society. His newest passion is Raleigh-based Wheels 4 Hope, which provides affordable, reliable transportation to low-wage families and individuals working toward self-sufficiency. Hill helped expand the program to the Triad.

Is it hard to find the time for so much community service, plus run two businesses?

"You'd be surprised," says Hill, who finds it easy. Almost as easy as riding a scooter.

Scooternerds
430 N. Eugene St.
Greensboro
336-271-4774
www.scooternerds.com

Setting an example

A frog parent reads to its offspring in the Children's Garden at Gateway Gardens. The statue is one of many whimsical, educational features of the recently opened first phase on East Lee Street. The gardens were developed by Greensboro Beautiful, Inc. in partnership with the city.





A.M. Briefing

Robin Davenport of the Greensboro Department of Transportation briefs GMA members on transportation issues at the April 12 Center City A.M. Briefing. These regular programs provide a forum for city officials, groups such as Downtown Greensboro, Inc., and others to share information. All members are welcome to attend. The next Center City A.M. Briefing is June 14 at GMA headquarters, 225 Commerce Place, Greensboro.



Leonora Iyahen and Kwaku Gyenne of Hermes Airport Transportation Services.



April 5
@ RBC Bank



Richard Oliver (center) of Industries of the Blind, and David LoPresti, president of Industries of the Blind.



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GMA President & CEO Michael F. Bumpass and Jacob Newsome, RBC Bank regional manager.



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NEW MEMBERS

The following new members have been approved since the last issue of *Trends*.

AFLAC – Craig Moon
Aircraft Management Services
Caring Hands Home Health Inc.
CertaPro Painters
Complete Nutrition
EmbroidMe of Greensboro
Fink's Jewelers

Gilliam Coble & Moser, L.L.P.
Guilford Medical Supply
Hermes Airport Transportation Services
Impact Promo Group, Inc.
Referred by Kathy Haines
The Carillon

Achieving goals isn't magic; it's all about focus

A person rarely sets out on a journey without a destination in mind. Before making a road trip, the traveler always prepares by studying a map ... or in today's world, by programming a GPS that provides regular progress updates.



Cates

Unfortunately, Adair Cates says, too many people journey through life without a clear idea of where they are head-

ed. Too many of us fail to live intentionally; in other words, we don't have a clear vision of what we want. And that, Cates says, makes measuring progress especially difficult.

"If you don't know where you're going," she asks, "how do you know when you've arrived?"

The solution, she advises, is to create focus in one's life. That sounds like a tall order

in the hectic 21st century, but Adair offers practical, hands-on tips so that anyone can help bring focus to his or her life.

Adair brings her message to GMA at the July 14 Workplace Workshop. Attendance is free for all employees of GMA member companies (preregistration required).

Cates' presentation is called "Focus Pocus: A Simple Formula for Explosive Results." Using her strategies, she says,

enables a person "to shift from inertia and inaction to empowerment and efficiency."

Becoming more productive and moving toward one's professional and personal goals is not about magic, she says. It's about motivation.

A teacher before becoming a motivational speaker, Cates is a graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill and has a master's degree from Appalachian State University. She lives in Atlanta.



Linda Larsen, speaker at the March Workplace Workshop. Below: Larsen interacts with the crowd.



Charles Heeb and Peggy Adams, both of MetLife.



Tina Holder, Joyce Belo and Ted Landis, all of High Point Bank & Trust.



Tina Stanley of Ecolab; Josh Rubio and Suzanne McEwen of Embassy Suites.



GMA members mingle before the Workplace Workshop begins and enjoy a Continental breakfast at Embassy Suites.



"Focus Pocus: A Simple Formula for Explosive Results"

with Adair Cates

Thursday, July 14
Embassy Suites Hotel
204 Centreport Drive
7:30 a.m. refreshments
8-10:30 a.m. seminar

Free for all employees of GMA member companies!

Registration deadline: July 12

Call 378-6350

or register online at

www.mygma.org

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MAY

24 Small Business Success Series Program

JUNE

7 Blood Drive at GMA
7 After Work Network
14 Center City A.M. Briefing
20 Taste of Greensboro
23 New Member Orientation

JULY

12 Noontime Network
14 Workplace Workshop
26 Small Business Success Series Program

AUGUST

2 After Work Network
9 Center City A.M. Briefing
11 GMA Night with the Grasshoppers
25 New Member Orientation

GMA goes to see the 'Hoppers

Plan to join fellow GMA members on August 11 for a night of fun at NewBridge Bank Park when GMA goes to see the Greensboro Grasshoppers play ball.

The evening begins with a hamburger and hot dog cookout at GMA headquarters on Commerce Place. From there, it's a short stroll to the ballpark.

Watch for details at www.mygma.org.

Networking opportunities make for a healthier business

Roger Grosser was new to the Piedmont Triad, freshly moved from California and looking for ways to make connections, when an acquaintance recommended he check out GMA.

Soon he was a member. He also found a slot in the C.A.N. group, the Competitive Advantage Networking group that meets each Friday at GMA headquarters.

"I joined a bunch of different groups when I got here, but it's the only one I'm in anymore," says Grosser, a distributor of nutritional supplements.

Software programming brought him to North Carolina, but his plan is to develop his supplement business, called HealthSource, to one day become a full-time endeavor.

Contacts made through GMA and the C.A.N. group have helped Grosser build his network of customers and other individuals to distribute several types of nutritional products.

The primary product is Moxxor,



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= SUCCESS**

a supplement made from the green-lipped mussel of New Zealand. Grosser says the supplement is an antioxidant that also promotes circulation and heart health.

Through GMA and the C.A.N. group, every interaction with another member has an immediate multiplier effect, Grosser says.

"Everybody knows at least 10 people," he says. Through word of mouth and recommendations, he's been able to enlarge his sphere of contacts dramatically.

"I work with a lot of health professionals that I've met through the C.A.N. group," he says. "They are good avenues through which to distribute my products."

Roger Grosser
HealthSource
Phone: (800) 316-1243



Roger Grosser of HealthSource, a provider of nutritional supplements.

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