

Ask SCORE for Business Advice

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Outsourcing Business Services by Tina Dettman-Bielefeldt

When Amy Eliason was operating a restaurant, she used a payroll service that she considered absolutely vital. She recalls, “When I sold the restaurant, I offered to purchase the payroll company because I felt it had been such a great tool in my business. I have my own knowledge of going through lean times in the restaurant and at the end of the day, I would find many corners to cut to save a little, but cutting the payroll company was never an option.”

She brought her sister, Kat Meissner, on board and about a year later, in 2005, they purchased the company, TimePlus Payroll. Services were broadened and bookkeeping, and QuickBooks support were added. Eliason and Meissner have guided the business to strong growth.

“I don’t know if I see an increase due to the recession,” Eliason explained. “I think in general over the past 10 years there has been a trend in outsourcing. We are a local company but have the support of a national company behind us so we are able to offer our services to small businesses at a fraction of the cost large businesses incur.”

With the benefits of a larger network, Eliason believes that companies are finding outsourcing much more efficient and less prone to error. Timekeeping is tracked electronically and sent to the computers nightly. Payroll is processed automatically and sent to the employer at the end of the pay period for review and approval. “It’s like having an entire payroll department at your fingertips,” Eliason added.

As more businesses opt to use an outside service, their major business growth comes through referrals. Eliason also teaches QuickBooks to new business owners to generate awareness of her company. As a graduate of Urban Hope Entrepreneur Center, now E-Hub, and owner of two businesses, she has plenty of sound advice for new business owners.

“Be prepared to weather the storm. I was told 20 years ago in the restaurant business it would take five years to truly begin to be able to back off the gas and that was right on. After five years, I had enough experience and qualified help to be able to direct more and work a little less,” Eliason advised.

As Eliason looks ahead, she plans on being sensitive to business trends and adding services to TimePlus that will create a complete outsourced business office solution. She envisions employing a team of business management specialists and expanding software. Having realized the benefit that outsourcing offered her previous business, she wants to help other businesses to be more efficient.

“I love what I do. I love to help small business owners understand their books, or handle pieces of the whole process so they can focus on their business,” Eliason commented. “It is a great feeling at the end of the day to have a client thank you and tell you how much you have helped them.”

If you’d like to learn more about outsourcing, contact the Green Bay Chapter of SCORE. Visit www.greenbayscore.org or call Cindy Gokey at 920-496-8930 for information.

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