



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Small Business Award Winners Are A Diverse Group

The Clermont Chamber of Commerce 2009 Small Business Best Practices Award Winners are a very diverse group that includes a local school district with a demonstrated commitment to saving taxpayer money, a company with a one-hundred-twenty-year history of customer service, a traditional service provider that preserved its niche by being an early adopter of technological advances, a manufacturer with a strong growth trends and a hotel that annually hosts many of the region's premier events. Despite this diversity, there were several shared characteristics that made each of the winners stand out to the selection committee. Energy. Creativity. Focus. Unique Solutions. Technology. These were the words repeated in how these five award recipients were described. These were the words that were applied to how they handle their jobs and/or operate their businesses. These were the words that separated them ever so slightly from the very worthy pack of nominees.

The **Clermont Northeastern School District** is being recognized with the Innovative Best Practices Award for businesses employing 51 – 250 employees. The school's computer lab is full of computer equipment acquired from companies that no longer needed the items. The cafeteria has mixers and slicers acquired from Ford after they shut down the Batavia plant. Other items of furniture and supplies from the FBI and other agencies are dispersed throughout the district. Used items that cannot benefit the system are passed on to other non-profits. The Cincinnati.com site for October 10, 2009, offered this "Thumbs Up". "**THUMBS UP** to Clermont Northeastern Schools Superintendent Neil Leist and his crew of Dumpster Divers. Leist hunts down discarded (but still useful) items from businesses and government agencies. His frugal finds have brought more than \$1 million in used furniture and equipment to the cash-strapped district." The other strong contender in this category was the 2008 honoree, Melink Corporation.

Bethel Building & Loan was selected over the large field of nominees for the Customer Focus Award for companies with 50 or fewer employees. Organized in 1889 as a Mutual company, Bethel B&L is owned by its depositors. Bethel B&L has survived depressions and recessions, world wars and natural disasters because of a management strategy that is focused on the long term future of the bank and its community. Through all the years and changes in directors and managers, Bethel B&L has maintained the same commitment to personal service and community support. Bethel B&L advises its residential and business customers, "Your Success Is Our Success". Other strong contenders in this category: Myers Y. Cooper Co. and Beechmont Racquet & Fitness.

G. J. Berding Surveying, Inc. will receive the Innovative Best Practices Award for companies with 50 or fewer employees. On the nominating form, it was stated, "This firm has transcended an ancient profession, re-imagining the role of the surveyor by applying 3D scanning technology and demonstrating that success can be assured even in today's marketplace." Based in Milford, this eighteen-year-old company adopted the costly new 3D technology in 2001, placing it well ahead of the market in providing its clients with better planning tools based on more thorough descriptions of properties. The other strong contender in this category was The Lyon Group.

Telema & Berger Resistors, Inc. was recognized with the Emerging Small Business Award. This Small Business Development Center client began operations in Park 50 TechneCenter in Miami Township in the summer of 2004. The company was a partnership between Bob and Debra Berger and an Italian company, Telema SpA. Telema SpA being the world leader in power resistor technology. Since the early days when the local company consisted of the Bergers and a handful of employees, Telema & Berger has taken over all the space at 1002 Ford Circle and grown its employee count to 33. T&B offers grid resistors, neutral grounding resistors, harmonic filter resistors, load resistors and dynamic braking resistors. Their custom design products are truly "A Technology Better". Other strong contenders in this category: Buffalo Wings & Rings, Cutting Edge Services and Mt. Carmel Brewing Company.

Holiday Inn & Suites Cincinnati East was the preferred nominee for the Customer Focus Award for companies with 51-250 employees. Holiday Inn & Suites Cincinnati East offers a newly renovated ballroom with 10,000 square feet of meeting space, state-of-the-art audiovisual services and exceptional customer services. Voted friendliest Cincinnati hotel, it is the ideal full-service hotel for events, whether it be a conference, convention, meeting, or wedding. Holiday Inn & Suites Cincinnati East employs 90 and has been a chamber member for over 27 years.

These five winners will be honored at the Clermont Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting on February 12 at Receptions Conference Center East. Congratulations to all 2009 Small Business Best Practices nominees and award winners. Individual and Table Reservations may be made by contacting the Chamber at 576-5000 or visiting www.clermontchamber.com.

Founded in 1969, the Clermont Chamber of Commerce promotes local and regional business through business attraction, retention & expansion, educational and networking opportunities, business consulting assistance and business advocacy for the over 1000 Clermont Chamber Members. Find us at www.clermontchamber.com. The President of the Clermont Chamber of Commerce is Matthew D. Van Sant, and the Chairman of the Board is Chip Gerhardt of Government Strategies Group, LLC.