

2012 MDT Needs Assessment Analysis

In order to determine barriers to DBEs participation in federal-aid highway construction projects and to identify services to best increase their participation, the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) DBE program conducted a web-based needs assessment survey in December 2012.

Comparing the Needs Assessment from 2011 to 2012, there were 104 participants in 2011 and 81 participants in 2012. Most participants were DBEs and DBE participation in the Needs Assessment decreased from 51 to 40. There was also less participation from the non-DBE contracting community. Non-DBEs decreased from 41 to 31 this year.

In 2011, slightly more participants bid for MDT projects. The percentage of participants bidding on MDT projects was 48.1% as compared to 47.1% in 2010. This was exactly the same percentage as participants *not* bidding on MDT projects, that percentage was 48.1%. Of those, 14.8% bid as a prime and 25.9% bid as a subcontractor.

It appears that the trend of working for other agencies than MDT remained close to 2010 figures at 40% of the participants working on MDT projects and 56.3% not working on any MDT projects. Many of the participants indicated that they do a lot of work for other government agencies.

New questions to the Needs Assessment in 2012 included information regarding prompt payments. 74% of contractors were being paid on time, while 26% of contractors are not being paid on time. There are other issues with being paid on time, including not paying for quantities, not paying on time, assessing liquidated damages after the project has been completed for some time and excessive paperwork.

Satisfaction with the DBE Supportive Services program dropped slightly this year with a "very satisfied" response of only 49% dropping from 57.4% in 2011. Noted in 2011 that for the categories "somewhat dissatisfied" and "very dissatisfied" combined, there were 7 respondents.

Current financial situations of participants seems to have improved with most participants rating their current financial condition as "Good", which is up from "Average" in 2010. "Excellent" and "Average" financial conditions of participants are on the rise and "Poor" financial conditions are on the decline.

Supportive Services will continue to work on more opportunities to network. If your firm does not see training in your location, contact Shannon, she may be able to offer an alternative. Mentioned again are set-asides and goals. DBE set asides will most likely never be an option, however, the MDT DBE program does have an approved race conscious portion of the goal until September 30, 2013 and that enables MDT to set project specific goals. Shannon does visit DBEs at least once a year and contacts them via phone as often as possible. Communication lines are always open in the DBE program, please don't ever hesitate to contact either Wendy or Shannon regarding any issues, if we don't know the answer, we will get it for you!

Welcome, Recently Certified DBEs!

U S Coatings

Barbara Lande
Residential and
Commercial Painting



**Do you know
someone who
wants to be a
DBE?**

If they are a small business owned by a minority or a woman and have less than \$1,320,000 in personal net worth and less than \$22.41 million in annual sales averaged over the last 3 years, they may qualify! Have them contact Wendy Stewart, DBE Program Manager at (406)444-6337 or westewart@mt.gov for an application packet.

INROADS

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MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION MDT holds two bid lettings each month.

Proposed for letting March 2012:

UPN/UNIT	PROJECT ID	FINANCIAL DISTRICT	PROJECT DESIGNATION	TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION	LENGTH MILES
6838 000	BH 253-1(21)1	4	YELLOWSTONE RIVER-1 M N TERRY	MAJOR BRIDGE REHAB WITHOUT ADDED CAPACITY	
7572 000	IM 90-6(139)313	2	ROCKY CANYON(I-90)	RESURFACING-ASPHALT (THIN LIFT<=60.00MM)(SCH MAINTENANCE)	5.0
4072 002	NH 63-1(14)0	5	US 12/US 191-INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS	RECONSTRUCTION-W/O ADDED CAPACITY	1.1
1233 002	STPP 83-1(20)0	1	CLEARWATER JUNCTION-NORTH	MAJOR REHAB-W/O ADDED CAPACITY	4.8
4803 000	STPP-HIP 14-2(24)63	2	CHECKERBOARD-MARTINSDALE	RECONSTRUCTION-W/O ADDED CAPACITY	8.7
6697 001	HSIP 227-1(16)7	3	SAFETY IMPR-S CENTERVILLE	ROADWAY & ROADSIDE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS	
6840 000	BR 14-6(19)246	4	DRAINAGE-6 MI NW VANANDA	BRIDGE REPLACEMENT W/O ADDED CAPACITY	
6961 000	CBI 1-3(65)209	3	EAST GLACIER-BROWNING	RESURFACING-ASPHALT (THIN LIFT<=60.00MM)(INC SAF IMP)(PAVE PRES)	10.
7704 000	STPE 6999(7)	5	EAST MAIN ST SIDEWALKS-LAUREL	CTEP PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES	

New Online Course For Native American Small Business Owners

Native American entrepreneurs have a new tool to help determine if they're ready for business ownership and to help them get started. **Native American Small Business Primer: Strategies for Success** is a free, self-paced online business course developed for Native American business owners.

The course provides an overview of basic business principles and makes participants aware of the programs and services available from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

"Native American Small Business Primer: Strategies for Success will enhance the agency's effort to provide important resources for emerging Native American entrepreneurs," said SBA Administrator Karen Mills. "Our ultimate goal is to help create jobs and stimulate economic and business development in our Native American communities. This course is an essential business development tool for the entrepreneur's toolbox."

The new online course emphasizes business planning and market research as essential steps to take before going into business; informs Native American entrepreneurs about the legal aspects of starting a business, including the type of ownership (legal structure) and licensing; and provides key information on seed money for starting up, raising capital, and borrowing money.

In addition, there is a section on how to estimate business start-up costs that can help assess the financial needs of going into business.

The course is available from the SBA's Online Small Business Training web page under Online Courses for Starting Your Business at <http://www.sba.gov/content/online-courses-starting-your-business> (choose "Native American Business Primer").

The Native American Small Business Primer course is one of nearly 30 online tutorials offered by the SBA's Online Business Training at www.sba.gov/training.

Taken from Idaho's February newsletter

DBE participation for MDT Awarded Contracts for December and January:

Prime <i>DBE</i>	Location	Project	DBE Participation
Knife River – Belgrade	Thorpe Road-West	STPS 205-1(41)12	0%
Neal Structural Repair LLC	Yellowstone-Greycliff-Scour	BH 9049(30)	0%
Riverside Sand & Gravel Inc <i>JCT Construction</i> <i>Arrow Striping</i>	Hardin-Roadside Imprv	HSIP 90-9(108)481	3.8%
Average Participation			.52%

Take the 5 Minute Brochure Design Trash Test

From About.com

You only get one chance to make a favorable impression with your brochure design. An effective brochure design that communicates to your prospects isn't about spending your entire ad budget on design and development. It requires the use of good brochure design and brochure writing principles.

Take just 5 minutes to discover if your brochure design will pass the trash test. Score your brochure with a + or -.

5:00 Appeal to Emotions: The old adage in marketing is that consumers buy based on emotions and justify with logic. Does your brochure design strike an emotional chord with your prospects? Appeal to the heart of your markets emotion by connecting with their pains or desires.

4:00 Be Professional: Is your brochure design professional or cheap? Adding poor quality graphics or clip art quickly downgrades the brochure. Use good quality photos, images, and graphics to avoid the trash.

3:40 Be Personal: A winning brochure design connects personally with your audience. If your brochure spends more time talking about how great your small business is versus life from the customer's perspective, it will more than likely end up in the trash.

3:00 Achieve Readability: Your brochure design should be pleasing to the eye and include bullet points, arrows, boxes or any other graphics to improve the readability of your marketing piece.

2:30 Speak the Language: An effective brochure design will speak in the customer's language. It's vital to remove any technical language your customer doesn't understand. The simpler your communications are, the easier to connect with your target market.

2:00 Lead with Benefits: A sure bet to have your brochure trashed is by feature dumping throughout the text or copy. Customers don't care if your series 700 widget has a multi-function control panel. Grab your target market's emotion by selling the benefits such as time savings, enhanced productivity, or any other powerful benefit.

1:20 Have a Single Message: It's tempting for the inexperienced brochure writer to want to include as much information as possible in the copy of the brochure. However, using your brochure to close the sale by packing it with a barge of messages only confuses your market and ensures your marketing dollars end up in the trash. Focus your brochure on delivering on a clear, compelling message.

0:50 Focus on a Product or Service: Your brochure is likely to be trashed if it reads more like a catalogue than being focused on a single service or product you offer. The more choices you offer your prospects, the greater the chance you will confuse and lose them.

0:20 Make an Action Call: Your brochure should direct the customer to take a specific action such as a phone call for more information or to visit your website. If your brochure lacks a call to action, you can be sure it's heading for the trash can.

0:00 Add Your Score: Now add up the +'s and -'s. If you have more than 3 -'s your brochure is heading for the garbage can and it's time for a makeover.

Avoid the common mistake to pack your brochure with endless information and lack of focus. Spend the same amount of effort in designing and writing your brochure as any other function in your small business. If your skills are lacking outsourcing can improve your odds of winning the business of your prospective customers.

MDT Civil Rights Bureau Directory

Wendy Stewart DBE Program Manager/Certifications	westewart@mt.gov	(406)444-6337
Shannon Hahn DBE Supportive Services Coordinator	shahn@mt.gov	(406)444-7287
Andy Hyatt-Marcucci Compliance Technician	ahyattmarcucci@mt.gov	(406)444-6331
Alice Flesch ADA Coordinator	aflesch@mt.gov	(406)444-9229
Bill Anderson Title VI & EEO Compliance Specialist	bianderson@mt.gov	(406)444-6334
Kathy Terrio EEO & Labor Compliance Specialist	kterrio@mt.gov	(406)444-9270
Patti McCubbins Civil Rights Bureau Chief	pmccubbins@mt.gov	(406)444-6042

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February



Take a class anywhere, anytime with the Small Business Training Network (SBTN). The SBTN is a virtual campus offering online courses, publications, and other forms of technical assistance. Courses are self-paced and take about 30 minutes to complete.

Available classes include:

- Strategies for Growth
- Construction Safety & OSHA Compliance
- IRS Resources for Small Business Owners
- Recordkeeping

Access the full listing at:

<http://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/counseling-training>

March

3/19 Using Online Marketing to Grow Your Business

Downtown Education Center, Bozeman
5:30 pm

Learn how to market your business more effectively online by using relevant content, social media, search engines and building an online community around your brand. Leave with a basic online marketing outline for your business.

Contact: Extended University, 406-994-6683

Montana811 is hosting dinners all over the state to information excavators about safe excavation and the One-Call/Call Before You Dig system. Click here for info:

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e5h5wuwmcce3e38d&llr=jpa%20si8iab>

- 3/14 - Butte, War Bonnet, 6 pm
- 3/20 - Thompson Falls, Rimrock Lodge, 6 pm
- 3/26 - Plentywood, Blue Moon, 6 pm
- 3/27 - Wolf Point, Elks Club, 6 pm
- 3/28 - Glasgow, VFW, 6 pm
- 3/29 - Malta, Great Northern Hotel, 6 pm

You asked for it...you got it!

The SBA is offering a **Construction Management and Marketing Your Small Business** to the Federal Government class

This two day training event will teach you the following: Documents & Defining the Scope of Work, Estimating and the Bid Process, The Cost Estimate, R.S. Means and How to Use It, Managing and Controlling Risk, Concepts and strategies for doing business with the Federal Government, Tools and opportunities to Market Your Business, Developing a Capabilities Statement and Marketing Plan, Marketing Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

March 21 and 22, 2012
At the Gateway Center in Helena

SIGN UP TODAY!!!

<http://sbaworkshops.stoverteam.com>

