

Commerce means Business

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1

JAN/MAR 2017

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, INTERNATIONAL TRADE, INVESTMENT ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Mission Statement

To actively promote and facilitate, in close collaboration with the Private Sector, the establishment of a dynamic investment and trading environment, which anticipates changes in global circumstances, whilst strengthening and enhancing the productive capacities and competitiveness of Industry and Commerce, encouraging good business practices and promoting consumer interest.

Vision Statement

**To be an agency that delivers internationally certified quality services for
Private Sector Development in Saint Lucia.**

Editor's Note

Welcome to Volume 3, Issue 1 of Commerce means Business

**a publication of the Department of Commerce, International Trade, Investment,
Enterprise Development and Consumer Affairs,
produced by the Commercial Information Centre (CIC).**

In this issue of "Commerce means Business" we highlight some of the major initiatives undertaken by the Department aimed at creating awareness of the services we provide to the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Sector. As the primary agency responsibility for private sector development, it is important that the Department in conjunction with its affiliate agencies work towards realizing this mandate of facilitating the promotion of a sustainable private sector.

The Small Enterprise Development Unit (SEDU) is one of the core Units responsible for facilitating the creation and sustainable growth of Micro and Small Enterprises. As part of its work programme, the Unit has embarked on various public awareness drives. This includes a series of radio and television programmes, as well as, several community outreach workshops targeting potential and existing entrepreneurs, in its efforts at cultivating an entrepreneurial culture in Saint Lucia. This and more is presented in this issue of Commerce means Business.

The work of the Consumer Affairs Division is also highlighted in this issue with the annual hosting of World Consumer Rights Day which was observed on March 15th. In keeping with this year's theme—"Consumer Rights in the Digital Age," several activities were held including a workshop dubbed "Seniors and Youth in Technology - Say It" as well as island wide school presentations. Additionally, for the second time the Consumer Affairs Division in collaboration with the National Consumers Association hosted a 10k Fun Walk to mark this occasion. All these initiatives were geared towards empowering consumers about their rights and responsibilities.

In our staff profile corner we feature one of our Business Development Officer's - Mrs. Leander Calixte-Jn Baptiste who has been with the Department from 2013 and has made a noticeable impact in fulfilling her responsibilities.

For our interview segment with a small business we feature – "Novelty Candles and Soaps St. Lucia," operated by Mr. Isaiah Charles - a hardworking and creative business owner who offers a unique product to our market.

The Commercial Information Centre of the Department of Commerce is pleased to present another issue of "Commerce means Business" to our readers, with the hope that we can continue to satisfy your appetite for information through our quarterly publication.

*Ms. Lydia Dariah - Information Officer/Editor
Commercial Information Centre*

Happy Reading!!

A Solid Mutual Exchange Programme Between CAD and UVM

The Department of Commerce, International Trade, Investment, Enterprise Development and Consumer Affairs was pleased to have hosted a contingent of twenty students and two professors from the University of Vermont (UVM), USA, from January 4th - 17th, 2017.

This was the thirteenth year the Department hosted students from the University which is testimony of the solid partnership Saint Lucia has established with Vermont. The students who are always enthusiastic to visit our tropic paradise have traditionally engaged in impactful projects under the guidance of their Professors, Kevin Stapleton and Thomas Dessito. During the student's short stint in Saint Lucia, they engaged in developmental projects in the areas of *School Kitchen Garden, HIV-AIDS Soccer Programme (demystifying the stigma that HIV-AIDS can be contracted through physical contact) and a Consumer Cable and Internet Services Survey.*

The School Kitchen Garden Projects were undertaken at the River Doree Anglican Combined School and the Lady Gordon Opportunity Center, while the HIV-AIDS Soccer Project was held at the Dennery Primary School. The Consumer Survey was conducted in Rodney Bay, Castries, Vieux Fort and Soufriere.

For the first time two of the University's communications students, namely Molly O'Shea and Stuart Laperle, interviewed two past project partners in an effort to document the benefits that have been derived to date from this ongoing bilateral exchange programme. Project partners Mr. John Seelie Joseph and Mr. Augustine Dominique were interviewed to get feedback on the project outcome.

According to John Seelie Joseph, Director of Latille Waterfall and Gardens who was a project partner eight years ago, "The mission of the UVM project was to install a micro-hydro and solar panel unit. With the fluctuating oil prices this initiative has been very impactful and to date persons still come and ask me about the water and electricity usage. I'm the only place on the island which uses micro-hydro for energy."

Augustine Dominique of the Piton Management Area (PMA) was also extremely excited that his 3-year quest to partner with UVM had finally borne fruit. According to him, "this year's collaboration will provide an opportunity for measuring the success of awareness and conservation activities over the last two years and also establish a framework for more in-depth research into areas like carrying capacity, economic benefits and livelihoods within the PMA. "

Kevin Stapleton, UVM lecturer and project instructor also expressed the following, "what really makes this course unique is the relationship UVM has formed with the Saint Lucian Government and community partners. For more than a decade we have worked side by side to create meaningful experiences for our students that provide benefits to the People of Saint Lucia as well."

Moreover throughout the course of the mutual development exchange programme, staff of the Department also benefitted from training workshops delivered by the Professors in the areas of Research Methods and Techniques and Communications and the Lemon Law which deals specifically with motor vehicles.

At the final presentation which was held at the Bay Gardens Beach Resort on January 13th, 2017, all the projects were lauded by the participants. It is expected that the findings of the Consumer Survey will be brought to the attention of cable and internet service providers with a view to addressing consumers' queries and concerns. The Department looks forward to the continued strengthening of this established mutual friendship with the University of Vermont.

*By: Mr. Damian Monrose
Information Assistant
CAD*



Business Start-up Essentials Workshop for Entrepreneurs

On January 19th, 2017, the Small Enterprise Development Unit (SEDU), also known as the Small Business Development Centre (SBDC) of the Department of Commerce hosted its monthly Business Start-up Essentials Workshop. This workshop forms part of the Department's mandate to facilitate entrepreneurial development and growth of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Sector in Saint Lucia.

The "Business Start-up Essentials Workshop" targets new clients of the Department who recently started or intend to start a business and want to acquire the guidance and knowledge needed to better manage their business. The training is held monthly - on the third Thursday or Friday at the Conference Room of the Department.

The focus of the workshop is primarily to inform new entrepreneurs of the basic but essential aspects of starting a business, as well as, to provide an understanding of the environment within which they will be operating.

Some of the areas covered in the workshop include:

- ◆ Overview of the services of the Small Business Development Centre (SBDC)
- ◆ Evaluation of a Business Idea
- ◆ Developing a Business Plan
- ◆ Business License & Permit Requirements
- ◆ Choosing a Business Name & a Legal Structure
- ◆ Importance of IRD & NIS Sources of Financing



Overall participants have generally indicated appreciation for the sessions and have requested similar workshops in areas such as Financial Management, Product Costing & Pricing, Business Plan Development Marketing and Customer Service.

The Department is working towards including these areas in subsequent training sessions.

*By: Mr. Jonathan Allain
Business Development Officer
SEDU/SBDC*



SEDU Host Business Community Outreach in Soufriere

The Small Enterprise Development Unit (SEDU) of the Department of Commerce in collaboration with Virghen Consulting hosted a Business Community Outreach for Soufriere residents at the Soufriere Primary School on January 25th, 2017, from 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

This Community Outreach addressed the following key areas:

- SEDU's Business Support Services and
- The Caribbean Development Bank's (CDB) Hospitality Assured (HA) Programme



A total of fifteen (15) prospective and existing entrepreneurs participated in the Outreach who were all eager to get information on how to start a small business or develop their existing business.

Mr. Peter Lorde of Virghen Consulting presented on the key objectives of the CDB sponsored Hospitality Assured (HA) programme, which he highlighted is to strengthen business performance and overall competitiveness of tourism-related Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in CDB Borrowing Member Countries.



Mr. Lorde further emphasized that the programme lends to promoting a culture of quality, service excellence and continuous improvement for tourism-related businesses.

All participants were encouraged to implement the knowledge gained in their business and to utilize SEDU's services.

*By: Mrs. Ruthanne Carasco-Phillip
Business Development Officer
SEDU/SBDC*

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Training Programme

The Department of Commerce in Collaboration with the Caribbean Development Bank - Caribbean Technological Consultancy Services (CDB/CTCS) Network hosted a training programme aimed at improving the capacity of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Saint Lucia.

This training forms part of the mandates of the Department and CDB/CTCS Network—to enhance private sector capacity to exploit the many opportunities offered within the local, regional and international markets.



The training took the form of a four (4) day workshop in QuickBooks Accounting Systems, facilitated by the Department and conducted by CDB/CTCS Network Consultants. The Workshop took place at the ICT Centre, Castries, from Tuesday, February 14th, 2017 to Thursday February 17th, 2017 between the hours of 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Twenty three (23) MSMEs benefited from the hands-on training. They learned how QuickBooks can be used to help them better manage their bookkeeping, inventory and accounting systems.



The workshop was hailed a resounding success by each participant and it is expected that a third workshop would be held sometime in the near future.

*By: Mr. Jonathan Allain
Business Development Officer
SEDU/SBDC*

SEDU Hosts Client's Valentine's Day Showcase

In the spirit of "love, support and appreciation", the Small Enterprise Development Unit (SEDU) of the Department of Commerce organized a Client Valentine's Day Showcase for its clients at the entrance of the Heraldine Rock Building, Waterfront from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m on Tuesday, February 14th, 2017. It was the first Showcase of its kind to be organized by SEDU.

Four (4) Business Owners participated in the Showcase namely: **Terril Joan Nicholas** of **illuminating Designs**, **Theresa Peters** of **Suenos De Chocolate**, **Christine Gustave** of **Archi Kouture** and **Sabrina Odol** of **Soin De Beaute' Day Spa**.

Through this Showcase clients got an opportunity to promote and sell their products and services, which included locally manufactured jewellery, chocolate treats, wood craft and massage treatments. At the end of the Showcase the participating business owners were satisfied with the outcome as they not only generated revenue, but through networking they were able to build their clientele and increase public awareness of their products and services.

One of the exhibitors in particular, Ms. Theresa Peters indicated that this was her first time participating in such an activity in Saint Lucia and was looking forward to participating in other activities organized by SEDU. Ms. Peters stated that "it was a fun experience and it reminded me of the first time I participated in the Barbados Chocolate Festival", while Ms. Sabrina Odol said that "it was an excellent experience."

The Department of Commerce would like to thank exhibitors for their participation in the Showcase and encourages them to keep the passion and love for their business flowing, as these are key ingredients for a successful enterprise.

The word **love** is such a simple word yet so powerful as it can impact the lives and businesses of many.



**Terril Joan Nicholas of
illuminating Designs**

*By: Mrs. Ruthanne Carasco-Phillip
Business Development Officer
SEDU/SBDC*



Sabrina Odol of Soin De Beaute' Day Spa



Theresa Peters of Suenos De Chocolate



Christine Gustave of Archi Kouture



World Consumer Rights Day 2017

“Consumer Rights in the Digital Age”

On March 15, 2017, Saint Lucia joined consumer organizations across the world in observance of World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD). Given the rapid rate at which technology has consumed almost all facets of business activities, Consumers International (CI) could not have coined a more apt theme - “Consumer Rights In The Digital Age” at this juncture of the world’s development.

“World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) is an opportunity to promote the basic rights of all consumers, demanding that those rights are respected and protected, and a chance to protest against the market abuses and social injustices which undermine those rights.” On March 15, 1962, US President John F. Kennedy delivered a historic address to the US Congress in which he outlined his vision of consumer rights. This was the first time any politician had formerly set out such principles. Back then President Kennedy, who is cited as one of America’s best Presidents’ asserted: “Consumers by definition, include us all, they are the largest economic group, affecting and affected by almost every public and private economic decision. Yet they are the only important group... whose views are often not heard.” (Source: CI’s website)

To mark this very important occasion, a series of activities were undertaken by the Consumer Affairs Division (CAD) of the Department to highlight ways consumers should protect themselves in the digital age, as well as, inform and educate them as to what their rights entail.

The main activities were - a pilot project dubbed **Seniors and Youth In Technology - SAY-IT; Secondary School Presentations; a Fun Walk and training for staff in relation to the theme.**

The objective of SAY-IT was to help senior citizens understand the basics of modern day devices particularly smart phones and the computer, while learning how to access online banking using these devices. The CAD was pleased and very appreciative that the Gros Islet Fishermen’s Co-operative Society, the St. Lucia Bankers Association and the Gros Islet Secondary School collaborated in this venture.

District Representative for Gros Islet - Hon. Lenard Montoute along with the Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development - Ms. Michelle Charles attended and addressed the opening ceremony of this three day workshop, held at the Gros Islet Secondary School from March 14th - 16th, 2017.

Hon. Montoute and Ms. Charles lauded this initiative of the Department and they both echoed the sentiment of the Acting Director of Consumer Affairs - Mr. Guillaume Simon who disclosed that this project would be replicated in other communities with Community Based Organizations.



The presentations at the workshop centered on:

- A) Services Available at the Automated Teller Machine (ATM) and how to use them; Precautions to take at the ATM and Pin and Card Security**
- B) ABM Services, Internet Banking, Electronic Statements**
- C) International Debit Credit, Online Banking and Managing Personal Finances**

The presenters were 1st National Bank, CIBC First Caribbean and Bank of St. Lucia (BOSL) respectively.

Additionally in its quest at ensuring that Saint Lucia becomes a society of discerning consumers who are aware of their rights and responsibilities as consumers, the Consumer Affairs Division also embarked on a series of Secondary Schools presentations.

These presentations were delivered at the following schools;

- * **Corinth Secondary School**
- * **Center for Adolescence Renewal and Education (CARE)**
- * **Piaye Secondary School**
- * **Soufriere Secondary School**
- * **Vieux Fort Comprehensive Secondary School**
- * **Seventh Day Adventist Secondary School**
- * **Clendon Mason Secondary School**

The presentations focused on the following areas:

- 1) Consumer Rights**
- 2) The Digital Age**
- 3) Pre Digital Age**
- 4) How the Digital Age has impacted our lives**
- 5) Consumer Rights in the Digital Age**
- 6) How to protect themselves as consumer**
- 7) The various pieces of Legislation regarding technology**

Moreover with last year's first successful awareness walk hosted by CAD in observance of WCRD, participants requested that such an event be made an annual affair. As such the second annual WCRD Fun Walk was held on March 12th.



CAD would like to thank all the sponsors, volunteers and participants who made this year's event the success it turned out to be with over 350 walkers.

This is what consumer power is all about and Consumers must continue to show their mettle, assert themselves, exercise their rights and be responsible.

*By: Mr. Damian Monrose
Information Assistant
CAD*

Highlights from the various activities





World Consumer Rights Day Address Delivered on March 15th by Honourable Bradly Felix - Minister for Commerce, International Trade, Investment, Enterprise Development and Consumer Affairs “Consumer Rights in the Digital Age”



Good Evening fellow Saint Lucians.

It is truly with immense humility that I address you as Minister with responsibility for Consumer Affairs, as Saint Lucia joins the International Consumer Movement in commemorating World Consumer Rights Day, observed on March 15th every year. It was on this day in 1963, that former US President John F. Kennedy first addressed the issue of Consumer Rights to the US Congress and informed that consumer interest should be protected by the Federal Government.

He further stated that: “ The Federal Government has a special obligation to be alert to the consumer’s needs and to advance the consumers’ interests.” Since then the world has continued to place focus on Consumer Rights, Consumer Protection, Consumer Policy and Consumer Legislation. As we sign on to International and Regional Agreements, it requires that we not only move to vigorously protect consumers, but most importantly, we must ensure that our nation’s economy fairly and adequately serve consumers’ interests- for Consumer Rights are Human Rights.

This year 2017, World Consumer Rights Day is commemorated under the theme “**Consumer rights in the digital age - Building a Digital World Consumers can Trust**”. The advent of digital technology has created unprecedented new opportunities for consumers to communicate, to access information, provided greater convenience and choice from a wider range of products and services.

Connections between devices such as smart phones, smart televisions, fridges, stoves, vehicles and other objects are rapidly expanding and have become an almost natural part of our daily existence. Sometimes referred to as ‘**the Internet of Things**’, we are seeing the interconnectedness of and convergence of technology such as sensors embedded in more and more everyday objects like vehicles, utility meters, white goods, wearable fitness trackers or home security systems - making objects capable of sensing and remotely communicating with each other, with other users, with manufacturers or with some central computing system.

As we know, the first truly smartphone was released by Apple in 2007 and by the following year approximately 3.7 million had been sold. Apart from making calls, smart phones contain software that can record data, voice, video, motion, location and much more. Global projections suggest about 5.6 billion people will own a smartphone by 2019 - which will constitute about 73% of world population.. A survey by a networking equipment company **Cisco** estimates that about 25 billion devices will be connected in the **Internet of Things** by 2032.

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Undoubtedly, living in the digital or information age has tremendously enhanced the quality of living of many consumers of developing states like ours while at the same time exposing consumers to a number of challenges which, without action by governments, regulators and, action groups could undermine consumer confidence and trust in technology. **The Internet of Things** could be one of the most disruptive technologies consumers have ever experienced, as “everything that can be automated, will be automated” and become connected in a massive network of networks.

Since the emergence of the internet, the digital age has fundamentally been impacting consumer protection and our understanding of consumer rights in the digital environment. It has allowed consumers greater access to get their voices heard, provide feedback and yet at the same time is presenting challenges in the protection of those very fundamental consumer rights. Challenges related to internet access for many consumers who are not connected, how to improve the quality of services, which online services and products consumers can trust, obtaining redress for online transactions and what happens to the data that consumers share online.

It was the very President John F Kennedy who recognised that “the march of technology...has increased the difficulties of the consumer along with his opportunities... [it has] also outmoded many of the old laws and regulations and made new legislation necessary”.

Director of Consumers International, Amanda Long, in her Keynote address at the International Conference on Consumer Protection in the Digital Age in Thailand on 3rd April 2014 espoused that “Consumers in the Digital Age simply has to be at the heart of everything the consumer movement is about” and highlighted that consumer protection in the digital age must be about privacy and data issues; managing and protecting digital identities.

The digital world has exposed consumers to wider choices of goods and services, new suppliers and new geographical markets. Greater consumer choice, availability of new markets necessitates that consumers transacting in this digitized world exercise greater diligence and prudence in their purchasing decisions.

Today, in Saint Lucia, the number and rate of internet and cell phone users has soared from approximately 55,000 persons or 35.2% of the population in 2006 to approximately 142,000 persons or 89% of the population in 2010. What this points to is that there is an increasing number of consumers communicating with each other whether via social media, sending sms or whatsapp messages, pictures, tweets or other forms of social media. Additionally, more consumers are engaging in cross border trade in goods and services as they have direct access to overseas markets through the internet. All of this exposes a great number of vulnerable cyber shoppers to internet scams, identity theft, cyber-bullying, with little or no recourse in redressing. And we know all too well some of the horror stories of sensitive pictures being released on the internet or email and bank accounts being hacked, individual’s identities being stolen and other cyber abuses.

Cont’d

Consequently, there is need to strengthen the requisite structures (i.e) laws, policies and regulations, to protect the interest of our cyber shoppers as it relates to fair contract terms, secure payments, clear and accessible information, data security and data protection.

Mindful of the myriad of concerns, challenges and vulnerabilities of consumers transacting in the digital environment, the Government of St. Lucia, has enacted a number of critical pieces of legislation to protect consumer rights and interests namely the:

- Consumer Protection Act No 9 of 2016
- Privacy and Data Protection Act enacted in April 2011 and later amended in March 2015
- Cyber Crime Act enacted in April 2011 and
- Electronic Transactions Act enacted in April 2011

Although Saint Lucia has been the first within the OECS to enact Consumer Protection Legislation, we recognize that there is still need for the enactment of even more legislation and the adoption of policy and regulations as we collectively continue to build consumer confidence in the utility of the technology.

As Minister with responsibility for Consumer Affairs, I want to urge that as we continue to communicate and transact in the digital world that we do so responsibly, safeguarding consumers' welfare and interest; that the business community in recognizing their responsibilities, protect consumer data obtained and invest in security that would serve to build consumer confidence in the marketplace. With so much potential for consumer benefit and significant threats at play, I urge consumer organizations to build up their expertise on this issue so they can influence the private sector and government in building an economy that is fair, just and caters to the consumer needs of trust, confidence and consumer protection in the digital economy for the betterment of all.

I wish all Saint Lucians a happy World Consumer Rights Day.

I thank you.

New ISO 9001 For Quality Management System

A **Quality Management System** is about understanding your customer's requirements and using that understanding to develop business processes that deliver acceptable products to the customer. Our Quality Policy expresses the focus of our QMS.

These customer satisfying **business processes** must be monitored and measured to ensure they will deliver the results our customers demand. We call this **process control**. Our Quality Objectives define the metrics that we monitor and measure to ensure our QMS is delivering the results to our customers.

Our QMS provides the foundation and often times the impetus for **continual improvement**, which in turn increases the likelihood of greater customer satisfaction as well as greater employee, stakeholder, and management satisfaction in the future.

QMS Customer Satisfaction

It means understanding what customer satisfaction is and making sure that every employee understands how to satisfy our customers.

QMS = Continual Improvement

QMS Corrective Action

It means identify areas within our Ministry that are not satisfying our customer and taking **corrective action** to make sure that this never happens again.

ISO 9001:2008 International Standard

The ISO 9001 standard specifies generic requirements for a Quality Management System. An ISO 9001 QMS can apply to any organization in any industry. It is used a lot in manufacturing, but can also be found in healthcare, services, education, and government. Variants are available in automotive (ISO/TS 16949), aerospace (AS 9100), telecommunications (TL 9000), food safety (ISO 22000), medical device (ISO 13485), and other industries.

A new ISO 9001 on the Horizon

ISO is in the process of harmonizing all management system standards. Some standards such as ISO 30301:2011 (Information and documentation – Management systems for records), ISO 22301:2012 (societal security – Business continuity management systems), ISO 20121:2012 (Event sustainability management systems) have already been changed to the new structure and some others such as the ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management Systems - requirements with guidance for use and the ISO 9001: 2008, Quality Management Systems – Requirements, are in the process of being revised to this new structure.



Process Approach

The new standard for Quality Management Systems, ISO 9001:2015 will promote the process approach beyond the existing requirements of ISO 9001:2008. The clause 4.4 (Quality management system and its processes) of the draft standard provides specific requirements for adopting a process approach.

Preventive Action vs Risk Management

One of the key purposes of implementing a quality management system is to act as a preventive tool. As a result the formal requirement related to preventive action does not exist in the current draft. This is being replaced with a risk based approach. Although it is required by the organization to determine and address risks, there is no requirement for implementing a formal risk management process.

Quality Management Principles

So far the standard was based on eight quality management principles. In this standard the earlier existing eight principles have been reduced to seven quality principles, which are as follows :

i. **QMP 1 - Customer Focus**

Meet and exceed customer expectations

ii. **QMP 2 - Leadership**

Provide purpose, direction and engagement.

iii. **QMP 3 - Engagement of People**

Recognition, empowerment and enhancement of skills and knowledge.

iv. **QMP 4 - Process Approach**

Understand processes to optimize performance.

v. **QMP 5 - Improvement**

Maintain current performance and to create new opportunities.

vi. **QMP 6 - Evidence-based Decision Making**

vii. **QMP 7 - Relationship Management**

Manage relationship with interested parties to optimize performance.

Products and Services:

In the 2008 version of the standard the term "product" was used. This term also included services. In the new standards, the term is "Products and Services".

Documented Information:

2008 version of the standard had two separate terms: "documents" and "records". "Document information" is now used in the recently International Standard. The term "Documented procedures" is now expressed as a requirement to **maintain** documented information, and where ISO 9001:2008 would have referred to "records", this is now expressed as a requirement to **retain** documented information.

Work Environment:

The term "work environment" used in ISO 9001:2008 has been replaced with "Environment for the operation of processes".

Purchased Product:

The term "purchased product" has been replaced with "externally provided products and services".

Supplier

The term "supplier" has been replaced with "External provider".

This does not mean that organizations would need to change this term in their QMS as well. Organizations can still maintain the term "supplier", "vendor", "contractor", "consultant" etc. as per their own need.

What should we be doing?

- i. Learn about the key changes
- ii. Evaluate the impact on the Department
- iii. Begin planning to revise the management system
- iv. Keep informed of the New International Standard
- v. Begin dialogue within the Department

Consequently, the fullest support of all staff of the Department is required in continuing the drive towards improved effectiveness and efficiency, through the use of the ISO 9001 standard.

By: Mrs. Roycelyn St. Hill Howell

Business Development Officer

SEDU/SBDC

Novelty Candles & Soaps St. Lucia

Established in 2010, Novelty Candles & Soaps St. Lucia is owned by Mr. Isaiah Charles who holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agricultural Science from Cameron University. Located in the community of Arrundelle Hill, Castries, Novelty Candles & Soaps St. Lucia is focused on providing customers with customized scented candles and soaps. Additionally, the business is also involved in manufacturing a line of herbal soaps which aid in the relief of various skin ailments, such as, eczema. The determined entrepreneur has future plans to create a line of salves, scrubs and balm to compliment the herbal line.



When asked what was the aspiration behind the establishment of this business Mr. Charles indicated that the idea evolved through a handmade candle which was given to him as a gift. "I was impressed by the scent and the fact that it was handmade, so I decided I would try to make candles to sell to the Caribbean Diaspora in New York where I resided at the time." He also stated that the idea shifted from making simple candles to the sculpturing and producing of candles in the form of the islands, Caribbean fruits and lines for different occasions.



Mr. Charles also added that since the establishment of Novelty Candles & Soaps St. Lucia, most persons are impressed with the products and the artistic quality. They are often delighted and surprised that the products are produced right here in Saint Lucia.

He further added that the Department of Commerce has been a valuable source of assistance to him from the establishment phase and through the life of the business. He has attended several workshops and training offered through the Small Enterprise Development Unit such as, marketing, customer service and product pricing. Additionally, Mr. Charles uses the Commercial Information Centre on a weekly basis to conduct research on marketing, labeling and packaging.

Mr. Charles is quite pleased with the level of assistance and support provided by the Department with the overall development of his business. He indicated that the support and training received has certainly augmented his understanding of business principles and showered him with a greater understanding of manufacturing processes and skills needed to run a successful enterprise.

Mr. Charles further indicated that on many occasions he has referred entrepreneurs to the Department of Commerce adding that “the Department is quite resourceful and an asset in assisting with business growth and development. It is an invaluable asset and one would be unwise if they did not avail themselves of the information and advice available.”

His advice to other entrepreneurs who may have a business idea but face challenges in executing is to **“start small, finish big; begin with what you have and never give up.** This culture is not encouraging to entrepreneurs; the individual has to believe in themselves and the idea.”

Emphasizing, that his driving force over the years, in light of what many may consider as difficult economic times, has been his stubborn refusal to give up on himself and the indirect impact of his mother on his life. He added “my mom who has achieved certain goals despite overwhelming odds has been my driving force for which I am very grateful.”

Having learnt of Mr. Charles’ drive and passion for his skill in candle and soap making brought to light the potential and determination of many Saint Lucian micro and small business owners who specialize in distinctive and innovative products.

The Department of Commerce would therefore like to wish Mr. Charles continued success in his endeavors and to thank him for his time and contribution to the Department’s newsletter.



*Interviewed By: Ms. Lydia Dariah
Information Officer*

*Ms. Meuris Dos Santos
Information Assistant
Commercial Information Center*

The Department Partners with Vybe Radio in Hosting a Series of Radio Programmes

In January 2017, the Department of Commerce partnered with Vybe Radio in hosting a series of radio programmes aimed at sensitizing the general public about its services. This forms part of the advocacy work programme of the Small Business Development Center for information sharing on the services it provides to the micro and small business sector, such as, business name registration. The radio programme also focuses on promoting the ease of doing business, while creating awareness for the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) on pertinent information required for formalizing their business operations.

Various sections of the Department, such as, the Consumer Affairs Division, Commercial Information Center, Commerce & Industry Division and Consumer Affairs Division have participated in the programme, coupled with the SBDC Network partners, such as, the Development Control Authority and the Environmental Health Department. Going forward entrepreneurs will also join in to speak out their business experiences and offer advice to potential and existing entrepreneurs.

To date the programme has been quite successful and the Department is very pleased to have partnered with Vybe Radio in its efforts at promoting an entrepreneurial culture in Saint Lucia. The Department sincerely thanks the management and staff of Vybe Radio for this profound opportunity and looks forward to forging an even greater partnership with them in “Growing our Economy, One Business at a Time.”

*By: Ms. Lydia Dariah
Information Officer*



Mrs. Roycelyn St. Hill Howell - Business Development Officer, SBDC



L-R Mr. Egbert Stevens - Business Development Officer, SBDC and Mrs. Suzanne Lewis, Commerce & Industry Officer



L-R Mr. Egbert Stevens - Business Development Officer, SBDC and Ms. Lydia Dariah, Information Officer



Mrs. Aisha Jn Baptiste-Sealy, Legal Officer

Community Outreach Hosted in Gros Islet and Vieux Fort by SEDU

With an increasing need to create a greater level of awareness of the services which SEDU provides to the micro and small business sector, the Unit has proactively embarked on a series of island wide Community Outreach Programmes. This initiative forms part of SEDU's Entrepreneurial Development Programme, the focus of which is to foster an entrepreneurial culture and more importantly, the development of best practices amongst potential and existing micro and small business owners.

The first outreach was successfully held in Soufriere on January 25th with a relatively fair numbers of persons having attended. Thereafter on March 1st and 30th respectively, the SEDU Team targeted entrepreneurs and other persons of the communities of Vieux Fort and Gros Islet, where collectively over fifty interested persons attended the sessions.

The Consumer Affairs Division of the Department collaborated with SEDU during the Outreach in Vieux Fort whereby the team sensitized participants about their services which included, inter alia, the rights and responsibilities of consumers.

The outreach in Gros Islet was delivered in partnership with the Environmental Health Department where presentations were made on the following key areas;

- Registration and licensing of barber shops, hair dressing salons/beauty parlours
- Licensing and regulating of food handling establishments
- Inspection of food products for wholesomeness
- Vector Control Measures

Both outreach sessions were hailed a phenomenal success given the level of engagement and interaction among participants. As a result, SEDU will be embarking on a series of related sessions in the coming months with the community of Dennery having been earmarked for the next Outreach.

Other related activities of the Unit include their monthly *Business Essential Start-up Workshop* which equips persons with knowledge on the specific requirements to launch a business, which includes undertaking market research, developing a business plan and the Business Name Registration Process. The Unit also plans to host a series of Business Plan Development Workshops and is in the process of conceptualizing the best approach to this intended programme.

SEDU uses this opportunity to encourage all persons who either own a business or intend to start a business to attend the upcoming free outreach sessions and workshops. It is expected to be a very thought-provoking, inspiring and interactive as persons will receive the information necessary to transform a business idea into a practical, thriving, competitive business.

*By: Ms. Lydia Dariah
Information Officer*

Highlights from the Gros Islet Outreach



Highlights from the Vieux Fort Outreach





Lively discussions happening as the presenters Ruthanne and Leander actively engage participants.

Companies Urged to Renew Outstanding Annual Licences

Castries, April 13th, 2017; The Department of Commerce wishes to remind all businesses and enterprises that are subject to quarterly, semi-annual or annual renewal of licences or permits that they should have all such permits or licences renewed on time.

The Department has observed that a number of enterprises that are subject to renewal of licences such as liquor licences, trade licences and petroleum licences have not renewed such licences which expired on December 31, 2016.

As part of efforts aimed at improving compliance with existing domestic laws and hence improve the quality of the business environment in Saint Lucia, the Department of Commerce will be exercising greater vigilance in the coming weeks to ensure that all companies are in compliance with applicable licensing regimes.

All businesses that are subject to licences or permits are therefore encouraged to comply with their relevant legislation at the soonest to avoid the penalty provisions applicable under the various pieces of legislation governing the respective business sector.

-End-

Let's Meet the Staff - Mrs. Leander Calixte-Jn. Baptiste



Everyday you see her walking gracefully into the office, with her broad captivating smile and gentle demeanor. But what do you know about this young lady? In this issue of Commerce means Business, we will introduce one of our staff from the Small Enterprise Development Unit, Mrs. Leander Calixte-Jn Baptiste. On February 18, 2013, Mrs. Jn. Baptiste joined the Department of Commerce, as a Business Development Officer. She holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration (MBA) from the National Taiwan University, in Taiwan. This opportunity was afforded to Mrs. Jn. Baptiste through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) R.O.C Taiwan Scholarship in 2007. Additionally, she also completed a

Bachelor's Degree in Economics and Management at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus in 2005 and graduated with upper second class honours. Mrs. Jn. Baptiste is intrinsically motivated and is one who believes in continuous self-development; therefore in 2015 she successfully completed the Professional Project Management (PMP) Certification from the Project Management Institute of Pennsylvania and is currently PMP certified.

No one would have guessed, but this reserved young lady was a Secondary School Teacher for over six (6) years. She taught Principles of Business, Principles of Accounts, Office Administration and a number of other subjects at the St. Lucia Seventh Day Adventist Academy, Bocage Secondary and Babonneau Secondary School. Although she enjoyed her teaching experience, Mrs. Jn. Baptiste wanted to make an even greater contribution towards the development of Saint Lucia, hence the reason she changed career paths and grabbed the opportunity to work at the Department.

Mrs. Jn. Baptiste loves to travel, meet new people, experience different cultures and learn different languages. While studying in Taiwan she learnt to speak, read and write Mandarin Chinese and obtained the Test of Chinese Proficiency-Huayu Certificate from the National Taiwan Normal University, Chinese Language Center. One of her future goals is to become more fluent in the Chinese language. She lives by the quote which says *"The heights of great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight, but they, while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night."* And this is exactly what Mrs. Jn. Baptiste did, she toiled and persevered against the odds and this is why she is here with us today at the Department of Commerce, making a significant contribution towards the growth and development of the Micro and Small Enterprise (MSE) sector in Saint Lucia.

謝謝 Thank You!

Upcoming Activities of the Department

⇒ April – June: Series of Programmes on Vybe Radio

⇒ May – December :

- * Hosting of Community Outreach Programmes for Potential and Existing Entrepreneurs by the Small Enterprise Development Unit (SEDU)
- * Monthly Business Start-up Essentials Workshop Delivered by SEDU
- * Series of Monthly Television Programmes with Host Ras Ipa of Calabash TV
- * Monthly School Lectures by the Consumer Affairs Division on the Rights and Responsibilities of Consumers
- * Hosting of a Series of Quality Management Standards Related Workshops by SEDU

⇒ May:

- * Consumer Affairs Division to Host Reading Month Activities at Various Schools

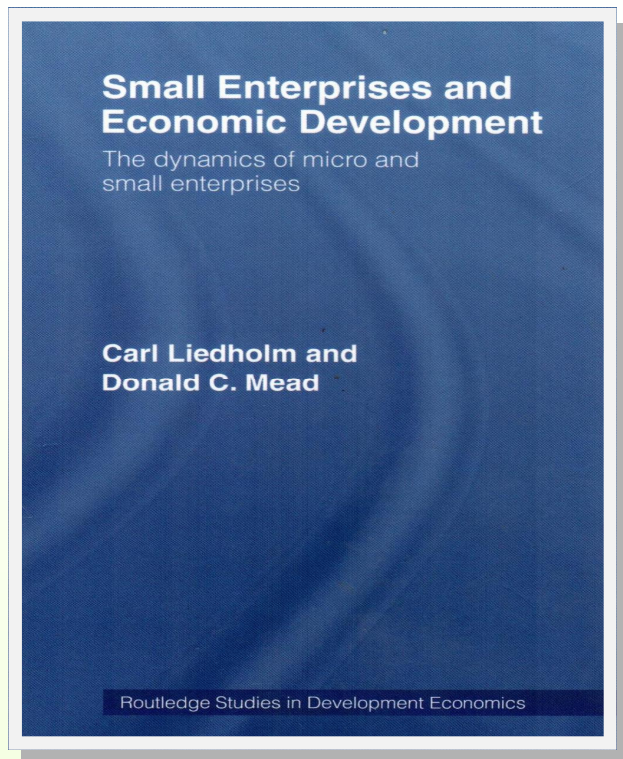
⇒ July/August/Sept: Registration Open to Businesses to Participate in the 10th Annual Saint Lucia-Taiwan Partnership Trade Show

⇒ Sept/Oct: Preparatory Activities and Meetings with Participating Businesses of the 10th Annual Saint Lucia-Taiwan Partnership Trade Show

⇒ November:

- * Hosting of Business Month Activities
- * Hosting of the 10th Annual Saint Lucia-Taiwan Partnership Trade Show

See What's Available at the Commercial Information Centre



Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) have been recognized as a major source of employment and income in a number of developing countries. Yet little is known about the characteristics and patterns of change in these enterprises. The publication entitled: "Small Enterprises and Economic Development: The Dynamics of Micro and Small Enterprises," focuses on their complexity and diversity, contribution to the development process, their needs and how they can be assisted in different ways. It also highlights their growth patterns which has strong implications on the design of policies and programs to support the development of these enterprises.

The book which is available at CIC will appeal to anyone interested in gaining a deeper insight into the characteristics of MSE's and pattern of changes combined with a vision of how things might develop better in the future.

Feel free to visit the Commercial Information Center to have a read of this publication which can enrich your understanding of MSEs.

In an effort at introducing children to their Rights and Responsibilities as young consumers, the Consumer Affairs Division of the Department of Commerce presents its publication entitled - "The Little Consumer."

This book presents the eight basic consumer rights through a narrative about Ma Son and her two sons John and Joe.

As the Consumer Affairs Division reaches out to young consumers during reading month, this book will be read to students of the various schools to generate awareness of the basic rights.



Always ☺
BE POSITIVE!

The Department of Commerce, International Trade, Investment, Enterprise Development and Consumer Affairs welcomes your comments and suggestions towards improving this publication.

The Department would also like to acknowledge and thank all staff for their continued contribution to this e-newsletter.

Feel free to email the Commercial Information Centre at cic@govt.lc with your articles and feedback.



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