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WSTPA News

"Driving a Technology Future for the West Sound"**Winter 2007/2008**

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**PRESIDENT'S CORNER:
Creating an IT/High
Technology Skills Panel**



For several years, WSTPA has worked to create and fund an IT/High Technology Skills Panel to develop and promote the resources indigenous to the region. Expected impact is the focus of education resources on meeting the needs of businesses which seek talent and expansion.

The IT/High Tech profession creates living wage jobs in a career field with projected longevity in demand. There is a current high demand amongst businesses, and it is

● **IMPORTANT NOTICE: Streamlined Sales Tax Arrives July 2008**

Recently, [Avalara](#) gave an informative presentation regarding Washington's change from origin- to destination-based sourcing and how the changes will affect local businesses as well as businesses that sell into Washington.

Both storefront and internet businesses with gross sales must be compliant with a new law which may increase cost and accounting nightmares. In the State's effort to boost tax collections and level the playing field between local and out-of-state businesses, the new law is expected to cause bookkeeping and accounting headaches and expenses for those businesses.

Despite the importance of this new law, to be effective July 2008, only 20 attendees participated in the Business Breakfast briefing held on Bainbridge Island last month. Not only did Avalara provide information regarding product and service taxability rules that will change due to SSTP; it explained the role it plays in assisting the state of Washington and its businesses towards compliance.

For more information about Streamlined Sales Tax:

- View Avalara's [webinar](#) on December 11 at 12pm, Pacific Time.
- Visit the [Department of Revenue's](#) page on this subject.

[Prepare for FY2008 changes in Washington state sales tax](#)

● **Upcoming WSTPA Events**

*Please note: **RSVP required for all monthly meetings and activities at info@wstpa.org. Unless otherwise indicated, meetings take place from 5:30p-7:30p at Poulsbo Regional Library's Community Room.***

- **December 20: WSTPA Holiday Social - Old Town Bistro Martini and Wine Bar, Silverdale, WA** - Join us in celebration of the holidays.
- **January 17: VoIP Panel.** Learn more about what to use, how much it costs, business case, types of equipment, security or quality issues, and vendors. **Panel members** include Embarq, author Harry Brelsford of SMB Nation, Steve Treanor (KRP Communications), and Mike Long of NTT Communications Global IP Network. **Moderator:** Charles Keating of Keating Consulting Service.
- **February 21: Business Accounting Software Review** - Confused about whether to use Peachtree, Quickbooks, or Microsoft Accounting? What are the pros and cons for possible business application? **Presenters:** Anthony Smallbeck, Financial Director for Washington State Trial Lawyers Association, Susan Veach, and Gale Kirsopp of Kirsopp Consulting.
- **March 20: Location-based Advertising with Google** - You're driving down the road and Google feels the advertisements you hear on the radio should match the stores you are driving by based on

anticipated to increase as businesses grow and become ever more reliant on IT/High Tech to achieve efficiencies and enhance marketing vectors. Currently, much of the need is being filled by drawing on professionals from the Greater Seattle Area (GSA), while many local resources are ignored.

Further, students who learn disciplines in these fields migrate or commute to GSA given a dearth of family wage careers

Our efforts to establish a skills panel focus on developing skills of an existing pool, but to also attract and retain new talent. A more defined path for mentorship opportunities can be created and facilitated between educational institutions and business, along with providing peer-to-peer best practises, a niche not being filled in traditional venues.

By fostering communication and requirements between education and the workplace by growing relationships between education, business, labor, government, and other organizations in order to achieve to achieve valuable careers....the panel will:

- Develop, maintain, and enhance relationships with education and training partners.
- Increase access to critical data to drive informed decision making.
- Increase successful student transitions into industry
- Increase active business participation in the education process.
 - Engage labor in the education process
- Provide technical symposia to educate the workforce at large for continuous adult education
- Develop programs to drive educator training relevancy.
- Develop and implement a marketing plan; and
- Relationship management to sustain the effort

Businesses in the West Sound region have the perception of being under-served in the technology area by the local workforce. This perception could stem from two vectors; the first being that the local workforce is truly lacking in the skills required; and second is

your GPS location. Advertisements talk about nearby locations and offer directions via GPS navigation. Is it coming, and if so - when? What are the privacy and security implications? Presenters: TBA

[RSVP for an upcoming meeting](#)

● JOB OPENING

TrustCC has an opportunity at one of its clients to perform an Oracle and SQL database audit in January. They are looking for someone interested in a subcontracting arrangement to help deliver this project. The perfect candidate will have expert level knowledge of Oracle systems and preferably some kind of background with Oracle security best practices. If interested, contact Brian Morkert at bmorkert@trustcc.com.



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This email was sent by West Sound Technology Professionals Association (WSTPA), a non-profit, tax exempt 501c(3) educational organization and technology cluster dedicated to increasing public awareness of issues

that businesses are just not aware of local talent. Most likely a combination of the two is closer to the truth. However, before the issue can be addressed, it must be fully understood; thus the action plan as articulated in our skills panel vision to gather the data, then create an action plan to address the issue.

In recent Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) visits completed by the Kitsap Economic Development Alliance (June 2005 - June 2007) 80% of all High Tech companies plan to expand in the next three years and over 50% of all High Tech companies surveyed noted one of the following weaknesses to doing business in Kitsap:

- Lack of skilled employees
- Lack of high-tech workforce
- Pre-conceived notions about Kitsap County - difficult to hire a software engineer to move to Kitsap

As quoted from the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)'s Regional Economic Strategy for the Central Puget Sound, "Too few students are graduating from our public schools with the technical, analytical and creative skills that companies need now and will need into the future".

Information Technology (IT) is a target cluster for the region. Immediate steps are being taken by PSRC to make our region more conducive to IT. As a partner, Kitsap is compelled to assist in this effort. Firms will recognize the success of an IT/High Tech Skills panel by increased access to qualified employees, access to customized training and specialized higher education resources, increased communication with employers to fill specific needs, and regional awareness to create credibility for workforce attraction. The skills panel will aim to decrease the existing and future skills gap in Information/High Technology thereby supporting new and expanding High Tech businesses.

The perception stated above points to a disconnect between local education resources and the needs and/or awareness of local business. Businesses would not be seeking to fill their perceived technology gap with talent from the Seattle area if they could fulfill their needs from local resources. Training relevance in information technology has a life-span roughly double that of Moore's Law. In other words, as the

affecting technology, improving education through the effective integration of technology, increasing skills and the availability of opportunities for regional technology professionals, and enhancing cooperation between business, community, and educational leaders for the adoption of technology as a tool to stimulate economic development.

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technology advances through two innovation cycles (approximately three years), training must be updated to reflect those innovations. In addition, a more formal link between education and business via mentorship programmes is needed.

The project aligns with strategies outlined in the state's plan for workforce development and local area strategic plans by focusing on a single high wage sector in a depressed area; IT/High Tech jobs in the West Sound. By supplying business with a trained workforce to meet their IT needs, not only are more high wage positions created in the West Sound region with indigenous businesses, but it also makes the area more attractive to bring new businesses to the area.

The combination of using local talent to develop local jobs not only stops outsourcing to Seattle and abroad, but creates a nexus upon which more technology might thrive.

WSTPA is an organization already developed as an industry aggregator and peopled primarily by business members with a technology focus. Thus, it is ideally suited to drive the panel in partnership with key business, government and educational panel members.

In order to achieve this goal, we will need financial and in-kind support from the community. We welcome your ideas and participation towards a highly skilled, sustainable and vital economic region.

[Support our Skills Panel today!](#)

:: [email us](#)
:: [visit our site](#)

**phone: 206.338.6554 or
360.551.6178**

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