



The Red Wolf

Advantage Professionals Sponsors the AICCNC

Advantage Professionals (AP) made it possible for the AICCNC to attend The 2nd Annual Native American Conference and Trade Show held at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando, FL the week of August 9 - 12.

This conference provided a venue for Native American businesses to network with purchasing and small business representatives from government agencies, government prime contractors, and large corporations seeking to work with Indian businesses. There were seminars, one on one meetings, and a trade show.

This event touched on many aspects that pertain to American Indian Business owners.

Topics discussed:

- SBA's-8(a) Program
- GSA Supply Schedule
- Marketing to the Federal Govt./ Large Primes
- Bonding Resources
- The DoD 5% Indian Incentive Program
- Govt. Loan Program
- Teaming/Joint Ventures
- Mentor Protégé

Scott Roberts of the AICCNC states, "John Keese of Advantage Professionals is a very charitable person. AP's

support gave me the chance to attend the event. We appreciate everything John Keese and Advantage Professionals did to make the trip possible."

The AICCNC looks forward to attending the event next year.

Visit Advantage Professionals, on the web at: www.advantageprofessionals.com



AICCNC Member Honored by MBPN

Roy Roberts, President of Alliance of Professionals & Consultants Inc., was selected by the Minority Business & Professionals Network (MBPN) as one of the "Top Fifty Influential Minorities in Business" in the nation. Roy received the award at a formal "black tie" gala event in Washington, D.C on June 23, 2004. Fifty men and women were honored from federal, corporate, and the small business sectors. "The national Fifty Influential Minorities In Business Awards Gala

honors dynamic, diverse men and women business leaders who share a commitment to professional excellence and making a difference in their communities," announced MBPN. "They are a select group of people with notable success and have demonstrated strong leadership in their line of business and industry." Honorees were featured in the special May/June 2004 edition of the Minority Enterprise Advocate Magazine (MEA).

Roy was recognized for his

achievements and accomplishments in assisting many minority firms and individuals. As President of Alliance of Professionals & Consultants, Inc. (APC) his firm mentors about 50 subtier and about 75 subcontractor minority firms nationally. Also, as President of the AICCNC, he assists entrepreneurial Native Americans in North Carolina to improve the success of their business or in the selection, establishment, and best-practices operation of their new business.

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Special points of interest:

- Advantage Professionals sponsors the AICCNC
- Software can help you in all aspects of your business
- AICCNC member can take care of your taxes

Best Practices: How software can help manage the functions outside of the "core-competency"

Starting a business is one of the most exciting adventures that you can undertake. To succeed in this business adventure, it is vital to address the non-core or "setup" aspects of your business in an efficient manner while you focus your valuable resources on the business's product or service development. Four areas in the setup process that impact practically every business are **Payroll, Accounting, Customer Management** and a **Website**. Fortunately, software companies have been able to create many types of affordable programs to help small businesses manage their setup and workflows in a systematic manner. Here's a quick look at each of these areas and a few of the "musthaves" for a new or growing business:

Payroll: When it comes time to pay employees, there are numerous regulatory and tax implications to consider. There are two general options open to a small business: You can *hire an accountant or a payroll service* to take care of this activity for you, including direct deposit of paychecks and automatic filing and payment of payroll taxes. Companies such as ADP, Ceridian and PayChex, or local payroll companies or accountants will provide this service for you at a cost. The alternative is to *manage the payroll process yourself, typically with small business software* like QuickBooks or Oracle Small Business Suite. This approach is usually less expensive, but be sure you have a good understanding of payroll processes and responsibilities before you do it yourself. You can learn more about what is required at your local SBA office or at www.sba.gov.

Accounting: All small businesses, including start-ups, need to manage their books, bill their customers, keep track of cash flow, and have a "scorecard" for their operation for both management and tax purposes. You can do it yourself manually or hire a local bookkeeper and "outsource" your accounting. This method usually only works for companies with limited transactions and simple processes. Typically, a small business will invest in software to automate recurring tasks like customer invoicing, bill

payment, cash and inventory management, and Profit & Loss reporting. You will probably have unique accounting needs depending on your particular business type. Numerous solutions exist in the market, from simple accounting products that cost less than \$500 and can usually be bought from office superstores (like Peachtree), to higher-end solutions, for more complex transactions, that can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars (like Microsoft Great Plains).

Customer Management: Customers are the lifeblood of any business, yet many small businesses do not have a system in place to keep track of and manage their customers proactively, let alone segmenting their customers or communicating with them regularly. Irregular customer communication can be one of the biggest mistakes that a small business can make. As a small business, you would be wise to invest in software to maintain customer contacts, provide support, identify leads, and ultimately, to understand which customers are driving your profits, and which ones are costing you money. You can buy off-the-shelf Windows-based products at an affordable price, or scale up to enterprise-level networked applications for Sales Force Automation, Customer Support Management, Customer Relationship Management and Marketing Automation.

Website: In today's economy, most intelligent buyers research their options on the Internet before purchasing. Whether they end up purchasing online or face-to-face, having a useful and attractive Website or Web Store (if you want to include an online catalog and sell online) is essential. Many software programs can help you create a cost-effective Web presence. You can choose to create the pages yourself using tools like Front Page or Dream Weaver, and working with your internet service provider to host the site, or you can use Web-based services like bCentral or Big Step that give you pre-designed or template-driven sites at a recurring monthly cost. You can also hire some web development firms to help set up your website. Such firms will typically charge a premium for their service and can be found on Internet directories or through the TAP Select

Providers Program (Ed: Look at 'Special Feature' for discussion). One of the disadvantages of building your collection of software in a piecemeal fashion is that you may end up with a hodge-podge of solutions that do not work well together and that do not give you a complete view of your business. Scalable application software is key to managing your business setup needs while helping you stay in control of your business and effectively managing its growth. Many companies, when moving from the start-up phase to the growth phase, have ended up adopting one application after another, eventually finding themselves in the difficult position of trying to run their business with many incompatible applications. This often causes costly problems such as the need to have employees re-enter information from one system to another, or manual inefficient processes just to get the up-to-date information you need to run your business, all resulting in valuable time wasted and loss of productivity. Software providers, like Oracle, Novell, H.T. Parks Inc. and some others, have recently begun to offer software "suite" solutions designed to work together as a complete small business management solution. Oracle Small Business Suite even works over the Internet. Typical components include Accounting and Payroll, Online Bill Payment, Sales and Customer Support Management tools, employee collaboration tools, and the ability to create a Web Store or a Website that is hosted for you. Thus, with just one integrated application, you avoid the 'headache' of trying to manage multiple systems. You can now streamline your operational processes and focus on your core business and on serving your customers well.

Jim LaBelle is Vice-President of Marketing at NetLedger, Inc., the company that makes and markets the Oracle Small Business Suite in conjunction with Oracle Corp. Prior to NetLedger, Jim served as Vice-President of Marketing at wine.com, and served in various marketing management positions with Ocean Spray Inc.

2nd AICCNC Annual Members Meeting

Thursday, October 28, 2004
9:30 am - 3:00 pm
9201 Leesville Road, Suite 201
Raleigh, NC 27613

All AICCNC Members are encouraged to attend this event. We will have two highly skilled speakers.

Topics Discussed:

Top 10 mistakes businesses make when submitting a bid

Differentiating Your Business With Customer Service

Please RSVP to scott@aiccnc.org or call Scott at (919) 510-9696.

Lunch will be provided.

Resources for New & Existing Businesses

Interested in working Abroad? Check out the guides to doing business in other countries.

[http://www.lexmundi.com/lexmundi/Guides to Doing Business1.asp](http://www.lexmundi.com/lexmundi/Guides%20to%20Doing%20Business1.asp)

Traveling Abroad? Check out the latest travel warnings and Consular information.

<http://travel.state.gov/travel/warnings.html>

Research the evolution of various web sites.

<http://www.archive.org/web/web.php>

Directory of public record databases.

<http://www.searchsystems.net/>

Meet Our Members

Mike & Jeannie Cranford
Cranford Tax Service

(919) 477-3955

5525 Bahama Road

Rougemont, NC 27572

cranfordtaxservice@earthlink.net

Tell us about your company.

"Established 1995 with 5 customers. Presently have over 150 clients, and growing. We prepare Federal and State taxes, we are an authorized e-file provider. 99% of our returns are filed electronically.

We also do direct deposits of Federal & State refunds."

What is your role within the company?

"I do everything but take care of the money, that's my wife's job."

What do you enjoy most about your work?

"Meeting new people, working on the computer, numbers. Math and science were the 2 subjects I enjoyed most in school."

What is the biggest obstacle for companies in your industry? How is your organization dealing with this problem?

"My biggest obstacle is trying to put a price on the service we offer. When I retire, this will be a source of income. I wouldn't want to price myself out of business."

We are taking submissions from members to be in the next "Meet Our Members" section of *The Red Wolf*. Please contact the AICCNC (919) 510-9696 to be in an upcoming issue.

On This Date in History

October 1st

1539: Today, de Soto's expedition reaches the Apalachee village of Ivitachuco (also called Ibitachuco), in north eastern Florida. The Spanish will set up camp near the village. Throughout the evening, the Indians will shoot arrows at the Spanish with little effect. The Narvaez Expedition had also visited the village in June 25,

1528, which may somewhat account for the hostile reception de Soto's Expedition will receive.

1728: (through the 5th): According to some sources, a conference on alliance and land cessions will be held for the next 4 days between the British in New York and the "SIX NATIONS".

October 2nd

1535: Cartier arrives in the area of what would eventually become Montreal.

1685: According to some sources, an agreement is reached today for the DELEWARE Indians to cede some lands to Pennsylvania.



**AMERICAN INDIAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

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We're on the web
www.aiccnc.org

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American Indian Member Companies



Technology Designed for Tomorrow's Goals

Amy Read, President

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Office: 910.452.2039
1.877.452.2039
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amy@allwaresolutions.com

TyMel

contractors, inc.

North Carolina Licensed General Contractor

Rock T. Wittman Office (910) 455-1851
Comptroller/Treasurer Cell (910) 389-3865
Email: Rock@nternet.net

"A Female Native American Owned Small Business"
1701 N. Marine Blvd., Jacksonville, NC 28546

Becoming an AICCNC Member

If you know of an American Indian that wants to start a new business, contact the AICCNC.

There are three ways to obtain a membership application.

1. Go to the website-
www.aiccnc.org, click on 'Membership Information'
2. Email the Chamber at info@aiccnc.org
3. Call Scott Roberts at the AICCNC office, (919) 510-9696

We can accept completed membership applications three ways.

1. Send via US mail to:
9201 Leesville Road, Suite 220
Raleigh, NC 27613-7540 or
2. Fax the application to (919) 510-9668
3. Email the application to:
info@aiccnc.org.