

## Hot Ideas for Surviving in Today's Business Climate

It's not "business as usual," and we have to be more proactive, creative and supportive.

**C**onsider the headlines in the Business Section of any local newspaper: "More Lay-offs," "Bankruptcy," "Store Closing," "Foreclosures Increase," "Market Plunges." It's apparent that it is not "business as usual." Budgets are slim and extravagances are looked down upon. It's no longer just waiting for the phone to ring or the email inquiry off your website. ***It means "rolling up our sleeves," getting off our behinds and getting out there.***

### Be "PC"— Proactive and Creative...

1. Use your associations. Chamber of Commerce, MPI, CVB—or whatever groups you belong to and get involved in ways that give you "face-time." I am not talking about going to mixers for networking. Offer to speak at a program or provide an educational class to other chamber members. They will actually promote you when you do this.
2. Use the internet and email newsletters. Get savvy about "search engine opti-



*Cynthia Shon, entrepreneur and President of Corporate Games, Inc. Find ways to use your hobbies to help generate business.*

- mization." Consider monthly newsletters that have content. Companies that can help you do this charge only about \$15 per month. If you don't have a website, get one. Very inexpensive using Network Solutions. Update it regularly.
3. Consider what you do and what services you currently offer. Then consider what businesses need in these times. Expand or adjust what you do so that you are a much more valuable resource.
  4. If people call you to "pick your brain" on a certain subject, consider writing a short manual or book—and either sell it or give it

away. It will have more value than a business card.

5. Provide free services for select groups that can refer business to you. You do not need to give them *everything*, but helping them — will give them an understanding of your expertise and encourage them to reciprocate by referring business to you.
6. Take a different approach to networking. We are all in this economy together. Instead of simply exchanging cards with others, ask the question— "what do we have in common?" Take the time to find out more about those you encounter and how you can help each other.
7. What are your hobbies and how can you use them to increase business? A hobby is an expertise too. Golf is the example that everyone thinks of, but every hobby has its enthusiasts. Those people are part of your network too.
8. VOLUNTEER.

*"Be creative and keep moving forward!"*

—Cynthia Shon