



Editor's Note

Welcome to the first issue of CVAC's Newsletter!

Welcome to our first issue of the CVAC Newsletter. This is an exciting time for CVAC since we finally get to share with you all the Virtual Assistant discoveries we come across from news in the industry to questions with answers from knowledgeable VAs. We had many contributors for our first issue and thank all who submitted valuable information for our newsletter. Expect to read your submission in upcoming issues. Special thanks to members [Tammy Lorette](#) and [Hilary Feindel](#) for helping us put it all together. Enjoy! ❖



Tawnya Sutherland, CVAC, CIMS
[Mediamage Business Solutions](#)

Founders Intro

What an Amazing Group of VAs

Elayne Whitfield, CCVA, MVA, PREVA
[Executive Assistance](#)

Janice Byer, CCVA, MVA
[Docu-Type Administrative Services](#)

It's been an amazing year for CVAC and we've come a long way. We wouldn't be where we are today without our members. Thank you for your support.

We truly want CVAC to be **'by the members and for the members'** so your input continues to be very important to us. We are proud of this group and of the resources that everyone has put together to comprise one of the most comprehensive collection of VA resources anywhere. ❖



Survival Strategies for Small Businesses

By Amy Ewart of Secretarial Solutions
www.secretarialsolutions.ca

I believe that as entrepreneurs, business owners, and executives we all need a pat on the back. Give yourself commendation. Why? Because we have the courage to step outside of the corporate box and start our own businesses, be our own boss and take on the challenge and responsibilities required for this adventure. In order to even contemplate that step we must have had a vision, a dream and a passion to bring it to fruition. So commend yourself.

Now, we're in business. We've been working our little brains out. We are dedicated to making our dream come true. But some time has passed and we may have exhausted ourselves of ideas, that passion

continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 [Editor's Note](#)
- 1 [Founders Intro](#)
- 1 [Feature - Survival Strategies for Small Businesses](#)
- 2 [Contest](#)
- 3 [Join CVAC](#)
- 3 [Calendar of Events](#)
- 3 [Feature – Administrative Professionals Week](#)
- 4 [Featured CVAC Member](#)
- 4 [Members in the News](#)
- 4 [VA Questions & Answers](#)
- 5 [Newsletter Feedback](#)
- 5 [Subscription Information](#)

that once used to drive us is fading and our never ending “to do list” is overshadowing our dreams.

Do not be discouraged, we only need to refuel. Picture the never ending stair master at the gym. I know we all dread that machine, because it seems like you just keep climbing and there is no landing. But each step is a further progression. Each step brings us to a higher level. Perhaps by reading these strategies we can replenish our passion and reinvigorate our drive. So let's focus on a few ideas that I have found to be helpful.

1) **Narrow Your Niche**

I know that as a woman, mother, wife, housekeeper, and a chef and so on, I tend to think that I can handle it all. Maybe not with grace, but I can accomplish a lot. I am a multi-tasker. We assume that if we can do so in our personal lives, the same should be true in our professional lives. No doubt, we can manage a lot. And as business owners there are a lot of hats to wear. Business owners are in advertising, marketing, accounting, and so on. But when it comes to the services we offer we should consider “narrowing our niche”.

We may be more proficient in a particular area of our practice. By honing in on our skills in that area, we are creating a competitive edge, an area of expertise. You can position yourself as a leader in your own industry. Opposed to fitting in with a thousand of professionals offering the same service, we are now exposed to clientele as specializing in a certain skill. We can also appeal more specifically to a “target market”.

2) **Partnerships and Alliances**

Wouldn't you agree that we all need support? We need confirmation that we are heading in the right direction, a resource for assistance, or an honest opinion when we need advice. That's why it is essential to group ourselves together with a variety of individuals who are enlisted within a similar profession. It also increases our professional appearance to clients when we can refer them to an associate of ours who specializes in a particular area of expertise. (Hence the importance of “narrowing your niche”). There are many associations and links available to aid us in our endeavors. So make the connections needed and integrate yourself with a partner or an alliance and unite together with a support system.

3) **Maintaining Passion**

The word passion is described as: “enthusiasm, excitement, desire for a particular activity, or devotion to a cause”. How do we maintain that enthusiastic approach? Focus on your core message. This is the

innermost substance of your business. Maybe our business is helping people. If it is a service oriented business, think about how you are empowering others to accomplish all that is needed of them by assisting them with your services.

Try focusing on the message that you are communicating to others and try to incorporate that in your everyday duties. For instance, the core message of my company is growth. Not only personal growth, but business growth and helping other businesses grow, expand, and develop. I try to allow clients to see the quality of my concern and I enjoy the opportunity I have to do so.

Another way to maintain your passion is to find similarities in your personal values and your business. All of us have a certain moral code. We all have things that are of particular importance to us and if we harmonize that connection between our work ethic and our personal ethics we will be passionate about what we do. Most of us appreciate sincerity from our family, friends and associates; by reflecting the same sincerity to others we are highlighting its importance to us. Having synchronization with our personal and business values will bring about passion, thus helping us to enjoy the entrepreneurial experience.

From my business to yours, I wish you much success and delight in your journey.

“Survival Strategies for Small Businesses” has been written by Amy Ewart of Secretarial Solutions. Amy is a Virtual Assistant and Writer who lives in Caledon Village with her husband and son. To contact Amy please e-mail her at secretarialassistance@yahoo.ca or feel free to phone her at 905-838-5848.

“Extra! Extra! Read all about it!!” CVAC Newsletter needs a name....

We need a name and it needs to be original. We would like a name that represents you, the VA and CVAC as a Canadian newsletter. [Send your submissions to CVAC.](#) The winner will receive a 1 year free membership to CVAC plus a copy of Surfin' The Net written by Janice Byer.



JOIN CVAC

BECOME A MEMBER



CVAC is by Canadian VAs, for Canadian VAs. Members of CVAC are in a variety of stages of running their Virtual Assistance businesses in Canada. Some have just started, while others have been at it for some time. By being in these different stages, we can share the do's and don'ts of running your business. Veteran VAs have "been there and done that" so they can enlighten others as to what works and what doesn't. New VAs have a fresh perspective and bring new ideas to the group.

Whether you are already established in the VA industry, just opened your virtual business, or are in the research process of setting up your own VA practice and are seeking guidance, CVAC is for you!

Read more about the benefits of joining CVAC at <http://www.cvac.ca/member.php> ❖

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NEWMARKET LUNCH – 1ST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

THE BUTTERY

NORTH EAST CORNER OF DAVIS DR. AND YONGE ST.
17565 YONGE ST., NEWMARKET, ON 905-836-0300

12:00 NOON

MEMBERS: LISA MARTYNUK, DIANNE MOON, MARION TRIPP,
SUSAN JESSOP, DEANNA SMYTHE, TERRI DONAVAN, ELAYNE
WHITFIELD

BRAMPTON LUNCH – 2ND FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH

CASEYS, TRINITY COMMON CENTRE (HWY 410 & BOVAIRD DR)
BRAMPTON 905-799-8464

12:00 NOON

MEMBERS: LISA IVALDI, ELAYNE WHITFIELD, JANICE BYER,
HILARY FEINDEL, ZIZI VOLFOORD-HULL, AMY EWART

GTA VA BREAKFAST – 3RD SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

PERKINS FAMILY RESTAURANT (HOLIDAY INN)
600 DIXON ROAD (DIXON & MARTIN GROVE) 416-240-9741

10:00AM

BARRIE AND AREA LUNCH

MANDARIN RESTAURANT, BARRIE

12:00 PM

lunch will be held every 4th Thursday of the month. ❖

Administrative Professionals Week

By Janice Byer, CCVA, MVA

Docu-Type Administrative Services

Since 1952, the last full week of April (18-24, 2004) has been designated Administrative Professionals Week (formerly called Secretaries Week) by the International Association of Administrative Professionals (<http://www.iaap-hq.org/>), with the 21st being the official Administrative Professionals Day.

Traditionally, bosses use this time to show their appreciation to their assistants for all of their hard work throughout the year.

To help bosses along (apart from giving the usual flowers and candy) we contacted several administrative assistants who were more than willing to give us some suggestions for bosses to show their appreciation. Each business relationship is different so you may want to talk to your assistant first, but here are some of the ideas that they came up with:

- Take her/him out for a nice, long lunch at a local fine restaurant
- Provide a morning at a local spa
- Give a gift certificate for a dinner for two or an evening at a hotel or resort
- Arrange for the afternoon off to go shopping and throw in a little spending money
- Provide a long distance calling card
- Arrange for a housekeeper for the day
- Book & pay to have the car tuned up and spring cleaned
- Present a plaque for her/his years of valued work
- Provide a family pass to the movies and plenty of popcorn money
- Arrange to have her/his carpets cleaned or yard prepared for the coming season
- Arrange for groceries to be paid for and delivered

Please let us know of any get together's or CVAC member events that are taking place in your area. We will list you on our event calendar, broadcast the details of your event to the members and we'd love to post a picture of the event too!

CVAC will contribute financially to local networking or trade show events. [Contact us](#) for more information. ❖

continued on page 5

FEATURED CVAC

MEMBER

ANITA L. KAI



A Technical Secretary left the successful firm of Cardwell Human Resources in December 2002 to research and develop an outsourced administrative / technical service. She also sought a work/life balance, a challenge with her special needs child and lack of appropriate social supports. A Google search brought her to CVA Success and vTemp Virtual Assistance was born.

A graduate of the Computer Applications and Desktop Publishing Programs at the Heinze Institute in Saskatoon in 1999, Anita improved on her technical ability necessary to succeed as a virtual assistant. Recently awarded the Certified Canadian Virtual Assistant Designation, Anita enjoys the benefits only membership can have! Proficient in Microsoft Office, Anita fully utilizes software resources, providing clients with exceptional product and service without high administrative and publishing costs. E-Communications using MSN Messenger, Outlook, Webcam and audio technologies has made business fun and effective. Extensive industry experience as Communications / Graphics Assistant with Agriculture Canada, Director of Sales & Marketing with the Quality Hotel, and as a previous small business owner, she has successfully provided administrative support, communications, graphic arts, sales & marketing, management, and consulting services to a diverse clientele. With the HR consulting firm, Anita learned the complex dynamics of the work world. She took advantage of the HR tools and resources available to her, and applied them towards her own personal and career growth. This included the Lominger™ Competencies, Conflict Management, and Career Development which are also a part of her work portfolio. Currently, the vTemp home office is bright, cheery, and well equipped to provide essential services, not to mention a wonderful eastern view out a 5' x 5' window!

Anita looks forward to growth and expansion over the next 5 years, employing at least 2 other VAs and expanding her client base.

Stop by the water cooler at the vTemp virtual office!

<http://www.vtemp.shawbiz.ca> ❖

Members in the News

Congratulations to members of CVAC who have achieved recognition as a Virtual Assistant:

[Tana Woodward & Associates](#) is proud to be awarded with the Northern British Columbia Business & Industry "E-Business" Award, sponsored by Telus. This award is presented to a company, organization or individual, deemed to most effectively utilize the potential of the Internet to enhance their business.

New Certified CVAC Members:

Anita Kai, CVAC

[VTemp Virtual Assistance](#)

Tawnya Sutherland, CVAC, CIMS

[Mediamage Business Solutions](#)

Ermelinda Whiting

[WebPageEnglish.com](#)

If your business is shining right now and you've made the news, email us at info@cvac.ca with the particulars and you will be featured in an upcoming issue. ❖



VA QUESTIONS AND ANSWER TIME

Q: I have a Word document with hyperlinks. When I save it to Adobe, should the hyperlinks still work? Any help is appreciated.

A: When you convert it to a PDF, you need to re-define the hyperlinks in Adobe.

Q: Does anyone have an agreement/contract they are willing to share re: bartering with a client. I have a client who will be coaching me in a straight-across exchange for VA services. I've been advised to document this arrangement and issue accounts. Does anyone else have experience with this arrangement?

A: Several of my clients use bartering systems and companies to exchange services. Simply treat these transactions as any other cash transaction. There should be invoices issued on both sides, when you receive an invoice from your coach, treat it as a credit memo (i.e. enter it as a backwards invoice under that client). Then it will be easy to see where you are at any given time with

continued on page 5

- Find out who is her/his favorite author and buy their latest book
- Offer a three hour lunch.....better yet.....*THE DAY OFF!*

Outsource some of his/her work to an off-site administrative assistant

Don't forget that this isn't the only time of year you should show your appreciation to your assistant. Ensure that you make them feel valued throughout the year. You'd be amazed at how far a 'thank you' or kind word can go.

Now, if you are an entrepreneur without an assistant, don't let this day go by without patting yourself on the back for handling all of the administrative tasks. Why not outsource some of your work to a Virtual Assistant and give yourself back some personal or revenue generating time.

If you are a Virtual Assistant, feel free to pass on this information in your newsletter or on your website to help inform your clients and readers of this special event. ❖

Janice Byer, owner of Docu-Type Administrative & Web Design Services (<http://www.docutype.net>) provides professional, creative and affordable virtual office assistance and small business website design. She is a Certified Canadian Virtual Assistant (CCVA), Master Virtual Assistant (MVA) and co-founder of the Canadian Virtual Assistant Connection. She is also the author of [Surfin' The Net - Docu-Type's Virtual Collection of Links](#), which is filled with the secrets of her success. Visit her website for more information and to get your copy.



Have a suggestion for our newsletter?

Nature gave us one tongue and two ears so we could hear twice as much as we speak ... Epictetus

Email us at info@cvac.ca ❖

regards to the exchange. Don't forget that taxes should be included by both parties, but they of course will not be paid out because they will "spell each other off" in the transaction. You shouldn't really need a contract of any sort, simply add the terms 'barter' into your bookkeeping program, that is contract enough.

Q: I have a client who has a database of approximately 3,000 names and wanted to know what the best software is. Most of it is now on hard copy but in a form which has many different pieces of information about that particular contact. For example, who referred this person, etc. etc. (many different categories). He would prefer it to be in Outlook, but I have my doubts that it would be suitable. He does not particularly have the time to learn new software that's why he would prefer it to be in Outlook.

A: I've created a database in Access for one of my customers who had 1000 names. It is very versatile and can handle many fields such as comments. Once you have created a form for your customer to use, he does not have to know very much about it. You can also set up some pre-formatted reports which he could run when he needs it. It would take a little bit of training but he does not have to know it all. I'm sure whatever database you use, there will be some training involved.

A: ACT! includes a large number of different category fields and is fully customizable. If you could set it up for him, I don't think he would find it difficult to use.

A: I use Maximizer Enterprise, it is a very powerful and flexible database/contact management tool that allows your user to see, in one glance, everything that is or has been going on with that client. ❖

For more on Questions and Answers,

Please visit the archives at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CVACConnection>

Subscribe or Unsubscribe Info:

The Canadian Virtual Assistant Connection is proud to offer the CVAC Newsletter to our members and all entrepreneurs around the world. We offer articles, links and tips to help you run your small business. If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe to the CVAC Newsletter, please fill in the form at: <http://www.cvac.ca/newsletter.php>

If you are already a Full or Partial Member of CVAC, you will automatically be added to the newsletter subscriber list so there is no need to fill in the form. ❖