



What people are saying about the program:

"Marc was great; relatable; engaging; would love to attend other sessions by him." *Eastern Shore Business Owner*

"Much of what Marc said changed MY ATTITUDE, which then resulted in increased revenue, and how can you put a value on that? I think it helped in many ways." *Lynchburg Business Owner*

"I think it is always helpful to hear perceptions from someone who does not live or work here. This is particularly the case, such as with Marc, where he has the training and experience from other communities to make informed observations." *Main Street Manager*

"Overall since working with Marc the sales have increased by 30% or more." *Charlottesville Business Owner*

About The Expert



Marc Willson, Retail Industry Consultant

Marc Willson brings 35 years of experience to bear helping retail, restaurant and tourism-related small businesses refine and promote their concepts to the public. In 1975, Marc started his retail career as co-owner of the largest distributor of Earth Shoes in the U.S. Since then he has held executive positions with retailers such as Britches of Georgetowne, Crown Books, Circuit City, The Bicycle Exchange, Ecampus.com and Storetrax, Inc. Most recently, he traveled to Dallas, Texas to open the world's first energy efficiency store for Current Energy, LLC,

a company funded by Ross Perot, Jr. Marc joined the SBDC in 2009 as a Retail Industry Consultant and has delivered over 70 seminars and assisted over 300 retailers throughout Virginia.

The **Virginia SBDC Network** is an organization of 29 local SBDCs across Virginia providing professional business counseling, training and information resources to help grow and strengthen Virginia businesses. The network is a partnership between the U.S. Small Business Administration, George Mason University-Mason Enterprise Center and premier local host organizations throughout Virginia. The Virginia SBDC Network is funded through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA.

Small Town & Merchant Program



Virginia Small Business Development Center Network

www.viriniassbdc.org



About The Program



Independent retailers and restaurants are the heart and soul of small towns and main streets across Virginia. Successful retailers build vibrant downtown destinations, but they face unique challenges ranging from inventory control, advertising, merchandising and staffing, to big box competition.

The Virginia SBDC Small Town & Merchant Program is a comprehensive collection of workshops, hands-on initiatives and resources designed to address the specific needs of main street retail and restaurant businesses.

Local organizations such as Main Street programs, Chambers of Commerce, Retail and Restaurant Associations and others can work with the Virginia SBDC Small Town & Merchant Program to deliver targeted, relevant guidance that business owners and managers can put to use immediately.

Small Town & Merchant Program highlights:

- ❑ Individual, Comprehensive Retail/Restaurant Check-up
- ❑ Confidential, On-site Business Visits
- ❑ Before/After Hours Seminars

Staying Relevant to a Changed Customer

TEAM Eventacular – Towns, Events and Merchants

Partnering for Profits

Windows, Signs and Visual Displays – Stewards of Your Brand

Restaurateurs – The Experience is Twice as Important as the Food
From Bah Humbug to Booming Holiday Sales

Program Fee To be paid by sponsoring organizations

Before/After Hours Seminar; Workbook;
and Retail/Restaurant Check-ups

\$750

Free on-site business visits can also be scheduled.

For more information or to bring the Small Town & Merchant Program to your community, contact the SBDC Retail Industry Consultant at 703.999.3048 or marc@virginiاسبdc.org