

Getting Above the Noise

Building Your Brand on the Trusted
Brands of others with Awards

Today's Presentation

- Common problems small businesses face trying to “get above the noise”
- Why the secret of building your brand on the trusted brand of others works so well
- How to find and win an award
- How to leverage that win with a strong communications plan

Common Problems

- Noisy Out There
 - No brand recognition
 - Limited resources – people and money
 - Efforts focused on developing technology
 - Marketing is a reaction



Pain

- How do I raise awareness to reach my target audience?
- How do I grab the attention of potential clients?
- How do I build trust and credibility when I am relatively unknown?
- How do I use my resources effectively?
- What should I do and when?



Why Awards?

- Build immediate trust – “others think these guys are the best – I should think so too”
- Don’t need a large client base to win
- Provides media kits you can leverage to get the word out
- Gives you “something to talk about” in your communications strategy
- Raises your profile in the minds of your suppliers as well as prospects and clients



How

- Add Awards as a Marketing Strategy
- Research the Right Awards
- Prioritize and Plan to Repurpose
- Understand the Process
- Submit a High Quality entry



What Makes a High Quality Submission?

- Read the questions
- Tell a story
- Stay out of the technical weeds
- Don't use acronyms
- Validate with third party sources



Award Suggestions

- **Chamber of Commerce / Boards of Trade**

- Toronto Board of Trade
- Brampton Business Awards – January 25

- **Industry Associations**

- **Technology Awards**

- Microsoft World and Canada Awards
- CDN VAR Elite
- IBM Business Partner Awards
- Deloitte Fast 50, Companies to Watch, Green

- **American International Business Awards**

- Customer Service – January 14
- Women in Business
- International Business



Okay I've Won – Now What?

- The award slides under the umbrella of your marketing communication plan (yes, you should have a plan)
- Get the media kit (press release, prizes, tips)
- Add logo to your website, signature block and business cards
- Send out press release, follow-up for story coverage
- Meet with your MP or City Counsellor for formal congratulations
- Announce in newsletter, linked-in, twitter, etc.



Mercer-MacKay Solutions Inc.

Taking Microsoft Partners to Market

Summary

- Building brand is expensive and resource-intensive
- Use the strategy of building your brand on the brands of others by association
- Awards programs are one way to build credibility and trust
- Awards programs are not a one-off but a component of your overall plan and tool-kit
- Communicating your win becomes an element of your communications strategy and plan



Want to Know More?

gail@mercermackay.com

905-510-3627

