

The Honda 2013 MODEL CLEAROUT

2015 CIVIC EX FROM \$39 @ 0.99% WEEKLY LEASE FOR 48 MONTHS*. EXCLUDES LICENSE AND HST.

MODEL PRICING \$0 DOWN PAYMENT \$0 SECURITY DEPOSIT

BUILT TO LAST. PRICED TO SELL.

PLUS GET A \$1000 ENHANCED LEASE BONUS

OR GET A \$2000 CASH INCENTIVE ON ALL OTHER 2015 CIVIC MODELS EXCEPT HYBRID

+17 CIVIC Canada's best-selling car 17 years in a row™

Dubais Honda Woodstock



NEWS WOODSTOCK & REGION

Oxford County uses unique networking events and new online tools to connect business owners with employees



By Megan Stacey, Woodstock Sentinel-Review
Tuesday, June 23, 2015 9:58:15 EDT AM



(Shutterstock.com)

From breakfast buffets to websites, networking isn't just about awkward cocktail hours anymore.

Now there's an option for everyone, young and old, introvert or extrovert. New online tools for networking even allow job seekers to network from home in pyjamas.

The Woodstock Chamber joined forces with Ryerson University and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce back in September to present an online networking tool called Magnet.

The platform helps connect employers with students, youth, and other folks looking for work. Job seekers post a profile - it's private so they can include things like a resume - and employers are able to search for qualified candidates with the particular skill set they need.

"We're constantly hearing from the Chambers about their need - especially in some rural parts of Ontario - to attract talent, and that they're having a challenge finding certain types of skilled talent," said Mark Patterson, executive director of Magnet.

"Right off the bat it seemed to be an obvious fit."

Magnet has been successful in linking employers with the skilled workers they need to keep businesses thriving, he said.

"We've had Chambers in all parts of the province that are really starting to see the benefits for their local employers in helping connect them to talent that they were having a hard time connecting to before. It's definitely been more cost effective."

But old-fashioned networkers can still count on opportunities to make connections face-to-face.

The Woodstock and Area Small Business Enterprise Centre runs twice-monthly breakfast events to allow small business owners and professionals of all kinds to expand their networks.

Christine Smith, small business advisor at the centre, said the morning sessions have been popular since they started in 2014.

There are often more than dozen, sometimes even two dozen, at each event.

"Most people have connected (with others), so they stay afterwards to conduct whatever business they're going to do," Smith said.

"I just find face-to-face is the way."

Sue Livings, who owns her own accounting business and has been attending the breakfast sessions since the beginning, said she prefers in-person networking too.

"I'm old school. I like the face-to-face," she said.

"I've made a lot of connections through the meetings, both personally and professionally."

But many job seekers - especially young people - are looking to take their networking online.

Sites like Magnet are offering simple, cheap ways to cast a net.

"What an employer would typically do is start calling their friends, their network and say 'do you know someone who has these skills and could be an asset?' and that's good to an extent, but it means people are only connecting within their network," Patterson said.

Harnessing the power of the Internet allows employers to tap into a number of regions, schools, and institutions with just one post, Patterson said.

It's also a way for employers to show graduating students or immigrants the benefits of the community.

"They're able to, within the system, talk about what it's like to live in the area. They can post photos, videos of what's it's like in the community," Patterson said.

That's one benefit of in-person networking events - local businesses can support and even recommend one another.

"I find that these breakfasts are the most well attended, and the business support is really excellent. I try not to miss these sessions," Shelley Ellery of Revived Interiors said about the networking breakfasts.

"It's all about building those relationships. Even if you meet someone today and they don't need your service, maybe next week they might need it."

megan.stacey@sunmedia.ca

Print
Facebook
Twitter
Email
Gmail
Favorites
More (294)
Add This

Easyfinancial Loans
easyfinancial.com
We Say Yes More Than Anyone. Decision
in Minutes. Happy Customers

