



## Website Hosting Tips

With many web-hosting services available, be selective and do your homework before you sign up with the internet hosting provider. Compare services before making your final decision – there are many differences among the providers and what they have to offer with monthly or yearly contracts. Some things to consider:

**Hosting charges** – Providers will normally charge \$10 to \$35 monthly depending on a single domain hosting or a multiple domain-hosting plan and the complexity of your site. If a provider offers a much lower monthly rate, research about the firm is a must. Evaluate the available security options, and be sure to read the fine print. It may be more beneficial to go with an established hosting provider even if the price is bit higher.

**Disk Space and Bandwidth** – Select a plan that offers you enough disk space and bandwidth in order to avoid paying more for over-usage. Unlimited bandwidth is your best option.

**Customer Service** – Make sure the provider has a valid, working customer service number and a technical support number (preferably toll-free.) Contact technical support staff prior to actually needing their services. Ask technical questions to see how staff responds. Are they able to communicate in terms that are understandable for someone who may not have a technology background?

**Security** – Double check the security that is offered by the hosting providers. Confirm with the sales staff whether the provider provides a regular backup of your website, including your databases. Ask if they are maintaining backup at the same servers or different server located offsite. **Security** is a key element to consider when looking for a web hosting provider.

**Hosting provider reviews** – Before you make the final selection, read customer testimonials and reviews. Reputable hosting providers list their satisfied clients and provide testimonials on their own websites.

*If you would like assistance with selecting a hosting provider for your company's website or would like a listing of providers, contact DBE Supportive Services staff at 207-942-6389 or [mweeks@emdc.org](mailto:mweeks@emdc.org).*

### WORKSHOPS COMING SOON!

- Bonding Basics
- MaineDOT  
Overhead Rate
- Making Your  
Business More  
Profitable

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#### What can we do to help you?

DBE Supportive Services is here to help. If you have questions or suggestions about what we can do to better assist you and your business, contact Melody Weeks at 207-942-6389 or [mweeks@emdc.org](mailto:mweeks@emdc.org)

# DBE NEWS



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## 3rd Annual Matchmaker A Success!

On November 12th at the Augusta Civic Center Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Supportive Services held its 3rd Annual Construction, Transportation & Government Contracting Matchmaker. Jackie LaPerriere, EEO Officer of the MaineDOT Civil Rights Office, offered a morning welcome. Theresa Savoy, Director of the MaineDOT Civil Rights Office, gave opening remarks and kicked off a morning of matchmaking.

This event, a.k.a. "speed dating for businesses," gave six prime contractors and two government agencies the opportunity to meet with DBE clients in 15 minute intervals. During each session DBEs presented the services they provide, while the contractors outlined their expectations and how they work with subcontractors and consultants. The event was well received by the prime contractors and agencies - feedback has been very encouraging.

The 4th Annual Event will be held in November 2010. In 2010 DBE Supportive Services will also offer additional networking opportunities for DBEs, primes and agencies.

*"This was well worth my time. I was able to direct people to specific parts of the MaineDOT website for information and answer very specific questions about the contracting process. [The] DBEs were prepared and we matched up well with everyone who came to the table."  
Scott Bickford, MaineDOT Contracts and Specifications Engineer*

*"As a consultant, I wasn't sure it would be beneficial to meet with prime contractors, but it forced me to prepare my presentation for a different audience and step outside of my comfort zone. I'm glad I attended and appreciate the opportunity to network with this new group of people. One prime has already given me a lead!" A Maine DBE Consultant*

## DBE Tuition Reimbursement Program

DBE Supportive Services assists Maine certified DBEs with attaining the education and training they need to succeed through the tuition reimbursement program. The program provides reimbursement for pre-approved courses from institutions of higher education or for professional training. Take advantage of this opportunity to upgrade your skills, maintain your certifications or learn a new type of software that would be beneficial to your business.

The process is simple:

- You must apply for and receive approval for the course in advance.
- The course must directly benefit your business growth.
- You must successfully complete the pre-approved course.
- Submit your proof of payment and course completion for reimbursement.

To request the pre-approval form, contact DBE Supportive Services at 207-942-6389.

## Schedule of Events

**The Bonding Process**  
MaineDOT, Augusta  
January 21, 2010

**MaineDOT Overhead Rate**  
MaineDOT, Augusta  
January 21, 2010

**Making Your Business More Profitable**  
Location TBD  
February 2010

**MaineDOT Contractor Meet & Greet**  
Location TBD  
March 2010

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## KAPPA Mapping Recognized by ASPRS/MAPPS

Kappa Mapping, Inc. recently received the Small Projects award for its project Color Infrared Imagery Makes Accurate Vernal Pool Mapping Possible in Bar Harbor, Maine as part of the third annual Geospatial Products and Services Excellence Awards competition.

The Bangor-based firm was recognized by MAPPS, a national association of photogrammetry, mapping, and geospatial firms, November 18 at the 2009 ASPRS/MAPPS Specialty Conference held in San Antonio, Texas. Judges evaluated 13 projects in five categories.

"We're honored to receive this award for our work in Bar Harbor," said Claire Kiedrowski, president of Kappa Mapping, Inc. "The project provided an excellent opportunity for us to use high-end mapping hardware and software and to work with the latest technologies in digital mapping. It's an exciting time to be in the business of making images."

According to Robert Burch PS, CP (Ferris State University, Big Rapids, Michigan), chairman of the independent judges panel, the group selected Kappa because its project required complex cooperation among a team of firms and its project outcome dramatically helped the city of Bar Harbor better manage conflicts between environmental protection of vernal pools and property development rights. "Kappa provided aerotriangulation and imagery data in true color and color infrared and worked with two professional firms and the town of Bar Harbor to produce the pyramid layers that were then used by one of the other vendors to create stereo mapping of vernal pools in the area," said Burch.

More information about KAPPA Mapping services can be found at [www.kappamap.com](http://www.kappamap.com).

## Setting Up an Employee Benefits Plan

Providing your employees with benefits that meet their needs and at the same time are in compliance with federal and state laws can be a costly, but very worthwhile endeavor. A benefits package is a good way to keep your employees satisfied and potentially reduce employee turnover. The cost may add as much as 30-40% to base pay for most employees so *it is crucial to consult a benefits consultant or attorney* before you set up your plan.

Some common mistakes to avoid include:

- Not telling employees the cost of their benefits. On an annual basis, provide your employees with a detailed explanation of their benefits and the cost. Most employees are surprised at the total worth of their benefits package.
- Assuming the entire cost of a benefits program. Very few companies are able to absorb the entire cost of a health insurance program, particularly if employees' dependants are to be included in coverage. By asking an employee to contribute to cost of the plan rather than just giving it away, you eliminate those who are already covered under a spouse's or parents' plan.
- Covering non-employees. An employer may want to purchase a group-rate plan for relatives and friends, but not realize the implications if a substantial claim is made. If the non-employee is enrolled in the plan, the claim could be disallowed or there is the potential that the policy could be cancelled. Benefits administration is often assigned to a person who is already multi-tasking and may not know the all the technicalities and requirements. Make sure that your benefits administrator knows current federal and state requirements, staying up-to-date with all paperwork and reporting.

If you are interested in setting up an employee benefits package, please contact [mweeks@emdc.org](mailto:mweeks@emdc.org) for more information.

## On-Line Workshops [www.mainedbe.org](http://www.mainedbe.org)

The following workshops can be found at [www.mainedbe.org](http://www.mainedbe.org). There is no charge, you may view them at a time convenient for you and all are self-paced.

- ★ Essential Marketing Materials for your Business
- ★ Property & Casualty Insurance for Small Businesses
- ★ Project Management
- ★ Connecting with Contractors
- ★ What to Expect in a Subcontract

## 2009 Needs Assessment

Thank you to the firms who participated in the 2009 Needs Assessment. We appreciate your interest in making the DBE Supportive Services program beneficial.

We will be using your input to help determine programming for the upcoming year. Areas we will focus on include marketing, networking opportunities, how to improve your cash flow, MaineDOT overhead rate, human resource and insurance issues.

If you have additional ideas about how to improve the DBE Supportive Services program, please contact us with your thoughts by calling 207-942-6389.



## Upcoming MaineDOT Projects



### Projects Under Advertisement (As of 12/10/2009)

**Attention to all Contractors & Suppliers: The latest bid packages cannot normally be purchased prior to the advertising date given on the notice to contractors.**

Bid Date	PIN(s)	Municipality	Location	Work Type
4/7 RFQ	RFQ20090924	Canaan-Pittsfield	Sibley Pond	Sibley Pond Bridge Replacement
1/13	015094.00	Falmouth	Routes 100 and 26 approximately 0.1 miles South of Turnpike Ramp 10	Railroad Crossing Bridge Replacement
12/30	015688.00	Bangor	Intersection of I-95 Southbound Off Ramp and Union Street	Traffic Signal Modifications
12/29	LAP016353.00	Bethel	Mason Street	Sidewalk Construction

For additional information on these and other projects go to:

<http://www.maine.gov/mdot/comprehensive-list-projects/project-information.php>

## Managing Risk

In the construction industry, one key to success is how you evaluate and manage risk on projects and how you make fiscally responsible decisions to ensure projects get completed on time. Taking a chance on a contractor whose commitment or qualifications are uncertain or who could become bankrupt halfway through a job can be a costly decision. How can a public agency using the low-bid system in awarding public works contracts be sure the lowest bidder is dependable? How can private sector construction project owners manage the risk of contractor failure?

Surety bonds provide financial security and assurance by assuring project owners that contractors will perform the work and pay specified subcontractors and material suppliers. A surety bond is a risk transfer mechanism where the surety company assures the project owner that the contractor will perform a contract in accordance with the contract documents. The surety company must be satisfied that the contractor runs a well-managed, profitable enterprise, keeps promises, deals fairly, and performs obligations in a timely manner.

Any contractor can experience serious problems - regardless of company size or number of years in business. Through the years surety bonds have proven to be a comprehensive and reliable instrument for minimizing the risks in construction.

DBE Supportive Services, in conjunction with Skillings Shaw & Associates, will hold a workshop, "The Bonding Process," on January 21, 2010 at the MaineDOT Office in Augusta. For more information, email [info@mainedbe.org](mailto:info@mainedbe.org).