

## **Ask for Help**

by Merra Lee Moffitt

Why do 87 percent of small to medium businesses have a website, yet only one out of five sell or even solicit online? I work with business owners finding profit sources they are missing. One area I consistently see overlooked is their websites. I've noticed an underground of businesses consistently making online sales and sales leads here in eastern Pennsylvania. An even larger number of small business owners appear mistakenly complacent and even withdrawn about their websites.

Forrester research predicts US online purchasing will grow cumulatively 19 percent over the next few years to account for 10 percent of total retail sales by 2008. This should be an opportunity seriously considered. I have developed a seminar called "Profitable Websites are Possible," enlisting a team of local business owners consistently making money on the Internet as panelists. I asked for co-sponsorship from the KU SBDC, SCORE and SBA chapters to help with marketing, facilities and registration. Determined not to miss the opportunity, local small business owners and nearby SCORE executives eagerly attended this interesting workshop. We ran out of space and had two hours of questions from the audience. The seminar would never have been this successful without all the help received from everyone. Plans are underway to run the seminar again in the fall and in surrounding communities. Watch for details.

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