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## BUSINESS MONDAY

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## Sandy's Super Suds irons out details for website

*Sandra Bonner's laundry service is up and running. Now Sandy's Super Suds needs a website.*

BY TASHA CUNNINGHAM

Last year Sandra Bonner took a job as a substitute teacher with Miami-Dade County Public Schools so she could have the time to pursue her lifelong dream -- owning her own business. Bonner, who holds a communications degree from Florida International University, had her eye on a chain of laundromats. But the floundering global economy forced her to rethink her dream of entrepreneurship.

"After surveying the industry, I realized it would be difficult to open one storefront location, much less a chain of laundromats throughout Miami in this economy," said Bonner, whose business is based in Miami Beach. "So I had to regroup and rethink my strategy."

Bonner decided instead to open Sandy's Super Suds, a mobile laundry service geared toward busy individuals who don't have the time or energy to do their own laundry. Bonner and her staff pick up laundry at customers' homes and offices. For \$2.00 per pound, they will wash and fold it. For as little as \$1.50 extra, they will even iron shirts, pants and other clothing items by hand.

"When it's all done, we deliver the laundry back to the customer," said Bonner. "We do all of this within a couple of days, saving the customer time and money."

Bonner has been so busy serving clients that she hasn't focused much on her marketing. "If you can believe it, I've actually been operating my business for the last year without a website," said Bonner. "I just haven't had the time to focus on creating one, but the time has come and I've got to get it done."

To create an online presence for her mobile laundry service, Bonner's first order of business was to get a URL for Sandy's Super Suds. She was able to secure [www.SandysSuperSuds.com](http://www.SandysSuperSuds.com) through GoDaddy.com. She used a template to create the site.

**To help Bonner promote her site, BizBytes 101 drew upon the expertise of Tadd Schwartz of Miami-based Schwartz Media.**

"First off, Sandra needs to view her website as a marketing vehicle for the business -- not as an online brochure," Schwartz said. "She can do this by offering online-only promotions, a newsroom that keeps the site's content current and builds credibility via media coverage, a blog, tips for keeping clothes clean at home and even services such as online scheduling for laundry pickup . . . -- all with the express goal of increasing credibility for the business and growing her online audience."

Once her site is up and running, Schwartz suggested Bonner tackle publicity to promote her business. "We would recommend developing a short press release announcing that Sandy's Super Suds is launching a new promotion for consumers who visit the site -- say, free pick-up and delivery," said Schwartz.

Schwartz recommended that Bonner find a credible news hook before sending out her release. "Here's the

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thing, too many companies fall into the trap of firing off press releases that lack hard news value. This results in lost credibility. Sandra needs to tie her announcement to a news peg such as: 'With the economy in the tank, more and more stay-at-home moms are going back to work; they don't have time to do their own laundry.' "

Donating his time to BizBytes, Schwartz offered to work with Bonner to establish a strong online presence via social media tactics, e-mail marketing and the development of a blog that provides analysis of her industry and the small business landscape. The goals are to reach her target audiences and drive traffic to the website through search engine optimization and expansion of her virtual network.

If you are operating a small business without a website, you're missing out on potential customers and invaluable exposure. You can do it yourself, but if you need a little help getting started, there is a wealth of resources out there to help you. Organizations such as the Florida Small Business Development Center at [www.floridasbdc.org](http://www.floridasbdc.org) provide valuable free training for entrepreneurs, including online programs to help you learn how to build a website for your small business. To learn more, call FSBDCat 305-261-1638.