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## Welcome to e-news for **NEXT**

**NEXT** is the resource collaborative that specializes in developing the region's fast-growth entrepreneurial sector. The mission of **NEXT** is to create a new culture of entrepreneurship in the region and dramatically increase the number and quality of fast-growth, entrepreneurial companies headquartered in our region. **NEXT** pursues three key initiatives to achieve its mission: client services to technology-based entrepreneurs; infrastructure; and voice/advocacy.

For additional information, contact Brenda Laakso at 864-239-3711.

## EVENT CALENDAR

**NEXT BP Forum "Sales Management Practices"**. Monday, April 6, 2009 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. Greenville Chamber Boardroom. Larry Blackwell will be our guest expert.

### About the Speaker – Larry Blackwell

Larry Blackwell founded Datastream in 1986, taking the company to \$118M in revenue and 600 employees before selling the business in 2006. Prior to Datastream, Larry was a co-founder of EDI Technology Companies, an environmental process engineering consulting company. Blackwell holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering from the University of Mississippi, a Master of Science degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a Ph.D. in Environmental Systems Engineering from Clemson University. He has received numerous business and engineering honors including Inc. Magazine's "Entrepreneur of the Year" for the State of South Carolina and Innovision Technology Awards' 2002 Charles Townes Individual Achievement Award. He currently splits his time between Greenville, Charleston, and Colorado.

Larry is currently serving as the Vice Chair, Community Prosperity on the 2009 Chamber Board of Directors.

**NEXT to host panel discussion in Anderson** *Creating an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: Servicing Fast Growth Technology Start Ups*, Monday April 20, 2009 4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. **NEXT** will be hosting the event from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Anderson Arts Center, 110 Federal Street, Anderson, SC 29625. More information will be available at a later date.

**NEXT BP Forum "Creating a Financing Strategy That Matches Your Business"**. Monday, May 4, 2009 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. Greenville Chamber Boardroom. Logan Metcalfe, Arena Consulting, will be our guest expert.

**NEXT** CEO's attend to learn: Financing sources available (from debt to equity and everything in between); Choosing the rights source(s) for your business at the right times; Picking your investors.

### About the Speaker – Logan Metcalfe, Arena Consulting

Logan Metcalfe is founder of Arena Consulting that provides fractional CFO and COO services to companies experiencing or anticipating rapid growth. Logan spent five and a half years as CFO/COO of Immaculate Baking Company – America's leading brand of all-natural refrigerated cookie dough. He joined Immaculate in 2003 (three days before baking the World's Biggest Cookie) and crafted the company's business plan, established key financial

days before baking the World's Biggest Cookie) and crafted the company's business plan, established key financial and operational processes and was instrumental in raising over \$7.6MM in angel and venture capital investment. Logan previously worked as a Senior Management Consultant with Booz Allen Hamilton in Sydney and New York, where he consulted for several Fortune 100 companies and helped establish an initiative to accelerate the development of high impact technology start-ups. Logan graduated from the University of Auckland with degrees in Business and Arts and earned an MBA from Harvard Business School. He can be reached at [logan@arenaconsulting.net](mailto:logan@arenaconsulting.net).

**NEXT BP Forum "Searching for the New Knowledge Economy"**. Schedule date TBA. Bruce Yandle, Dean Emeritus, Clemson University College of Business will be our guest expert.

NEXT CEO's attend to learn about: Brains filled with wealth-enhancing knowledge form the capital of the future. But brains are far more mobile than machines and factory buildings. Where are they locating in the U.S.? How can we measure the location of the knowledge economy across states and cities? How is South Carolina faring as a competitor in the new knowledge economy?

**About the Speaker - Bruce Yandle, Dean Emeritus, Clemson University College of Business**

Bruce Yandle is Alumni Distinguished Professor of Economics Emeritus at Clemson University, and Dean Emeritus of Clemson University's College of Business & Behavioral Science. Dr. Yandle served in Washington on two occasions, first as a senior economist on White House staff during the Ford and Carter Administrations and later as Executive Director of the Federal Trade Commission in the Reagan Administration. He is a Senior Fellow with Clemson's Thurmond Institute and a Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Economics with George Mason University's Mercatus Center where he lectures regularly on Capitol Hill. Dr. Yandle has been a member and chairman of South Carolina's State Board of Economic Advisors. He is past-president of the Association of Private Enterprise Education and a trustee of Spartanburg Methodist College. He is author/coauthor of some 16 books, including *Regulation by Litigation*, just released by Yale Press. Prior to entering a career in university teaching, Dr. Yandle was in the industrial machinery business for 15 years. His quarterly *Economic Situation* newsletter on the economy is distributed by Clemson's Strom Thurmond Institute.

**FastTrac NewVenture – Greenville.** Specific dates and location are to be determined. Specific dates and location are to be determined. [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates. See course description under NEXT Partner Services and Events.

**FastTrac GrowthVenture – Greenville.** Specific dates and location are to be determined. Specific dates and location are to be determined. [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates. See course description under NEXT Partner Services and Events.

**FastTrac TechVenture – Greenville.** Specific dates and location are to be determined. [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates. See course description under NEXT Partner Services and Events.

## **NEXT PARTNER SERVICES and EVENTS**

**FastTrac® NewVenture™** FastTrac NewVenture is ground zero for anyone interested in starting a business. An education program created by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs, FastTrac NewVenture is designed to help you evaluate and perfect your business concept. Taught by seasoned entrepreneurs in your community, FastTrac's hands-on program uses your idea as a case study, giving you an opportunity to "workshop" your venture in a safe and supportive environment. FastTrac NewVenture is a nine-module, 31.5 hour, program. The cost for the NewVenture course is \$195. Register and pay at least 2 weeks in advance to receive a \$50 discount!

**FastTrac® GrowthVenture™** What do you get out of FastTrac GrowthVenture? That's easy. Control of your business and your life. Graduates of FastTrac GrowthVenture describe the program as one that encourages entrepreneurs to streamline their business processes, analyze strengths and shortcomings, and achieve more balance in their work and personal lives. By working closely with other entrepreneurs in the intensive, FastTrac GrowthVenture environment, you'll interact with a group of people with whom you can share ideas, strategies, and successes. You'll also hone business skills that you'll use to shape your business for years to come. The cost for the GrowthVenture course is \$295. Register and pay at least 2 weeks in advance to receive a \$50 discount!

**FastTrac® TechVenture™** What do you get out of FastTrac TechVenture? That's easy. The tools you need to advance your technology venture to the next stage of business, whether that is seeking your last round of financing

advance your technology venture to the next stage of business, whether that is seeking your last round of financing before going public, or moving beyond the start-up stage. Graduates of FastTrac TechVenture describe the program as one that encourages technology entrepreneurs to determine the economic feasibility of their business concept, reevaluate the feasibility of the technology, design a business model that matches a personal vision, and create a business plan to communicate the opportunity to investors. The cost for the TechVenture course is \$395. Register and pay at least 2 weeks in advance to receive a \$50 discount!

**Downtown Greenville cultural events:**

[http://www.greatergreenville.com/visitors/events\\_cal\\_resultsGG.asp?Start\\_DateM=06&Start\\_DateD=15&Start\\_DateY=2007](http://www.greatergreenville.com/visitors/events_cal_resultsGG.asp?Start_DateM=06&Start_DateD=15&Start_DateY=2007)

## PRESS RELEASES

**INTEGRAL SOLUTIONS TO BUILD DATA CENTER**, Spartanburg, SC, March 10, 2009 — Integral Solutions Group, a division of J M Smith Corporation, announced today their plans to convert their Blackstock Road facility into a data center. The data center will offer a variety of I/T services and solutions under Integral's existing trademark, *StressFree I/T*. Products and services will include: content management, disaster recovery plans for business continuity, internet vaulting/offsite back-up, data management, co-location services, email hosting & filtering, virtualization, green initiatives, managed services/enterprise monitoring, and cloud computing. Russ Weber, president of Integral Solutions said, "Hardware and network reliability, data security & privacy, and bandwidth needs of internet hosting have created a need for businesses to evaluate and invest in site infrastructure that will support their I/T goals. Our goal at Integral is to create a data center environment with 99.999% reliability to meet our current and future customers' goals and become a top commercial data center in the Southeast." "We are pleased that Integral Solutions Group, located in Spartanburg, is fast becoming one of the premier technology-related business operations in the Southeast," adds R. Carter Smith, Executive Vice President of Spartanburg's Economic Futures Group. "They have been and are an important component to the Spartanburg business community. This expansion representing a \$5 million investment along with additional new technology related job opportunities is very welcomed and appreciated." Integral Solutions Group's continuum of technology solutions includes Fourth Utility design, I/T network design and implementation, cabling, wireless applications, enterprise managed services, and consulting to industries that require sophisticated IT networks and consulting for higher education, financial services, healthcare and manufacturing. In addition, Integral provides sales and service of leading hardware and software, along with business forms and supplies ranging from computer accessories to custom printed forms and envelopes. Its diverse client base includes Samsung, Clemson, Nexsen Pruet, Greer State Bank, USC, Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative, Harper Construction, Palmetto Health, SCANNA, Palmetto Bank, and Johnson Development. Reach at.

**CONTACT:**

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**Merge Expands and Helps Clients Grow, Despite Economy** Greenville, SC, March 26 - Merge, an Upstate developer of high-performance web sites is excited to announce several new clients and the expansion of its team. With the current state of the economy, Merge has been able to help many companies looking for new ways to more effectively market their services and/or products.

In order to meet the demand for more effective web sites for Upstate companies, despite the economy, Merge has hired four new employees in addition to an intern from Furman University. The addition of these new employees has helped Merge take on larger, more complex projects while still providing excellent support to its current clients.

Merge's M5 Digital Strategy approach to building high-performance, results-oriented web sites has been customized to ensure that each client can achieve 2009 business goals despite the current state of the economy. Some of Merge's new clients include The Furman Company, Old Edwards Inn and Spa, Oobe and Coldwell Banker Caine.

**Furman Company**

The Furman Company has been rewarded the EB-5 designation of becoming a Regional Center to offer development opportunities to foreign investors. The Furman Company turned to Merge to handle the web site for their EB-5 program, which will launch late spring of 2009.

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#### **Old Edwards Inn and Spa**

Located in Highlands, NC, Old Edwards Inn and Spa has 29 guestrooms and suites. Due to its location and amenities, Old Edwards Inn and Spa is an ideal choice for weddings and corporate meetings and retreats. Merge was selected because of its previous experience with web sites in the Cashiers and Highlands area of North Carolina.

#### **Oobe**

Oobe, an apparel design and manufacturing company headquartered in Greenville, SC, wanted to create a sustainable marketing plan to locate and market to Oobe prospects. Using the M5 Digital Strategy Model, Merge provided strategic consulting for Oobe's temporary site based upon their business goals, and is currently implementing the entire strategy for Oobe's new corporate web site.

#### **Coldwell Banker Caine**

Merge was engaged to create a digital strategy for the Greenville real estate institution, servicing Greenville for more than 75 years. Merge's M5 Digital Strategy model will help Coldwell Banker Caine more effectively use its web site to serve its customers as well as help the firm reach its business objectives.

#### **About Merge**

Merge is the only web development firm in Greenville, SC that offers a comprehensive, strategic approach to developing high-performance web sites for its clients. Founded in 2002, Merge has established itself as one of the leading web firms in the Southeast. You can visit Merge's web site at [www.mergeweb.com](http://www.mergeweb.com).

#### **CONTACT:**

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### **MIT DVD BROADCASTS AVAILABLE FOR CHECK-OUT**

From Soft Drinks to Real Estate: How a Looming Water Crisis Affects Our World and How to Optimize the Business Opportunity, October 23, 2008

Pathways to Entrepreneurship, September 23, 2008

Are You Ready for IPO? Strategies and Steps for How and When to Take Your Company Public, January 24, 2008

Enterprising Georgia Energy, Security & the Economy, October 24, 2007

Entrepreneurship: Success, Failure, Greatness A Fireside Chat with Ann Winblad and Jason Pontin  
September. 27, 2007

A.B.L.E. Tech: Achieving Better Life Experiences for People with Injury, Disability and Aging Challenges Through  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Technologies, June 6, 2007

Financial Markets: Outlook 2007 moderated by Liz Claman, CNBC, January 25, 2007

A Very Special Evening with Geoffrey Moore, November 15, 2006

Angel Groups in Action: Funding Early Stage Innovation, June 1, 2005

Forecasting Markets: The Capital Update for 2006, January 26, 2005

The dvd's can be checked out for 2 weeks. Please contact Ginger McKenzie [gmckenzie@greenvillechamber.org](mailto:gmckenzie@greenvillechamber.org) if you are interested. You will need to pick them up from, and return to, the Chamber

For more information on the services of NEXT partner organizations, visit: [NEXTGreenville.com](http://NEXTGreenville.com)

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