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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 Best Practices Forum *Acquisitions - how to look at, how to structure, how to analyze to determine when it makes sense.* Hagen Rogers, Watermark Advisors, LLC will be our speaker. Monday, March 3, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m., Greenville Chamber Boardroom.

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. **FastTrac NewVenture – Greenville.** Meets Thursdays for 10 sessions beginning April 1, 2008, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. [Register here.](#) [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates.

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. **FastTrac GrowthVenture – Greenville.** Meets Tuesdays for 10 sessions beginning April 3, 2008, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. [Register here.](#) [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates.

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 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. **FastTrac TechVenture – Columbia (no Greenville location listed).** Meets Tuesdays for 10 sessions at the University of South Carolina beginning April 8, 2008, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. [Register here.](#) [Check the program schedule](#) to view other locations and dates.

NEXT Best Practices Forum *Competition - validation of your market, how to interact with your competition.* Monday, April 7, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m., Greenville Chamber Boardroom.

NEXT PARTNER SERVICES and EVENTS

The Clemson University Renaissance Center presents a Clemson Renaissance Center event Tuesday, March 4, 2008 from noon – 1:30 p.m. You cordially are invited to attend a luncheon program on "Research Ethics and the Private Sector", featuring William Kilgallin of the NSF's Office of the Inspector General. Co-sponsors are Rutland Institute for Ethics, The Graduate School and the Research Division, Clemson University. This program is intended for executives and/or researchers from companies with R&D efforts who may have federal grants or an interest in hearing from a senior government representative about the importance of research integrity/ethics in research. Event location is the Commerce Club, 55 Beattie Place, 17th Floor, Greenville, SC. Cost to attend is \$35 and seating is limited. Registration begins at 11:30 a.m. Register online at www.clemson.edu/ethics. Click on the Kilgallin topic in the Upcoming Events box on the right hand side of the page. For more information contact David Jones, (864) 656-5379 or djones1@clemson.edu.

The Clemson University Renaissance Center presents the Clemson University Center for China Studies 2008 Speaker Series on China's Banking Industry under Reform: Marketization & Internationalization. Friday, March 7, 2008 at noon. Featured speaker will be Dr. Jianping Shi, Assistant President and Professor of Finance at Central University of Finance & Economics, Beijing. In the past year, China's financial institutions underwent a series of international mergers, which was unprecedented in the Chinese banking history and has attracted worldwide attention. Yet there exist different assessments of China's financial reforms and what they could deliver in the near future. Having witnessed China's financial reforms in the past thirty years, Dr. Jianping Shi, Professor of Finance from Beijing's Central University of Finance & Economics, will share his analysis of China's financial industry, particularly the current status and future development of China's banking system along the process of continual marketisation and internationalization.

Dr. Shi has been Assistant President of the Central University of Finance & Economics (CUFE) in Beijing since 2006. He was Dean of Faculty of Finance at CUFE from 1999 to 2006, and Chair of Department of Finance at CUFE from 1987 to 1999. He has also been a member of the National Commission on Certification of China Banking Professionals, a Board member of China Society for Finance & Banking, and Vice President of Beijing Association of International Finance. He received his Ph.D. in Economics and Master's in Finance, both from CUFE. CUFE has been ranked the number one among the Chinese universities and colleges of Finance and Economics. Dr. Shi is currently a senior visiting scholar with Clemson University Center for China Studies. Event location is the Commerce Club, 55 Beattie Place, 17th floor, Greenville, SC. Cost to attend is \$20. Register online at <http://business.clemson.edu/rencenter/RenaissanceCtr.htm>

Greenville Technical College's Buck Mickel Center offers Adaptive Leadership Symposium. Wednesday, March 19, 2008, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Any critical incident response must start with leadership, and those in charge at all levels must be able to adapt their thinking and leadership skills to the ever-changing environment of a disastrous event. Principles of adaptive leadership also apply to today's environment of exponentially increasing information and technology requiring business leaders to become adaptive in order to maintain a competitive edge.

Adaptive solutions to complex problems in chaotic, unpredictable situations are based more on intuition than on analysis, deliberate planning, and doctrine. Leaders that are adaptive are defined by certain characteristics: Intuitiveness, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Self-Awareness and Social Skills.

The Adaptive Leader learns to employ principles from military strategist John Boyd's theories of "An Organizational Climate for Operational Success" to create an organization with focus and direction at all levels where employees understand mission responsibilities and respond with initiative and intuitive competence in a climate of mutual trust. In short, the adaptive leader learns to create a culture of innovation. This culture of innovation is typified by an environment within which every single person in the organization is invested in the organization's success and feels a responsibility to implement new and better ways to achieve organizational objectives. Innovative organizations depend less on forecasting, planning, and control and more on scanning, agility, and feedback. Innovative organizations embrace uncertainty, recognizing that an uncertain future potentially holds as many opportunities as it does threats.

The First Annual Adaptive Leadership Symposium brings together, for the first time, four of the foremost sources on applying Boyd's theories to business leadership – Chet Richards, Dale Stewart, Don Vandergriff, and Mike Wyly. This is a unique opportunity you will not want to miss to ignite your Adaptive Leadership skills! [Click here to register.](#)

The Spiro Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership invites you to attend the third annual Celebration of Clemson Alumni Entrepreneurs on Thursday, April 10, 2008, 5:30-7:00 p.m. with reception following. Successful Clemson alumni entrepreneurs will share their experiences and offer advice in this lively panel discussion. Clemson students and faculty, entrepreneurs, and members of the business community are all invited to enjoy this special presentation. Panelists include: Bill Masters, a 1974 alumnus with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering. He is the founder of Perception Kayak. He currently serves as president of Kinetixx, Inc. Joe Turner, a 1971 alumnus with a B.S. in Industrial Management. He is the co-founder and CEO of First Sun Management Corporation, one of the largest Wendy's franchise owners with 47 restaurants in the Southeast. Event location is the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 220 North Main Street, Greenville, SC. There is no charge for the event, however the reception will have a cash bar. Register at <http://www.clemson.edu/spiro/AlumniEntrepreneuers.html>. For more information, contact Debbie Allen at 864-656-7235 or email spiro@clemson.edu.

Downtown Greenville cultural events:

http://www.greatergreenville.com/visitors/events_cal_resultsGG.asp?Start_DateM=06&Start_DateD=15&Start_DateY=2007

▶ UPDATES

PRESS RELEASES

Customer Effective Inc. Partners with SalesCentric to Improve CRM Performance for Financial Services Customers - Relationship Charts offer view of critical relationships between contacts. Greenville, SC, February 2008. Customer Effective, Inc., a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and value-added reseller of Microsoft Dynamics CRM, announced a partnership with SalesCentric to offer its customers Relationship Charts, an add-on for Microsoft Dynamics CRM. Relationship Charts were developed by SalesCentric to complement Microsoft Dynamics CRM with easy to use, visual tools that improve sales performance, forecast accuracy and marketing effectiveness. Customer Effective is including this functionality in its portfolio of Microsoft Dynamics CRM solutions, which includes Capital Effective, a front office relationship management solution designed exclusively for the financial services market. "Our Capital Effective offering helps organizations in commercial banking, private equity, investment banking, hedge funds and wealth management address marketing, sales and customer service performance," explains Scott Millwood, CEO Customer Effective. "The visual integration and mapping of entities provided by Relationship Charts provides the rich, graphical look our financial service customers crave."

With Relationship Charts, more users, especially sales people, get value and ease of use from their CRM solution. With attributes and relationships tagged in the database, users can easily understand the critical relationships and connections between organizations and individuals within the CRM platform. For example, wealth management portfolio managers use Relationship Charts to keep an easy-to-understand visual of their clients' information to see which individuals belong to specific funds and the brokers, accounts, etc. that are tied to their total portfolio. Matthew Crook, CEO of SalesCentric adds, "We are honored to collaborate with Customer Effective in their pioneering product offering. With Relationship Charts, Capital Effective will deliver real business value to customers in the financial services sector. Relationship Charts are a perfect fit for unique business requirements of this vertical market."

About SalesCentric

Established in 2003, SalesCentric develops and markets add-on software to visually enhance Microsoft Dynamics CRM, sold globally via Microsoft channel partners. With facilities in the U.S. and the U.K., SalesCentric products help drive CRM usage, increase sales performance and improve marketing effectiveness. SalesCentric is a Microsoft certified ISV partner. For more information, visit www.salescentric.com

About Customer Effective

Customer Effective, with headquarters in Greenville, S.C., is a leading innovator in customer interaction solutions based on Microsoft Dynamics Customer Relationship Management (CRM). The company is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, Independent Software Vendor (ISV) and Solution Implementer having been engaged in more than 200 Microsoft CRM implementation and development projects. With its Capital Effective™ CRM Suite, the company provides front office solutions for financial services professionals in commercial banking, private equity, investment banks, hedge funds and wealth management. For more information, visit www.CustomerEffective.com.

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www.customereffective.com

Jamestown Selects Customer Effective Inc. as CRM Provider. Greenville, SC, Feb. 13, 2008. Customer Effective Inc., a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and value-added reseller of Microsoft Dynamics CRM, announced that Jamestown, the leading initiator of closed-end U.S. real estate funds in Germany, has selected the company to provide CRM software implementation and customization services. Jamestown will use Microsoft Dynamics CRM technology for contact management, but has also configured it as an integral tool in managing its acquisitions pipeline of over 1,000 potential real estate development deals that are reviewed each year.

Beginning in 2007, Jamestown's Atlanta office reassessed its technology infrastructure for contact and document management systems and evaluated a CRM solution integrated with Microsoft Outlook and Sharepoint. Simultaneously, the company's business model was shifting from "core" funds involving a few commercial buildings per fund to "opportunity" funds with more than 30 or 40 development projects per fund – greatly increasing the deal complexity and amplifying the need for effective business processes. "With no effective contact management system and thousands of property-related documents stored in a complex shared-folder structure, we knew the IT strategy had to stay ahead of the changing business model," said Chuck Niswonger, IT director, Jamestown. "Customer Effective demonstrated that Microsoft Dynamics CRM, integrated with Outlook and Sharepoint, could be easily configured to offer a smoother, more intuitive user interface. Even more critical than contact management was our ability to provide a fully functional pipeline management tool that would allow our Acquisition, Asset Management and Accounting departments to work more closely together. Customer Effective paid particular attention to our unique business processes and the need to manage complex deals on a single pipeline."

The end-user adoption of the pipeline management tool within CRM at Jamestown has been very successful with over 30 users frequently accessing detailed deal information through Microsoft Outlook's interface. Internal users know the system as "Jamestown Business Intelligence (JBI)" and commented on how the technology has impacted their work. "The acquisitions pipeline report is a critical business tool we use for managing deal flow and interacting with various audiences within our organization," commented Clay Adams, Jamestown's Chief Investment Officer. "Within the JBI system, we now have the ability to use our acquisitions deal data in new ways which should allow us to eliminate redundancy of data input in new report creation. It's an exciting opportunity to create efficiencies in how we manage data and to create new ways of using our data to make business decisions."

Matt Bronfman, one of three managing directors (and project sponsor) stated, "I was impressed with how quickly our IT team mobilized resources to solve one of our annoying business issues – that of not having a shared contact management system. Not only did the project team [supported by Customer Effective] implement CRM on schedule and within budget, the capability far exceeds that of a mere global contact database. Microsoft CRM, integrated with Sharepoint and SQL 2005, will form the foundation of our business intelligence system. Our vision to leverage JBI for intuitive data visualization will provide Jamestown with the innovative tools necessary for competitive differentiation."

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ProActive Technology Completes Customer Portal for ScanSource Virtual Technician Community Site. Greenville, SC – February 6, 2008. ProActive Technology, a Greenville, SC-based custom software development company, is pleased to announce the completion and launch of the ScanSource Virtual Technician Community Site. Using Microsoft's Windows SharePoint Server, ProActive Technology developed a collaborative portal so that ScanSource staff can more efficiently share information with ScanSource Virtual Technician customers that are all across the country, as well as, allow customers to share information with each other using wikis.

Using SharePoint's document management and collaboration capabilities, ScanSource is able to provide product information, documents with technical specifications and allow customers to share information about their use of ScanSource's Virtual Technician. The customer portal allows secure access to content that is specific to the individual channels serviced by ScanSource.

"With the release of new product features, we see the Virtual Technician Community Site as a vital communication platform", said Paul Constantine, vice president for Solutions and Services at ScanSource. "We can provide a seamless stream of product information to our customers, while reducing the number of calls to our helpdesk". "Using wikis to allow customers to share recommendations and best practices information is a great way for us to get constant product feedback".

"SharePoint was the perfect tool for the ScanSource Virtual Technician Community Site", said ProActive's president Bradley J. Smith. "We are seeing more and more companies that are using SharePoint for both internal and external document management and collaboration. The security and controls in SharePoint make it a great solution for self-service access to information, thus saving a company time and resources".

About ScanSource, Inc.

ScanSource, Inc. is a leading international distributor of specialty technology products, including automatic identification and data capture (AIDC) and point-of-sale (POS) products through its ScanSource sales unit; Avaya communications products through its Catalyst Telecom sales unit; communications products from Intel and NEC through its Paracon sales unit; and electronic security products through its ScanSource Security Distribution unit. The Company serves the North America marketplace and has an international segment, which sells AIDC and POS products in Latin America and Europe. Founded in 1992, the Company markets products from more than 100 technology manufacturers to over 16,000 value-added technology resellers and is committed to empowering them with tools and services designed to help them grow. For more information, call the toll-free sales telephone number at 800-944-2432 or visit www.scansource.com.

About ProActive Technology:

ProActive Technology is a Greenville, SC-based software development company offering custom development and technology solutions for businesses and industries. ProActive delivers products and services that enable clients to use information more efficiently. Through technology, ProActive improves its clients' ability to execute, compete, and succeed. As a Microsoft Certified Partner, ProActive Technology's product expertise includes .NET development, mobile device development and web-based business applications. For more information visit www.proactivetechology.com, or contact the company at 864-421-9247.

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North Gate Labs Hires Business Development Executive. Greenville, SC, February 25, 2008. North Gate Labs and its WebSalesTool division have hired Chad Bishop as Business Development Executive. In this role, Bishop is responsible for North American sales and Value-Added-Reseller agreements. North Gate Labs is continuing its geographic expansion of their VAR and client relationships to ensure they are positioned for growth in Web-based marketing?

Bishop joins the team with close to 10 years of experience in client services and business development. His expertise in sales makes him a great fit for a firm introducing an array of industry-leading products and services. He will maintain superior client relations as well as well as expand the WebSalesTool suite of software into the national market.

About WebSalesTool™

WebSalesTool (WST) allows advertising agencies, marketing groups and design firms (our Value-Added-Resellers) to offer comprehensive web site solutions that meet the goals of presentation, data collection and easy to-use administration for their clients. Utilizing the agencies' creative design, navigational ideas and branding themes, WST is an outsourced solution that makes providing and managing web sites profitable. For more information on WebSalesTool and North Gate Labs please visit the web at www.websalestool.com or call 888-759-3666.

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ProActive Technology, Greenville, SC – February 25, 2008. ProActive Technology, a Greenville, SC-based custom software development company, has been engaged by Georgia Pacific's Consumer Package Goods Division for a four month Business Intelligence project. ProActive will be providing ETL migration consulting.

MIT DVD BROADCASTS AVAILABLE FOR CHECK-OUT

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
21st 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 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

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