



Business Development Course Instruction Manual

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Session 1 - Getting Started

This session will cover how to get started creating an online business. So let's start from the beginning:

Do you already have a legal business? If yes, then you are a step ahead of quite a few people who want to have an online business. If not, here are the steps you need to follow to begin your business:

1. **First you need to name your business.** The way you determine the name is by several factors: What is your skill that you are going to promote, what will people remember, and what do you want to be known as?
2. **Once you've determined your business name you need to make it legal.** So next you need to go to the County Clerk's office and file a "Fictitious Name Statement". You need to file this statement to be sure no one in your county has already claimed this business name. Go to the County Clerk's office and look in the microfiche under your proposed business name. If it isn't in use, you can submit the fictitious name form with the appropriate fees. When you complete the form, only register the legal owners. If you are in a partnership, this should be the general partners (don't list your limited partners). Do not use P.O. Boxes for any address. When you file the form, ask the County Clerk's office to certify the yellow copy - your bank requires this!

If you are in a hurry, most county clerk offices will check name availability for you, for a fee. Call the County Clerk's office to verify the fee and submit the fictitious name statement, the correct fees, a stamped-addressed envelope, and a cover letter.

3. **Now you need to publish.** Choose a local newspaper (daily or weekly) which circulates in your area (the County Clerk will usually have a list of approved newspapers). Call and ask for their fees to publish a fictitious name statement for four consecutive weeks. Then send the pink copy of the fictitious name form and the newspaper fee with a cover letter to the newspaper. Write over the pink copy so that it is legible.
4. **After you've published you need to submit this to the County Clerk.** The County Clerk must be notified when publication is complete. Usually, the newspaper will do this step for you; however, you need to verify this with the newspaper. If they don't do this service, they should send you a notice of completion, which you must forward to the County Clerk (send it with a cover letter). The County Clerk's address can be found after the fictitious name statement and the cover letters to the county clerk. Note: If no one notifies the County Clerk that publication was completed, your fictitious name statement will be invalid.
5. **Approximate Cost** The fees to file a fictitious name vary by county. Usually they are \$20-\$40 for basic filing, plus \$5 for each additional business name and/or owner, plus a name search fee if the form is filed by mail. Pay this when you first file the form with the County Clerk. The newspaper fee is usually \$40-\$60, which you must pay directly to the newspaper.
6. **Time Deadlines** You must file this statement before you use the name or file any other forms. You must begin publishing in a local newspaper within 30 days of filing the fictitious name statement. If you use a weekly newspaper, some counties require that you begin publishing within 20 days. You can use your proposed business name during the newspaper publishing period.
7. **Expiration** Fictitious name statements expire five years from the initial filing date or 40 days after a change in ownership, business location, or business name. The County does NOT notify you of the expiration date.
8. **Protecting Your Business Name** Fictitious name statements only protect your name from being used by other businesses in the county where your fictitious name statement was filed. If you want to protect your business name state-wide or nationally, you must trademark it (we will cover this in a later section).

If you would like letter examples of "Request to Record Fictitious Name Statement", "Request to Publish in a Newspaper", and/or "Letter Confirming That Publication is Complete", please call us and we will fax them to you.

CERTIFIED BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COURSE - SESSION 1 – QUESTION & ANSWERS

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

FAX: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Please be sure to fill out the information above, complete the test and e-mail or fax it back to us at iridology@netzero.net or 530-878-1119. We will grade your question & answer session and will let you know if we have any questions or concerns.

1. What is the name of your business?
2. What date did you file your fictitious business name?
3. What paper did you publish in?