



Angel Consulting

Angel Consulting has been in business for about one year and provides Salesforce consulting for small businesses and nonprofits. Founder Joan Strahler was an airline consultant who spent her career traveling all over the world working on a proprietary software database for airlines. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the hospitality industry, so Ms. Strahler needed to pivot and rethink her career path.

During that transition period, she learned about salesforce.com, and found it to be fascinating and an amazing resource to manage contacts. She decided to get certified. After speaking to a civic organization that ran their entire business from a spreadsheet, she realized that salesforce implementation would be of amazing benefit to non-profits. That became the impetus for her new business concept.

The Challenge

Although Ms. Strahler had a solid business strategy for her new business, she was unsure how to find and market to non-profits. The challenges of COVID-19 pandemic only complicated this issue; she had always been very comfortable taking advantage of networking meetups and other events to build connections, but- with social distancing in place, this channel of business-building was not readily available.

Working with the Loudoun SBDC

Ms. Strahler reached out to the Loudoun SBDC right away to help understand and address her marketing challenges. She was familiar with the SBDC from being part of the Loudoun Chamber.

Her first meeting was with Loudoun SBDC advisor, Subodh Nayar. In the first meeting, they reviewed Ms. Strahler's business plan, which they determined looked good and was solid. They then moved to her marketing needs. As part of this review, Nayar suggested she build out her value proposition so that she could better drill down on her business's core strength and what she wanted to convey in her messaging. She was given a step-by-step guide to walk her through that process. "The process really helped me focus on the mechanics," said Ms. Strahler. "I have a lot of ideas and working with the SBDC keeps me focused on the most important elements to drive my business forward."

Nayar then brought in Mary Joynt, a Loudoun SBDC marketing advisor, to help her walk through her questions, understand her target audience and begin the process of building out her messaging to better reach her audience through a variety of mediums- like her web site, email and social media.

As a sole practitioner in her business, Ms. Strahler valued the opportunity to have a resource to run ideas by and to build true mentoring relationships. According to Strahler, "It's so nice to have guidance every step of the way. Loudoun SBDC advisors are professionals who have the experience and expertise to help me move my business forward."

The Results



Although Ms. Strahler is in the early stages of launching her business, she has developed a solid contact list and has begun setting client meetings. She attributes much of her momentum to her work with the Loudoun SBDC. “I’ve never felt more comfortable or confident that this is going to be a success and I’m going to grow my business. This has been the most gratifying experience I’ve had in my business career.”

She also feels strongly that anyone considering starting a new business should reach out to the Loudoun SBDC. “If you are even considering, go for it – its easy, convenient, and very effective. It will contribute to your likelihood of success by leaps and bounds,” she notes.