

BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

Public Hotspots Get a Warm Welcome





Wanda Mingo
Business Services Sales
843-761-9836
Wanda.Mingo@HomeTelco.com

Robert Reimers
Business Services Sales
843-761-9564
Robert.Reimers@HomeTelco.com

Judy Cronin
Director of Sales
and Business Development
843-761-9880
Judy.Cronin@HomeTelco.com

Business Connections is a publication of Home Telecom, 579 Stoney Landing Road, Moncks Corner, SC 29461.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, electronic, photocopying, recording, mechanical, or otherwise without the prior written permission of Home Telecom. All rights are reserved.

Editorial and Circulation - Contact: Gina Austin, 579 Stoney Landing Road, Moncks Corner, SC 29461, 843-761-9178.

Trademarks - All brand names and product names used in this publication are trade names, service marks, trademarks, or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

Additional Issues - Extra issues are available to business customer employees on a limited basis while supplies last. Contact: Gina Austin, 579 Stoney Landing Road, Moncks Corner, SC 29461, 843-761-9178.

Copyright © 2012 by Home Telecom and Cornerstone Publishing Group, Inc.

POSTMASTER
Send changes to:
Gina Austin - Business Connections
Home Telecom
579 Stoney Landing Road
Moncks Corner, SC 29461



BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

'Tis the season for gatherings. Whether that means socializing at in-person holiday events or connecting online via Facebook, this time of year seems to intensify our need to reach out to others.

In this November issue of **Business Connections**, we celebrate the power created when people gather for a common purpose. The theme begins on page 3 with a look at the **increasingly social aspect of shopping** including the role of online customer reviews and ratings. Also on that page, we share news of Home Telecom's recent recognition from the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce for our support of this community and its small businesses.

On pages 4 and 5, we **"Deck the Halls for Profitability"** and offer security, marketing, and Internet suggestions related to the holiday season. You won't want to miss these ideas, particularly if you own a retail store or restaurant.

There's nothing quite like gathering outside for community events, and Home Telecom is doing our part to make those moments even better. We recently installed free public **WiFi networks in Governor's Park on Daniel Island and at the Train Depot in Moncks Corner**. You can read more about the exciting community development on pages 6 and 7.

I also want to take this opportunity to wish you a happy and healthy holiday season. Home Telecom greatly appreciates your business and looks forward to helping you be even more successful in 2013.

Sincerely,

William S. Helmly
President & COO
Home Telecom



SHOPPING

is Now More Social

Purchasing decisions are strongly influenced by feedback on social media

Spread the word—consumers are increasingly turning to social media to access product information and recommendations from other consumers. While buying has long involved social aspects (such as asking your neighbor if he likes his new mower), social media and related technologies have greatly amplified the importance and impact of these conversations.

Research from trendwatching.com shows five key influences:

Discovery

Consumers discover new products and services through recommendations from friends on their social networks. Social media sites and tools help consumers discover products in a variety of ways; these include combining “Likes” from friends and creating virtual scrapbooks of products gleaned from around the Web.

Ratings

Consumers can now find personalized recommendations from friends about products they want to buy. Targeted ratings and reviews are also becoming more popular in increasing awareness of products and services.

Feedback

The majority of consumers now go online to research purchases and part of that research entails reading reviews. Online

reviews have been part of retailers’ websites for years, but buyers trust reviews more when they come from their social networks. Consumers are expected to increasingly ask their friends and followers to comment on their buying decisions.

Shopping Together

Online retailers like Amazon.com have made wish lists shareable for years. Purchasing habits are expected to become increasingly social, with the Web becoming the virtual equivalent of shopping at a mall with peers.

Personalization

Users of social networks can now manipulate and organize their content. Apps and Web services let users package content into personalized magazines and home pages, which can then be turned into products and services.

Given the influence of social media in the shopping process, many businesses now consider user-generated content (such as ratings and reviews) as a key part of their marketing program. Consumers have evolved from simply being recipients of promotional messages to becoming actual contributors.



L to R: The Honorable Nikki Haley, Governor of South Carolina; Will Helmlly, President & COO of Home Telecom; and Ron Anderson, President of Berkeley Chamber of Commerce

HOME TELECOM RECOGNIZED FOR SUPPORT OF SMALL BUSINESSES

During its Salute to Small Business Luncheon on August 24, 2012, the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce presented Home Telecom with the 2012 Corporate Entity Award. To qualify for this honor, a business must have a proven record of positively impacting Berkeley County’s overall economic footprint and a history of supporting local community activities and programs.

Home Telecom was recognized for being a true community enterprise, offering state-of-the-art technology while investing in and serving its local area and citizens. Most notably, Home Telecom serves over 24,000 access lines and was one of the first companies in the nation to provide Fiber-to-the-Premises. In addition to this infrastructure, Home Telecom also actively contributes to the community through charitable donations and volunteerism.

We were pleased to accept this award and remain dedicated to serving the needs of our customers. By being a good neighbor, Home Telecom not only helps small businesses succeed but the entire community as well.

Deck the Halls for PROFITABILITY

Prepare your small business for holiday challenges and opportunities

The holidays often bring more of everything—more traffic, more customers, more sales, and (unfortunately) more crime. That being the case, Santa isn't the only one who should be making a list and checking it twice. You'll want to plan now to get your retail store or restaurant ready for the weeks ahead.



Don't Invite Thieves to the Party

'Tis the season to be jolly, but it's also the season to be extra wary of burglars, robbers, and shoplifters. Since nothing can ruin the Christmas spirit faster than becoming the victim of a crime, make sure your small business takes appropriate security precautions—not only during the holidays, but all year long. Doing so can reduce the likelihood of a theft occurring and lower the amount of the loss should one occur.

Here are some key components of a successful security program:

- Keep only small amounts of cash on hand and advertise this fact.
- Make frequent bank deposits.
- Count cash only in a private area.
- Have bright exterior and interior lighting to make your establishment less attractive to criminals.
- Use mirrors, cameras, or one-way glass to observe all areas of the interior, particularly blind spots.

- Arrange your furniture, displays, and merchandise to allow clear visibility.
- Instruct employees to greet and acknowledge every customer, and keep their eyes open.
- Have more than one person to open and close.
- Install high-quality door locks.
- Have an emergency alarm system that works.

Another key way to help keep your business and employees safe is with an effective security system. Home Telecom offers a variety of solutions including Customized Security Systems, 24/7 Security Monitoring, Fire Detection, Cellular Back-up, and Total Connect (a convenient way to receive information remotely via web-enabled devices).

To learn more about customizable security solutions from Home Telecom, call 888-571-5775.



Make Marketing More Merry

As a retailer, you probably depend on the holiday shopping season to keep your store in the black. Given its importance to the overall bottom line, it makes sense to take a fresh look at your holiday marketing strategies and make sure you're taking full advantage of this sales opportunity.

For example, giving free samples is a proven way to boost sales and fits well with the festive spirit of the season. Let customers taste your bakery's cookies, smell the latest perfume, or take a sip of that featured wine. While you're at it, make sure the shopping experience is an enjoyable one for customers by carefully selecting holiday decorations, scents, and music for your environment.

During the holiday season, people often feel overwhelmed with having so much to do in so little time. You can help by making shopping easier for your customers by hosting special shopping events with

refreshments, setting up ready-to-go gift displays based on price range or other criteria, and providing extra assistance to customers with particularly challenging gift requirements. As a small business, these personal touches are a strong competitive advantage and will be especially appreciated by customers.

Social media also offers many marketing tools that can enhance holiday sales. You may want to offer special discounts to people who "check in" to your store or restaurant on FourSquare or who "like" your business on Facebook.

Give Your Employees What They Want for Christmas

If the Internet speed at your business hasn't been upgraded for a while, we're betting that your employees have bigger bandwidth on their holiday wish lists. Let's face it; getting work done takes much more effort if your Internet speed isn't keeping up with demands. Does it take too much time for

your staff to do online research or receive large files? Are your employees frustrated with the Internet speeds at your business? It could be time to equip your business with more bandwidth.

An increasing amount of business activity is now done online, and data-intensive applications require faster data speeds. If you want to stay ahead of your competition, you need to be traveling as fast, or faster, than they are. With more bandwidth, your employees can move data more quickly and efficiently, resulting in a better overall experience for your customers.

Home Telecom offers a wide variety of Internet solutions and we can help you pick up the pace for an affordable price. To learn how to upgrade your speed for as low as \$10 more per month, visit www.HomeSC.com or call 888-571-5775.



Fresh Air, Green Grass, and **Free WiFi**

Home Telecom installs new public hotspots on Daniel Island and in Moncks Corner



These days, smartphones and tablets go everywhere—including to public parks. Which is why Home Telecom is pleased to help bring free public WiFi to Governor’s Park on Daniel Island and the Train Depot in Moncks Corner.

It’s good news for residents and businesses alike. Gina Austin, Home Telecom Marketing Manager, notes, “Both Daniel Island and Moncks Corner can use their WiFi networks to attract vendors for local outdoor festivals and events. A WiFi network simplifies the selling process for outdoor vendors, enabling them to offer more payment options to customers.”

Charleston Free WiFi Network in Governor’s Park

By offering free public WiFi, the newest public park on Daniel Island allows visitors to enjoy great technology along with the great outdoors. Funding for the deployment of the Charleston Free WiFi Network in Governor’s Park was made possible through an agreement between Home Telecom and the Charleston Digital Corridor Foundation, with the network owned and operated by Home Telecom.

“Today, 50 percent of wireless users own a smartphone, with the tablet market growing daily. WiFi hotspots allow these users to stay connected, as well as save on costly, capped wireless data plans,” says Will Helmly, President of Home Telecom. He adds, “Supporting the Charleston Free WiFi network in Governor’s Park is Home Telecom’s way of showing its commitment to keeping our local communities connected affordably.”

Mac McBride, President of the Daniel Island Neighborhood Association, notes, “Providing free WiFi in the City’s new Governor’s Park is a natural extension of services in this amenity-rich community, providing one more reason to use our parks and spend more time in our community. The Daniel Island Neighborhood Association and Board are very appreciative of the partnership between Home Telecom and the Charleston Digital Corridor to provide this convenience on Daniel Island,” said DINA President, Mac McBride.

Both Daniel Island and Moncks Corner can use their WiFi networks to attract vendors for local outdoor festivals and events.”

—GINA AUSTIN, MARKETING MANAGER, HOME TELECOM



Home Telecom WiFi Network at the Train Depot

Next stop ... the information superhighway! The Moncks Corner Train Depot has long been the home of the celebrated Festival on the 4th Street Dance, as well as many other public and private functions. Now the Train Depot is also home to the Home Telecom WiFi Network. It's the first free high-speed wireless Internet network for Main Street Moncks Corner—an important step for economic development efforts in the area.

Tourists and local visitors are now able to stay connected to social networking sites, email, and other online resources while enjoying social events at the Train Depot. The free service is being provided by Home Telecom in partnership with the Town of Moncks Corner.

Austin notes, "Home Telecom turned up the WiFi system at the Train Depot the day before the Fourth of July Festival this year. The response has been positive and we're all looking forward to expanding WiFi to other areas of Moncks Corner."



Easy to Access and Free to Use

Both the Charleston Free WiFi Network in Governor's Park and the Home Telecom WiFi Network at the Train Depot are available free of charge to all users who have accepted the terms of service and the privacy policy. The networks are designed to support a large number of users and Home Telecom will provide additional bandwidth as needed in the future.

For more information on free public WiFi, visit www.charlestonfreewifi.com/di and www.homeswifinetwork.com/home. To learn about Home Telecom's cost-efficient Internet solutions for every size and type of business, call 888-571-5775.

WHO'S MINDING YOUR BUSINESS?

GREG INGALLS Senior Home Integration Sales Representative

Greg Ingalls' career path has taken him from food to fiber.



He explains, "For the majority of the last decade, I was an account manager and distribution manager in the wholesale food brokerage industry. However, I do have telecommunications in my blood. My father worked his entire career for Western Electric, which turned into AT&T. I have sales experience with a cellular communications channel and in the CLEC industry. In June 2012, I joined Home Telecom and now spend my days discussing fiber optics with our customers."

As Senior Home Integration Sales Representative, Ingalls shares the benefits of structured wiring and related upgrades to new homeowners. "The majority of my time is devoted to the Del Webb Charleston property where Home Telecom has a fiber optic network in place. Since this is a 55-and-older community, I talk to people from all over the U.S. who have picked Del Webb to be their retirement destination. For example, I'm working now with a veteran who goes online regularly to update personal profiles for the Marine Corps. He's going to love our Internet service in Del Webb," says Ingalls.

He adds, "Probably the best part of my job is getting to work with the Home Integration Team of Will Wofford, Tyler Mullinax, and Ryan Hall. They're real professionals in everything they do. As a new salesperson who has the drive to succeed but is still learning the ropes, they have my back. I'm really looking forward to becoming a 'go to' guy for sales information and recommendations. I believe selling is helping and I get the opportunity to help every day at Home Telecom."

DOUBLE YOUR
SPEED **\$10**
for as low as
more per month*

Does your business need *FASTER* download and upload speeds?

Ramp up your production with *double the internet speed*. Upgrade your Business Internet for as low as **\$10 more per month**. Lock in these savings for 12 months today!*



Just scan to call now.

Call us today to learn more!
888.571.5775
www.HomeSC.com

HOME
TELECOM

*Upgrade discount is only available to existing Business Internet customers. A discount (\$10 credit for those upgrading to Premium/Premium+, \$15 for those upgrading to Extreme, \$20 for those upgrading to Extreme+/Ultimate, and \$25 credit for those upgrading to Ultimate+) will apply for 12 months after which the credit will expire and current Business Internet rates will take effect. Not available in all areas. Some restrictions may apply.