

Certification Program Schedule

As mentioned in the March 2012 newsletter, MBL has launched a comprehensive certification program. MBL is offering 15 courses that allow credit union representatives to earn the designation of Certified Business Lender. The courses will be presented at MBL's training facilities in West Jordan, UT on the following dates:

- May 21 - 25
- June 25 - 29
- July 16 - 20

Please contact Sarah Hettinger at 801-545-7958 or SHettinger@mblllc.com to learn more about the certification program and to reserve your spot in an upcoming session.

Monthly Training Seminar

MBL will offer an online seminar on Loan Workouts in May. The seminar is part of MBL's free monthly seminar series, and is open to all credit union business lending staff.

Loan Workouts

Wednesday, May 9th

2:00 – 3:00 p.m. (MDT)

Session number: 807 277 995

Session password: Wednesday1

A link to the training will be provided in a separate email.

For more information contact Sarah Hettinger at (801) 545-7958 or SHettinger@mblllc.com.

SBA BASE RATES MAY 2012

WSJ Prime	3.25%*
1-Month LIBOR Base Rate	3.24%*
SBA Fixed Base Rate	4.84%*
SBA Peg Rate	2.25**

*Effective for the first business day of May 2012

**Effective for the period between April 1, 2012 to June 30, 2012

Credit Unions Approve More Business Loans

According to the Biz2Credit Small Business Lending Index for February 2012, large bank lending to small businesses remains flat, while the rate of growth at credit unions was twice that of small banks.

Over the last year, the largest institutions in the U.S. that received taxpayer assistance specifically to lend to small business only approved an average of 10 percent of the requests they received. Credit unions approved more than 50 percent of their loan requests from small businesses. In fact, throughout the recession and ongoing recovery, credit unions have remained committed to small business lending.

When banks of all sizes clamped down on loans to businesses, credit unions actually increased loans.

According to data from regulators, during the period from December 2007 through December 2011, banks pulled back from lending to small business by nearly 15 percent. During the same time period credit unions increased lending by 45 percent.

MBL Holiday Closures

Memorial Day
May 28, 2012

The MBL Mission:

“To aid, counsel, and assist our participating credit unions and the member businesses they serve”

Changes to SBA's Website

Recently, the SBA held focus group sessions in three major U.S. cities which resulted in recommendations on how to improve SBA's award-winning SBA.gov website and maximize social media tools and tutorials for the 800,000 individuals who visit the site each month.

Focus groups in Baltimore, Richmond and Washington D.C. helped SBA learn how to better serve the needs of small business owners and entrepreneurs. Feedback from focus groups suggested that small business owners often aren't aware of many of SBA's resources or how their partner organizations can help both startups and day-to-day business operations. For example, SBA offers resources specific to women business owners, veterans and hosts an entire online community of blogs and discussion boards with over 30,000 members providing answers to common small business challenges.

As a result, SBA is undertaking a series of communication initiatives that highlight how its programs and services can help and the effort has brought increased website traffic to SBA.gov as well as a measurable growth in engagement via social media.

Using a variety of integrated outreach tactics, including the SBA.gov website, email campaigns and social media, SBA is bringing together resources from across its diverse program offices to provide small business owners with a one-stop resource built around key topics. For example, through targeted marketing and social media, one topic – how small businesses can sell to the federal government and tap into the \$100 billion that the government awards to small businesses each year – saw a 72 percent increase in visits to the Government Contracting classroom page. Those visits resulted in a 255 percent registration increase in "Gov't Contracting 101" courses.

Another topic highlighting resources for women-owned businesses spurred a 92 percent total increase in page views by current or aspiring women small business owners. Other topics include tips to help reduce their taxes and the President's Startup America campaign, to name a few.

SBA is committed to better serve the needs of the nation's 29 million small business owners.

Franchise Lending on Steady Upswing

Franchise lending has steadily increased throughout the past 12 months, according to the new monthly Franchise Lending Index from the International Franchise Association and Boefly.

According to data, during the past two years, franchise lending showed the steepest increase from November to December 2010, when lending to franchise businesses rose by 20.54 percent. This increase was largely attributed to SBA stimulus from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This upward trend was followed by a sharp 28.78 percent decrease from December 2010 to January 2011 as franchise lending reverted back to levels similar to those seen during the financial crisis.

According to the Index, franchise lending experienced growth of 10.56 percent between February 2011 and February 2012. Despite the net 12 month gain, the growth in the period was variable with as many months seeing expansion as retraction. "The index confirms that access to credit in the franchise industry has relative stability, a non-trivial achievement in the wake of the financial crisis," said Mike Rozman, co-president of Boefly. "In developing the current index, we explored how borrowers were using credit to establish new franchise units or to refinance existing debt."

In February 2012, 42.7 percent of loans approved by dollar amount for franchises were used to fund new businesses, whereas January 54.9 percent of approved loans went to new entities.

"Franchise owners continue to take advantage of record low interest rates to shore up their balance sheets. And, although those seeking more short term job growth are likely disappointed that a greater percentage of financings aren't going to fund new formations, we are encouraged that franchise owners are better positioned for current profitability and therefore future, more secure growth." Rozman said.

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