



SMALL BUSINESS TIPS FROM A SUCCESSFUL **ENTREPRENEUR**

By Lyve Alexis Pleshette

Ruth Ellen Miller, Co-Founder and President of NoUVIR Lighting www.nouvir.com based in Delaware, is a successful entrepreneur who saw her business grow out of her living room to become a million dollar enterprise.

Nouvir Lighting is a manufacturer of fiber optic lighting, producing pure-white fiber-optic light capable of minimizing photochemical damage. Nouvir's lighting systems are used in museums including historic documents and memorabilia such as Thomas Jefferson's handwritten draft of the Declaration of Independence to Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, from the Bill of Rights to The Louisiana Purchase, the Magna Carta and hundreds of other priceless documents. Through Ruth Ellen's leadership, Nouvir Lighting has become a booming business that embodies her passion and creativity.

As a testament to her contribution in the community and her business success, the Small Business Administration named Ruth Ellen as the Small Business Person of the Year for the State of Delaware in May 2000.

Here are her tips to would-be entrepreneurs, particularly small business manufacturers:

1. PLAN BIG.

"Entrepreneurs need to plan the manufacturing and marketing of profitable, proprietary products; not generic, me-too, low-bid business. Plan how you will market, how you will grow, how you will advertise and where you will be a year from now, three years and five years from now. Keep your goal worthy and in sight."

"NoUVIR has 16 U.S. Patents protecting its proprietary products. Our fiber optic lighting has unmatched performance and is superior in technology. We win any head-to-head contest with any competitor no matter how big a conglomerate we face. They cannot

imitate or copy us, because we planned big. The cash for the new computers was planned. We added a new building to make NoUVIR more responsive to customers; produce better products, and create a better quality of life. The cost of the new building was planned, and it was completed right on budget."

2. START SMALL.

"Live tactically on rabbits, while planning strategically to hunt elephants. Small sales build a company. Tiny offices, obsolete equipment, used furniture; temporary employees, small production spaces, etc. let you put dollars towards more important things like R&D that help you grow."

"Those small sales of one fiber optic lighting system have grown into lighting whole galleries and floors. The tiny single ad is now a modest ad campaign. We continue to work on a small scale, prove it, keep the process efficient and then grow according to the plan into bigger things."

3. DON'T BORROW.

"Monitor cash flow so your profits build your new building, not your bank's."

"There is no trouble in spending extra if there is a need to correct something. I have the financial freedom to give a customer little extra something extra as a customer service. Many big companies can't say that."

About the Author

Lyve Alexis Pleshette is a writer for PowerHomebiz.com. She writes on various topics pertaining home businesses, from startup to managing a home-based business. For a step-by-step guide to starting a business, order the downloadable ebook "Checklist for Starting a Small Business" from PowerHomebiz.com

