

June
2016

Next Issue: August

Vital Statistics

Latest (April) Pacific County Unemployment: 9.1% ↓

New Business Licenses YTD: 52

Sales Tax Distributions through April: \$776,299

Lodging Tax Distributions through April: \$209,389



Minding the Store



Adam Zeigler inspects grapes treated with Sea Crop on the family farm in Menlo.

Online marketing

By Keleigh Schwartz
beachdog.com

Even a small business can make a big impression online with a couple of hours and, optionally, a small budget.

What you need:

- **Photos.** At least one, preferably 5 (or more!) photos that present your business well. They don't have to be professional photos but do need to be authentic. They should be wide, not tall, in orientation.
- **Software.** You'll need a way to crop and size your photos. Don't have one? Try the FREE <https://www.picmonkey.com/photo-editor>
- **Information** about your business, including your contact info, hours, a one-sentence and one-paragraph description.
- **A playful attitude!** So many people come to beachdog.com terrified they'll get lost and frustrated along the way. Social media is designed to be intuitive, user-friendly. Don't let your fear shut down your brain and you'll be just fine.

Step one: Assess the situation

We could have an extensive discussion regarding the relative

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Extracting profit *Ambrosia Technology*

RAYMOND — Ambrosia Technology LLC continues to expand its reach in agriculture as the reputation of its sole product, Sea Crop, grows.

Arthur Ziegler started the company in 1999 and uses seawater from Willapa Bay to extract minerals for use on crops and livestock. The closely guarded process concentrates 90 minerals and removes 95 percent of the sodium chloride (salt), making it safe to repeatedly apply the product to crops without building up in the soil.

Surprisingly, sales on the West Coast have lagged. "Since our inception 12 years ago, we've been primarily selling into the Midwest to the
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- **Owners:** Arthur, Katherine and Adam Ziegler
- **City:** Raymond
- **Established:** 1999
- **Key product:** Sea Crop
- **Key demographic:** Commercial farmers

360-942-5698

www.sea-crop.com

Pacific County Economic
Development Council
600 Washington Ave. · Raymond,
WA 98577

360.875.9330 · 360.642.9330
To receive a paper copy of the
newsletter, please call (360) 642-
9330 or (360) 875-9330

Monthly meeting schedule:

EDC South:

Noon July 7: Shelburne Inn, Seaview

EDC North:

8 a.m. July 11: **Special Open House at Jessie's Seafood, South Bend. Please RSVP**

TAC/PCOG:

June 22, PUD Auditorium, Long Beach

TAC: 10:30 a.m.

PCOG: 1 p.m.

EDC: 2 p.m.

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value of a variety of social media platforms for your business. For today, we'll focus on the tools that are going to bring the strongest return on effort for most companies. For *social media*, that means Facebook. For *local business listings*: Bing, Yahoo, Yelp, Google+, Google Maps, Google MyBusiness, YouTube.

Do you exist in all these places? Does your company have a profile? Google the name of your business. Note the results and, from the list above, what is missing.

Step 2: Build your empire

People are very likely already finding you on the Internet. Now is your chance

to have them find what you want them to see rather than partial and/or poor information gathered by computer robots, well-meaning fans, and/or disgruntled customers.

It costs nothing but time to set up a profile for your business in each of these online venues. It's as simple as filling out forms and cropping/sizing your images according to the specifications of each before uploading them. Go to each of these sites and stake your claim to your name:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/business/products/pages>

Bing: <https://www.bingplaces.com>

Yahoo!: <https://help.yahoo.com/kb/local>

Yelp: <https://biz.yelp.com/>

Google MyBusiness (includes Maps, Local, YouTube): <https://www.google.com/business/> and/or <https://support.google.com/business/?hl=en#topic=4539639>

YouTube.com. You can set up your YouTube profile through Google MyBusiness because, yes, Google owns YouTube. If you want to set up YouTube first for some reason, here are step-by-step instructions: <http://sproutsocial.com/insights/how-to-create-youtube-account/>

HINT: Video need not be professionally pro-

duced! Keep the wide view on your phone and shoot! You can also curate lists to your YouTube profile. Add video others have done that is relevant to your business, such as that produced by your vendors and associations.

If you are a restaurant or lodging business, add: <https://www.tripadvisor.com/Owners>

Step 3: Decide how much time and cash you want to put into the machine

You're ahead of many of your competitors already by completing the steps so far. If you are not interested in social media yourself, and/or don't have an employee with a fire in their belly for marketing your products

and services this way, turn off the computer with a smile on your face. You've done well!

If, however, you want to leverage this effort to build your brand, expand your reach, improve customer relationships, and/or tease sales and promotions, a world of opportunity is now at your fingertips.

Developing an *editorial calendar* is an outstanding way to meet your goals without wasting time online—or missing key opportunities. Here's a template to get you started setting goals and creating a calendar to keep you focused: <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2012/08/editorial-calendar-template/>

Sadly, gone are the days when a business could get a great response online without engaging in paid listings. If you want social platforms to work on your behalf, take advantage of the opportunities these venues offer, whether it's paid ads, boosted posts, or sponsored listings.

The good news here is that it doesn't take much cash to make a strong impact. Start with \$100 and don't spend it all in one place. Boost a post and/or buy an ad. Wait a few days then look at your analytics (aka insights) and see what happened. Use this information to guide your next step.

OBH-OP update

EDC Board member Larry Cohen (CEO, Ocean Beach Hospital) reports that plans for the Ocean Park clinic are progressing.

The hospital is meeting with an architect to discuss designs, and logistics continue to be worked out with project partners Peninsula Pharmacies and the Port of Peninsula.

OBH will likely hire new providers and support staff to operate the clinic and will offer primary care services and perhaps rotate surgery and other specialty services to the Ocean Park location.

Cold, hard cash

Mary DeLong (Director, Port of Peninsula) says the new ice plant provides ice daily to numerous smaller and family oyster farms, allowing them to meet Washington's stringent shellfish time and temperature controls that went into effect May 1st.

The Port's ice plant operations were recently tested when the nation's two largest oyster producers temporarily lost their ability to make ice.

The plant sold 106,000 pounds of the crucial product in May, much of it going to producers who normally generate their own ice supplies.

Port consultant Jay Personius points out that the availability of the ice kept the producers going rather than halting their operations.

A new 60kW generator will allow the port to both produce ice and use product hoists to continue commercial shellfish shipments even during power outages.

With one-quarter of the U.S. oyster production coming from Willapa Bay ports, the ice plant fills a critical need for oyster crews operating out of the Port of Peninsula.

"Ice equals commerce," he said.

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Amish and Mennonite communities,” Arthur said. Word of mouth was the key to that market. “More and more we’re getting attention from conventional farmers or conventional farmers looking to transition into organic.”

It’s truly a family company. Ziegler’s wife, Kathy, handles shipping and bookkeeping. His son, Adam, runs the production facility in Tokeland.

The product returns minerals to the soil, which helps grow stronger plants that are more resistant to problems such as pests. Farmers like it because it increases crop yields and reduces or eliminates the need for conventional fertilizers and pesticides.

Third-party testing, including one by Colle Agriculture in 2012, has found increased protein content and brix level, an indicator of sweetness.

Public demand for organic produce is helping expand the Zieglers’ reach.

Conventional agriculture has started to accept the product. In addition to large-scale commercial farms in the Midwest, Sea Crop is used in fruit orchards and hops farms in the Northwest.

The product is finding wide acceptance in the fledgling cannabis industry as well, although the Zieglers don’t actively pursue the business.

Lab analysis shows significant increases in cannabinoids and yield, Arthur said.

An organic blueberry farm in Oregon uses the product and has found an increase in sugar content as well as more even ripening, an important factor for farms using mechanical pickers.

Closer Shave

The product has also garnered interest from a rice grower in California. The flooded rice



The Zieglers use their farm to test Sea Crop on a variety of plants.

fields dilute the product too much, so the Zieglers came up with an aerial application of Sea Crop for the plants after they are established.

As a bonus, it may help break down the rice stubble after harvest because the product stimulates beneficial bacteria in the soil. Farmers are no longer allowed to burn the stubble because of air quality concerns, so anything that helps speed up the process would be welcome.

“Just the stubble alone could be a major impact for the rice farmers down there,” Arthur said.

Home Grown

Closer to home, the Zieglers purchased a farm near Menlo in 2014 to test the product on their own. Initial testing showed the farm suffered from acidic, nutrient-poor soil.

They spent two years adding soil amendments to increase the fertility of the land. That included ground limestone to raise the pH of the soil, soft-rock phosphates, fish fertilizer from Raymond producer Pacific Gro, and of course, Sea Crop.

The farm will be certified organic in a few months.

This year marks the first year of production on the land.

The Zieglers planted three-quarters of an acre of russet potatoes. They already have an eager buyer in Raymond. The Pitchwood Alehouse & Inn will use much of the crop starting in the fall.

The popular restaurant may take the entire crop, Arthur said. It just depends on the harvest.

Adam said the organic potatoes were a big hit at the Pitchwood when they conducted a blind taste test. “Everyone was blown away,” he said. “There was not a person there that couldn’t tell the difference.”

They plan to send some of the crop for assay to determine nutrient level compared to potatoes they purchase in grocery stores. “I think we can prove that with Sea Crop and proper soil maintenance, we can blow them out of the water,” Arthur said.

Sweet Success

They’ve planted several varieties of berries and three types of wine grapes. Arthur wants to explore the viability of a winery in the area.

An orchard with cider apples and other fruit is also in the long-term plan.

“We think there’s a lot that could be done in this valley

with agriculture that is not being done,” Arthur said. “For a couple of generations there’s not been much here except hay and dairy.”

Adam added, “The biggest potential this place has is bringing in new agricultural products and techniques.”

The future holds promise for the Zieglers and Sea Crop. In addition to U.S. studies, it has been tested on crops in Africa. Their European distributor sells the product for crops and for use in animal nutrition and to prevent and cure Newcastle Disease, a contagious bird disease that can wipe out poultry stocks.

It’s FDA approved in the U.S. for animal nutrition and there is interest in use as a supplement for people.

To Market

The Zieglers will continue to expand their share of the market at home and abroad. Adam has 1,000 gallons ready to ship to New Zealand in a few weeks.

Locals who want Sea Crop for their garden or landscaping don’t have to buy anywhere near that quantity. The Dennis Company sells it in quantities for home use.

Businesses vulnerable to ID theft

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By Caron Beesley

How secure are your small business assets from fraud, identity theft and cybercrime?

According to the [Association of Certified Fraud Examiners \(ACFE\)](#), companies with less than 100 employees lose approximately \$155,000 as a result of fraud each year. Small businesses also have a higher fraud rate than larger companies and non-business owners. One of the most frequent sources of fraud is credit card abuse – largely due to the fact that few business owners actually take the time to go through every line item on their bill or choose to mingle business and personal accounts.

Other sources of fraud stem from an overall lack of security across the business – such as inadequate network and computer security and a lack of background checks when hiring employees.

Don't be a victim! Here are some tips you can take to better protect your business from some common forms of fraud and cybercrime.

Protect Accounts

Since this is a common area of fraud for everyone from sole proprietors to employee-based firms, this one goes at the top of the list. Start by separating your personal banking and credit cards from your business accounts – this will ensure fraudsters don't get their hands on ALL your money. Separating your accounts will also make it easier to track your business expenses and report deductions on your tax return.

Next, make sure you use

your card wisely. Don't hand over your plastic or your card number to employees or companies with which you don't have a familiar relationship. Switch to online bill pay or make sure you store paper bills securely. Likewise, use a secure mailbox for receiving and sending bills. If you don't have one, deposit your mail directly at the post office (this goes for any mail that contains sensitive information – you don't want to leave it lying around in an unsecured mailbox).

Lastly, check your online banking every day for suspicious activity.



Secure IT

Every business owner should invest in a firewall as well as anti-virus, malware and spyware detection software. Backing-up is also a must and will make it a lot easier for you to continue working in the event of a cyber attack. This blog offers more advice on what to look out for and digs deeper into your options: [4 Ways to Safeguard and Protect Your Small Business Data](#).

Banking Computer

This is a great idea from

Forbes magazine's [5 Ways Small Businesses Can Protect Against Cybercrime](#). Use a dedicated computer for all your online financial transactions and, ideally, make sure it's one that isn't used for other online activity such as social media, email and web-surfing which can open up the machine to vulnerabilities.

Password Policy

Another easy step you can take to protect your IT systems is to institute a password policy.

- Make sure you and your employees change them regularly (every 60 to 90 days is good rule);

prevention measures – both for new hires and seasoned staff. Enforce the training by instituting policies that guide employees on the proper use and handling of company confidential information, including financial data, personnel and customer information.

For ideas on what to include in your training, check out the resources offered by small business groups like your local Small Business Development Center or Women's Business Center ([find one near you here](#)), you could also look out for free online webinars from security organizations and businesses.

Background

Checks

One of the first steps to preventing fraudulent employee behavior is to make the right hiring decision. Basic pre-employment background checks are a good business practice for any employer, especially for those employees who will be handling cash, high-value merchandise, or have access to sensitive customer or financial data. This blog offers tips on which background checks you can legally pursue and

some tips for doing your own detective work: [Conducting Employee Background Checks – Why Do It and What the Law Allows](#).

Insure Your Business

Fraud and cybercrime does happen; however, you can still seek to cover your damages by purchasing an insurance policy that protects you against any losses that you may incur from crime or fraud. Likewise, find out what your bank is willing to do to help you out if your credit card or business account is compromised.

2016 Meeting Dates and Locations

(Subject to Change)

January 27	PUD Auditorium, Long Beach PCOG 1:00 p.m. EDC 2:00 p.m.
February 24	PUD Auditorium, Long Beach TAC 10:30 a.m. PCOG 1:00 p.m.
March 23	Pacific Co. Courthouse Annex Commissioners' Meeting Room PCOG 1:00 p.m. EDC 2:00 p.m.
April 27	Pacific Co. Courthouse Annex Grays Harbor College Riverview Campus—Raymond TAC 10:30 a.m. PCOG 1:00 p.m.
May 25	PUD Auditorium, Long Beach PCOG 1:00 p.m. EDC 2:00 p.m.
June 22	PUD Auditorium, Long Beach TAC 10:30 a.m. PCOG 1:00 p.m.
July 27	Grays Harbor College Riverview Campus—Raymond Room 101 PCOG 1:00 p.m. EDC 2:00 p.m.
August 24	Grays Harbor College Riverview Campus—Raymond Room 101 TAC 10:30 a.m. PCOG 1:00 p.m.
September 28	PUD Auditorium, Long Beach PCOG 1:00 p.m. EDC 2:00 p.m.
October 26	PUD Auditorium, Long Beach TAC 10:30 a.m. PCOG 1:00 p.m.
November 23	Grays Harbor College Riverview Campus—Raymond Room 101 PCOG 1:00 p.m. EDC 2:00 p.m.
December 28	Grays Harbor College Riverview Campus—Raymond Room 101 TAC 10:30 a.m. PCOG 1:00 p.m.

Directions to the GHC Riverview Campus:

From South Bend: Continue north on US 101. Turn right at the first stop light onto Fowler St. Turn right on Lincoln St. GHC is on the left.