

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

MICROBUSINESS MARKETING WITH NO TIME, NO MONEY, AND NO EXPERTISE – RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING MARKETING RESULTS FOR MICROBUSINESSES

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Microbusinesses are a specific type of small business that employ 9 or fewer people, including the owner. Microbusinesses are a major factor in the national, regional, and local economies. Microbusiness operators face the issues of limited time, money, and marketing expertise when conducting daily operations. The purpose of the qualitative descriptive case study was to describe the amount of time and money that microbusiness owners perceived to spend on marketing. Time and money along with the perception of marketing expertise were then related to the microbusiness sales performance. In this study, the respondents perceived that they did not spend enough time on marketing because of daily challenges of running the business, but the amount of time spent on marketing did not appear to be associated with sales performance. Microbusiness operators perceived that they spent an adequate amount of money on marketing to

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achieve their sales performance goals. In this study there appeared to be no association between the money spent on marketing and sales performance. The microbusiness operators perceived their marketing expertise to be adequate and higher levels of marketing expertise did appear to have a positive association with sales performance. Improving the marketing budgeting process, improving measurement of return-on-investment on the marketing spend, improving digital marketing skills, and utilizing time-efficient marketing tools were key themes to increase marketing effectiveness. The microbusiness marketing tools of personal selling, digital marketing, relationship marketing, word of mouth, networking, and branding were found to provide opportunities to improve sales performance by leveraging limited time, money, and marketing expertise. The results of this study provide direction for microbusiness operators on profitable time, money, and marketing expertise strategies to improve microbusiness sales performance.