

## Meet Your New Marketing Partner, Sorkins.com

Midwest provider of in-depth company profiles



Contact Sorkins, Inc. at 314.373.3975 and receive 10% off on your first order for mentioning this ad.

When it comes to hiring, make sure **honesty** is part of your policy.



AAIM Background Verification Services  
Call 314.754.0223

Employment Verification  
Criminal History Checks  
Drug Testing  
Motor Vehicle Records Search  
Social Security Trace



Don't take chances, take action



Wearing all the hats a business owner must can be a difficult and time-consuming task. Hiring more employees and growing your business can add to the pressure. A business partner can often help balance out your professional life, but the process of finding the right business partner can be a stressful task in itself.

*My biggest challenge is finding a business partner with complementary skills that would enable us to focus on what we do best and be more efficient with our networking and sales efforts. A partner would also alleviate fears of the sales increase needed when hiring to cover salaries. I've tried using contractors to fill the void, but it has not worked out. How do I find the right partner to help run and grow my business?*

—A St. Louis web designer

## Health Coverage Made Easy.

We offer Health Coverage for:

- Individuals without Group Coverage
- Dependents and Students
- COBRA/Alternative
- Self-Employed
- Small Businesses

Serving the St. Louis Area for over 25 years!

# Lang Insurance Service, Inc.

636-441-0211 or 314-421-2244



Steven J. Lang, President

www.langinsurance.com



Lang Insurance Service, Inc. is an authorized agent in Missouri for Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield. Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name for RightCHOICE® Managed Care, Inc. (RIT), Healthy Alliance® Life Insurance Company (HALIC), and HMO Missouri, Inc. RIT and certain affiliates administer non-HMO benefits underwritten by HALIC and HMO benefits underwritten by HMO Missouri, Inc. RIT and certain affiliates only provide administrative services for self-funded plans and do not underwrite benefits. Independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. ANTHEM is a registered trademark. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield names and symbols are registered marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

### Choose Carefully

You should choose your business partner more carefully than your spouse.

As the networking/sales person for your business, this person will largely be the face and personality of your company, so select someone who shares your values, ethics, enthusiasm, drive and goals for success.

This person should have a proven track record and documented success with the desired skill sets. There should also be an "engagement" period so you can evaluate this person to make certain you have chosen the right partner.



Sexton

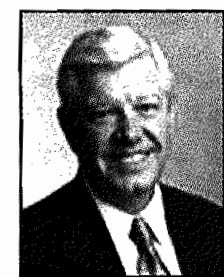
I would suggest two things: Work together for a few months to get an idea of how you both work, and most important, read and use the process in "The Partnership Charter" by David Gage. It was a very valuable tool that my partner and I used to form our partnership.

—Cathy Sexton, On Point Solutions LLC

### Find A Compatible Relationship

Like finding the right life partner, finding the right business partner is about a compatible relationship. Relationships take time to develop.

Consider the following criteria for increasing your chances of a successful partnership:



Coleman

1. Define what you need from a partnership—benefits and goals. Establish the skill sets needed to make your future partner compatible.

2. Determine his or her investment. Whether money or sweat equity, your new partner will need motivation to succeed.

3. Don't be too quick to act; take your time. When you think you found someone who meets your needs, meet with him or her several times. Start building the relationship.

4. Let him dip his toe in the water. In other words, see what it might be like having this person as a partner before you both make the commitment.

5. You and your new partner should clearly understand expectations and each other's role in the business and put it in writing. Getting an attorney's advice would be the prudent thing to do.

—Ken Coleman, FranNet



Birsinger

Here are a few ideas on how to find this person:

1. Consult with industry professionals you know and trust to refer someone.
2. Approach people with the required skills whom you admire and trust.
3. Place a free listing on <http://stlouis.craigslist.org>.
4. Place a blind box ad in your industry magazines, St. Louis Small Business Monthly or other business publications.
5. Try <http://www.partnerup.com>.

—Mark Birsinger, M.A. Birsinger & Co. LLC

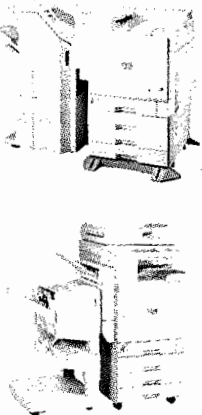
### Partnership Is Like A Marriage

Finding a partner sounds like a great idea. A partner can share the workload and help increase sales and profit. But it is not as easy as just hiring an employee or contractor. A partnership is much like a marriage, and in some cases you spend more time with a partner than you do a spouse.

So, it is very important that you complement each other's strengths; share the same vision, goals and work ethics; and have the same or very similar management styles. There must be mutual respect and trust. Before entering into any partnership,

## WE HELP OUR CUSTOMERS SUCCEED

by understanding their document management needs and by delivering solutions and services that increase efficiency, reduce costs and improve document workflow.



**da-com**  
Digital Office Solutions

314.442.2800 • da-com.com  
5317 Knight of Columbus • St. Louis, MO

**Do you have a challenge that you would like answered by the board?** If so, send them to [jeremy@sbmon.com](mailto:jeremy@sbmon.com). All challenges will be presented anonymously