

# Measure prospective sites against standard

When conducting the actual site selection process, the current or prospective business owner needs to develop a standard from which all potential sites are evaluated. By defining the criteria by which one will judge any site, the owner may avoid the problems associated with choosing a poor location.

In the book, "Principles of Retail Location," Richard Nelson discusses eight major criteria to be considered. First, how much business can you expect to generate (dollar volume) from potential customers doing business within the trading area of a particular site? The U.S. Depart-

ment of Commerce publishes its statistics among competitors by local trade area.

Next, can potential customers be easily and conveniently served by the site? Although an area may appear "busy" in terms of automobile traffic flow, there needs to be an associated level of pedestrian foot traffic in order for any site to be considered viable.

Nelson's third criteria has to do with growth potential. How does the site compare to others in terms of population growth, income trends and purchasing power? Demographic data by zip code would be used to

evaluate differences existing between alternative site locations. Next, what type(s) of stores share business with the site and would they work to attract customers to the site and your store?

One excellent local example involves a wine/party store merchant sharing 6,000 square feet of retail space with a videotape rental facility and a bagel/deli shop. The compatibility and cumulative attraction of-

ferred customers patronizing the site has turned what was once a dead retail location into a thriving center of business activity.

Additional criteria pertains to site economics. In terms of cost vs. productivity, how efficient is a site relative to its size, shape, facilities and topography? If a site seems favorable but requires extensive leasehold improvements, it may not be cost effective to pursue at this specific location. Lastly, does the site minimize competitive hazards given its location, character, size and type of present and potential competitors?

Available sources of local market

data and information include county and city planning commissions, downtown development authorities (DDAs), and retail merchant associations. It is also recommended that the entrepreneur contact other business owners whose personal judgment and experience may prove a valuable source of assistance.

Mary DiPaolo is the owner of Mark's Trends, a Farmington Hills-based business consulting firm. She is also producer and host of the cable television series, "Focus: The Small Business Environment."

## focus: small business

Mary DiPaolo

## business people

Kerrie Edgeworth was named manager of the typesetting department at Simons Michelson Zieve Inc., a Troy advertising firm. She has been a typesetter for six years and has an associate's degree in print technology from Macomb County Community College.

Thomas J. Davenport of Birmingham was appointed vice president and general counsel of the Budd Co. Davenport, general counsel for the Troy company since 1984, joined Budd in 1956 as an attorney in the patent affairs department.

Andrew J. Soffel of Birmingham was appointed executive vice president and chief operating officer of Crowley, Milner and Co. Before joining Crowley's in 1977, Soffel had been assistant treasurer of Cook United Inc., treasurer at Eckerd's Inc. and regional controller of Montgomery Ward.



Edgeworth Davenport Soffel Lane

William Lane of Rochester Hills was appointed sales engineer, automotive specialist, by Branson Ultra-Sonics Corp. He is responsible for sales and service to key accounts in the automotive industry and will work out of the company's Detroit regional facility.

Robert Brewster of Orchard Lake joined the RB&W Corp. as general sales manager, automotive, which carries the responsibility of managing the Detroit sales office. RB&W manufactures and distributes cold formed parts and powdered metal parts.

Please submit black-and-white photographs, if possible, for inclusion in the business people column. While we value the receipt of photographs, we are unable to use every photograph submitted. If you want your photograph returned, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Indicate in a margin on the front of the photograph that you want it returned. We will do our best to comply with your request. Send information to: Business editor, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. Please include city of residence and a daytime telephone number where information can be verified.

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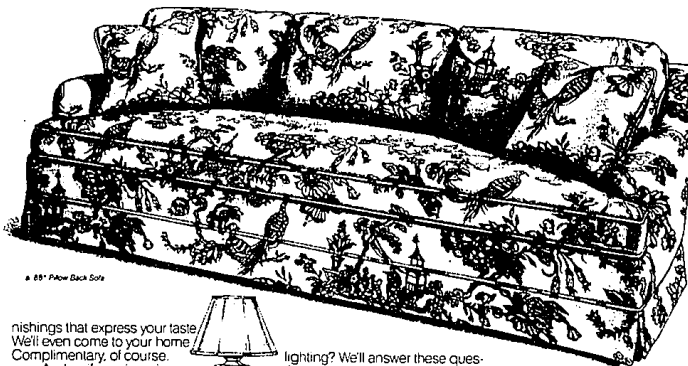
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