

CMC Properties Encourages

Small Business Growth with the “Perfect Small Office”

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Photo by Brian Amba



Entrepreneurship is experiencing a resurgence in the Tristate, even in the midst of a still shaky economy. Cincinnati entrepreneurs have been given an opportunity to network in a supportive environment; they are sharing ideas, support, and camaraderie to create lasting success. One of the drivers of this resurgence is the "Perfect Small Office," a one-of-a-kind office complex provided by CMC Properties, which currently accommodates more than 1,000 small business owners citywide. If not for CMC's small business-friendly properties, entrepreneurship might not be as robust.

When they began building office spaces in the 1970s, CMC Properties – developers, owners, and operators of residential, retail, and commercial property throughout Greater Cincinnati and the Midwest – had one goal in mind: to provide the perfect office environment for small business owners. CMC's objective is to "lower the barriers of going out on your own" and "provide well-located and exceptionally affordable business communities for professionals and entrepreneurs" to operate independently.

In order to achieve that, every inch of their buildings were designed with the small business owner in mind. Offices were built so tenants can communicate just like they would in a corporate environment – sharing ideas, advice, and best practices – and all seven locations have property managers on-site that work to promote networking opportunities and spur growth.

"We provide the office space, but more than that, we help entrepreneurs to get out of their homes and come into a conducive environment to become successful," says Chasta Postler, regional manager for commercial property at CMC.

CMC promotes the growth of new and existing businesses in each of their locations. They hold monthly networking events for each property where owners can meet, exchange contact information, and answer questions about their business in a public platform. Moreover, CMC has an online business directory that connects all seven offices. Tenants can log in, do business with one another, and see a calendar of events. These extra perks can help businesses grow, but more importantly, it gives business owners a chance to communicate with a professional peer group.

According to Postler, many times, if in a typical office in a standalone building, you're on your own. But CMC provides an "entrepreneurial environment where you can talk around the proverbial water cooler ... There is a real camaraderie in our buildings," she says.

The networking environment – with shared lobbies and kitchen areas – and networking events serve to encourage businesses to grow. In fact, when offices were designed, costs were kept to a min-

imum because CMC understands small business owners want to expand, which can be difficult with high rents. CMC offers low rents and they have developed an expansion program. "Rent only what size space you need today, add more only when you are ready," she says.

Several tenants have expanded because business owners have an easier time investing in their own growth. For example, Engineering Dynamics – a company that provides generators for hospitals and other facilities – began in a 150-square-foot office and now has almost 5,000 square feet of space.

Many tenants have also expanded to CMC's flex space—warehouse and office space combined. Just like offices, flex space comes without common area maintenance (CAM) fees – insurance, taxes, landscaping, etc. – which makes budgeting easier and minimizes surprises for the business owner, allowing even more room for future expansion.

"We know businesses are on a budget. We don't want them to worry about those costs because we want them to be focused on what they do best, run their business," Postler says. "... If they keep growing, we grow with them. If they do have to leave, to a different state or larger space, we don't want to see them go, but we know we did our job. They grew."

With high occupancy rates, CMC is concentrating on their own growth in order to be available for more small business owners who are ready to expand. They have plans for office construction in Noblesville, Ind., and are exploring the Louisville and Lexington areas.

Moreover, they're bringing ideas to life, such as the Cincinnati Small Business Igniter in Springdale.

This all-inclusive concept has furnished, private offices, with a shared private lobby, conference room, kitchenette, and Internet provided by PowerNet Global throughout the community. Additional services are also included such as janitorial, on-site management, and monthly tailored business consulting for only \$350 per month.

Another similar concept exists for nonprofit agencies at the Blue Ash location where they have free unlimited use of the conference room, limited use of any training room, and a discount on consulting services with Executive Service Corps of Cincinnati. At the same location is a "pop-in-space" created for those who need a quiet private office, but are not ready to furnish an office, set up Internet service, or pay monthly rent. These spaces can be rented at half-day or full-day rates for less than \$50.

No matter what type of space it is, CMC works to provide a space with a sense of "community that has purpose, order, and meaning," which encourages growth.

"We do our best to see through the eyes of our tenants. What's going to help them grow the most? How can we help them to succeed?" Postler asks.

CMC is headquartered at 10925 Reed Hartman Highway, Cincinnati, OH 45242. You can reach them at 513.301.0234 or visit their website at www.perfectsmalloffice.com.

Coming this fall, an all new perfectsmalloffice.com – a fully responsive website specially designed for CMC's future and current business owners.