

CHAMPIONS of DIVERSITY



WBENC turns 20!

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TECHCORNER SPOTLIGHT

OUTREACH GALLERY

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TechCorner Spotlight now features new technologies and tools in addition to diverse-owned technology companies.

What is Cisco DevNet? Some say it is a developer's utopia, a growing tech company's BFF. You decide after reading about DevNet and checking out the website [here](#). Start by taking a [tour of DevNet](#) to learn how we help developers and IT professionals who want to write applications and develop integrations with Cisco products, platforms, and APIs.

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VETCON 2017



2017 FACING HISTORY BENEFIT

FEATURES

WBENC turns 20! and reflects on technology growth



The largest third-party certifier of businesses owned, controlled, and operated by women in the United States celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. The Women's Business Enterprise National Council (**WBENC**) and its stakeholders celebrated this momentous occasion at this year's annual WBENC conference and business fair this summer in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Furthering the success of women-owned businesses, the four-day event included some of the best programming yet. The 2017 conference opened with an orientation workshop for first-time conference attendees, a Next-Gen meeting for future WBEs and supplier diversity professionals under the age of 40, multiple concurrent workshops, and of course its day-long business fair. The conference concluded with even more thought-provoking workshops, a dinner and awards ceremony, and the 2018 Motor City launch party. Events of this magnitude are only possible and successful because of excellent team members led by committed and passionate leadership. Speaking of which, we were fortunate to catch up with Pamela Prince-Eason, president of WBENC, shortly prior to the conference kickoff. As these milestones arrive, it is natural to reflect on successes and to plan for more.

With a working title of "Women Businesses: Innovators, Trailblazers, and Disruptors," we asked Pam and her team about the technology growth of the council and its WBEs and how WBENC has played a role in embracing, developing, and promoting these businesses

to be innovators, trailblazers, and disruptors in the technology industry.

Here are her thoughts.

Q: How has WBENC grown technology wise in the last 20 years? 10 years?

A: From the start, WBENC's founding leaders understood that technology is a conduit for collaboration. In 1997, we were on the cusp of the dot.com boom, and using core technology foundations, we grew a movement around women's business development. We used new technologies of the time to bring together disparate communities, including our growing corporate and government members, our 14 regional partner organizations (RPOs) from around the nation, and even global organizations like WEConnect International.

Over the last 10 years, we continued to expand that organizational framework by using our WBENC certification online through WBENCLink, our certification database, which allows WBENC to make sure of clear communication, shares opportunities for women business owners, and empowers leaders around the world.

Q: What has been the greatest technology value-add to the council and its stakeholders to date?

A: Our WBENCLink supplier database houses more than 14,000 WBENC-certified businesses ready and willing to do business with our corporate and government members as well as other women business enterprises (WBEs). Obviously, this is a core value-add for our cor-

porate members, like Cisco, looking to find diverse suppliers.

However, we always strive to improve. Last year, we transitioned our database to completely digital records, making sure of added security for highly sensitive files. We also sought to bring efficiency to the process for extremely busy women business owners. By approaching this technology upgrade with collaboration in mind, we increased the value-add for all our audiences.

Q: Which certified WBEs in the technology industry would you consider innovators, trailblazers, and disruptors, and why?

A: We have so many great WBEs in the technology industry, and that doesn't count the WBEs who are just getting WBENC certified. Even startups know that technology should feature prominently in any business owner's strategic plan.

This year we can spotlight **Ampcus, Inc.**, one of our WBE Presenting Sponsors at our National Conference and Business Fair in Las Vegas, who presented on best practices for quick decision making to avoid major disruptions in operations: every leader's worst nightmare.

Q: Since launching your Student Entrepreneurship Program eight years ago, you have had more than 150 students to graduate from the program. Science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) have been a significant part of your program. How have your students' interest in/aptitude for these areas exceeded

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WBENC turns 20!

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your expectations?

A: If there is something I've learned about our next generation of women leaders, it is that these women are capable of setting incredible expectations for themselves. Why should we do any different? During our program, WBENC engages with a rubric of high expectations for all our students because we want these women to be prepared for the competitive nature of entrepreneurship. Each year, we are always, without exception, inspired and driven by the ideas presented by these students. The pitch competition has featured life-saving medical devices, social apps to help food banks, and online retail services for the disabled. Our students come prepared with patents, pitch decks, and a desire to learn.

Q: Predict, if you will/dare, the role of women and women-owned business in science and technology and their contributions to the world.

A: The WBENC community succeeds from sharing our success. I cannot speak for all women, but I feel like women leaders have the unique opportunity to open the doors for other women. When we share our success through mentorship, we contribute not only to the public success of women business owners, but also to their personal wealth. Just as companies like Cisco recognize that engagement with women-owned businesses on multiple levels results in greater innovation, I believe that we will continue to see accelerated innovation in science and technology from both women-owned businesses and corporate women business leaders. WBENC is excited to be a part of their momentum and success.



2017 WBENC BUSINESS FAIR - CISCO BOOTH



2017 WBENC WORKSHOP



2017 WBENC WELCOME RECEPTION

2017 GOCA Spring Conference

"Attending these conferences and being a member of the association are good platforms from which to learn and gain knowledge from other obligors, who are multinational companies as well as from offset authorities. We are looking forward to learning and sharing knowledge with our peers this fall." - Edrei DuToit

The capital city of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, played host to the 2017 Spring Global Offset and Countertrade Association (**GOCA**) Conference. GOCA promotes trade and commerce between companies and their foreign customers around the world through a greater understanding of countertrade and offset. Twice a year—spring and fall—GOCA hosts a conference to carry out its mission with its corporate members and governments.

Cisco is a member and proud supporter of GOCA, which supports its public sector strategy. Senior Manager Madison Gunter III and Offset Manager Edrei Du Toit of Cisco's Global Offset and Countertrade organization attended this year's spring conference and accepted the Bronze Sponsor's award on behalf of Cisco.



2017 GOCA SPRING CONFERENCE

The conference opened with knowledge-sharing sessions for government officials only, and speaker presentations took place over the following two days. Members and attendees enjoyed panel presentations about offset activities and success stories in the Asia Pacific Region and the Malaysia cybersecurity landscape and initiatives. Cisco Security Architect Tengku Shahrizam participated on the cybersecurity panel. Shahrizam, out of Cisco's Global Security Sales organization in Kuala Lumpur, highlighted the importance of cybersecurity in his presentation, entitled "Cisco Cybersecurity for Internet of Things (IoT)."

The three-day conference concluded with a dinner gala hosted by Malaysia's Minister of Finance Mohd

Irwan Serigar Abdullah on the viewing deck of the Putrajaya International Convention Centre. This fall the GOCA conference will be held in the United States on October 29 in Key Biscayne, Florida.

"This was my first exposure to the GOCA conferences, and it was clear to me where companies like Cisco are essential in supporting offset and countertrade initiatives." -Madison Gunter III

TechCorner Spotlight: Cisco DevNet

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WHAT: What is DevNet? It is the single resource for everything developer at Cisco. We help developers and network engineers innovate using Cisco technologies and platforms. We're all about providing you with the tools, the resources, and the code you need to build innovative, network-enabled solutions. Whether you're automating network management or hooking up a zillion devices in an IoT app, DevNet aims to get your questions answered so you can keep your project moving. It's the place to learn, code, get inspired, and connect. Dig in to create and find inspiring applications, learn about our APIs, and connect with other developers in our communities. What else?

- Find APIs and tools
- Learn and code
- See what others are creating
- Submit creations
- Participate in trending forums
- Build innovative, network-enabled solutions

Who: Who can join DevNet? It's free, and anyone can join. No experience is required. DevNet is for everyone, from beginning coders to network engineers to women in tech and more. Wherever you are in your developer journey, DevNet has the tools and resources you need!

WHEN: When should you check out and join DevNet? There's never been a better time than right now. Visit Developer.cisco.com.

WHERE: Where else can you connect with DevNet and its communities?

Connect with DevNet



Why: Member benefits.

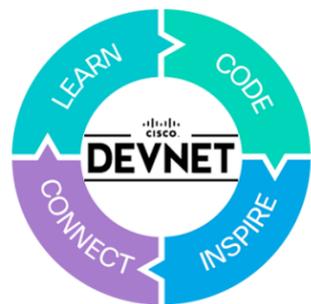
APIs and SDKs with detailed documentation

- Free 24x7 remote development labs
- Customized notifications
- Self-paced learning tracks
- Active community forums
- Multiple support options

How: How do you become a member of DevNet?

Becoming a member of the DevNet Community is free and easy and gives you access to useful resources and tools.

Join by using our new social log-in available in our Learning Labs! To register, visit <https://learninglabs.cisco.com/>.



DEVNET TECHNOLOGIES

- IoT
- CLOUD
- NETWORKING
- DATA CENTER
- SECURITY
- ANALYTICS & AUTOMATION
- OPEN SOURCE
- COLLABORATION
- MOBILITY

#theEditor'sCorner

with Madison Gunter III

Technology: Ready, Set, Grow

Education and access to capital

Increasingly, technology is being woven into the fabric of many businesses and yes, even in small, diverse-owned businesses. Outside of the standard marketing tools (email systems, websites, and lead generation call systems) or the social media applications (LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook), some diverse-owned businesses are utilizing technology to educate, develop, and connect their ecosystems. The perceived and actual expenses needed to develop such a platform can be dream busters for many businesses regardless of their size, not to mention time killers. Rodney Woods, president/founder of Diversity in Promotions (DIP) and Playbook Investors Network (PIN), is one such small, minority-owned business owner who found a way to use technology to educate, grow, and connect his stakeholders. We asked Woods about his business enterprises and learned what the inclusion of technology in his businesses has meant for his businesses and stakeholders.

MG3: Rodney, tell us a little bit about both your businesses: Diversity in Promotions and Playbook Investors Network.

RW: Happy to do so, Madison. Thanks for asking. Thirteen years ago, we launched Diversity in Promotions, or DIP, as a unique full-service marketing firm that combines general marketing and advertising with sports/entertainment events and diverse suppliers. Essentially, I brought in a few of my friends who happened to be professional athletes and paired them with diverse-owned businesses and major Fortune 1000 corporations that wanted to strategically combine brands for market share growth or paired private investors with diverse-owned businesses that needed help raising capital to scale and grow their businesses.

From DIP, PIN, or rather Playbook Investors Network, was born. PIN is a subscription-based, real-time, digital B2B exchange portal that exposes mutual beneficial business opportunities for small businesses, diverse-owned businesses, nationally recognized certifying agencies, corporations, private investors, EB-5 immigration investors, financial institutions, athletes, and entertainers.

MG3: Wow! That is a healthy amount of players represented in your ecosystem. How does one do it and keep it all together?

RW: Believe me, it was not fast or easy, and it was definitely not cheap. It took us eight long years to develop the technology platform that would meet all of our needs with capacity to take on more. The components to our platform

include a multiuser-level web portal, content management system, member management (MWBs, corporations, investors, athletes), investment management, back-office solution (customer relationship management, subscription billing and payment management, record management), messaging system, rule engine, and of course information and security management, plus a bit more. Sciberus, a minority-owned enterprise out of Atlanta, is our solutions provider and manages our back end.

MG3: Without giving away your secret sauce, tell us how technology is woven into the fabric of your businesses.

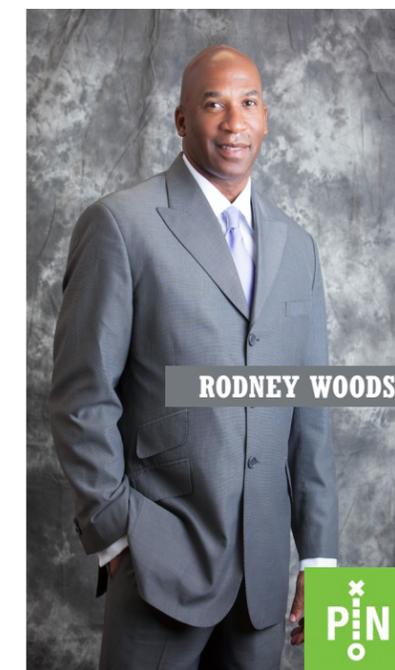
RW: Our platform is video driven, and through it we identify, evaluate, educate, and introduce. We identify diverse-owned businesses seeking capital, evaluate each business, and determine the company's financial position in order to gain access to capital. PIN's platform provides subject matter experts who educate and assist businesses through the process of securing capital that best ensures the company's success. And lastly, we introduce suppliers to one or more financial service third parties offering capital solutions suitable for their business.

PIN is also an interactive information and training resource for diverse businesses to keep them abreast of solutions for next-level business engagement and growth. We found that most business owners are always crunched for time and that hearing a great idea is oftentimes preferable to reading about it. So we had our subject matter experts create educational vid-

eos in lieu of creating written reports. It works. We have a unique multilayer platform that identifies the most attractive business candidates and provides significant due diligence support to evaluate potential growth opportunities, as well as provide a hands-on role in executing organic growth avenues.

MG3: And all of that takes place through your technology platform?

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OUTREACH GALLERY



DBP PROGRAMS

DBP and Zones Use Diversity in Sales

The time is now to begin the dialogue with your Cisco sales teams about your Tier 1 Spend. Let us show you how.

Today, more companies are utilizing various avenues of influence to increase their Tier 1 spending initiatives through information technology. Utilization of diverse partners, whether woman, minority, or veteran owned, allows customers to satisfy those needs and gain a competitive advantage.

CISCO'S DIVERSITY SOLUTION

Many customers have utilized Cisco's Diversity Business Practices team as the conduit to start the conversation. For more than 14 years, Cisco's Diversity Business Practices team has been helping customers solve supplier diversity requirements. The Cisco Diversity Business Practices team provides a seamless transition for partners and customers to help solve supplier diversity business objectives through the procurement of Cisco products and services.

OUR COMPETITORS DON'T HAVE IT: OUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Led by Senior Manager Madison Gunter III, the Diversity Business Practices team helps customers buy smarter by maximizing their Cisco spend. Collaborating with partners such as **Zones**, a certified minority business enterprise (MBE), enables Cisco to help solve customer supplier diversity challenges, deepen relationships, and address competitive threats. Zones' ability to collaborate with best-in-class partners to deliver customizable solutions and positive business outcomes helps meet the needs of the company.

Zones Chief Global Officer Sean Hobday states, "The Cisco Diversity Business Practices team has enabled Zones access to account teams that are looking to serve our mutual customers with Tier 1 spending initiatives. Zones has received great response from the Cisco teams to partner and develop solutions that afford the opportunity to sell more Cisco technologies."

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Technology: Ready, Set, Grow

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RW: It does.

MG3: What elevates your business above other similar businesses?

RW: Two particular things elevate PIN above similar businesses.

First, we take the time to educate our diverse businesses about the different types of financial solutions available to businesses. We have major corporations bring us their Tier 1 and Tier 2 suppliers that they want to help grow. Access to capital has been a constant refrain for businesses wanting to scale and

grow and for corporate customers who want to do more business with the supplier.

The second thing that elevates PIN is that we have relationship managers who are assigned to each supplier. They conduct assessments of company operations, review current financial position, determine if additional services may be required, recommend appropriate financial solutions, and ensure diverse-owned businesses retain majority ownership interest.

ABOUT WOODS: Rodney Woods, a native of Nashville, TN, was a scholar collegiate athlete in basketball and graduated with a BA degree in sociology from Paine College in Augusta, GA. He also attended Tufts School of Business at Dartmouth, receiving a certificate for "Building a High-Performing Business." Because of his dedication and excellence in basketball, Woods was invited to try out for the Dallas Mavericks. After experiencing a career-ending injury, he decided to pursue a successful career in law enforcement with the Dallas Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for over 20 years. For more information, visit www.diversityinpromotions.com and www.playbookinvestorsnetwork.com.

CP²: Cisco Software Strategy for Partners

"Today's presentation provided deep insights into Cisco's foray into the software domain and the strategy that it is executing on top of its hardware platforms to create a value for partners and customers." -Dan Grigg, Enterprise IT Solutions

SOFTWARE is an important part of Cisco's portfolio and an integral part of technology trends. Cisco's channel partners play a key role in its software strategy. This past March, there was never a better time for our current and past protégés to hear from our executive speaker, Jason W. Gallo. As the global director of enterprise networking and software partner business development, Jason leads a team responsible for developing partner initiatives, programs, and enablement for Cisco's enterprise networking architecture, buying models (enterprise license agreements [ELAs]), and partner software lifecycle management services.

Attendees to this WebEx event included diverse-owned Cisco channel partners who already support or are interested in supporting Cisco's software strategy.

Gallo commenced his presentation with a timeline of the Cisco partner evolution that reflected the beginning of Cisco in 1984, its 1996 commitment to channels as a strategic route to market, the launch of the collaborative channel in 2008, creation of the global partner organization in 2010, and the current ecosystem and role-based system. The importance of Cisco's channel partners was emphasized and demonstrated through its steady growth in number as well as revenue. Gallo shared that nearly 90 percent of Cisco's revenue is derived through the channel partners. With

the growth and increased importance of its software portfolio, opportunity for diverse partners to grow their software business with Cisco was evident.

Prior to sharing Cisco's software strategy with the diverse-owned channel partners, Gallo spoke to four areas of value that partners get from teaming with Cisco: (1) technology innovation, (2) practice enablement, (3) partner-centric sales and services model, and (4) partner profitability.



JASON GALLO

Cisco software strategy for partners

By 2019, there will be a \$90B total available market for software in network and compute (\$17B), analytics and automation (\$25B), security (\$6B), and collaboration (\$24B). This opportunity is unique and creates

a huge opportunity to drive growth. This software opportunity is a top priority for Cisco. So how do partners capitalize on this market opportunity with Cisco? Gallo shared ways some of Cisco's software partners have successfully built up their software practices: (1) software solutions sales, (2) consumption sales, (3) lifecycle advisory services, and (4) software development. What top partners have in common is that they all created a well-documented and actionable software practice plan around these four areas. Gallo's presentation went on to share that partners' successes are

no longer based on simply attaching software to hardware. Rather, they must lead sales opportunities by explaining the software value and then how the hardware becomes a sales pull-through.

Lastly, Gallo provided attendees with a new resource recently introduced at Cisco Live Berlin. Cisco DevNet provides developers with the tools, resources, and code needed to build innovative, network-enabled solutions. Members collaborate with each other for the purposes of growing their business, learning new code, receiving one-on-one support, accessing fully tooled sandboxes, and much more. Who can become a member? Anyone who registers.

Learn more about DevNet in our TechCorner Spotlight on page 4.

ABOUT GALLO: Jason Gallo originally joined Cisco through the acquisition of Tandberg, where he led the onboarding of more than 1700 partners globally and the design and integration of the Cisco TelePresence partner go-to-market strategy. During his 16-year career, Jason has worked in many functions, including management strategy consulting, sales, operations, product management, and finance. Jason has a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering from Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), a master of engineering management degree from Washington State University, and an MBA degree in finance and strategy from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

ABOUT CISCO PROTÉGÉ PROGRAM: The Cisco Protégé Program (CP²) Executive Speaker Series is a business development series designed for our current and past protégés. The CP² speaker series is yet another program by which our protégés continue to gain insightful, practical, relevant, and timely information from proven business executives, including Cisco senior executives. The CP² speaker series is an hour-long event conducted by WebEx and held throughout the year.

CONTRACTING NEWS

SBA Programs for Veterans

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has resources and programs to help veterans and service-disabled veterans start, grow, and finance a business. There are programs and resources for aspiring and existing veteran entrepreneurs and military spouses.

WHAT KIND OF RESOURCES?

For aspiring veteran entrepreneurs, there are resources available to help write a business plan and to register a business, for starters. Existing veteran entrepreneurs can receive assistance with growing their businesses through hiring, marketing, and exporting resources.

The mission of the SBA's Office of Veterans Business Development is to maximize the availability, applicability, and usability of all administration small business programs for veterans, service-disabled veterans, reserve component members, and their dependents or survivors.

What programs are available? Here are a few, but there are many more.

TRAINING

Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) Program: Provides entrepreneurial development services such as business training, counseling, and resource partner referrals to transitioning service members, veterans, National Guard and reserve members, and military spouses interested in starting or growing a small business. The SBA has 20 organizations participating in this cooperative agreement and serving as VBOCs.

Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship (V-WISE): Administered by the Institute for Veterans and Military Families and SBA funded, V-WISE includes online training, a conference that harnesses the unique esprit de corps of women veterans and female military spouses, and follow-on mentoring through a community of partners.

FINANCING

Leveraging Information and Networks to Access Capital (LINC): An online matchmaking service, connecting small business owners with nonprofit lenders that offer free financial advice and specialize in micro-lending, smaller loans (SBA Community Advantage program), and real estate financing (SBA 504 loan program).

SBA Veterans Advantage: Guarantees loans approved to businesses owned by veterans or military spouses during fiscal year 2017 (October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017) will receive the benefit of its regular guaranty fee reduced by 50 percent, when the loan is over \$150,000.

SBA Veteran's Entrepreneurship Act of 2015: Reduces the upfront borrower fee to zero dollars for eligible veterans and military spouses for SBA Express loans up to \$350,000.

DEPLOYMENT

Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program (MREIDL): Provides loans up to \$2 million to eligible small businesses to cover operating costs that cannot be met due to the loss of an essential employee called to active duty in the reserves or National Guard.

For more details about these and other resources and programs, click [here](#).

New HUBZone Maps

The HUBZone program recently announced the release of the new **HUBZone maps**. The new maps have the most current HUBZone designations and features to improve their usability.

You can determine if an address or a particular area is designated as a HUBZone by using the HUBZone maps.

What is a HUBZone? Managed by the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Historically Underutilized Business Zone program encourages economic development and employment growth in distressed areas or underutilized business zones by providing access to more federal contracting opportunities. Enacted into law under the **Small Business Reauthorization Act of 1997**, businesses in HUBZones can be eligible for certain federal contracting opportunities if they meet SBA's eligibility requirements.

Who's eligible?

To qualify for the program, a business (except tribally owned concerns) must meet the following criteria:

- It must be a small business by SBA standards.
- It must be owned and controlled at least 51 percent by U.S. citizens, a community development corporation, an agricultural cooperative, or an Indian tribe.
- Its principal office must be located within a Historically Underutilized Business Zone, which includes lands considered Indian Country and military facilities closed by the Base Realignment and Closure Act.
- At least 35 percent of its employees must reside in a HUBZone.

If you are eligible, visit [Applying for the HUBZone Program](#) and [Maintaining the HUBZone Certification](#). Be sure to read the HUBZone Primer [transcript](#) for the details about this program.

FY17 Federal Procurement Small Business Scorecard

Seven Federal Agencies Received A+ Grade



For the fourth consecutive year, the federal government reached its small business federal contracting goal.

In case you missed it, the U.S. Small Business Administration announced this spring that the federal government reached its small business federal contracting goal for the fourth consecutive year.

Here are the highlights:

- Awarded 24.34 percent in federal contract dollars to small businesses, totaling \$99.96 billion, an increase of more than \$9 billion from the previous year.
- Exceeded the Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB) goal, almost doubling it.
- Awarded highest achievement ever for percentage of contract dollars to Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned (SDVO) small businesses.
- Increased prime contract dollars in all categories.
- Exceeded its subcontract goals for awards to women-owned and small disadvantaged businesses.

The FY 2016 Small Business Procurement Scorecard that SBA uses to grade agencies in terms of prime contracting and subcontracting performance, as well as other factors, resulted in an overall grade of A for the federal government. Seven agencies received A+, 11 received a grade of A, four received a grade of B, and one agency received a grade of C.

Factors on which the agencies are graded:

- Commitment to small business utilization
- Effective engagement of senior-level management in achieving small business goals
- Data quality of small business contracting
- Training of acquisitions staff
- Outreach to small business
- Bundling avoidance, justification, and mitigation
- Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) organization

Each agency's overall grade will show an A+ for agencies that meet or exceed 120 percent of their goals, an A for those between 100 percent and 119 percent, a B for 90 to 99 percent, a C for 80 to 89 percent, a D for 70 to 79 percent, and an F for less than 70 percent. An agency's overall grade is composed of three quantitative measures: prime contracts (80 percent), subcontracts (10 percent), and its progress plan for meeting goals (10 percent).

See government-wide and agency performances and scores [here](#).

OUTREACH GALLERY



IN THE NEWS

Business Disruption Workshop at WBENC

“Disrupt or Be Discarded” was one of several workshops offered at the Women’s Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) annual conference this summer in Las Vegas, NV.

Disruption disciple Madison Gunter III did what he does best: Dish out intriguing and actionable business growth strategies that capture the attention of even the most seasoned entrepreneurs. Gunter led with quotes from both Chuck Robbins and John Chambers, current and past Cisco chief executive officers, respectively, about how imperative it is to disrupt yourselves and your industry to be successful or be left behind.

WHAT IS DISRUPTION?

Gunter introduced disruption as a business strategy and transition that creates a new market and value network that eventually disrupts an existing market and value network:

- **CHANGING YOUR INDUSTRY:** Gunter provided real-world examples of how disruptors have changed their industries. Tesla Motors most certainly disrupted and changed its industry. Ask Mark Fields, the ex-CEO of the Ford Motor Company.
- **CREATING AN INDUSTRY:** Rideshare pioneer Uber definitely created a new in-

dustry. Ask those in the taxicab and rental car business how disruptive Uber has been to their bottom line.

During the workshop, Gunter invited two WBENC-certified business owners to share how they used disruption to keep their business enterprises from being discarded. Pam Isom, president and chief executive officer of **ICE Safety Solutions**, shared how she created a want that her customers didn’t yet know they needed using technology. Disrupting her industry set Isom’s business far apart from her competitors and increased her value to her customers around the world.

Michelle Vondrasek, president, **Von Technologies** also carved out a wireless analytics niche in her industry that not only changed but also created a new segment in her industry that leaves her competitors behind.

Gunter concluded the workshop by encouraging the audience of nearly 250 attendees to ask themselves if they wanted to be a Netflix or a Blockbuster.

Disrupt or be discarded.



[WATCH THE DISRUPTION VIDEO HERE.](#)



[VIEW THE DISRUPTION WORKSHOP REVIEWS HERE.](#)



DBP and Zones Use Diversity in Sales

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WHY ZONES?

Zones is a leading global provider of comprehensive IT solutions. For more than 30 years, from Seattle to Sydney, Dallas to New Delhi, and beyond, Zones has taken pride in becoming experts in all things technical. Zones’ primary areas of expertise include:

- Modernization
- Optimization
- Transformation of network infrastructure
- Data center
- Mobility
- Unified communications
- Cloud and security
- Workplace technology
- Internet of Things (IoT)

This global expertise, spread across 80 coun-

tries, allows Cisco customers to not only succeed, but also help customers assess, design, implement, and manage end-to-end solutions for all their IT needs, while actualizing Tier 1 spend through their diversity certification. Zones is certified as an MBE under the guidelines of the National Minority Supplier Development Council, Inc. (NMSDC) and is also a certified Corporate Plus member of the NMSDC.

More importantly, Zones recognizes the benefits of supporting a diverse supplier base in order to bring thought leadership and unique capabilities to its clients. Zones was honored to receive the Northwest MSDC MBE to MBE Inclusion Award for its support and inclusion of diverse suppliers.

Hobday remarks, “The Cisco diversity strategy has helped Zones in a number of ways. Business Development Manager Melissa Holder has done an amazing job in providing aware-

ness of Zones capabilities and the unique solutions that we bring to the market.”

CISCO’S VALUE

The Cisco Diversity Business Practices team serves as an advocate for companies that are trying to increase their Tier 1 spend. Cisco is the only technology company with a plan that develops sales through a diversity channel partner program and has a dedicated team who proactively focus on diversity sales, allowing customers to maximize their Cisco spend. Access to the DBP Diversity Partners portfolio allows Cisco customers to purchase equipment and fulfill their diverse spending goals.

For more information, contact Melissa Holder, BDM: at melholde@cisco.com or 919-392-9169.

Cisco Supports VETCON17

(Reprint from Cisco Global Procurement Services Blog)

VETCON is a veteran entrepreneur conference that promotes the veteran community. Cisco Global Procurement Supplier Diversity and Sales Diversity Business Practice were among the sponsors of VETCON 2017 in Redwood City, CA on March 23–25, 2017. The three-day event targeted entrepreneurs whose businesses are 51 percent owned by a veteran or service disabled veteran, giving them access to sponsors (like Cisco), venture capitalists, support organizations, and a broad range of interesting speakers on a variety of topics relevant to small businesses.

Many new and innovative businesses attended:

- **Travelrecon:** Offers security intelligence about travel risk at country, region, city, and street level.
- **CarDash:** Bay Area service that picks up, services, and returns clients’ cars the same day using a network of service centers and negotiating volume discounts, so clients receive the best value.
- **Veterati:** Digital mentorship platform that makes being a mentor and finding mentors effortless, enables mentorship on demand, and is easily adaptable for a corporate mentoring program.

- **BrightWork:** A hosted microservices platform built to give developers, IT groups, and DevOps teams fast build times in a reliable and scalable solution.

Minority- and women-owned businesses have mature national support organizations that provide certification and advocacy (NMSDC and WBENC, respectively). Although they are in their infancy, we see great promise in supporting the National Veteran’s Business Development Council (NVBDC), VeteransList, and VETCON as offering similar support to veteran-owned businesses.

Cisco values innovative entrepreneurs and diversity, and our buying decisions have to be value driven. The diversity we encountered, including but not limited to gender and ethnicity, illustrated the rich perspectives and innovation our veterans bring to the table. They are a diverse community united by a common experience: offering value, leadership, teaming, and problem-solving skills. To learn more about great veteran-owned companies, contact us at gpsdiversity@cisco.com.

OUTREACH GALLERY



Gunter Speaks Business Strategy at 3rd Annual DPC Summit

"The retreat like setting, coupled with the energy of our guests and workshops, fosters an environment for authentic solutions that can be applied personally and professionally. It is our goal to help diversity professionals and entrepreneurs explore opportunities that drive revenue and stimulate economic growth among diverse communities." -Melissa Simmons, President/CEO, Diversity Professionals Connect

Lake Tahoe was the locale for the annual Diversity Professionals Connect (DPC) Summit.

Cisco Senior Manager Madison Gunter III, Diversity Business Practices and Global Offset and Countertrade, led an interactive day-long workshop entitled 'Using Disruption to Take Your Business to the Next Level' during the third annual DPC Summit this spring. DPC is a unique and intimate summit where corporate diversity leaders and entrepreneurs work together to develop applicable, innovative business solutions and is the brainchild of Melissa Simmons, publisher, [Diversity Professional Magazine](#).

Gunter encouraged attendees to consider the following as options for disrupting their current businesses for achieving next-level growth: new technologies, mentors and advisors, and acquisitions.

The invitation-only crowd paired off into teams that included an entrepreneur and a corporate diversity leader. The corporate diversity leaders served as mentors to the entrepreneurs as they worked on multiple activities that culminated in viable 12- to 18-month business strategies for moving their businesses to the next level. Participants walked away with not only a tool for

growing their businesses, but also ways in which their businesses can thrive and grow in spite of or because of disruption.

More about DPC Summit

The mission: *The goal of DPC is to embrace, fulfill, grow, and sustain the advancement of the diversity professional. We are passionate and dedicated to connecting people, exploring opportunities, and building success through personal relationships and shared experiences.*



"DPC creates a unique platform for thought leaders in diversity and inclusion to collaborate and strengthen their toolkit to advocate for social and economic equity across the globe." -Todd A. Gray, MBA, Chairman, DPC Summit, Diversity Professionals Connect

Who should attend: *DPC is for you if you are looking for a new way of doing business and are a small business owner, supplier diversity professional, or workforce diversity professional working in an environment with a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equality.*

Contact DPC at events@diversityprofessionalsconnect.com.



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