

Michigan Small Business Development Center Launches “Small Business, Big Threat” Cyber Security Assessment Tool

The Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC) announced its intention to go all-in with its efforts to assist Michigan small businesses in evaluating risk of cyber threats by offering a free risk assessment tool.

The initiative, which centers on the [“Small Business, Big Threat”](#) website assessment tool evaluates risk and provides cyber security resources, aims to attract 10,000 Michigan businesses by the end of 2016.

“Over 1,500 individuals have experienced the Small Business, Big Threat website so far,” commented Keith Brophy, State Director of the Michigan Small Business Development Center. “We hope to have 10,000 individuals experience the site by the end of 2016. Increasing the cyber security awareness of 10,000 people makes for a safer, more vibrant business economy.”



MI-SBDC State Director Keith Brophy, John Hey of Trivalent Group (cyber security content production partner), and Latchezara Smith of MI-SBDC announce the launch of the initiative

The initiative was launched December 4th with a cyber security panel discussion and training held in Grand Rapids, MI. Similar trainings will be replicated across the state and announced at a later date. The initiative was developed and is operated by the MI-SBDC with funding support from the U.S. Small Business Administration. Grand Rapids-based technology firm Trivalent Group serves as the lead content production partner and cyber security experts.

The foundation of the initiative is a website, www.smallbusinessbigthreat.com, which allows individuals to take the free online assessment. At the conclusion of the assessment, the individuals receive a risk assessment report. From there, participants can choose from a variety of resources to engage with, including in-depth trainings, webinars, best practices, or industry articles on small business cyber security.

The information on the website is targeted to small business owners and employees who are non-technical. The assessment takes between 25 and 35 minutes to complete. The site has been live for a few weeks and already has received positive feedback.

“We have been piloting this program for a few weeks now and have seen notable results from participants,” said Michigan SBDC Associate State Director Jennifer Deamud. “We are confident that Michigan small businesses will benefit from this tool and be more prepared to fight cyber threats.”

Aside from direct outreach to SBDC clients and referral partners, the SBDC has partnered with Issue Media Group (publishers of Grand Rapids' popular Rapid Growth Media newsletter and Detroit's Model D) to publish a 10-part series on cyber security. Cyber security workshops will be scheduled throughout the state providing small business leaders the opportunity to learn more about the risks of cyber threats and how the assessment can help.

"The ultimate goal is to arm small businesses with information, an assessment of their awareness, and an action plan," Brophy adds. "The assessment tool is the starting point, but we're hopeful that our webinars, in-person training and action plans will help protect Michigan small businesses against cyber-attacks."

Learn more about the program and training sessions at www.smallbusinessbigthreat.com.