



The University of Georgia

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SBDC Clients Will Benefit From New Fintel Financial Analysis Software

Business consultants for the Georgia Small Business Development Center Network have a new financial analysis tool that can help clients compare the financial performance of their companies with others in their industry. Developed by Fintel.us, the online software utilizes a database of more than 900,000 privately-held companies in 2,500 industry groups.

"We're excited to be able to offer Georgia entrepreneurs this powerful new analytical software. With the guidance of SBDC consultants, Fintel will show business owners how to better manage their company's operations to generate higher profits and stronger cash flow," said Allan Adams, state director of the Georgia SBDC Network. "Fintel is one tool in our arsenal of products and services that allows us to offer a broader and more sophisticated range of solutions to entrepreneurs across the state."

For its comparisons, known as benchmarks, Fintel uses 14 financial ratios generated from a company's financial statements. One advantage Fintel has over other benchmarks is that its comparisons are based on more detailed size segments (small, medium and large) specific to each industry rather than breakdowns based on fixed size thresholds. For example, other benchmarks base all their comparisons on fixed sales volumes or asset sizes.

In addition to the benchmarks, the online software provides an extensive array of analytical "what-if" scenarios to show company owners how they can

strengthen liquidity, profitability, efficiency and growth by improving specific financial categories.

Company owners wanting to take advantage of the Fintel financial analysis tool should contact their local SBDC office (go to www.georgiasbdc.org to find the closest office) to set up an appointment with a consultant.

All work performed by Georgia SBDC consultants is strictly confidential. Also, the financial data on Fintel's system is encrypted and secure. And unlike other financial analysis tools, a company's financial data entered by SBDC consultants is not used to generate additional benchmarks.

After entering a client's financial data into the Fintel system, SBDC consultants work one-on-one with clients to show them how their company compares to others in their industry and what specific steps they can take to improve their bottom line. Working with a client using the Fintel software, SBDC clients can demonstrate various models and the earnings impacts of specific management decisions to guide profitability improvement decisions. Business owners will also be provided concise, detailed written reports with specific guidelines and anticipated outcomes if the strategic recommendations are followed. Another exciting capability offered by Fintel is a growth analysis module that computes the rate at which a company can afford to grow its sales without running into liquidity problems. If a company that wants to grow isn't positioned to do so, recommendations can be made to improve sustainable growth performance.



Passion, Planning, and Monkey Make for a Popular New Jesup Pizzeria

Jesse Thomas was an Army pilot, infantryman, and recruiter. Wherever he and his wife Heidi were stationed, he would also pick up part-time work at a major pizza delivery chain or mom and pop restaurant. “I’ve always loved the food industry,” he says. So when Thomas completed his final tour of duty in Hinesville, they decided to use his bonus separation funds to open a pizzeria of their own.

“All the places I worked seemed to be missing something,” says Thomas. “They didn’t allow employees to offer new ideas or recipes. You couldn’t break free. With my own place, I could bring my ideas out.”

Jesse and Heidi opened Gooley’s Pizza in Jesup in November, 2008, and it quickly became a popular gathering spot for the town’s teens and families. “My wife and I both had a lot of creative energy to devote to the business,” says Thomas. “Our location near the new Wayne County High School is good. We provide a unique dining

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experience that invites our customers to come out, eat great food, and be safe.”

SBDC Consultant Debbie Graham, who divides her time between Brunswick and Jesup, admits that the location scared her to death. “Their building was on a main highway with no deceleration lane. It looked like a median was going to be added with the road construction that was going on there. Everything was wrong with that location. But their combination of fabulous pizzas, great customer service, and persistence -- he keeps going no matter what -- have made Gooley’s a successful venture. I’m not as worried as I was in the beginning,” she says.

Thomas went to the SBDC and Graham when he and his wife decided to open the business. “I knew how to make pizza and manage employees, but there were a lot of



(l-r) Heidi, Angel, and Jesse Thomas with mascot, Gooley (Bryan Thomas)

things about running the business that I just didn’t know,” he says. “Debbie helped make sure there were no holes in our general business planning.”

Graham also helped Thomas identify and go after nontraditional financing sources for his equipment and supplies. “Because his property was owner-financed, Jesse couldn’t use it for equity to finance his equipment or operations,” she says.

“Debbie was very helpful,” says Thomas. “She answered all of the hard questions that none of my friends or family knew the answers to.”

Sales to date have far exceeded projected revenues. In just a few months, Jesse and Gooley -- the restaurant’s monkey logo and mascot designed by Heidi -- have become famous in Jesup. A suited Gooley attends most of the area’s special events, to the delight of area children.

Graham and Thomas continue to meet regularly to run a general business health check. “Jesse is staying on target and paying attention to the financial side of the business. And he’s putting money into his retirement fund, which is the best part,” says Graham. Thomas is looking into opening a satellite restaurant close by with funds saved from his first six months in business.

“Gooley’s success has everything to do with the Thomas’s passion for the business,” says Graham. “Sometimes success is not about higher education or money, it’s about having a passion and pursuing a good idea that you know will work because of your experience and background in the field.”

Thomas agrees. “Don’t forget about all of the little things that made you successful to start with.” His passion to build a better dining experience has been a surefire recipe for success at Gooley’s Pizza.

IRS's Top Seven Tax Tips for Taxpayers Who Have Started or Are Thinking of Starting a New Business

Anyone starting or thinking of starting a new business should be aware of their federal tax responsibilities. Here are the top seven things the IRS wants you to know if you plan on opening a new business this year.

1 First, you must decide what type of business entity you are going to establish. The type your business takes will determine which tax form you have to file. The most common types of business are the sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, and S corporation.

2 The type of business you operate determines what taxes you must pay and how you pay them. The four general types of business taxes are income tax, self-employment tax, employment tax, and excise tax.

3 An Employer Identification Number is used to identify a business entity. Generally, businesses need an EIN. Visit IRS.gov for more information about whether you will need an EIN. You can also apply for an EIN online at IRS.gov.

4 Good records will help you ensure successful operation of your new business. You may choose any recordkeeping system suited to your business that clearly shows your income and expenses. Except in a few cases, the law does not require any special kind of records. However, the business you are in affects the type of records you need to keep for federal tax purposes.

5 Every business taxpayer must figure taxable income on an annual accounting period called a tax year. The calendar year and the fiscal year are the most common tax years used.

6 Each taxpayer must also use a consistent accounting method, which is a set of rules for determining when to report income and expenses. The most commonly used accounting methods are the cash method and an accrual method. Under the cash method, you generally report income in the tax year you receive it and deduct expenses in the tax year you pay them. Under an accrual method, you generally report income in the tax year you earn it and deduct expenses in the tax year you incur them.

7 Visit the Business Section of IRS.gov for resources to assist entrepreneurs with starting and operating a new business.

To get the latest IRS news and products and services, subscribe to e-News for Small Businesses on IRS.gov at <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=154825,00.html>. Click "Subscribe Now" at the bottom of the page and enter your e-mail address.

If you had the opportunity for one-on-one mentoring with the world's leading corporations, would you take it?

Become one of Georgia's elite small businesses by applying for the Mentor Protege Connection. Protege companies will have an opportunity to gain:

- Cutting-edge business practices
- New markets through global expansion
- Professional development and business training
- Enhanced and improved business operations

Hurry! The deadline to apply is October 15th. For additional information, go to www.georgia.org/mentorprotege.

This program is provided by the Georgia Department of Economic Development to proteges at no cost.





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