

# the Focal Point!



A newsletter for the customers of Focus Telecommunications, Inc.

## Healthy...

**K**now your medical history! According to the doctors at NIH, “nearly everyone has a serious health condition that runs in the family and could be prevented or caught early if you know to look for it.” The sooner you map your family health tree the better off you’ll be. Begin with your parents and siblings, add your grand parents, aunts and uncles – and continue branching from there. Ask how old relatives were when they were diagnosed with ailments and when they died. Make sure this information is in all your medical charts, and remind your doctors of your family history whenever a symptom worries you.

## Wealthy...

**T**his is the season when department stores are cutting prices, advertising loss leaders, and enticing you to open a store charge account with the offer of “Save 10% on your purchase today!” When you accept that card, it may be immediately maxed out - which actually lowers your credit score. (Maxed out cards work against you!) Think opening the account, getting the discount and then closing the card will work – nope, closing cards sometimes works against you, too. Those store cards usually have high interest rates. Take a pass.

## ...and Wise

**S**pend money on your hair! A good hair cut (and color) really change your perception of yourself. When you look in the mirror or accidentally catch your reflection in a



window you’ll like what you see. When you look good you feel good. People respond to you in a more positive way, look at you differently and pay more attention to you when you feel good about yourself. There is no more dramatic, inexpensive way to increase your self-confidence than knowing your hair looks great.

## Focus Recognized as One of the Gazette of Politics & Business Exceptional 53!

**I**n 2008 the Gazette of Politics and Business launched a program to recognize Maryland’s most “well rounded” businesses and organizations. At the Third Annual Awards Banquet hosted by the Hyatt Regency in Bethesda, Maryland, 53 companies were honored for their organizational growth, innovation and community service. “These 53 companies are great places both to work and to do business,” stated publisher Cliff Chiet. “To be exceptional in today’s ever changing marketplace, businesses must run smarter, faster and more efficiently while providing additional value to their employees and the communities they serve.”



“Coming in number 23 in our roster of 53 is Focus Telecommunications! Although their income was down this past year, this company improved their bottom line and did it without laying off a single employee or compromising the quality for which they are known...” “We were stunned that our small company came in so high in the company of giants such as Comcast, The Kaiser Foundation, and Eagle Bank,” said Donna West, president of Focus, “and we extend our congratulations to our clients, [Vision Technologies](#) and [Johns Hopkins](#) for also being one of the Exceptional 53!”

## Please! Don't Send Us Account Changes Between 3:30 and 7:00 PM or on

**T**his past Friday we had 42 calls between 3:30 and 6:00 PM from folks who needed to change their account information!

Some were “simple” changes— “Take Dr. Y off and put Dr. Z on call for this weekend.” Some were really difficult changes—“We just changed our cell phones; here are 11 new phone numbers that are in effect NOW.”

We have always asked that account changes be called in between the hours of 10:00 AM and 3:30 PM on weekdays only. This is when our programmers are available to make changes. When the “rush hour” begins at 3:30 we should have all hands on deck to answer YOUR customers’ calls.

In the past we charged for all changes made between the hours of 3:00 PM and 7:00 PM. We stopped charging when the person responsible for that task was no longer with us. However, we simply must find a way to stop this trend.

**Beginning November 1<sup>st</sup> we will begin charging a programming fee for changes that are called in after 3:00 PM.** The fee will be \$7.00 for an on-call change or \$10.00 per half hour of programming (with a 15 minute minimum) for other kinds of changes. Changes may not be available until after 7:00 PM.

If your business requires regular changes during these times please contact Anna in our Customer Care Department to see if we can work out another plan.

October 5, 2010

### Our Services Include

Answering Service  
Appointment Making  
Customer Service  
Data Entry  
Dealer Locate  
Direct Mail  
Fulfillment Literature  
Help Desk  
Hotlines  
Pre-Announcements  
Relief Receptionist  
Reservations  
R.S.V.P.  
Surveys  
Voice Mail

### Focus Comm Centers

1912 Liberty Rd. Suite F  
Eldersburg, MD 21784

2930 Carol Rd.  
York, PA 17402

### Remittance address:

PO Box 822640  
Philadelphia, PA 19182-2640

### Phone Numbers:

301-421-1111 MD/DC  
410-880-8600 Baltimore  
301-236-5500 VA  
1-800-886-6696 Toll Free

E-mail: [ask@focustele.com](mailto:ask@focustele.com)  
website: [www.focustele.com](http://www.focustele.com)

### On-Call info can be sent to:

301-421-0347 Fax  
301-421-5261 Phone  
[on-call@focustele.com](mailto:on-call@focustele.com)

### Customer Care Contact

301-421-5894 Office  
301-421-0347 Fax  
[customer-care@focustele.com](mailto:customer-care@focustele.com)

Join us on



Search people for  
"Lannette Gerbrick", our  
Director of Business  
Development

Connect with us on



Search for "Focus  
Telecommunications, Inc."

Refer a new client and you  
could receive **\$100!**

Call us NOW for more info at  
301-421-1111

## The President's Letter

Dear Friends,

You all know that Focus is a family owned business (now three generations), and I think that most of you know that those members of our senior staff who are not actually family members become family of our hearts and are hugely important to the well being of our company. What you may not know is that we have a "Futures" meeting every six weeks where eight of us come together for a full day to discuss the future of our company, and the present and the most immediate past.

I think this is the single most important thing we do for our company. We usually meet in my home, and enjoy a nice lunch together. We work hard, but in a relaxed atmosphere where we can enjoy each other's company. I believe these meetings give us a unique strength that makes Focus a great place to work (as well as a great one with which to do business.) At the end of the day we know we are all on the same page and working toward the same goals.

Our recent meeting was an exceptional one. We have added clients in spite of the economy, and most of them were referrals from current clients. We learned more about the new on-call scheduler software we purchased and we are pleased with it. It should help to eliminate errors, which are low to begin with, but there is always room for improvement. We decided that we would reinstate a portion of the pay that we cut at the first of the year which made us all happy. Our staff was as excited that we are recovering from the hit of the economy as they were that their pay was getting closer to being back to normal.

I think the Futures Meetings are a part of the reason that when we faced the loss of two large clients (who went out of business) all of our employees pulled together and no one jumped ship in spite of a pay cut. If anyone would like more information about holding your own futures meetings, please feel free to contact me, I love to share business tips.

Hugs,



## Life in 25 Words or Less

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

—Eleanor Roosevelt

## Gotta' Giggle

A boss asked one of his employees, “Do you believe in life after death?”

“Yes, sir,” replied the new employee.

“I thought you would,” said the boss. “Yesterday after you left to go to your brother's funeral, he stopped by to see you.”

## Annual Rate Increase to Take Effect

According to the Federal government the cost of living has gone down. Unfortunately our cost of doing business has gone up.

**INSURANCE** - With the exception of our medical insurance going through the roof, most of the increased costs have a real advantage for our customers.

**PAYROLL** - Our employees have all been with us one more year. We have not hired a new agent since 2009 and 85% of our employees have been with us for 3 years, but 46% have been with us over 10 years. This year, 4 employees will hit their 20 year anniversary. It means that we have well seasoned, knowledgeable employees taking your calls! But it also means a significant increase in our payroll costs.

**EQUIPMENT** - We have a chance to purchase some additional equipment in the next few months. It brings with it a possible tax advantage – but we have to spend the money first! The good thing is that this is an upgrade that we really want and that will make things better and easier for our customers.

For most of our customers an increase of approximately 3% will be reflected beginning on the invoice dated November 30, 2010.