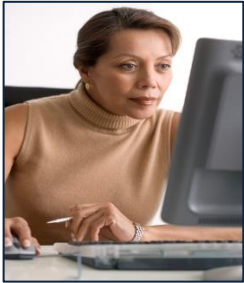




KYTC Launches Online Certification Portal for Disadvantaged Businesses



Applicants seeking to apply for a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) certification and Airport Concession DBE certification through the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) will experience a faster, more convenient process thanks to the new online application portal, DBE Online, launching today. Administering the

federal certification program to promote equitable business opportunities in the Commonwealth, the Office for Civil Rights and Small Business Development (OCRSBD) spearheaded the initiative.

“Our office is cutting red tape by creating a streamlined process for qualified women- and minority-owned businesses to become certified as DBEs with the Cabinet,” said Jamir Davis, Civil Rights and Small Business Development executive director. “Transitioning from a paper application to an online process will increase efficiency and convenience for small businesses and ease administrative burdens for both parties.”

Applicants previously submitted files of paper applications and supporting documents the width of two encyclopedias for the Small Business Development team to review.

The DBE Online process eliminates excessive printing, postage costs to mail paperwork and the risk of omitting necessary documents. Increasing efficiency, the online application offers built-in quality control measures that detect if any required documents are missing prior to application submission.

“Less time spent on administrative duties, like following up on incomplete submissions, will translate to more time our staff can spend evaluating applicants with fewer delays,” said Davis.

No external costs were incurred by the Cabinet for the development of this portal due to a collaborative effort between KYTC’s Office of Information Technology and the Indiana Department of Transportation, which uses a similar application process. Expanded capabilities through the portal are expected in the future to allow current certification holders to submit annual affidavits of no change electronically and to offer applicants around-the clock access to retrieve submitted files when applying for certifications from other states.

The KYTC OCRSBD establishes goals to create equal opportunities for disadvantaged businesses to compete for federally funded transportation-related projects in the Commonwealth and ensures the eligibility of for-profit businesses seeking certification to participate in the program.

To read more from this excerpt:

<https://transportation.ky.gov/NewsRoom/DBE%20Online%20Certification.pdf>



DBE Opportunities

Want to learn more about the DBE Program

Call or email us.

- Ask us about getting a letter of bond ability
- Need a capability statement? Give us a call
- How about a new/updated website, Email/call us
- Want to become DBE Certified? call us
- Need Training and Technical Assistance

Phone Number:855-678-9323 – Email: Info@kydbe.com

About The DBE Program

The Construction Estimating Institute (CEI) works with Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) as the statewide provider of the federally funded Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Supportive Services Program.

We want to increase the number of certified DBEs participating in highway and bridge construction, as well as assist DBEs in growing and eventually becoming self-sufficient. Additionally, CEI provides supportive services by assisting prime contractors and consultants with identifying DBEs for subcontracting opportunities on priority projects.

How Voice Assistants, Smart Speakers can Improve your Business



We take voice search SEO — search engine optimization — for granted today. If you had an iPhone, you have pushed the home button more than once since 2011 asking Siri a question. Android followed soon after with its digital voice assistant. It was not smooth

sailing at the beginning where the digital voice assistants often could not understand accents nor simple phrases. It was frustrating for the user.

But digital voice assistant developed. Amazon brought us Echo in 2014 for hands-free user experience to get such information as news, music, and order with Alexa, the digital assistant. Google even has the Google Home. Echo and Home are smart speakers that a wireless speaker combined with a voice command device having a digital voice assistant. It offers interactive actions and handsfree activation with the help of “hot” or “wake” words.

Fast forward to 2018. The shift to mobile continues. Mobile search surpassed desktop search in 2015. According to ComSource, users spend on average 69 percent of their media time on smartphones. The digital voice assistant evolved and expanded to learn and add functionality. In using the cloud, these devices and platforms can respond to your request from telling you what is on your calendar for tomorrow to ordering more cereal from Walmart. Siri receives over a billion requests daily. Amazon has sold over 21 million Echos in 2017 where there were 5 million Google Home sold during the same period. Clearly, we have embraced digital voice assistants and smart speakers.

Consumers have moved to these technologies and are more dependent on voice search today than ever before. Businesses need to do the same.

Tamara MacDuff, a digital marketing strategist and a speaker on SEO, social media, and content strategy says that people are using voice to search for their favorite stores, restaurants, and things to do.

According to a 2016 study by MindMeld, 61 percent of people use voice-activated searches because they can multi-task and find their answers when their hands or vision occupied.

Why should marketers and businesses care about voice search? Because it’s what customers are doing. MacDuff says that even playing and asking silly questions to their home assistants, like Google Home, Siri or Alexa, is feeding information into the search stream and returned links based on these questions.

When you are developing your SEO program for your business, you need to think about how people speak naturally. Think about how your customers would request services and products. For example, most people will ask, “What’s the weather in Lexington, Kentucky today?” not “Weather in Lexington, Kentucky.”

MacDuff suggests three ways to implement voice search into your content for SEO:

- 1) Listen to your prospects. How are they asking you questions about your company, product or service? What are they buying or searching for that complements your products or services? Find out by using the search bars on Amazon, Facebook, Google, Bing, Yahoo etc.

To read more from excerpt: <http://www.kentucky.com/news/business/article201766954.html>

Supportive Services Offered



- Estimating Training
- Building Capacity
- Mobilization Financing
- Bonding Assistance
- Marketing Plan Development
- Creating a Business Plan
- Building a Website
- Plan Reading



CEI is an educational organization providing the highest quality construction training in the industry. Over 100,000 owners, estimators, project managers, field supervisors, office support staff, foremen, laborers, and key management personnel have attended courses that are offered nationwide. The courses provide students with construction skills training and the critical information needed to be effective within their companies and organizations.

CEI DBE Supportive Services

Call 855-678-9DBE (9323) or visit us online at www.kydbbe.com