



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **MIDDLE MARKET BUSINESS OWNER WORKSHOP SERIES: LAUNCHED IN CLEVELAND**

Pittsburgh, PA, and Cleveland, OH (April 20, 2006). The Business Growth Alliance, LLC (BGA), in collaboration with the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority (Cleveland Port Authority), hosted and presented the first of what will be a nationwide series of Business Owner Workshops. The workshop for Northeast Ohio Middle Market Business Owners and Executives was focused on the subject of: *Increasing Profit and Sustaining US-Based Middle Market Businesses By Accessing Fortune 500 Company Know-How & Development Support*. The workshop was held at the Hyatt in downtown Cleveland on April 6, 2006.

The workshop was organized for the benefit of Northeastern Ohio Middle Market Businesses to help such companies grow and remain competitive in the United States and throughout the world. The historic event featured speakers from two Fortune 500 Companies, Ohio-headquartered Procter & Gamble Company (P&G) (NYSE: PG) and DuPont (NYSE: DD). Mark Peterson, a director in P&G's External Business Development group, discussed P&G's innovation strategy, as well as how middle market companies can access P&G Brand names, patents, and capabilities to grow their businesses. "P&G is open for business," said Mr. Peterson. He added, "We want to be the partner of choice, and are eagerly looking for inbound and outbound innovation opportunities." Mr. Peterson emphasized P&G's commitment to "good corporate citizenship" and their "open door" to family-owned and other closely held, medium sized businesses.

Dr. Barry Crouch, Licensing Manager of DuPont, discussed the benefits of licensing DuPont's Technologies and its approach to working with and selecting middle market companies. "DuPont spent \$1.3 billion on research and development last year," said Dr. Crouch. "Much of this technology will be used internally in new products, but inevitably some will not fit with our strategic plans and will not be implemented. This means there is an opportunity for middle market companies to take advantage of this pool of knowledge and drive forward to market with products they might not be able to develop internally. We are actively looking for companies interested in licensing technology and the BGA meeting was an excellent opportunity for DuPont to spread this message."

Also, Eric and Cary Senders, co-owners of 6062 Holdings Inc., a Northeastern Ohio company, discussed how they recently licensed a product line from DuPont, which is now the foundation for their current initiatives in introducing a new growing medium for the global hydroponics industry. “It is clear from our licensing deal with DuPont, and our interaction with P&G, that there are large, forward thinking companies which recognize the benefit of offering untapped technology to successful entrepreneurs, as well as small-mid sized companies, to capture ROI on what would otherwise be unused or shelved intellectual property. It is also clear that the best path to working with these companies is through yet2.com and the BGA, both of which offer access and assistance both pre and post deal”, said Mr. Eric Senders.

BGA featured speakers included: Mr. James C. Bly, Jr., Co-Chairman of BGA and Chairman and CEO of Source Companies, LLC based in Pittsburgh, PA and Messrs. Benjamin F. du Pont and Phillip Stern, co-founders and Partners of yet2.com, based in Needham, MA. Source Companies, LLC and yet2.com are both Founding Members of BGA ([www.bgallc.net](http://www.bgallc.net)).

James Bly focused on how companies must re-think their growth strategies and learn how to factor into their plans the ability to access world-class know-how, development support, and even brands and products lines from Fortune 500 companies. He presented practical examples of what middle market manufacturing companies are doing to profit from this emerging trend among Fortune 500 companies to assist smaller businesses. “Most medium-sized companies have not considered, as a key element of their growth strategy, accessing know-how and development support from Fortune 500 companies,” said Mr. Bly. “Often that would be less risky than considering growth through business acquisitions.”

Ben du Pont and Phil Stern explained how their pioneering activities during the past seven years have positioned their company, yet2.com ([www.yet2.com](http://www.yet2.com)) as the world leader in providing guidance and intermediary assistance to arrange successful “know-how” transfers from larger companies to middle market businesses. They noted that yet2.com has working relationships with roughly twenty-five percent of the Fortune 500 companies, which are committed to finding medium-sized companies that can benefit from intellectual property and knowledge transfer, and development support. “Importantly” noted Mr. du Pont, “we have developed the window and gateway that can facilitate a middle market company’s ability to more easily determine which Fortune 500 companies might be able to provide know-how or technology applicable to their needs, and the ability to immediately access direct introductions to the decision makers within large companies.”

Mr. Gary L. Failor, President, Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority, discussed the many financing options made available to Middle Market Companies in the Cleveland area through the Port Authority, which could help companies expand and grow their businesses. “The Port Authority is committed to the economy and employment in the region. We are here to support the financing needs of businesses, which need to fund

new facilities and equipment to grow and expand employment in northeastern Ohio”, he said.

The conference was well received by the companies which had been invited to attend, according to many members of the audience who participated in the Executive Roundtable Discussion at the end of the workshop. Mr. Mike Cain, President of Michael Day Enterprises, a local manufacturer of Engineered Thermoplastic Resins based in Wadsworth, OH said, “This type of conference was something overdue in our minds. The workshop addressed some of the real issues middle market companies like ours are facing today. We are trying to survive and grow in today’s rapidly changing and competitive environment and all of the points discussed at the conference hit home for my company with respect to the financing solutions, networking opportunities and growing our business value through know-how acquired from Fortune 500 Companies. Before this conference, our feeling was that Fortune 500 companies did not want to cooperate with middle market companies.”

Manning O’Connor, Executive Director of BGA said, “BGA was pleased and honored to collaborate with the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority to present this middle market business owner workshop. The audience received valuable information and examples of how this willingness of Fortune 500 companies to share valuable technology and know-how can benefit middle market and family-owned businesses. It is our hope that the information presented at this event will create growth opportunities for manufacturing businesses in the Northeast Ohio area.”

## **ABOUT THE CLEVELAND-CUYAHOGA COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY**

The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority helps the regional economy grow, keeps local industries connected to the world and supports thousands of jobs by providing area businesses with a competitive financial advantage. In more recent years, the Port Authority has expanded its role to include identifying opportunities to assist in regional revitalization efforts and to cultivate development finance partnerships.

## **ABOUT BGA**

Business Growth Alliance, LLC (BGA) believes that locally owned, privately-held, growing and profitable medium-sized businesses are materially important contributors to the betterment of regional economies and the social fabric within communities. BGA has carefully selected and organized a National Affiliate Network of seasoned, professional services firms, which are dedicated to providing growth advisory and investment banking services to middle market and family-owned companies and their principals. In addition to their core growth advisory and investment banking services, BGA Member Firms collaborate to address the strategic growth, capital formation, owner liquidity, and governance needs of such businesses and their owners. The eight Founding Affiliate Members of BGA include: de Visscher & Co., Source Companies, LLC, yet2.com, The Pursuit Group, Tenzing Consulting, Value Defined Middle Market, LLC, Asher Training, and US China Business Solutions, Inc.

For future workshop dates in other cities or to learn more about BGA please contact:

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