Attendees of the first Small Biz VCon walked away with tons of resources to help them grow their businesses online and in the Cloud. The Small Biz VCon, held January 23-24, was created by Dawn Brolin, CPA and Stacy Kildal, two of the "2012 Most Powerful Women in Accounting," in an effort to help small businesses learn about and incorporate mobile and web technology into their business.

During the two-day conference, attendees heard from vendors and experts on a variety of topics, including creating and maintaining attractive websites, managing finances and payroll on-the-go, filing taxes, tracking customers and increasing productivity and efficiency. Speakers included author Mike Michalowicz, CEO of Provendus Group, website stylist Jen Puckett and motivator Coach Jenn Lee, as well as presenters from Method CRM, ScanWriter, Bill.com, Intuit, BillQuick and Transaction Pro Importer.

In addition to product demonstrations and best practices, many vendors offered special discounts on their products for professionals who attended the VCon. Dawn and Stacy, who are both Advanced QuickBooks ProAdvisors and co-founders and co-hosts of the online radio podcast "Radio Free QuickBooks," also bought Kindle editions of **The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur** by Michalowicz for each attendee and gave 10 percent of the profit back to several randomly picked attendees.

Speakers shared the significance of branding and researching the various technologies, as well as the importance of picking solutions that are the right fit for the business. With the various options, small business owners have many solutions to choose from. However, not every solution will meet the unique needs of every business. The cloud and mobile technology that businesses choose should increase and simplify their collaboration efforts and efficiency.

Brand identification extends past choosing the right technology to designing the

Michalowicz's book, **The Pumpkin Plan**. Investing in technology and their website is a good start, but business owners shouldn't stop there. They need to leverage the technology to help them reach out to and nurture current and potential clients. In addition, they also need to identify which opportunities they should say yes to and which they should say no to. Lastly, they have to be willing to make the necessary changes for success.

"Are you stuck in the same place, but scared to move forward because it's unknown or you might fail?" asked Michalowicz. "You have to be so scared of where you are that the leap to get where you want to go doesn't seem as scary."

Two more Small Biz VCons will be held throughout the year. The next one is scheduled for May and registration will be discounted for attendees of the January VCon.

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