

# Enterprise Network August 2008 Executive Forum

## Prepare Your Business Today For Future Sale

Thursday, August 21, 2008

Preparing your business for sale *before* you are ready to sell it is a major key to procuring a successful sale. More than 125 business leaders attended Enterprise Network's August 21<sup>st</sup> Executive Forum-- "Prepare Your Business Today for Future Sale."

Moderator Tom Fencl, managing director of Green Manning & Bunch, Ltd. led panelists Brian Blaney, Shareholder - Greenberg Traurig, Bill Miller, Managing Director of Mergers & Acquisitions - Windstone Capital Partners, Jerry L. Mills, Founder & CEO - B2B CFO, and Andy Spillum, Partner in Charge - EideBailly, in a lively and engaging discussion.

Attendees learned that preparing a business for sale may take up to two years, and the subsequent sale, of which only 59% of sales actually close, can take anywhere from 6-18 months. In addition, emerging businesses learned that the primary characteristic buyers are looking for is value.

In looking at value, buyers focus on a solid performance history, a "clean story," a capable management team, growth story—strategic growth opportunities, consistently improving cash flows—EBITDA and personal finance planning. While each of these has its own intricacies, the EBITDA formula generated much interest.

Before time and monetary investment are spent in the above value propositions, our panelists imparted a few more great tips that prospective sellers should put into action immediately: begin documenting your intellectual property and business processes, be sure your balance sheet is clean (accounts receivables, inventory, assets, etc) and compile three years of audited financials.

Although preparing a business for sale is a comprehensive process, Enterprise Network has again provided value to the emerging business community with a thoughtful discussion and invaluable information on such an important undertaking.