

Sippel Glidden – FAQs

1. What makes Sippel Glidden different than other management or marketing service firms?

While every business consulting/contracting resource ultimately competes for clients by demonstrating the value and appropriateness of the experience and skills of the principals involved – and we are pleased to offer our clients over 148 years of combined business expertise and practice – we bring another special, unique consideration to the mix. We understand that whatever the problems or opportunities that our clients need help with, other key issues tend to surround and sometimes significantly amplify the challenges they face; namely governance, resources (talent and dollars), and timing. We are willing and able to creatively respond, not only to the issues at hand, but also to the chronic constraints that most small/emerging businesses operate under every day.

2. Structurally, what is the best way to support the transition of struggling, or marginal businesses into successful companies?

Establishing and using a diverse, talented Board of Directors gives every business the structural resources to establish an invaluable perspective/position from which to analyze operational performance, and establish the direction and policies by which the organization can and will conduct its business. While it is perhaps expected, many small businesses excuse themselves from the disciplined practice of operating under an active, functioning Board, opting instead for a seemingly efficient, compact set of owners/managers to run the business without the diversity, and expense of a formal Board structure. Fairly though, many small businesses have considered and then rejected the challenge of forming a 'full' Board, because of the serious fiduciary risks of bringing outsiders onto Board membership, and the relatively high cost of purchasing liability insurance to protect them.

3. What can small, emerging businesses with limited resources do to get the experienced help they need to transition forward – solving problems and leveraging opportunities?

One increasingly popular solution is for small companies to form an Advisory Board that can largely supplant the professional (but not the formal) functions of the named Board of Directors legally required by the States in which the corporate form of the business operates. [We recognize that some small businesses may be operating as sole-proprietorships, which require no legal Board structure. Whether or not they should incorporate for liability and other reasons is another matter.]

Another clear trend is the use of contract service providers and consultants or supplemental staffing resources, where specifically appropriate talents can be flexibly applied over limited time frames to increase the probabilities of successful execution - but avoiding the heavy cost/risk of permanently adding payroll.



4. What unique opportunities and benefits do Advisory Boards offer?

The Advisory Board meets regularly, and provides advice, counsel, and may even perform certain assigned tasks to assist the business owners/managers in reaching their objectives. Sippel Glidden typically recommends that Advisory Boards be established if a diversified formal Board of Directors is not actively engaged in operations oversight on a month-to-month basis. We assist our clients in recruiting Board members with business experience and talent, and can organize the 'charter' and objectives under which their Advisory Board operates. The most important benefit of having a pro-active Advisory Board is CREDIBILITY – credibility with your employees, your creditors, your accountant or attorney, and other key business relationships - even your suppliers. Your Advisory Board will help you do the right things right! And, that will be noticed and valued by all those you do business with.

5. Our business has little staff time and few dollars to invest in new initiatives – how can I afford your help, even though I know that I need it?

Sippel Glidden is very aware and sympathetic to this dilemma, and the Advisory Board suggestion is one example of how to accomplish a lot with a relatively small amount of resource. Outside assistance must yield a significant, real ROI – it has to pay for itself!

Another methodology that can dramatically impact the speed and quality of needed initiatives in resource-constrained businesses is the careful prioritization and selection of process and decision tasks that contribute relatively better results faster. Sippel Glidden can help you do this. If together, we can begin to increase revenues more quickly, and/or reduce near-term expenses appropriately; more discretionary cash will be available to re-invest in permanently fixing problems and seizing opportunities that lead to long-term profitability – fueling the cycle of continuous improvement.

6. We're not a small business, how can Sippel Glidden help us develop and succeed?

Sippel Glidden can focus strategically on the whole, or tactically on specific issues and areas of your operations – whether support or line functions. The process is usually the same, whether the context/application of our resources are small, medium, or large enterprises. Whatever the scope, there is always a reality/status to be understood, one or more objectives to be reached, and the challenge of successfully getting from here to there. Since every Sippel Glidden engagement is initiated by written proposal, our experience and capacity can be directed precisely where you want it – where it's most needed.

7. What do you mean by web-enabled?

The benefits of web-enabled management and marketing simply mean that the Internet, and the digital technologies that operate through it, can directly support, and value-add, nearly every aspect of business operations today. Establishing a web presence, and the market connections it immediately enables, is just a small piece of what a well designed and continuously enhanced website can do for your business. Your website, whatever



its initial function and features, becomes a strategic platform from which you not only engage prospective customers, but one you can use to build strong (and highly profitable) on-going relationships with your customer base, train and motivate your employees, simplify and improve your interactions with vendors/suppliers, and serve many other objectives as well. Using the web well is rapidly becoming the most effective and efficient way to compete and succeed – a way that few businesses can survive without.

8. How does that apply to small, emerging businesses like mine?

The only way small, emerging business can survive and succeed is to offer real value to your customers, support and motivate your workforce, and operate as efficiently as possible – and the web helps you do that. A web-enabled business is almost by definition a bigger/advantaged business, and will reach more prospects, sell more products/services, communicate better with (to and from) every relationship it has and needs, and will be much more organized because it has aligned, integrated and focused its capacities to a greater degree than its competitors. Small business is the bedrock of the American economy, but running a small business is the toughest challenge there is, and many/most do not survive. Those that out-perform by embracing and leveraging innovation/technology have the best chance at success.

9. What if I don't need or want a new or expanded web presence for my business/organization, are your services still of any value to me?

Yes, of course. Our core value-add is the skillful review and re-organization of management processes, and the creative, practical implementation of new marketing initiatives. Sippel Glidden works in a clear and straightforward way, sharing our insight and energy on behalf of the owners/managers – as if we had the same, full responsibility for the businesses' success as you do.

10. Give me some examples of how I'll benefit from the specific assistance you provide to improve the way I'm doing business today?

While not every item indicated will fit/benefit every client, Sippel Glidden can:

- Bring new ideas, energy, decision confidence, and credibility to the management team
- Identify advantaged governance and organizational changes
- Improve/Customize the financial statements and supporting data
- Develop new performance tracking systems and reporting metrics
- Align staff performance and compensation
- Integrate and align operations with objectives
- Document any/all policies, plans, and procedures
- Review and realistically revise revenue, expense, and cash flow forecasts
- Prioritize and plan new initiatives
- Specify new process and technology requirements
- Source, select, and negotiate with third-party vendors and service providers
- Lead new product/service or market development projects
- Plan/organize for web development contracting
- Assist in new financing and capital structure