



## GUEST COLUMN INSIDE VOLUSIA BUSINESS

Thank you for considering providing a Guest Column within the Daytona Regional Chamber's monthly Inside Volusia Business (IVB). The IVB is emailed directly to the Daytona Regional Chamber's members first and launched to a broader audience through social media and posted to the website.

IVB contains relevant information on current and upcoming Daytona Regional Chamber events, meetings, business, and member news all intended to assist in developing greater business-to-business relationships and help businesses grow and prosper.

**WORD COUNT:** 200 – 1000 words

**TOPICS:** Your column can provide business advice or share about an emerging business trend. Examples include announcement on new minimum wage to doing business in the digital era. Feel free to get creative!

**2022 DEADLINES** (to be published in the following months):

Monday, January 24	FEBRUARY IVB
Monday, February 21	MARCH IVB
Monday, March 21	APRIL IVB
Monday, April 25	MAY IVB
Monday, May 23	JUNE IVB
Monday, June 20	JULY IVB
Monday, July 25	AUGUST IVB
Monday, August 22	SEPTEMBER IVB
Monday, September 19	OCTOBER IVB
Monday, October 24	NOVEMBER IVB
Wednesday, November 14	DECEMBER IVB

- Please submit in WORD format to [kerry@daytonachamber.com](mailto:kerry@daytonachamber.com)
- Provide images in JPG format including a **headshot**
- **Include a 2-sentence biography on author**

NOTE: If multiple submissions are made for the same month, the Daytona Regional Chamber will select the order of publication at their discretion. As well, edits may be made by the Daytona Regional Chamber and will be submitted back to original author for review. Submitting a column does not guarantee it will be published.

# Daytona Regional CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



--SAMPLE LAYOUTS--

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## ADVOCACY & ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

### Eggs & Issues Features New County Chair



Brower

Interested in hearing from the new Volusia County Council Chair, Jeff Brower? Then be sure to join us on January 14th, as the Daytona Regional Chamber will host a Zoom into Eggs & Issues breakfast from 8:00-9:00 am. Mr. Brower who officially takes office on January 7th will discuss his thoughts and plans for leading the County over the next four years. This is a great opportunity to see and hear directly from him as he begins his leadership journey with the County.

Center for Advocacy and Economic Prosperity Vice Chair Cheryl Coxwell stated, "We look forward to presenting our 2021 City/County recommendations to our new County Chair and

and having the opportunity to get his thoughts on infrastructure, business permitting, workforce housing and the competitive bid process and other important issues."

Admission to the event is \$17 for Daytona Regional Chamber members and \$35 for non-members. You will need your member portal username and password to access the member rate. Eggs & Issues is sponsored by Halifax Health and Daytona Beach News-Journal.

Admission fee provides firsthand access to the information presented with an added value of making connections with the Zoom participants. Additionally, all participants will receive a \$10 gift card to a local Daytona Regional Chamber member breakfast restaurant to use at your leisure. It is just one small way we all can support our members and return economically to those who need our continued business.

### City/County, Legislative and Congressional Recommendations Submitted for 2021

The Daytona Regional Chamber has approved its City/County, Legislative and Congressional recommendations for 2021.

The Daytona Regional Chamber's Advocacy Action Council drafted these recommendations after several meetings along with input from a membership survey. The intent is to develop a business community consensus agenda which will be forward to local city commissions/councils, Volusia County Council, Volusia Legislative delegation and our Congressional delegation.

Center for Advocacy and Economic Prosperity Vice Chair Cheryl Coxwell stated, "This year's Daytona Regional Chamber recommendations to our legislative leaders promote a strong economic and business environment that will help local businesses return to a sense for 'normalcy' and move our economy forward."

With our local economy having endured the COVID-19 pandemic including shut-downs, we support tax policies including e-fairness/internet sales tax to help "main street" businesses and to

revitalize growth in all sectors of our local market. To promote a competitive economic environment, we will also lobby to fund the most critical infrastructure/transportation needs.

While Florida has ranked highly in job growth, it still ranks 45th in legal climate which is why we support and encourage our State Legislative and Congressional officials to approve legislation that discourages frivolous lawsuits against businesses operating in good faith to limit employee and customer exposure to Covid-19.

In order to form broad-based solutions, the Daytona Regional Chamber's Advocacy Action Council will convene stakeholder groups and research issues based on our overall philosophy regarding specific issues.

These recommendations are being forwarded to area city commissions/councils, Volusia County Council, Volusia Legislative delegation, the area's Congressional representatives as well as the Volusia Elected Officials Council.

For a complete list of Daytona Regional Chamber priorities visit [DaytonaChamber.com](http://DaytonaChamber.com).



### Information Employers Need to Know in 2021

By Skip Lilly, Vision HR

As we move into the new year it is important to understand the changes to employment minimum wages and what that means to employers. To make it easy here is a quick reference to help you prepare for and implement the changes and when:

#### Florida Minimum Wage Increase

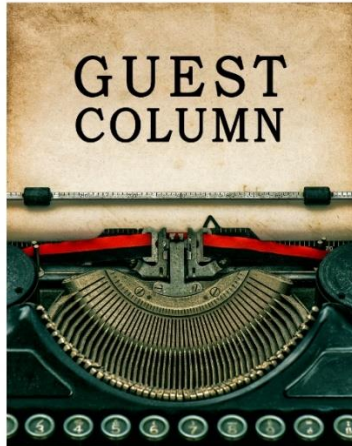
During the last election, Florida voters approved "Amendment 2," by just over 61 percent, according to the Associated Press. This will increase the statewide minimum wage to \$15 by the end of 2026. The scheduled increases are as follows:

- \$10 per hour (\$6.98 minimum base wage for tipped employees) on September 30, 2021
- \$11 per hour (\$7.98 minimum base wage for tipped employees) on September 30, 2022
- \$12 per hour (\$8.98 minimum base wage for tipped employees) on September 30, 2023
- \$13 per hour (\$9.98 minimum base wage for tipped employees) on September 30, 2024
- \$14 per hour (\$10.98 minimum base wage for tipped employees) on September 30, 2025
- \$15 per hour (\$11.98 minimum base wage for tipped employees) on September 30, 2026

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## Pandemic-Proofing Your Business

By Matt Fehrmann, ZGraph

No person or business could have predicted what 2020 would look like, or how it would affect their unique customers and community. But many of the businesses who fared best during this uncertain time shared a few common, strategic advantages worth noting—such as an active online presence before and during the pandemic, and the development of new systems to keep up in a rapidly changing economic climate.

Read on to discover what we can learn from these seemingly “pandemic-proof” businesses, big and small—and how to implement those lessons in your own organization for added peace of mind.

**For successful businesses, pandemic-proofing began long before 2020**

Did you temporarily close your business in 2020 due to COVID-19 safety restrictions or financial limitations? You are not alone. When international home furnishings retailer IKEA developed their ecommerce site (a place to browse product offerings and order online), the company did not know that a global pandemic would temporarily close 75 percent of its physical retail locations. But because they had the site to lean on, they were able to serve a greater number of online customers than ever before—with website sales up 45 percent for the year—while experiencing only a four-percent decrease in total sales revenue.

useful, in fact, that IKEA did away with its one era, it also marked the beginning of an exciting new one: IKEA’s performance in 2020 proved that a solid online presence is essential to weathering unexpected events in the modern age.

Another business that benefited from digital innovation pre-pandemic is the Daytona Beach area’s very own Southern Title. The local title agency had previously transitioned to a paperless closing system, reducing the need for in-person meetings, and establishing Southern Title as a modern fixture in the real estate industry.

The bottom line? By modernizing your business with digital solutions, you can better serve your customers’ ever-changing needs—even before you know what they are.

### Doubling down on digital innovation

When faced with the COVID-19 crisis, businesses that already had a thriving online presence were able to leverage their digital marketing efforts to further serve their customers and community.

For example, Stonewood Grill & Tavern, a locally founded Florida restaurant with eight locations across the state, doubled down on its digital innovation with increased email marketing, special offers and an entirely fresh curbside concept that paired Stonewood’s classic flavors with a seamless online ordering process. In doing so, the restaurant was able to stay competitive in the new COVID-19 landscape, while still providing guests with the brand experience and flavors they have come to know and love.

### Smarter social strategies

You likely found yourself spending a lot more time scrolling through social media this past year—and the savviest businesses were there to meet you with special offers, important operation updates and simple messages of hope, humor, and reassurance.

The key takeaway? Consistent, engaging posts help users feel connected to your brand, even if unexpected events like COVID-19 prevent them from visiting in person. An active social presence keeps your business top-of-mind for current and future customers alike, so that whenever they are ready to take that next step (whether it is booking a virtual consultation or ordering their dinner online), they know exactly where to turn to you!

Of course, we know that posting alone is not enough for social success. Targeted ad-spend strategies help make sure your message reaches the right people based on location and many other factors.

### In it for the long haul

One of the most essential “secret ingredients” in the recipe for digital marketing? Time! Watching your website climb the search results rankings (and thus, become more reachable by new customers) is an exciting process that builds over time.

Businesses that had already positioned themselves for search success pre-pandemic and maintained those efforts over the course of COVID-19, were able to preserve their competitive spots in search results even as other companies lost traction in this area. Southern Title, for example, did not waver on their search engine optimization (or SEO) efforts, even in the face of an uncertain 2020. This commitment allowed Southern Title to maintain a dominant search ranking, being one of the first sites users found when searching for title companies following the arrival of low, COVID-era interest rates.

Zgraph has been the Daytona Beach area’s leading local resource for web design and digital marketing for more than 20 years. Whether we are helping to drive sales or build your brand in the virtual space, it is our privilege to help your business weather unexpected times with dependable digital solutions you (and their customers) can count on

Matt Fehrmann is Vice President of Business Development at Zgraph Digital Marketing. He’s been exclusively focused on custom web design, branding, and online advertising management for 15 years. He has worked with hundreds of clients and currently manages a client online advertising budget in excess of \$400K. Grace Wehnianen is Zgraph’s Content Marketing Specialist. Her articles and social content reach over 1 million viewers monthly. Zgraph provides Web Design, Social Media, Search Engine Optimization, and Email Marketing Campaigns nationwide, among several industry-specific services.

