



OPPORTUNITIES | EDUCATION | EVENTS | UPDATES

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October 2025



As we move from fall into the fast-paced holiday season, there's no better time to make sure your business is both **cyber-savvy** and **holiday-ready**.

The York County business community is bustling with activity—from festive local events to year-end marketing campaigns. It's a season of connection and opportunity, when buying local really does make a difference. Whether you're gearing up for holiday shoppers, reviewing your business plans or thinking ahead to 2026, now's the perfect time to finish the year strong.

This month's newsletter highlights key opportunities to help you prepare, from cybersecurity tips and tariff management resources, to seasonal promotions like BOOST Local, Shop Small Saturday and the Historic Holiday Pass. You'll also find updates on upcoming events, York County's latest visitor spending numbers and new ways to grow your business before year's end.

STAYING CYBER-SMART 'Tis the season to safeguard your business



Cyber criminals can be scarier than any Halloween movie. From phishing scams to payroll fraud, even the smallest oversight can lead to big losses. In fact, **41% of small businesses were victims of cyberattacks in 2023**—nearly double the rate just two years earlier. And the average cost per incident is now over \$8,000.

Just ask **FirstSpark**, a local nonprofit serving the Virginia Peninsula, which learned this lesson the hard way when a cyberattack led to a fraudulent payroll transfer. The experience forced the organization to overhaul its policies, strengthen system safeguards and train its team to spot suspicious emails before they do real harm.

The good news? You don't have to face these threats unprepared. **October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month**, which is the perfect time to review your own systems: update passwords, enable multifactor authentication, verify email requests before acting and train employees to recognize red flags.

Find more actionable tips and read the FirstSpark story excerpt from our Crisis Management Guide below.

SIMPLE CYBERSECURITY TIPS

NEWS TO LOVE Tourism thriving in York County

Fall might be the “shoulder season” elsewhere, but in York County, tourism is in full swing...the upswing! From student field trips and battlefield tours to autumn getaways at Great Wolf Lodge, visitors are discovering York County year-round.

In fact, Virginia visitors spent a record \$35.1 billion in 2024, up 5.4% from the previous year—and local businesses are reaping the benefits.

With the new **Greater Williamsburg Sports and Events Center** under construction, the **Edge District** gaining traction and new attractions opening across the County, now's the perfect time to showcase your business.



Explore York County's many promotional opportunities, like **Restaurant Week**, co-op advertising and our **Shopping & Dining Guide**, to help your business reach both locals and visitors this season.

COUNTY TOURISM STATS

FREE ASSISTANCE Opportunities to optimize your business

As the year winds down, now's the time to get your business operations and strategies in shape for 2026. Whether you're experiencing tariff tumult trying to navigate global supply chain challenges, or gearing up for local license renewals and tax season, these upcoming opportunities are designed to help you stay efficient, informed and ready for what's next.



'Strategic Approaches to Tariff Management' WEBINAR | NOV. 6

Is your global supply chain feeling the strain of rising duties and unpredictable tariffs? Join VEDP's Supply Chain Optimization Program for a virtual session with trade expert Mike Allocca of Allocca Enterprises. Learn how to potentially eliminate, delay or recover duties and develop a smarter, more resilient supply chain.

[REGISTER](#)



York County 'Portal-a-thon' EVENT | NOV. 3-7

The York County Commissioner of the Revenue's Office will host a weeklong "Portal-a-thon" to help businesses and taxpayers set up their online portal accounts, by phone or in person. Establishing an account now will make business license renewals and filings much easier in the new year. Don't wait until January—log in early and save time later!

[MORE DETAILS](#)

HOME-BASED BUSINESSES

Explore tricks and tips to grow your business

△ *Scale Smarter.*
△ *Grow Stronger.*
△ *From Home.*

\$45
EARLY BIRD
RATE
THROUGH
OCT. 17th

2025 Home-Based Business Conference

The only event in Hampton Roads designed exclusively for entrepreneurs building and scaling from home.

THURSDAY
November 6, 2025
8:00 am – 3:00 pm
Virginia Peninsula Workforce
Development Center, Hampton

RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!
Scan the QR code for
details and registration.



HOME-BASED
BUSINESS
NETWORK
Founded On The Virginia Peninsula



AMERICA'S
SBDC
VIRGINIA
HAMPTON ROADS



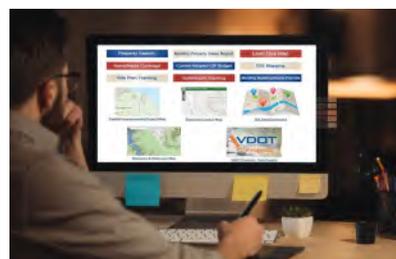
The popular Lunch & Learn Series may have wrapped up for the year, but the home-based business opportunities aren't over yet!

Register for the 2025 Home-Based Business Conference, a dynamic, one-day event designed to equip home-based entrepreneurs with the tools, strategies and insights needed to grow and sustain a thriving business. This year's conference features an inspiring keynote on how to scale your business from home, plus expert-led sessions on high-impact topics like budgeting and bookkeeping, using AI to boost efficiency, finding grant opportunities and converting interest into loyal clients.

Whether you're just starting out or ready to take your business to the next level, this conference offers the knowledge, resources and connections to help you succeed. Don't miss your chance to invest in your business and join a vibrant community of fellow entrepreneurs!

[REGISTER FOR CONFERENCE](#)

NEW IN TOWN & COMING SOON



Stay in the know

Each month, new businesses open up in York County. Be the first to know when you check out our New In Town:

- **Business list**
- **Video series**
- **Ribbon-cutting images**

What's up with THAT?

Want to know what's coming to the County? Wondering what's going on at that site next door? Check out the **Development Dashboard** for details on recent property sales, assessments, building permits, site plans and much more!



>>> Welcome to York County!

If your business is new in York County, WELCOME! We're glad you're here.

One of the first things you'll want to do is check out our many resources for new businesses and entrepreneurs and our grant programs. Our new **Grand Opening Guide** and **Starting a Business** brochure provide the information you need to get off on the right foot.

NEW-BUSINESS RESOURCES

MARKETING MINUTE

Fun ways to BOOST your holiday visibility



The holiday season is fast approaching—and with it comes plenty of opportunities to shine! From special promotions to community celebrations, here are four fun, festive (and mostly free) ways to help your business spread cheer and attract new customers this season.



BOOST Local – *“The Buck Stays Here” gift certificate promotion*

Join the Greater Williamsburg Chamber’s holiday campaign and reach new diners! Shoppers can purchase restaurant gift cards at a discount and redeem them at participating businesses. Last year’s program sold out, generating over \$100,000 in local sales. [Learn more and sign up >](#)

Rockin’ Retro Holiday Parade – *Sponsor or attend on Dec. 7*

Although parade registration is full, it’s not too late to get involved! Local businesses can still sign on as sponsors or attend the event to network and celebrate the season. [Details >](#)

Jingle Fest at Busch Gardens – *Networking fun on Nov. 19*

Presented by Williamsburg Jewelers, this festive evening inside Busch Gardens’ Christmas Town offers businesses a unique chance to connect, celebrate and sponsor one of the region’s most popular holiday gatherings. (It sold out last year!) [Reserve your spot >](#)

Historic Holiday Pass – *Promote your deals or discounts*

Submit a special offer to be featured in this year’s Historic Holiday Pass program, which encourages visitors to shop, dine and explore across the Greater Williamsburg region. It’s a great way to showcase your business to thousands of holiday travelers and locals, too. [Submit your offer >](#)

MORE MARKETING TIPS

BUSINESS ANNIVERSARY

Machine shop still trucking for almost 60 years

For nearly six decades, **Apples Machine Shop** has been keeping engines—and York County’s legacy of craftsmanship—running strong.

Founded in 1968 and now operated by second-generation owner Chad Williams, the family business continues to specialize in everything from classic car engine restorations to high-performance hot rods. Known for its precision work, loyal customers and deep community roots, Apples Machine Shop stands as one of York County’s longest-running businesses and a proud example of family tradition carried forward.



[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

Does your business have a milestone anniversary coming up? We’re already looking ahead to 2026 anniversaries, so if you’ve been in York County 20 years or longer and have a big year coming up, let us know—we’d love to share your story.

[Contact us](#) for a chance to be featured in a future edition.

A large, red, distressed stamp with the word "BUSTED" in bold, white, sans-serif capital letters. The stamp has a double border and a slightly tilted orientation.

BUSINESS MYTHBUSTERS

'Support is just for startups'

Myth: There’s no help out there for small, existing businesses—especially at the state level. Once you’re established, you’re on your own!

Fact: Actually, the **Virginia Small Business Financing Authority (VSBFA)** offers a range of programs designed specifically to help existing small businesses grow. Whether you’re expanding, upgrading equipment or managing cash flow, VSBFA works with banks to make financing easier and more accessible.

From loan guarantees and credit support to direct financing options, there are plenty of ways to get the boost your business needs—no startup status required!

[GET VSBFA PROGRAM INFORMATION](#)

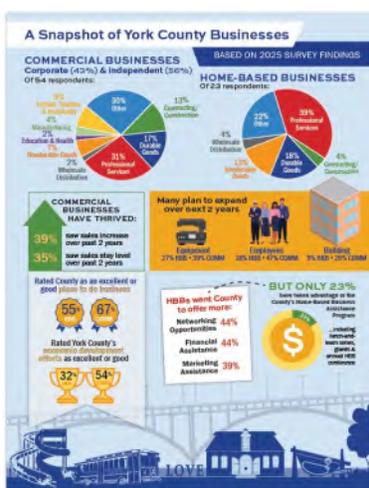
ICYMI Reports to revisit as the leaves (& numbers) change

Stay up to date on the latest publications and resources from York County Economic & Tourism Development. From annual reports to business survey summaries, here are three key documents you'll want to explore.



From cybersecurity tips to holiday marketing strategies, our fall issue of It's Your Business magazine is packed with timely advice and inspiring local success stories. You'll also find fall-themed articles on resetting, refocusing and preparing your business for the busy holiday season ahead.

[VIEW MAGAZINE](#)



[VIEW REPORT](#)



[VIEW REPORT](#)

See how York County's economy continues to thrive, with highlights from key business expansions, workforce initiatives and tourism growth. The 2023 report also celebrates

FESTIVE FOCUS

Holiday sales ideas that stand out



We've all been there. After hours spent looking for that perfect gift, you watch as your child rips into the paper, pulls out the item, then casually shrugs their shoulders and throws it aside, moving on to the next box.

Want to stand out this holiday season? Go beyond transactions and offer customers something more meaningful.

Think experiences, not just things

Give shoppers something truly unique that they can't find online or at a chain store. Experience-based gifts let your business surpass "more stuff" and move into the realm of memory-making. They also save your customers the time and effort of brainstorming on their own and make them look good. It's a win-win, which makes saying yes to your business even easier.

Make shopping simple

The key is convenience. Shoppers want unique gifts but don't always have time to curate them. If your business does the thinking for them, you've already won. Package, name and market your ideas in ways that make them feel special and ready to give. Consider offering festive wrapping or gift cards tied to the theme. Be sure to offer photos/graphics of the package to sell shoppers who aren't good at visualizing.

Making the holidays meaningful builds loyalty that lasts well beyond December. Customers remember the businesses that made their season easier, brighter and more joyful. By shifting your focus from simply selling to thoughtfully serving, you're planting the seeds for long-term growth and goodwill. When shoppers see that your business is offering something thoughtful, creative and ready-to-go, they'll be more likely to choose local—and more likely to come back year after year.

Check out our full ["Make it Meaningful" article](#) in our [Fall 2025 It's Your Business Magazine](#) for tips and tricks to make this year memorable for your business and your customers!

FULL SET OF TIPS

FREE ENTREPRENEUR EVENTS

Fuel your entrepreneurial journey here

Whether you're a startup founder, small business owner or someone exploring a new idea, this fall brings two exciting opportunities to connect, learn and grow your entrepreneurial network. From a regional pitch competition spotlighting innovative startups to a forum empowering veteran and military-spouse business owners, these events offer valuable insights, resources and inspiration for entrepreneurs at every stage.



WILLIAM & MARY
CHARTERED 1693

Military Entrepreneurship Forum

Oct. 29 from 9:30 AM to 6 PM

William & Mary, in partnership with Syracuse University's D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families, will host this unique event that connects veteran and military spouse entrepreneurs in Hampton Roads with resources, expert panels and regional business assistance organizations and networks.

Admission is free and includes lunch.

[REGISTER](#)

Start Peninsula

Start Peninsula Championship Pitch Event

Nov. 5 online from 6-8 PM

Watch local innovators take their ideas to the next level during Start Peninsula's final pitch competition event of the year. Top entrepreneurs from across the region will compete for seed funding and business support as they pitch their ventures before a panel of judges. This signature event celebrates creativity, collaboration and the thriving entrepreneurial spirit that drives the Virginia Peninsula economy.

[REGISTER](#)

Celebrate Buy Local Month & Shop Small Saturday

This November is Hampton Roads' Buy Local Month, culminating in **Small Business Saturday** on Nov. 29. Both are powerful opportunities to connect with customers who want to support their community.

- Promote your business through York County's Buy Local campaign—resources and ideas are available at KeepItInYorkCounty.com
- Read about assistance initiatives in our **buy local press release**. (bit.ly/buylocpr)
- Learn how we support your business in our **12 Days of Business Support guide**. (bit.ly/12day-yc)

When we all "Keep It in York County," we keep dollars circulating locally, strengthen our community and show customers the impact of their support.



SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY
NOV 29

FEATURED PROPERTY

Prime retail/restaurant lot for sale in the Edge District

817 Merrimac Trail in upper York County



Situated in the **Edge District** of Greater Williamsburg—a thriving corridor that bridges York County, James City County and the City of Williamsburg—this 1.15-acre retail lot offers excellent visibility and frontage along Merrimac Trail (Route 143). Zoned General Business (GB), the property features 156 feet of frontage and two access points, making it ideal for restaurant, retail or service-based uses seeking a high-traffic location.

Adjacent to James-York Plaza and surrounded by popular destinations like Casa Pearl, Shorty's Diner and The Virginia Beer Company, this site sits in the heart of one of the region's hottest "eatertainment" zones, where dining, craft beverages and experiences draw locals and visitors year-round.

[CONTACT AGENT](#)

[PROPERTY DETAILS](#)

Thanks to our partner organizations:



York County's Department of
Economic & Tourism
Development
is here to assist you with all your
business needs, from funding, to
expansion, to education.

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