



How does a minority-woman owned technology business get the word out about their groundbreaking product ARMS™ (Asset Relocation Management System), a software suite with a mobile app targeted to the relocation, insurance, and warehousing industry? As CEO, this was my dilemma mid last year. Aeolean's past and present clients are all high technology companies and government organizations, but our current product ARMS <http://arms.aeolean.com> was targeted to verticals we had no prior contacts with. What we needed were connections to the major players in these industries.

Question: How can a small business like ours get connected to these large companies?

Answer: Use the tom-tom.

tom-tom? Yes, GNEMSDC's (Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council) tom-tom!

GNEMSDC's tom-tom came to our assistance, and provided us with introductions to not just the companies but the decision makers in those companies. So what is this tom-tom? Actually, a better question to ask would be "Who is this Tom-Tom?" The answer is Tom Davis, VP External Supplier Diversity, Cartus, and Tom Colucci, VP of Strategic sourcing, Mobility Services International.

I reached out to Tom Davis almost a year ago. He was direct and to the point. If I had a product that would benefit Cartus, he would send the information to the right people. The first one page on ARMS I sent him was purely technical and explained the product. He wrote back to say "*How can any of these items (a) increase my revenue, (b) reduce my expenses? I will be asked the question 'why do I need any of this'.*" Within the next week I had totally re-written the one-pager so that it pointed out what the system could do (generate electronic inventories, capture voice descriptions/images of items, make data available on server 24/7 ...) and most importantly, the benefits to an organization like Cartus and its clients (reduce claims from losses, increase productivity, and provide a better customer experience). Tom, true to his word, was able to put me in front of the decision makers in Supply Chain Management. Our staff met with Ken and Jim, who were duly impressed with our product. As a result of that we were introduced to one of their key suppliers for a lengthy focus group meeting. But, Tom didn't stop there. When I asked him for others who may be able to benefit, he helped me out by giving me their names and contacts. I was now convinced that contacting GNEMSDC's Tom was the right way to go!

When I called Dr. Fred again, this time asking him for an introduction to Mobility Services International, he immediately asked me to send Tom Colucci an email. I dutifully sent off an email to Tom, and was pleasantly surprised when he actually wrote me back, --- in less than an hour! I chatted with him over the next few days to better explain our product and vocalize what kind of help I was looking for. He then performed his magic and put together a meeting with the President, and the VP of IT, followed by focus group meetings with 4 of their suppliers. And the meetings were scheduled for 18 days after I sent my first note to him. I had to pinch myself. Was this a dream? No, it was absolutely real! We went up to New Hampshire, spent the day with Tom and his colleagues, made the presentations, met the suppliers, and got valuable feedback that a small business like ours could only dream of! Again, this Tom also gave me names and contacts of other companies that may be interested in our product. I was now doubly convinced. GNEMSC's Tom-Tom was the right way to go!

Thanks to all of the contacts that Tom Davis and Tom Colucci have provided us, Aeolean is now launching the Pilot Program for ARMS (<http://arms.aeolean.com>).

So how does a minority business with a new product or service get the word out? No-brainer! Use GNEMSDC's true and tried network, maybe you too will end up being presented with a Tom-Tom!

Bala Krishnamurthy, CEO, Aeolean Inc.