

From: Main Street Monday - U.S. Chamber of Commerce <mainstreetmonday@uschamber.com>
To: Kevin L. BryantKevinBryant@scstatehouse.gov
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Subject: Decoupling, Getting the Price Right, Indestructible Pants and more...

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“The only pants more advanced than these are on spacesuits.”

That's what Steve Tidball, the founder of the adventure clothing brand Vollebak, [says about his pants, which designed to last a century](#). They feature materials so tough, you can walk through fire in them. The company previously released an indestructible [hoodie](#) and the world's first [graphene jacket](#), which is designed to do everything from absorb heat to repel bacteria.

If a diamond can be forever, can it help make memories last that long, too? Meet Ade Archer, the entrepreneur behind a unique approach to [honoring the memory of loved ones by turning their ashes into diamonds](#).

1. The struggle is real: For small business owners, great employees available for hire is [anything but abundant right now](#). But that tight labor market is also [prompting small business owners to become more innovative in their search](#).

2. Startups losing appeal? Millennials, saddled with debt, lacking savings and scarred by the financial crisis, [have become jaded with the romance of entrepreneurship](#). What are the implications for entrepreneurship and our economy?

3. Fear no robot: Automation need not be stirred into a doom-laden soup. [Here are the reasons why we should welcome the march of the robots](#).

4. Saving vs. investing: Here's a fascinating story about how small business owners are looking at the age-old question: [Should I put money away for the future or funnel it back into my business](#)-- and what the implications of both are.

5. Public-private partnerships: Combining the power of private enterprise and community stakeholders can be an innovative way of tackling problems that might not otherwise get the attention they need. [Check out stories from our business learning tour on just that](#).

6. Best places to work (and why): Business owners of all sizes can learn a lot from [Entrepreneur Magazine's annual list](#).

Bonus: 105 experts were asked what [worries them most](#) and [what gives them hope](#).

3 Q's with **Jessica Wright**, owner of [Simple Sweets](#) in Capitol Heights, MD

Q: What gets you up in the morning?

A: I have this theory that each of us are going to meet success at some point in our lives. So, knowing there's a daily opportunity to reach a new height of success while embracing my dream gets me up in the morning. And of course my children. Simple Sweets was created by intertwining my love for the arts and dessert. It's like the perfect love story, having my children cheer me on makes the journey so much more worth it.

Q: What words of advice do you have for the small business community?

A: Spend less time on attempting to figure out where to start, searching for that perfect moment and simply start where you are. Being vulnerable and in the moment with ideas and strategizing has the ability to create our greatest successes.

Q: What song gets you pumped up?

A: I may not be a committed member of the Beehive, but a little Beyonce goes a long way! "Better" by Jessica Reedy is another. Despite how good or bad life may be sometimes, we need that gentle reminder that things are going to get better. I can't forget "Golden" by Jill Scott. Living your life like it's golden, to be liberated, to be authentically you, and to unapologetically live in your now.

You can find **Simple Sweets** [here](#) and on [Facebook](#).

P.S. We'd love to feature your small business too! Hit us up at MainStreetMonday@uschamber.org

1. Confessions of a micromanager: "If we know that micromanagement isn't really effective, why do we do it?" asks entrepreneur Chieh Huang. [In a funny talk packed with wisdom and humility](#), Huang shares the cure for micromanagement madness.

2. Is the price right? Pricing your product is one of the most important decisions you make when launching a business -- yet it's also one of the most neglected. [Here are five things to consider on how to get it right.](#)

3. Decoupling: Business partnerships don't always work out. [Check out how this entrepreneur survived and thrived after splitting with her business partner.](#)

4. Lessons from Tinsletown : Here's what Hollywood [taught one entrepreneur about business.](#)

5. Waking up at 5 a.m. is not enough: [This fascinating article is a good reminder that what you do with your hours](#) -- and how you identify your 'prime time' -- that makes the difference.

Bonus: Looking for marketing inspiration? [Here's everything that was hot on YouTube this year.](#)

President Donald Trump, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and (now former) Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto signed the new U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) on Friday. This agreement -- a follow-on to NAFTA -- will modernize the trade partnership that has formed the basis of North American relations for a quarter of a century. [Here's what you need to know about that deal and what steps come next.](#)

[President Trump](#) is poised to sit down this week with Democratic leadership after Congress punted the partial government funding deadline to Dec. 21.

House Democratic Leader [Nancy Pelosi](#) (Calif.) and Senate Democratic Leader [Charles Schumer](#) (N.Y.) on Tuesday will head to the White House, where they are expected to [discuss the funding fight and a stalemate](#) over the U.S.-Mexico border wall.

P.S. Want to get more involved in additional efforts to support and defend America's small business community? Consider joining the Chamber's Main Street Leaders program.

Visit <https://www.uschamber.com/main-street-leaders> for more information.

What did we miss? Don't be shy. Let us know at MainStreetMonday@uschamber.com

Small businesses are feeling the strain of not having the staff they need as **81%** say they have to work longer hours or take on additional roles.

Although the [Q4 MetLife & U.S. Chamber of Commerce Small Business Index](#) shows small business owners' confidence in the economy continues to grow, the latest report also [shows that among the businesses searching for talent in 2018, 67% report difficulty finding candidates with the skills they need.](#)

Have your own hot tips, stories or thoughts to share? Reaching out is super easy! We're at MainStreetMonday@uschamber.com. We can't wait to hear from you.

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