

# Friends™

B U S I N E S S S O U R C E

*Everything for people@work.*

## Delivering a year of growth in the Cleveland Area

**CLEVELAND, Ohio** – Friends Business Source's fifth location in Richfield, Ohio contributes industry and market feedback as it celebrates its one-year anniversary on July 6.

Finding a niche within the Cleveland area was the first thing Friends Business Source (FBS) sought out last July. Scott Baldwin, Vice President of Market Development (Office Products Division) for FBS, had business ties to the area dating 12 years back. "My focus has mainly been in educational sales, but I knew that this new location would prove a progressive move for Friends Business Source."

With growth developing for FBS in Northeast Ohio, the team continues to specialize in office supplies, janitorial supplies, promotional products, office furniture, business machines, school supplies and more. In conjunction with the FBS corporate philosophy, the Richfield location focuses on the business customer's needs.

"It takes a lot of time to gain customer buy-in," assures Ken Schroeder, CEO of FBS. "Our specialty is business to business service. Projecting from our success so far, we will reach the point when we can establish a distribution center like we have in Columbus and Findlay for the Cleveland area so that we can marry stocked product with wholesale product for our customers."

Sales Manager, Pam Brooks of the Richfield location, has worked within the office product industry since 1984. Brooks recognizes the vast needs of the office supply industry customer and values the married services FBS offers. "As we expand into different markets around the state, we need to adapt and respond to the competitive environment that we are now a part of in order to capitalize on opportunities and grow sales. Our region could easily support 10-15 sales people, and I'd love to help them grow and develop new business."

Betsy Hughes, Vice President of Sales for FBS, was part of the Cleveland area visionary team for FBS. "Last year, the Cleveland market became part of the business plan as a prime area for our growth. I have known Pam Brooks from the industry for years, and she has been a tremendous leader for us in that area. I am excited about the success of the team."

FBS School Specialist of the Richfield location, Marcy Lucchese, acknowledges Friends ability to deliver excellent customer service through representatives who care about the end result for the customer. "My goal is to be a presence within all of the Cleveland area schools and to continue to grow our relationship in that market."

The array of office supplies and services seem limitless through FBS. "I have been selling and designing offices for over 10 years," asserts Lynn Fronek, Furniture Specialist for FBS Richfield location. "I have learned that Friends has a solution for almost every need that comes up in any business, from furniture to coffee and then everything in between. I hope to promote the FBS name and create brand recognition throughout Northeast Ohio."

In addition, Jennifer Douglas joined Friends in January and brought with her five years of experience selling to the educational community. She brought on multiple new school districts since becoming a member of the Cleveland team. She plans to help build upon Friends initiatives and launch them as the premiere Educational reseller in the Northeast Ohio area.

Friends Business Source is one of Ohio's largest independently owned office supply dealers. For over 45 years, Friends has been partnering with companies throughout Ohio and into southeastern Michigan to maintain the best service and supply of office related products. They specialize in office supplies, office furniture, business machines, educational services, coffee-trend supplies, promotional products and janitorial supplies. As a single source supplier, Friends truly has everything for people at work.

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