

Dosal sharpens focus of Economic Summit

■ **Alberto Dosal is chair of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce's 2012 Economic Summit.**

BY JANE WOOLDRIDGE
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Alberto Dosal is the founder and CEO of Compuquip, a 30-year-old business with more than 70 employees based in Doral. He is also first vice chairman of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and chair of its 2012 Economic Summit.



DOSAL

2012 ECONOMIC SUMMIT

When: 8 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Jan. 13

Where: Jungle Island, 1111 Parrot Jungle Trail Miami

Cost: \$200; \$75 for lunch and closing session only

Information: www.miamichamber.org; 305-577-5432

Q. You're the chairman of the upcoming Economic Summit put on by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. When did the chamber start putting on this summit, and why?

A. The first South Florida Economic Summit, held in January of 2011, was a huge success with more than 250 attendees and presentations by Gov. Rick Scott, the U.S. Secretary of Education and a senior economist with JPMorgan Chase. At the time, the Chamber saw a need to expand its outreach to both members and non-members and provide both audiences with the opportunity to hear where our economy was, where we would like it to be and what we need to do to get there.

The second summit, set for Jan. 13, 2012, will continue to enable the South Florida business community to participate in important discussions and exchange ideas that will help to shape the future of our local economy and the success of Miami's key industries.

Q. What topics will the summit cover, and how will it be different from last year?

A. This year, the summit will focus on four key drivers of South Florida's economy: Healthcare; Banking &

Financial Services; Real Estate & Construction; and Travel, Tourism & International Trade.

Panels of senior-level executives representing these industries will lead discussions focused on topics that we consider to be the "key pillars" of our community. Attendees will get valuable information from these in-depth discussions and have the ability to ask and have their questions answered by successful stewards of business and government.

Q. What do you expect attendees to get from the conference in terms of take-aways?

A. The Economic Summit is a great way for attendees to start the New Year with a clear snapshot of where the economy stands and how they can implement strategies to plan properly for a successful 2012. With more than 25 industry experts participating in panel discussions, the summit is sure

to address the top issues affecting all attendees.

Q. Why does the Chamber do this instead of some other group, like the Beacon Council or a government entity?

A. For more than 100 years, the Chamber has served as the voice of Miami's business community. We work closely with government officials and a variety of civic and business groups, including the Beacon Council, to educate members and develop programs that support local businesses and generate economic progress. We developed the Economic Summit to serve as a critical component of our educational programming initiatives and to help existing Miami-based businesses, their executives and their employees exchange ideas and learn new ways to advance their businesses in the New Year.

Q. Some locals have com-

plained that the chamber doesn't always represent the community in its broadest terms. Do you think that's true, and how do you reach out to segments that might not be in touch with the chamber, especially for this event?

A. Over the years, the Chamber has not only expanded the scope of its educational programming, it has also expanded the marketing of these programs to businesses that are not Chamber members. As a result, business professionals who attend events such as the Economic Summit experience first hand the role the Chamber plays in contributing to the local community.

I'm a prime example of a business owner who spent decades not realizing the benefits the Chamber could provide to me and my business. Since I took an active role four years ago, participating in Chamber events and volunteering for committees, I've reaped tremendous rewards that have helped me learn from my peers, make a difference in Miami's economic progress and gain new clients for my own small business. Like a lot of things in life, you get out of the Chamber what you put into it.

Q. Working with the Chamber is your volunteer job. What is your "day" job?

A. I'm chairman of Compuquip Technologies, a family-owned and operated business I founded more than 30 years ago. We provide local and statewide businesses with fully integrated IT services, including cabling, networking, Internet security and managed IT services. Together with our subsidiaries, Blue Wave Communications and BrightGauge Software, we provide end-to-end solutions that simplify the business of informa-

tion technology.

Q. So you work in the technology sector. Recent stories have pointed out that young workers are leaving South Florida, in part because there aren't enough tech sector jobs. What does it take to grow the local tech sector, or is that even a realistic goal?

A. The fact is that there is a wealth of great tech talent in South Florida, and in the past year, our companies alone added 20 new employees from the local area.

Over the years, many of our civic leaders have been working hard to keep these "best and brightest" professionals local. The Technology Committee of the Chamber has done phenomenal work to keep jobs here by promoting collaboration among tech and bioscience, which you can see in the University of Miami's Life Science & Technology Park, as well as fostering entrepreneurial ventures through such programs as UM's Launch Pad.

I strongly believe that Miami has all the ingredients for a booming technology industry. We are capable of getting momentum building is a huge success story about a local tech company that creates jobs and grows exponentially in a short time. It's definitely doable, and there are some great local companies on that path, but we're not there yet.

Q. What worries you most about the South Florida economy at this moment in time?

A. It's tragic to see such a significant workforce of professionals unemployed. With our economy's historically heavy reliance on real estate and construction, we need to create jobs in these sectors to help us rebound.

Q. If you could fix one thing in the local economy, what would it be?

A. The national banking crisis has had a profound effect on our local economy. For years, Miami banks were heavily involved in the betterment of our community and strong supporters of our civic organizations. However, in the past several years, their focus on their own bottom lines have resulted in diminished support that has impacted the health of the greater economy.

Q. What keeps you awake at night?

A. I actually sleep well knowing that Compuquip has four very capable senior managers, including my sons, running our businesses. However, the fast-paced nature of our industry and the need to constantly adapt to change are very demanding. As a result, the increased workload our managers carry and its impact on their work-life balance sometimes cause me concern.

Q. What was the last great book you read?

A. *The Primal Blueprint* by Mark Sisson was a fascinating read that detailed how adopting a primal lifestyle improves health and wellness. Sometimes you have to go back in time to prepare for the future.

Q. Tell us one thing about yourself that would surprise your colleagues.

A. I was a champion racquetball player at Florida Atlantic University.

Q. What is the best advice you ever got?

A. My father always told me to pick a career that I really liked, because I would be working at it for a very long time.