

STREETSMARTS, A NEW NONPROFIT SO. FLORIDA MONTHLY MAGAZINE

EMPOWERING THE HARD-CORE UNEMPLOYED WITH THEIR OWN BUSINESSES AND IMMEDIATE INCOME AS THEY WORK TOWARD SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Today WAGES, Miami-Dade's Homeless Assistance Center, and other supportive-care agencies are striving to help those South Floridians having difficulty qualifying for jobs and integrating into society. These hard-core unemployed include many coming off welfare, the homeless, migrants, recently released convicts, and the elderly.

Now, in 1999, a new not-for-profit South Florida magazine called *STREETSMARTS* joins that struggle to help empower these men and women, providing them with entrepreneurial opportunity, a legitimate and dignified means of income, job training, and an authentic voice as they work toward self-sufficiency.

GENERAL CONCEPT

The idea is simple: Those who want to work are taught basic business and life skills and given a marketable product that they sell for a 150% profit wherever and whenever they wish.

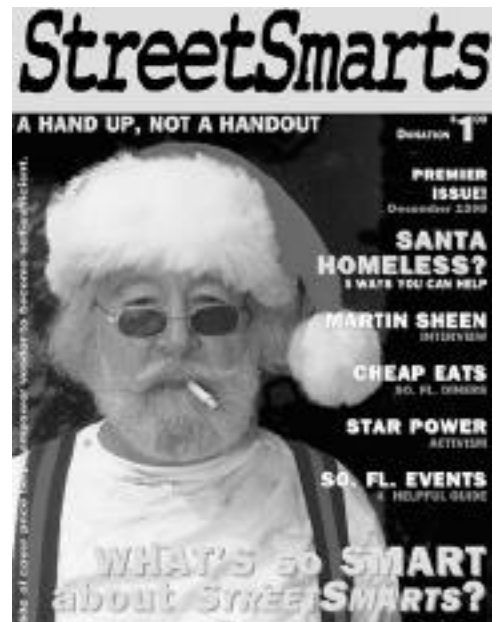
That product, *STREETSMARTS* (text in both English and Spanish), creates dignified work founded on the principle that most of us want to help people who are helping themselves. Coincidentally, many hard-core unemployed persons want to work, to enjoy employment that offers independence, dignity, flexibility, and immediate payment.

There are 50 such publications currently sold in communities of all sizes throughout the US. And everywhere they are sold:

- **Panhandling sharply diminishes.**
- **Crime decreases in neighborhoods served.**
- **At least 20 percent of the vendors move on to full-time gainful employment.**

At Chicago's five-year-old *StreetWise*, for example, a monthly circulation of 120,000 provides income to 350 active vendors at any given time. Over 4,000 unemployed, mostly homeless men and women have gone through the *StreetWise* program; a third are now employed in full-time, living-wage work. According to its publisher, top vendors of *StreetWise* earn more than \$100 a day. Many vendors earn \$1,500 a month or more.

Across the world such publications are empowering thousands of homeless and other hard-core unemployed persons to win control over their lives, taking them to higher levels of self-sufficiency and sustaining them there with a continuum of care.



Selling *STREETSMARTS* empowers those having difficulty integrating into the community to become self-sufficient through gainful employment. By offering a hand up, not a handout, *STREETSMARTS* helps these men and women earn the money and the skills needed to win dignity and control over their lives.

By helping the poor and hard-core unemployed to immediate and meaningful work, *STREETSMARTS* fills a gap in South Florida's social services community. Indeed, **there is no other *income-creation* program for our hard-to-employ. *STREETSMARTS* offers a first step toward economic self-sufficiency not available anywhere else.**

The publication helps other local programs succeed by acting as their economic arm, teaching clients how to work, manage a business and make money. Further, every issue of the publication features details about local agencies, their particular niche, contact numbers, volunteer, and gift needs.

Editorially, *STREETSMARTS* appeals to readers with a mix of general-interest pieces, informative articles for tourists, plus stories by and about those having difficulty integrating into the community, and includes agency success features, e.g., "Counting Success 345 at a Time — The Remarkable Story of Downtown Miami's New Homeless Assistance Center" (Community Partnership for the Homeless).

***STREETSMARTS'* publisher and editor, Carolyn Blair and Frank Kaiser, have solid foundations in the community and firmly established credentials in publishing, advertising, and social service. Both have a rich history of synergy.**

STREETSMARTS is an entrepreneurship, but instead of the primary goal of raising the value of company stock, the primary goal of this micro-enterprise is increasing the worth of individual human lives by leading them to self-sufficiency. Street Smarts Coalition, Inc. is a Florida not-for-profit corporation.

MEASURING SUCCESS

STREETSMARTS issues quarterly progress reports and an annual report providing detailed measurements including the following considerations: 1) number of vendors graduating from training programs; 2) number of vendors gaining other part-time, full-time or self-employment; 3) number of homeless vendors gaining housing through the program; 4) number of created jobs in the community; 5) increase in circulation; 6) pre/post surveys revealing changed perceptions of the poor, dispossessed and homeless within the community; and 7) total revenues generated through the operation.

Operating funds come from magazine and advertising sales, small donations, corporate sponsors, grants, and fund raising. Excess revenues will be invested into *STREETSMARTS'* Work Empowerment Project. A Volunteer Mentor Program is being established to offer additional support to vendors such as one-on-one aid with vendors' individual goals for job training and computer development (using *STREETSMARTS'* editorial-department computers).

As Miami-Dade Mayor Alex Penelas said at the 1998 Empowerment Zone Conference, "We must empower the *minds* of our community, unlocking the economic and personal potential of our poorest residents." *This is StreetSmarts' goal.*

For further information about this income-creation program for the poor, call Carolyn Blair at 305 754 8833 or e-mail her at streetsmarts@kaisercom.com. A complete business plan for StreetSmarts Coalition, Inc. is available at <http://www.kaisercom.com/streetsmarts/> or upon request.

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