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Microbusinesses are the Country's Backbone

Very small businesses create the jobs. Period. From 2004 to 2013, **U.S. micro-businesses created a net of 7 million jobs.** Very small businesses created jobs every year and mostly created more jobs than any other firm size. During 2009 and 2010, micro-businesses were the only firm size that created jobs. ([Small Business Administration](#))

Our labor force is undergoing a clear, structural shift to independent work. In 2012, roughly 1 in 4 independents hired other independents, spending \$96 billion and employing the equivalent of 2.3 million full-time workers via contract hiring. ([State of Independence in America](#))

After Chris Saint had spinal cord surgery, it became clear that he couldn't return to being a private investigator. After reminiscing about ice cream trucks at a party, Chris and his wife Jennifer drew up plans for a "pimped-out truck with pinstripes and a rockin' stereo system." They took their plan to a regular bank, but didn't get very far. The bank said that they were too risky.

*They were referred to **ACCION San Diego** by a friend. The greatest thing was when the Saints presented their idea to ACCION – they 'got it' and loaned Jennifer and Chris \$35,000. They also got business management assistance. "They didn't laugh," said Jennifer. "And they went all the way with us which was so cool. During the first year, we called our counselor: 'We are struggling, we don't know what to do' and they were always supportive. We wouldn't still be here without ACCION in that first year."*

*The Sweet Treats truck mainly caters to corporate events with a menu that includes Häagen Dazs, Ben and Jerry's, Snow Cones and dog ice cream. They became so successful that they went to **CDC Small Business Finance** for a bigger loan to pay off ACCION and buy another truck. They now have three trucks and are looking at a fourth, have two employees besides themselves and hire lots of independent contractors.*

Read more [Micro Enterprise success stories](#).



CAMEO's Mission

CAMEO's mission is to **grow a healthy, vibrant, thriving environment for all entrepreneurs and start-up businesses by advancing the work of our statewide member network.**

Our members help the self-employed and entrepreneurs **create jobs** for themselves and others, help Main Street **businesses survive and thrive** during difficult economic times, **revitalize neighborhoods** through business development, and provide infrastructure that **strengthens families and communities.**

Our member organizations provide entrepreneurs with small business financing such as loans and credit, business technical assistance (think mini-MBA) and business management training.

CAMEO is the voice for Micro Business in California - expanding resources and building capacity for its member organizations.

CAMEO

- Provides information on trends, innovations, and technology to increase capacity to serve more clients and reach new markets;
- Cultivates new resources and investments to provide business services and capital to microbusinesses;
- Promotes best practices;
- Builds public awareness about the positive economic impacts of Micro Enterprise development
- Advocates at the local, state and federal level for public policies that support our industry in California.

CAMEO is California's statewide Micro Enterprise association made up of over 180 lenders, training programs, job creators, agencies and individuals dedicated to furthering Micro Enterprise development in California.

Claudia Viek has been CEO of CAMEO since 2007. Claudia has been a pioneer in both the Micro Enterprise and business incubation fields in California and is a recognized thought leader in the field. She is the former Executive Director (14 years) of the Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center. Renaissance is an award winning training, financing and business incubation program in San Francisco. Claudia served on the Board of the National Business Incubation Association and founded the Pacific Incubation Network of business incubators from Baja to Alaska.



California Microbusiness Means Business Creating Jobs and Economic Progress

Microbusinesses create the jobs.

- From 2003-2012, microbusinesses created 900,000 jobs in California, while big businesses lost about 200,000 jobs.
- 4.2 million Californians were employed by microbusinesses in 2007.
- 3 million microbusinesses have no employees.
- Small local businesses have a multiplier effect on their local economies that is twice that of big national chains.
- Jobs are created locally.

Technical assistance is the key to success.

- Microentrepreneurs that have gone through training programs and receive technical assistance from *CAMEO members have an 80% success rate* (versus the 50-80% failure rate of small businesses that don't seek help.)
- CAMEO member clients who start their own businesses also on average *create two jobs in addition to their own*, over a three-five year period.

CAMEO businesses create jobs and generate income.

CAMEO members serve about 20,000 businesses with training, business technical assistance and loans. These firms, which were largely start-ups, created or supported about *35,000 jobs for California's economy*.

- The businesses created a total of *\$1.5 billion in economic activity*.
- For every \$3,000 in technical assistance provided, a company generates \$70,000 in sales.
- Federal taxes paid increased 35% over a five-year period.
- Traditionally, CAMEO members have served the emerging majority, the underserved - women, minorities and low income – or those who have high barriers to entry into the business world.
- Because of the Great Recession, CAMEO members are serving new populations - struggling Main Street businesses and unemployed who have turned entrepreneurial and are the new *free-agents*.
- An estimated 120,000 unemployed (about 5% of unemployed) are potential entrepreneurs.

