

# The MicroEnterprise Journal

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## **That's what I call a conversation starter** **January 28, 2008 |**

**Here's a post from the Washington Post's Small Business Blog, penned by Sharon McLoone, that I managed to miss last week. It contains the interesting proposal that the government increase the size and budget of the SBA, consolidate all those redundant small business programs across all those government agencies and pay more attention to small businesses in general.**

**I'm not altogether sure that I agree with this proposal 100%, although I do think there is something to be said for a certain amount of consolidation of small business programs across government agencies. The only problem is that, when the government starts consolidating, it often doesn't consider the differing needs of different segments of the small business population. Just because Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers and micro-enterprise development organizations all offer technical assistance and training, that doesn't mean they should all be consolidated into one program because they serve three very different sets of people.**

**Actually, the most intriguing thing Mr. Cloutier has to say was this:**

**"Soon there will be a new administration and new heads of agencies and that's why we're starting to make noise about this plan now," he said. "People are asking for concrete ideas for change and I'm offering some." Well, you know, that's a thought. Somebody needs to be talking about it and, since the actual candidates aren't doing it, I'm glad Mr. Cloutier is. Nobody is required to accept his proposal but it might lead to a fruitful conversation.**

**If nothing else, I will indulge the hope that the notion that we don't pay enough attention to small businesses takes hold ... somewhere.**