

Becky McCray

Expert for Small Towns at Cattle rancher and rural entrepreneur

Alva, OK, US

Practical steps you can put into action right away to shape a better future for your community

Biography

Becky McCray is a lifelong small-town entrepreneur. As co-founder of Save Your.Town, she shares insights from her real-world experience as a business owner and cattle rancher. Her practical perspective is featured at her highly-ranked website, Small Biz Survival, and in her award-winning book, Small Town Rules. She's been featured and quoted in books, newspapers, magazines, blogs, podcasts and university publications. She makes her home base in Hopeton, Oklahoma, a community of 30 people. Her goal is to deliver practical steps you can put into action right away to shape the future of your town.

Availability

Keynote, Moderator, Panelist, Workshop, Host/MC, Author Appearance

Industry Expertise

Agriculture and Farming, Social Media, Retail

Areas of Expertise

Revitalization, Placemaking, Small Business, Economic Development, Rural, Small Town, Community Development, Social Capital

Affiliations

Alva Area Chamber of Commerce, Northwestern Oklahoma State University Alumni Association, Shift Your Shopping National Working Group

Sample Talks

Small Towns Have a Future: 10 Trends in Our Favor

All your life, you've been told that small towns are dying, drying up, and disappearing, and that there's nothing you can do to change it. What you don't ever hear is the good news. Big trends are moving in our favor: brain gain, changing retail dynamics, new travel motivations and more. Learn why we have a future and how to shape the future of your town.

Rural audiences love this topic because it is a breath of fresh air: the good news about small towns!

“We Tried That Once” and Other Myths: Making your town idea-friendly

Too often, small towns shoot down ideas with “We tried that once” or “That’s not how we do things here.” But massive changes in the economy, technology and society mean small towns must change or die. Since we can never go back to the way things were, how do we start from here and go forward? Learn the practical steps you can take to change attitudes, improve the environment and create more connections, whether any of the old guard are ready to change with you or not.

This topic shakes up old ideas about small towns. Audiences leave feeling more optimistic because they see exactly how they can shape a better future for their town.

Small Town Rules: A Refresher Course in Common Sense

Shifts in the global economy, new technology and changes in society have made the business world much more like a small town, refocused on local businesses and communities. We’re hungry for a return to business and life on a human scale, and 21st Century leadership means relearning the practical principles that small town businesses have been using for years to succeed even in the worst hard times.

If you want a topic that appeals to a broad range of people, this is a terrific choice.

What Works in Rural Marketing Today: Be heard without shouting

Your messages are being lost in the ocean of information. How can you get your important communication through? How can you market, advertise or advocate when no one is listening? The answer is in this practical system for stepping up the engagement and layering the details that you can put into practice in your very next email, update or printed material. You’ll create valuable messages that get through and get remembered.

This is an excellent topic for tourism-related businesses.

Event Appearances

Do small towns have a future?

TEDxGympie: Innovation in Rural Communities

How Big Brands and Small Businesses are Thinking and Acting Small

American Marketing Association local

The Return of Small Town Business

Social Media Breakfast Maine

Fitting Social Media into Your Workflow

Texas Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus Conference

Small Town Rules

BlogWorld Expo

Small Town Rules -- Keynote

Michigan Small Town and Rural Development Conference

Small Town Rules -- Keynote
Social Media Tulsa Conference

What we can learn from small town entrepreneurs
SXSW Interactive

Finding Your Online Champions, and Social Media Roundtable
Nebraska Travel Conference

The Social Network: Marketing Strategies for Today
Oklahoma Governor's Conference on Small Business

Small Town Rules
RevitalizeWA

Charge Premium Prices and Visitors Will Thank You -- Keynote
Tri-state Agritourism Conference

Social Media: Linkage to Multiple Markets
International Economic Development Council Conference

Marketing Your Community as a Destination
Governor's Rural Community Summit

Panel with Liz Strauss, Terry Starbucker, Dave Taylor and Simon Salt.
Social Media Club

Small Town Rules - Keynote
Norfolk County Tourism and Economic Development Symposium

Small Town Rules -- Keynote, 3rd consecutive year
Social Media Tulsa Conference

Event host/emcee
SOBCon

Small Town Rules -- Keynote
Locally Energized: Community Futures Development Corporations Conference

Social Media & Tourism: Market YOUR Main Street
American Planning Association Illinois State Section Fall Conference

Small Town Rules - keynote
Norfolk County Tourism and Economic Development annual symposium/general meeting

Keynote speaker for 3rd consecutive year

Social Media Tulsa Conference

Small Town Rules - Keynote

Locally Energized: Community Futures Development Corporations Conference,

Keynote speaker

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture's Municipal Economic Development Forum

Keynote speaker

Rural Pathways to Prosperity Conference

Keynote speaker and workshop leader

Doing Business Creatively in a Northern Community

Putting Success in Your Way - 4th consecutive keynote appearance

SMTulsa Conference

Panel on Multiplying Your Online Reach with Jen Risley and Emma Wilhelm, and presentation on Creating Your Business' or Organization's Biggest Fans.

Go Local, Grow Local: American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA) Conference

Small Towns Have a Future - Keynote

Small Town Conference, Oklahoma Main Street

The Liquor Store Model for Social Media Success

Confluence

Tackling Rural Entrepreneurship Challenges

National Summit on Rural Entrepreneurship

All Business is Local - 5th consecutive year to keynote

SMTulsa

10 Trends in Our Favor -- Keynote, and Building a Strong Local Economy -- workshop

Community Connect Forum

10 Trends in Rural's Favor, and Why Small Towns Need Social Media

Rural Development Conference, USDA, TVA

Broadband Access as a Basic Service panel

Public Knowledge Policy Panel

Bringing Big Ideas to Life -- keynote, What Works in Rural Marketing Today -- workshop

Big Ideas for Small Towns

Turning Rural Negatives into Positives, with Deb Brown
Rural Economic Development Webinar

Current list on my speaking site
Over 200 events

Education

Northwestern Oklahoma State University
B.S. Business Administration

Accomplishments

Top 100 Small Business Influencers, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014

As selected by a group of small business experts and online nominations. Quite an honor, considering the competition included many much more "well known" people.

Outstanding Resource Partner, Small Business Administration, 2003

Honored in the Northwest Oklahoma Region, nominated by the local Small Business Development Center for our work together on Entrepreneur Days throughout the region.

Small Business Book Awards 2013

A Community Choice Winner in 2013 Small Business Book Awards, Small Biz Trends.

Best Small Business Books Published in 2012

Awarded by National Federation of Independent Business

Testimonials

Mack Collier

Becky agreed to co-host the 1st Live #Blogchat event at South By Southwest. I threw Becky quite the curveball, as I asked her to join and help facilitate the discussion and flow at this event with only a couple of hours notice. But I did that because I knew that she could handle the event, and she did so flawlessly. Becky is a very polished yet completely natural speaker, and that resonates with her audience. She was a star of our event, and a huge reason why it was so successful.

Cheryl Lawson

Becky's ability to connect the changes in today's business world to small town rules is phenomenal. When she speaks, you can see the light bulbs going off in the audience as they collectively nod their heads. Becky McCray understands community and seamlessly becomes a part of any audience she encounters. More than just a speaker, Becky is a valued partner and an asset to me as an event organizer.

Kevin Jessop

That Becky McCray knows her stuff. Our AMAOKC surveys indicate she was EXTREMELY well received!

Derrick Parkhurst

I have a sneaking suspicion that you could talk about anything and make it seem interesting.

Deb Brown

Outstanding guided brainstorming session today with Becky McCray. She got the entire room to start thinking about working together, sharing our passions and supporting local businesses. Everyone left with a list of things they could go back to work with and install right away. So much better than a one hour lecture and more empowering as well. By the end of the week, I saw businesses changing their marketing, starting to work together, cooperating with the local paper, and a few new people starting to work with the Chamber.

Laura Girty

Consistently audiences rate her highly and go away energized and excited to tackle their business dreams, and always wanting more. She continues to be one of the most valuable resources I have found for small business!

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