



# READY, SET, GROW

## Case Study

### Governor's Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs (GOSBA)

The Governor's Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs (formerly GOMA) serves as a vital coordinating entity within Maryland's Executive Department, dedicated to expanding economic access and opportunity for the state's diverse small business community. GOSBA connects small, minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses to procurement opportunities across more than 70 state agencies and departments, ensuring equitable participation in Maryland's economic growth.

Through its leadership, GOSBA fosters an open and inclusive business environment where all entrepreneurs have the tools, resources, and support needed to compete and succeed—reinforcing the state's commitment to being open for all small businesses.

Type of Business:  
**State Government**

Location:  
**State/Regional**

Services Provided by Kennedy Consulting Group:

**Brand Development, Marketing Collateral, Logo Design, Tracking and Analytics, Reporting, Event Planning, Media Relations, Digital Content Creation, Video Production.**



## Project Overview

As part of its consulting partnership and gubernatorial appointment within the Governor's Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs (GOSBA), Kennedy Consulting Group (KCG) developed and implemented several key brand initiatives to empower Maryland's small business community. These included the *Ready, Set, GROW!* statewide training program, the *Power Up* webinar series, and *Candid Conversations with Entrepreneurs*, an online digital series designed to highlight the stories of businesses across the state.

In addition to developing these programs, KCG created and implemented the full branding and marketing strategies for each initiative—including logo design, brand voice and messaging, core purpose and values, and a cohesive rollout across print and digital platforms. The firm also managed ongoing tracking and reporting to measure program reach, engagement, and impact, reinforcing its commitment to driving visibility, inclusion, and sustainable growth within Maryland's small business ecosystem.

## Challenges

During the creation and implementation of these initiatives, KCG faced several challenges inherent in building statewide programs from the ground up. Establishing cohesive branding and messaging across multiple platforms required balancing creativity with consistency, while ensuring accessibility and relevance for Maryland's diverse small business community. Coordinating with numerous state agencies and stakeholders to align objectives and communication strategies also demanded significant planning and adaptability.

Additionally, launching virtual programs such as *Power Up* and *Candid Conversations with Entrepreneurs* presented technical and engagement challenges, requiring innovative digital marketing approaches to effectively reach and retain audiences. KCG successfully overcame these challenges by developing unified, impactful strategies that strengthened visibility, participation, and long-term program sustainability.

# Actions

In response to the need for stronger visibility and engagement across Maryland's small business initiatives, Kennedy Consulting Group (KCG) implemented a series of strategic branding and marketing actions to elevate each program's presence and impact. The team developed cohesive visual identities for *Ready, Set, GROW!*, *Power Up*, and *Candid Conversations with Entrepreneurs*, including logo design, brand voice, and messaging frameworks that ensured consistency across all platforms. KCG also produced dynamic marketing collateral, and targeted digital campaigns to expand audience reach and engagement. To further enhance program credibility and efficiency, the firm designed professional presentation templates and digital assets that supported outreach, partnership development, and statewide business participation.

1

## Brand Development and Identity

Kennedy Consulting Group (KCG) established a unified brand presence for Maryland's small business programs by creating distinct yet cohesive visual identities for *Ready, Set, GROW!*, *Power Up*, and *Candid Conversations with Entrepreneurs*. This included designing logos, defining brand voice and messaging, and crafting brand guidelines to ensure consistency across all communication channels.

2

## Marketing and Digital Engagement:

To expand visibility and strengthen engagement, KCG implemented targeted marketing strategies that combined traditional outreach with digital innovation. The team produced promotional videos, social media campaigns, and marketing collateral that showcased each program's purpose and value while connecting directly with small, minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses across the state.

3

## Content and Resource Development:

To support long-term program success and credibility, KCG created professional materials such as proposal templates, presentation decks, and digital assets that enhanced business development and stakeholder communication. These resources provided a polished, consistent foundation for ongoing outreach, ensuring that Maryland's entrepreneurial initiatives maintained a strong, recognizable, and trusted presence statewide.

# Analytical Results

In her dual capacity as a gubernatorial appointee and consultant, the CEO of Kennedy Consulting Group (KCG) developed a cohesive visual identity through professional logo design—including the MBE University Conferences' 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo—, marketing collateral, and detailed brand guidelines that established consistency and credibility.

## Campaign Outcome

The strategic branding and marketing campaigns delivered measurable and lasting impact across Maryland's small business programs. The unified brand presence for *Ready, Set, GROW!*, *Power Up*, and *Candid Conversations with Entrepreneurs* significantly increased statewide recognition and audience engagement. Digital campaigns and video content collectively generated thousands of interactions and views, with *Ready, Set, GROW!* being adopted by both Governor Hogan and Governor Moore.

The branding position and marketing strategy resulted in the following:

- **Bipartisan Endorsement:** *Ready, Set, GROW!* achieved lasting success, having been adopted and continued under both a Republican and a Democratic Governor's administration.
- **Expanded Reach:** Connected thousands of businesses across Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Virginia with resources and tools.
- **Increased Engagement:** Boosted participation among small business owners by 35%, reflecting stronger visibility and trust in the programs.
- **Media Recognition:** Secured media coverage across television, radio, and print outlets, enhancing public awareness and credibility.
- **Economic Impact:** Contributed to improved contracting opportunities for small, minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses statewide.
- **Content Creation:** Led the creative team that created the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for the MBE University Conference logo, marketing collateral, and event strategy.

