Business Forum looks at leveraging corporate resources

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Freeman School assistant dean Peter Ricchiuti has seen Black Monday, the dot-com boom and bust, the subprime mortgage crisis, and the worldwide financial meltdown, yet he’s never seen anything quite like what’s happening in today’s credit markets.



Peter Ricchiuti, assistant dean at the Freeman School, will moderate a panel on alternative capital markets at this Friday's Tulane Business Forum.

“The country is awash with cash, but if you’re an individual or a small business, banks aren’t lending,” says Ricchiuti. “There’s plenty of money out there but not a lot of appetite for risk. Small businesses are really struggling and having to come up with innovative ways to come up with financing.”

This Friday, Ricchiuti will moderate a panel that explores some of the innovative ways small businesses are coming up with financing at the 31st annual Tulane Business Forum. The forum, an annual presentation of the Tulane Association of Business Alumni, takes place at the New Orleans Sheraton Hotel from 8 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Participating in the panel will be J. Marshall Page, an attorney at Jones Walker who specializes in private equity investments and leveraging state and federal tax incentives; Christopher Perry, who oversees the delivery of information, analytics and tools for capital markets trading organizations at Thomson Reuters; and Nicolas Perkin, founder of the New Orleans-based Receivables Exchange, which enables small and medium-sized businesses to sell their accounts receivables and access working capital in as little as three days.

The Receivables Exchange has established an online marketplace for businesses to auction off their receivables, making the financial transaction known as factoring—in which businesses sell their invoices at a discount to obtain working capital—much less costly and time consuming than conventional factoring deals.

“The Receivables Exchange is really one of the biggest stories in Louisiana,” Ricchiuti says. “The factoring market is something like 20 times the size of Wall Street in terms of numbers, and Nic wants to make the exchange here.”

In addition to the panel, other speakers taking on this year’s forum theme of “Leveraging Corporate Resources” will be Dean Taylor, chairman of Tidewater Inc., who will talk about ways in which Tidewater distinguishes itself in an increasingly commoditized business; Charles Kahn III, president and CEO of the Federation of American Hospitals, who will discuss the impact of health reform; David Brain, president and CEO of Entertainment Properties Trust, who will talk about off-balance sheet-financing; and Robbie Vitrano, chairman of Trumpet, and John Winsor, CEO of Victors & Spoils, who will talk about social media and strategies for the post-mass-media age.

For more information about this year’s program and to register online, visit TulaneBusinessForum.com.