

Who's on the list? It's a secret!

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ALTON – Currently, a dozen local businesses know they are on the “short list” of businesses being interviewed on film by *The Small Business Revolution* over this coming Wednesday and Thursday – but they are not coming forward at this time.

Vice President of Public Relations and Community Management for show producers Deluxe Corporation, Cameron Potts, said the show's producers were trying to keep a lid on the businesses chosen for the short list, adding the final six selected for the show will be announced Friday, March 23, at the Broadway Bash in Alton. *The Small Business Revolution* runs through Hulu, YouTube and the Deluxe Corporation's website and

features eight episodes each season – two for the community, and one for each of the six businesses chosen to be featured. Those businesses and the community will receive \$500,000 for innovations through the Deluxe Corporation.

Potts said, while Deluxe Corporation does marketing and design work, much of the actual hands-on work will be done through local businesses.

“We want to keep the dollars in town,” he said. “We try to work with local contractors to do much of the construction and physical needs for the businesses.”

Since announcing Alton had won the nation-wide vote for a town to be featured on the third season of the show, Potts said his team has been inundated with applications for businesses wanting assistance and attention from Deluxe Corporation. More than 230 applications from across the entire city were submitted.

“We opened it up from 1.5 miles from the visitors center to the whole city, because we had such a great outpouring of support from businesses wanting to be a part of the city,” Potts said.

Many businesses were alerted they would not be included on the show over the weekend and Monday morning. Some of those businesses, such as State Street Market, announced they were not included on Facebook and wished those who were selected well – a sentiment Potts said is being voiced throughout Alton.

“We have a hard time telling anyone no,” he said. “These responses, however, are only a little bit disappointed they were not included with people saying they are excited for Alton. There is a real spirit here of celebrating being a part of this.”

That sentiment was mirrored by Donna Nunnally of It's Raining Zen.

“Deluxe is a good corporation and I know they are going to help those folks who need it the most,” she said. “It's a good time to be an Altonian. We are still going to put our best foot forward every day and always look to improve.”

Even if a business was not selected to be the dozen filmed for interviews or the half dozen ultimately selected to be featured, Potts said the business may still be on film. Meeting locations and contractors being utilized to improve businesses will be a part of the process as well as those six businesses.

After this Friday's announcement by *The Small Business Revolution* host Amanda Brinkman and this season's co-host Ty Pennington, Potts said the team will return to Alton the first week of April to begin in-depth interviews with the six selected

businesses. They will stay for about 10 days before returning to Minneapolis, Minnesota, to work remotely with the businesses.

They will return again in June to do several reveals. If a business needs a website built from scratch, a new logo or construction work, Potts said that time will be when those things are filmed for the show.

Potts said the staff of Deluxe Corporation still works with the businesses they helped during seasons one and two of the show in Wabash, Indiana and Bristol Borough, Pennsylvania, respectively. Potts said Alton is much larger than those two towns, but will also receive a check-up from the corporation after six months and a year.

As for Friday, however, Potts said Brinkman and Pennington will do a meet-and-greet with Altonians during the Broadway Bash in front of Bluff City Grill. Bluff City Grill will be hosting “Mustache March,” a benefit for local police officers with live music.

“They will address the crowd and announce the six businesses that are a part of this year's show,” he said. “The rest of it is going to be us being there and filming the community celebration.”