



Wyoming SBDC Offices

State Headquarters and Statewide Information

**Wyoming Small Business
Development Center**
University of Wyoming Campus
13th/Lewis, Vocational Education Annex, Rm. 165
Department 3922, 1000 East University Avenue
Laramie, WY 82071-3922
(307) 766-3505 or
(800) 348-5194 (Wyoming only)
www.uwyo.edu/sbdc

Regional Counseling Offices

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**Serving Uinta, Sweetwater, Lincoln, and
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Rock Springs, WY 82901
(307) 352-6894 or
(800) 348-5205 (Wyoming only)

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Fremont County Center
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Riverton, WY 82501
(307) 857-1174

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1400 E. College Drive
Cheyenne, WY 82007
(307) 632-6141 or (800) 348-5208

Satellite Office
Serving Albany County
University of Wyoming Campus
13th/Lewis, Vocational Education Annex, Rm. 162
Laramie, WY 82071
(307) 766-3515

Region 5 Office
**Serving Campbell, Crook, Johnson, Sheridan,
and Weston Counties**
201 W. Lakeway Rd., Suite 1004
Gillette, WY 82718
(307) 682-5232 or (888) 956-6060 (WY only)

Program Offices

GRO-Biz State Office
Procurement Technical Assistance Center
Laramie County Community College
1400 E. College Drive
Cheyenne, WY 82007
(307) 637-4990 or (866) 253-3300 (WY only)

GRO-Biz Regional Office
1400 Dewar Dr., Suite 205B
Rock Springs, WY 82901
(307) 362-2110

GRO-Biz Regional Office
203 S. Main St., Suite 2003
Sheridan, WY 82801
(307) 672-3700

Wyoming SBIR/STTR Initiative
201 W. Lakeway Rd., Suite 1004
Gillette, WY 82718
(307) 682-2660

Business Voice

News for Wyoming's Small Business Community

Director Hired For Wyoming Technology Business Center at UW



Jon Benson

Jon Benson has been hired as the inaugural director of Wyoming Technology Business Center (WTBC), a technology related business incubator to assist Wyoming entrepreneurs.

Ground excavation began in July on the WTBC, located at the University of Wyoming.

Construction is scheduled to be completed in June, 2006. The WTBC will provide educational and mentoring programs, business services and appropriate tenant space and infrastructure. A state of the art information technology center will be installed to support companies with very specific high capacity information technology needs.

"The ultimate goal is to create a fertile ground for the development of technology companies an essential infrastructural component in Wyoming's long term economic development strategy," says UW Vice President for Research and Economic Development Bill Gern. "I am very pleased the university is bringing Jon Benson to the University of Wyoming to help us achieve this goal.

"He has a solid background as chief executive officer of a very successful non profit business incubator, as CEO of a high tech university spin off company, as a program manager for the National Science Foundation, and as assistant director of a university based think tank. His varied experience is just what Wyoming needs to help create a nurturing environment for the kind of cutting edge new businesses this state needs for a diversified economy."

"This project really has the potential to do something special," says Benson, who since

1998 has served as CEO of Medical Optical Imaging, Inc., a Charlotte, N.C.-based company that created a new type of medical device that uses light from lasers to image breasts for cancer diagnosis.

"I have really been impressed with the commitment of the state of Wyoming, the University of Wyoming, the Wyoming Business Council and the Laramie Economic Development Corporation to bring the dream of the Wyoming Technology Business Center to where it is today," Benson says. "I look forward to being a part of this team as we work together to help entrepreneurs grow technology related companies in Wyoming."

From 1986-98 he was CEO of The Ben Craig Center, Inc., a non profit business incubator that operated as a joint venture between the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and major private sector interests. Working with the UNC Charlotte Foundation he led development of a new \$3.5 million, 50,000 sq. ft. facility in the University Research Park that opened in 1990, working with nearly 100 companies during a 12 year period. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, he was a program manager for the National Science Foundation, working to promote the application of science and technology to the problems of local government, and was assistant director of the Urban Institute at UNC Charlotte, working on a series of local government related studies including transportation planning, parks and recreation and citizen participation.

Benson earned a bachelor's degree (magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa) in history (1972) from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio and M.A. (1975) and Ph.D. (1976) degrees in political science from The Ohio State University. He began his UW duties in early July.

There are now more than 800 business incubators of all types in the United States, Gern says, citing a National Business Incubator Association report showing that 85 percent of all companies that have undergone incubation remain in business, compared to the national five year small business survival rate of 50 percent.

The WTBC is designed to hold about 12 companies although the actual space within the facility is highly flexible. Gern anticipates 90 percent occupancy in year four. He said well run incubators are rarely completely full

some space should be available for the next new company.

The Wyoming State Legislature, in 2001, appropriated \$250,000 for initial design of the WTBC, and during the 2003 session appropriated \$5.3 million for development and construction of the incubator, contingent on the university securing a non state match of \$3.18 million. With critical assistance from U.S. Senators Craig Thomas and Mike Enzi and Rep. Barbara Cubin, UW secured seed funding from the federal government, through a \$1 million appropriation from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and a \$1.6 million competitive grant from the U.S. Economic Development Authority. The project funding requirements were fully achieved with a key \$1.6 million private donation from UW alumni and Casper philanthropists Mick and Susie McMurry.

UW Media Relations



The Wyoming Technology Business Center (WTBC) will be a research incubator to house technology-related businesses originating from the University of Wyoming, or from those choosing to become associated with UW because of its different research strengths.

Technology companies have great need to exist close to universities. Locating one at UW will mean that Wyoming will become a target for such companies and thus, will make Wyoming technology rich.

WTBC is a joint entity including the Wyoming Business Council, City of Laramie, Laramie Economic Development Corporation and University of Wyoming and is a not-for-profit corporation. The incubator facility will be constructed on University property. The WTBC will contract management services and lease appropriate space to the client firms residing in the facility

SmallBizU:

An On-line Solution To Entrepreneur's Educational Needs

At some point, every organization must be entrepreneurial if it expects to grow. Entrepreneurship is about economic creativity. It's a discipline, and like any discipline, it can be learned and improved upon. There are a variety of formal education options available to an entrepreneur, but finding the option that best fits the fast-paced work of growing a successful company is a challenge. To respond to this challenge, the entrepreneurial community can enroll in SmallBizU.

SmallBizU is for those individuals seeking thought-leadership. Designed specially for entrepreneurs and small businesses, this online university seeks to instill a formal business intelligence—the capacity to solve problems, meet challenges, and create valued products.

The courses at SmallBizU are organized by the 3Ms: Money, Marketing, and Management. SmallBizU offers a utilitarian curriculum that provides small businesses with real world tools and information.

More advanced course topics are also

available, from new ventures, to business managers, to entrepreneurs, to master level classes. The intent of SmallBizU is to offer a range of courses across all functional areas of small business. Large corporations have their own training departments—now you have your own just-in-time desktop university with SmallBizU. Each course is only \$10—major credit cards accepted.

For more information on SmallBizU, click on the SmallBizU link on the Wyoming SBDC website at www.uwyo.edu/sbdc.

Small Business Resource Center

Accion USA Works with Wyoming Business Council to Increase Small Business Lending

ACCION USA, a private, nonprofit organization that provides financial services to low- and moderate-income entrepreneurs, announced the availability of loans of up to \$25,000 to Wyoming-based entrepreneurs in need of business financing.

ACCION USA has lending operations in Florida, Georgia and Massachusetts, which, together with its licensees in Texas, California, New York, New Mexico and Illinois, form the ACCION USA Network. The Network operates in over 35 cities and towns across the U.S. and, since inception, has disbursed more than \$100 million in loans to over 10,000 entrepreneurs.

"We are pleased to have this opportunity to serve clients in Wyoming for the first time," says Bill Burrus, President and CEO of ACCION USA. "Together with the Business Council and other service groups in Wyoming, we will help Wyoming families build brighter futures."

"The Wyoming Women's Business Center and Wind River Development have been providing micro-loans in Wyoming, and now ACCION will add their resources to this important segment of business development," said Gov. Dave Freudenthal. "We are striving to provide as many tools as possible to current and aspiring entrepreneurs in the state. They form an important part of our economy and a vital engine for the growth of high-paying jobs."

Loan applications will be processed virtually via ACCION USA's new Internet loan application platform, available at www.accionusa.org after August 15, 2005. This program uses no public funds from the State of Wyoming, nor does the processing of its applications rely on government employees. ACCION's lending capital primarily emanates from philanthropic donors. Some of its corporate sponsors include commercial banks who seek to improve the number and activity of entrepreneurs who will become the next generation of banking customers.

Information and assistance for business plan development is available from the field representatives of the Wyoming Small Business Development Center and Wyoming Business Council. For more information, please visit the Web site at www.wyoming-business.org.

Wyoming Business Council Sponsors Booths at Sportsman's Expo

The Wyoming Business Council is offering an opportunity for sportsmen, as well as outdoor product manufacturers to exhibit at the upcoming International Sportsman's Expos (ISE) in Denver and Salt Lake City.

The Expos, considered America's premier travel, fishing, hunting, camping and outdoor sports shows, are consumer shows, and will feature everything from exhibit booths to fly-casting and elk-calling.

The show in Denver runs from Jan. 26-30, while the Salt Lake show is held March 16-19. Booth space at the shows cost \$250 for a 5x10 space, or \$500 for a 10x10 space if purchased through the Wyoming Business Council.

Currently, all WBC spaces have been sold but a waiting list is

being created.

For more information or an application, contact Annie Wood at 307.777.2844 or awood1@state.wy.us.

Wyoming Business Council Offers SHOT Show Opportunity

Measuring the success of a business' presence at a trade show can be a tricky thing - just maybe not for the folks at Cast Performance Bullets of Riverton.

A year ago, Renee and Kelly Brost took their high performance handgun bullets to the SHOT (shooting, hunting and outdoor trades) Show in Las Vegas. That trip came thanks in large part to a grant from the Wyoming Business Council, which provided nearly half of the \$2,000 cost for an exhibit booth.

The SHOT Show is the largest marketplace for all in the shooting sports and hunting industries and attracts buyers from all 50 states and more than 75 countries. The buyers represent gun shops, specialty archery stores, multi-line sporting goods stores, hardware stores, wholesale distributors, manufacturers and law enforcement among others.

In the year since Renee Brost went to the SHOT show, she says her businesses is close to securing a deal with Sportsman's Warehouse, which will put Cast product into their big box hunting stores as early as September. Cast and Sportsman's Warehouse first got together at last year's SHOT show.

"Being able to go to the SHOT show allowed us to meet with our customers face-to-face and let them see some product up-close and personal," Brost said. "More than that it gave us plenty of exposure to distributors. We talked to Cabella's and Sportsman's Warehouse among others."

"It was a great experience but we could not have done it without the Business Council because at this point in our lives we couldn't have afforded to go."

The Wyoming Business Council will once again offer a trade show incentive grant to exhibitors at this year's SHOT Show February 9-12, 2006 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Exhibitors that want to co-op with the Wyoming Business Council for table space can get a 10-foot by 10-foot table for \$950. Directory listings and furniture use constitute a separate cost.

Over 18,000 attendees along with 1,600 manufacturers and distributors frequent the show each year. Products range from firearms, ammunition; custom manufacturing; scopes and sights gun locks; gun cases; telescopes; binoculars; shooting range equipment; targets; training and safety equipment to archery; hunting and fishing accessories; eyewear; clay targets to camouflage; clothing; mitts and hats; and leather goods.

Interested businesses should contact Annie Wood, marketing and attraction specialist for the Wyoming Business Council at 307.777.2844 or by email at alongp@state.wy.us.

New Women's Business Roundtable in Worland

The Wyoming Women's Business Center is proud to announce a Women's Business Roundtable Program in Worland. The first Roundtable program was on Thursday, September 8th. There were 40 attendees that enjoyed lunch and participated in brainstorming ideas for future Roundtable topics. "It turned out to be a terrific networking hour," Robbi Welch, Worland Roundtable Coordinator and Office Associate for the WSBDC, said.

The Wyoming Women's Business Center, Wyoming Small Business Development Center (WSBDC), Washakie Development Association, Worland-Ten Sleep Chamber of Commerce, Northwest College, RT Communications, Chuck Glade State Farm and King's Carpet One collectively sponsor the program. There are six other Roundtable Programs currently throughout the state of Wyoming. Two of which Welch had originally helped start in 2001 in Powell and Cody. These Roundtable Programs have been successful and have a valuable networking impact for women in business or in managerial positions. "I am excited to begin the Roundtable Program in Worland. This is a positive networking program that has an excellent educational value and enhances relationship building", said Welch.

The Worland Women's Business Roundtables are held the second Thursday of each month, beginning at 11:45 am at the Washakie County Fairgrounds - Conference Building. This luncheon program is offered at no charge.

For more information on the Worland Roundtable program, please contact Robbi Welch at 800-383-0371 / 307-754-2139 or email: wsbdc@wir.net.

Noncredit Online Courses

The University of Wyoming Outreach School Division of Community Service Education (CSE) started offering noncredit online courses beginning Wednesday, Oct. 19.

CSE, in conjunction with Ed2Go, offers classes designed for learning or improving skills at an affordable cost. Participants can take classes from home and access course material around the clock online.

"I think the classes are great, I can take the classes for my own growth, interest and training in a number of different areas," says Debra Morke, of Casper. "The classes are very clearly put together and when dealing with the school or instructor, I have found everyone to be helpful and friendly."

Ed2Go offers more than 300 classes in areas including computer software, applications and programming, Web page design and programming, languages, writing courses, entertainment industry courses, grant writing and nonprofit management, business planning, administration and management, sales and market-

ing, accounting, test preparation, personal and career development, personal finance, health care, family and personal enrichment, child care and parenting and law.

A variety of Ed2Go classes are available for Professional Training Standards Board (PTSB) credits. Visit <http://outreach.uwyo.edu/enrichment/ptsb.htm> for a complete list of PTSB credit classes. For more information on any Ed2Go non-credit online class, contact Abi Gerhard at (307) 766-5634 or abi@uwyo.edu.

College of Business Internship Program

Why not take advantage of some great youthful enthusiasm for your business? The College of Business Internship Program offers you that opportunity - to gain the competitive advantage and grow your business.

The Internship Program is designed to provide advanced business students with practical experience in their fields of study. This is an excellent way for students to round out their formal education. The student may receive academic credit for an internship.

The advantages for the business community are tremendous. You get a bright employee with the latest technical skills to assist you in special projects such as developing a marketing campaign, setting up a new accounting system, analyzing business opportunities, or rewriting an employee handbook. We have qualified students in many areas of the business world.

The employer has an opportunity to take care of those one time, special tasks that can utilize a temporary employee. You get the benefit of fresh ideas and of evaluating students for long-term employment.

For more information on the internship program contact: Joan Downham, Coordinator at 307-766-2363 or email at downhamj@uwyo.edu or Lanny Stevens, Director at 307-766-2962 or email at lstevens@uwyo.edu.

Wyoming First Program Launches Web Site

The Wyoming First program, a division of the Wyoming Business Council, is pleased to announce the launch of a Web site designed to compliment the marketing efforts of its members.

The Web site (www.wyomingfirst.org), offers product descriptions, pictures and contact information, as well as links to members' homepages where the products are available for purchase.

"We feel this is one more avenue we can use to help Wyoming First members promote their products," said Wyoming Business Council Value-Added Program Manager Ted Craig. "This is a tool to promote their products locally, regionally and nationally."

Membership in the Wyoming First program costs \$20 a year and the benefits are many. They include availability of "Made in Wyoming" tags or stickers for as little as \$3 a roll, a presence in the Wyoming First store at Wild Horse Gulch during Frontier Days as well as placement in the Wyoming Products Pavilion at the Wyoming State Fair. Wyoming First members are also offered space on the Web site and in the Wyoming products catalog.

Business Council Negotiates Discounted Fee For National Hay Conference

Wyoming hay producers will have the opportunity to attend the Western Hay Business Conference and Expo November 29-30 at "The Ranch" in Loveland, Colorado.

Hay and Forage Grower Magazine will host the national hay industry conference, highlighting a variety of hay production and marketing topics. Experts from across the United States will discuss dairy, horse and organic markets, irrigation methods, forage analysis and Roundup Ready alfalfa.

The regular conference registration fee is \$150 per person. To encourage participation, the Wyoming Business Council Agribusiness Division negotiated a discounted registration opportunity for Wyoming hay producers and industry professionals. If a minimum of 20 people from Wyoming pre-register through the Business Council, the registration fees will be reduced to \$100 per individual. The discounted fee is only offered to Wyoming growers.

To attend the conference under this discounted registration, contact the Wyoming Business Council Agribusiness Division no later than 12 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 21. If fewer than 20 Wyoming producers pre-register, the fee will remain at the regular rate of \$150.

For more information or to pre-register with the discounted fee, please call Scott Keith at 307-237-4696 or 307-259-3274 or e-mail at skeith@state.wy.us. You may also contact Terri Barr at 307-777-2807 or e-mail tbarr@state.wy.us.

Special Call for Entrepreneurs

Four premier startup entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to pitch their companies to a distinguished panel of angel investors and venture capitalists during the next Venture West meeting. Think you can handle the pressure? Then apply to make a pitch - and get your venture in front of several active investors at the same time. If selected, you'll have the chance to make an impression on professionals that actively invest in regional companies. You'll also have the chance to impress your colleagues, polish your pitch and attract crucial support for your business.

In order to apply, you must submit an executive summary of your business plan to plans@venturewest.org. Finalists chosen by the screening committee will be required to submit full business plans and five-minute PowerPoint presentations. Up to four entrepreneurs will be selected to participate at the next event.

For more information on the location, time and fees for these events, visit the Venture West website at www.venturewest.org.



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307-766-3505

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UNIVERSITY
OF WYOMING



Small Business Development Center Winter 2005-06 Workshop Schedule

Please call the number listed for more information about the workshop contents, fees and registration deadlines.

Class Title	City	Location	Time	Date(s)	Fee	Contact
Educating Your Customer for the Sale	Worland	NWC Worland Center Community Center Complex	8am-Noon	Nov-15-05	\$10	Pre-register with Stacy at 307-754-6062
Bookkeeping for Dummies	Lusk	The Learning Center	6:30-8:30pm	Nov-16-05	\$15	800-348-5207
Fundamentals of Employment Law	Casper	SBDC Conference Room	9am-noon	Nov-17-05	\$25	800-348-5207
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	3-5pm	Nov-22-05	\$10	800-348-5208
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	5:30-7:30pm	Nov-30-05	\$10	800-348-5208
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	9-11am	Dec-8-05	\$10	800-348-5208
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	5:30-7:30pm	Dec-14-05	\$10	800-348-5208
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	5:30-7:30pm	Dec-19-05	\$10	800-348-5208
QuickBooks - Set-Up & Preferences	Casper	UW Outreach Center, Room 114	12:30-4:30pm	Jan-4-06	\$50 (\$175 for entire series)	800-348-5207
QuickBooks - Basic Bookkeeping	Casper	UW Outreach Center, Room 114	9:30-11:30am	Jan-5-06	\$30 (\$175 for entire series)	800-348-5207
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	5:30-7:30pm	Jan-5-06	\$10	800-348-5208
QuickBooks - Invoicing & Payments	Casper	UW Outreach Center, Room 114	12:30-2:30pm	Jan-5-06	\$30 (\$175 for entire series)	800-348-5207
QuickBooks - Vendors & Payables	Casper	UW Outreach Center, Room 114	2:30-4:30pm	Jan-5-06	\$30 (\$175 for entire series)	800-348-5207
QuickBooks - Payroll	Casper	UW Outreach Center, Room 114	12:30-4:30pm	Jan-6-06	\$50 (\$175 for entire series)	800-348-5207
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	5:30-7:30pm	Jan-10-06	\$10	800-348-5208
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	5:30-7:30pm	Jan-18-06	\$10	800-348-5208
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	5:30-7:30pm	Jan-23-06	\$10	800-348-5208
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	5:30-7:30pm	Feb-01-06	\$10	800-348-5208
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	5:30-7:30pm	Feb-09-06	\$10	800-348-5208
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	5:30-7:30pm	Feb-16-06	\$10	800-348-5208
Start-Up	Cheyenne	LCCC - Auto Body 204	5:30-7:30pm	Feb-28-06	\$10	800-348-5208

Cultivating Your Network Circles

By Aliza Sherman Risdahl



Think of your network as a series of concentric circles. The outer circle - let's call it CIRCLE 5 - are people you meet at networking events. You don't really know them,

but you have their business card and an idea of what they do. Maybe you even know what they need and have plans to help them by introducing them to someone else you know. The contacts in Circle 5 are the ones that take effort on your part to cultivate and convert into one of the inner circles.

The next circle in - CIRCLE 4 - consists of your friends and family. Why aren't they closer to the center? The nature of friends and family in relation to your business is a tricky one. While friends and family make an excellent network to tap into for your business, be forewarned that the connection may come with emotional strings attached.

CIRCLE 3 are your clients. Satisfied clients are often your number one source

of new client leads, but keep in mind that there is often a delicate balance in your client relationships. Not every client will feel it is appropriate for you to ask for referrals so gauge your relationship carefully. More often than not, however, they will make referrals unsolicited by you, particularly if they are pleased with your work.

CIRCLE 2 are your business associates. These are people with whom you do business or have done business. Unlike your clients, you have a more flexible relationship with business associates. You should be able to easily ask anyone in Circle 2 for client leads and business contacts. And put your competitors in Circle 2. Why? Because if you have more work than you can handle, you can refer the work to a capable company with whom you already have a relationship and perhaps get a finder's fee. You can usually remain a part of the client relationship in these types of relationships, and it serves you well to touch base with the client to make sure things are running smoothly. With the right "competitive cooperation," you could end up with new business from one of your competitors as well.

CIRCLE 1 is your closest network. These are the select people who know you and your business almost as well as you. Sometimes, these can be your employees, however, you may want to put your employees into CIRCLE 1A. You can't always turn to your employees for everything you need for your business, and there are some things you are better off not discussing with employees. You should be able to talk to your Circle 1 about anything and call on them at any time.

Your CIRCLE 1 network are the people you can always count on in a pinch, the people who you can trust implicitly, the people who never expect anything in return because you both know the relationship is balanced and mutually beneficial.

All of your circles require seeding and cultivation. Keep an eye open for anyone in one of your outer circles who shows signs of being ready to be part of one of your inner circles. And always be on the lookout for things you can do to continue to nurture those within each circle, even Circle 1. Can you make an introduction? Did you come across an interesting and relevant news article? Have you heard of

an opportunity that suits them? Give generously to your circles. Don't take anyone for granted.

Your networking circles also require weeding. Sometimes you may have a falling out or a drifting apart from someone in your innermost circle. Sometimes you give and give and give and get absolutely nothing back in return. Weeding can be as simple as no longer making an effort to cultivate and the contact will "expire." If the relationship is important to you, take the person out to breakfast or for coffee and speak candidly to them about how you feel. Sometimes a misunderstanding may seem like a weed, but a little extra communication clears everything up and sheds new light on the relationship.

While the temptation is to just tend to Circle 1 because they seem so valuable to you, don't neglect the other circles. Each one can bring unexpected value to your network, your business and your life.

Aliza Sherman Risdahl is an entrepreneur, author and television and radio producer. This article is excerpted from her book "PowerTools for Women in Business" (Entrepreneur Media, 2001).

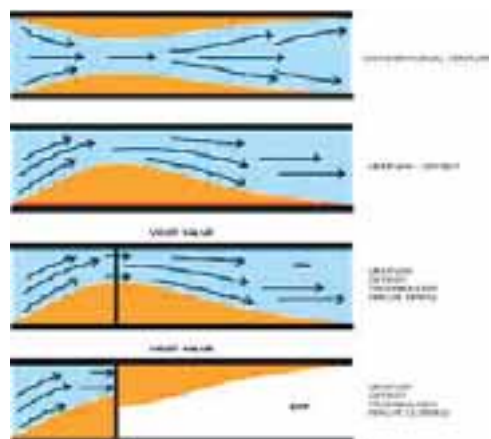
SBA Client Success

Big Horn Valve, Inc.



Senator Mike Enzi (at right) with Kevin Burgess, founder and president of BHVI

Big Horn Valve, Inc. was founded in Sheridan on June 11, 1997 by Kevin Burgess to develop a new stemless valve technology called the VOST™ valve. This basic new valve technology was incubated as a result of practical "field" lessons learned during installation, repair,



and maintenance of residential irrigation systems. Kevin's technical base came from nine years as Physical Plant Director at Sheridan College; five years as a maintenance planner with Exxon Minerals; and two years of studies at the Colorado School of Mines.

BASIC CONCEPT

As with the development of all new ideas, the VOST™ technology has seen many changes since its inception. A visit in 1997 with Dave Walrath and Bill Lindberg of the Mechanical Engineering Department at the University of Wyoming resulted in the formation of the basic valve concept (see pictures at left) that embodies an eccentric venturi to accomplish what other valves do with a stem and handle-turning fluid flow on and off.

The concept of a stemless valve is a new platform technology that can solve a number of different problems for industry. For example, more stringent air quality standards require the petroleum and petrochemical industries to reduce emissions from valves.

Patent No's. 5,718,257, 6,026,845, 6,109,293
Other U.S. and International Patents Pending

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

The principal source of valve emissions in standard valves is the dynamic (moving) seal around the actuator stem. Big Horn Valve has



Outside view of VOST™ magnetically actuated valve

recently developed a VOST™ valve that uses magnets to rotate the valve into the open and closed positions. This eliminates the need for a penetration through the body of the valve and as a result there is no way the valve can leak to the outside if it is installed properly. Notice the lack of a valve stem on the drawing

of the magnetic valve (at right).

TESTING

Field tests have been conducted on the manual valve at the Rocky Mountain Oilfield Testing Center north of Casper. The automated valve was tested at Torque Process and Control, a Casper firm specializing in refinery support services.

A full-scale test of 2" manual valves is planned for the spring of 2005, at Chevron-Phillips' petrochemical plant near Amarillo, TX. Upon successful completion of the Chevron-Phillips test, a follow-up test will be conducted at a refinery operated by Chevron-Texaco near Los Angeles, CA.

MARKETING

Big Horn Valve management sees greatest potential in the short run, for direct product sales to motivated customers-particularly those that have participated in product development with them.

In late 2004, Big Horn Valve established a joint venture partnership with MIC Group in Brenham Texas. MIC possesses a full range of manufacturing capabilities, including foundry,



machine shop and valve testing facilities. The company manufactures an array of products, including specialty valves for the petroleum industry. This partnership will also enable BHVI, with its one full-time and three part-time employees, to respond to larger orders without investing heavily in plant and equipment.

Management and engineering activities will continue to expand at the company headquarters in Sheridan, WY. Continued success in raising capital for manufacturing as well as recent SBIR awards will allow the company to meet its goals in 2005.

For more information contact

Big Horn Valve at:

http://www.bighornvalve.com/v2/big_home.html

Kevin Burgess

Email: info@bighornvalve.com

Phone: 307-672-0968

FAX: 307-672-5386

Address: BigHornValve - 248 West Works St.
P.O. Box 6849, Sheridan, WY 82801



INTRODUCING VENTURI OFFSET TECHNOLOGY (VOST™)

DeltaNu Named One Of R&D's Top 100

DeltaNu of Laramie has earned a place in the prestigious R&D 100 by R&D Magazine, the premier journal dedicated to inventions and innovations in the country.

The R&D 100 awards, which have been dubbed "The Oscars of Invention" by the Chicago Tribune, will be presented during a black-tie banquet Oct. 20 held in the Grand Ballroom at Navy Pier in Chicago.

"We are known in some areas more for the R&D 100 than we are for anything else," said Tim Studt, editor-in-chief of R&D Magazine. "We don't recognize the companies as much as we do the technology developed and the people that developed it."

"The people who are recognized at the banquet are really the elite of the elite."

The process to win an award involves a nomination process and goes through a panel of 50 judges and editors at R&D Magazine.

DeltaNu won the award for their work in Raman Spectroscopy. The firm released an instrument called The Investigator this year, which is used to follow high speed chemical reactions that are accelerated by microwaves. The microwave process is called microwave assisted synthesis and follows the same principle as a microwave oven. Chemical reac-

tions that take hours by traditional heating methods take place in seconds in a microwave reactor. The primary market for these reactors is drug discovery, where large pharmaceutical companies want to develop new drugs as rapidly as possible.

"This innovation is far more sophisticated than the microwave reactors themselves," Keith Carron, CEO of DeltaNu said.

The project took a little over a year to complete by the DeltaNu technical team, which recently installed the first system at one of the world's largest drug manufacturers, AstraZeneca. DeltaNu is working with CEM Corporation in Mathews, North Carolina to sell embedded systems in CEM's microwave reactors.

"We are very gratified to win such a prestigious award", said Rick Cox, VP Sales and Marketing for DeltaNu. "Our core technology and emphasis is Raman Spectroscopy, and our R&D team is the engine that drives DeltaNu products to niche markets. This further substantiates that they are one of the most innovative group of engineers and chemists in their field."

Since opening its doors in 1997 DeltaNu has teamed with several of the Wyoming Business Council's economic development partners from the University of Wyoming. The

Small Business Development Center was valuable in helping DeltaNu develop a business plan, while the Market Research Center at UW performed research studies for the firm. The Research Product Center has been key in helping DeltaNu with intellectual property issues. Manufacturing Works has aided with everything from manufacturing standards to inventory control.

In addition to providing funding for all of the groups listed above, the Wyoming Business Council aided DeltaNu by helping negotiate a bank loan which allowed DeltaNu to move into their current location in Laramie.

DeltaNu has also taken advantage of the Small Business Innovation Research grant program. The Phase 0 portion of this program is funded in part through the Wyoming Business Council. In all, DeltaNu has received grants totaling \$3.7 million from this program.

"DeltaNu is a great example of the kind of technology business we are trying to develop in Wyoming," said Wyoming Business Council Chief Operating Officer Bob Jensen. "The Business Council is happy to have been able to help in the growth of DeltaNu. These kinds of technology-based jobs are what we and the university is striving to help generate."

Grand Dynamics Featured In The New York Times

Grand Dynamics, based in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and with a brand new division in Atlanta, Georgia was recently featured in the NY Times. Grand Dynamics, is an experiential training and development company specializing in corporate retreats, business consulting, and health and wellness programs. Serving performance-driven organizations and businesses across the nation, Grand Dynamics' programs are based upon the belief that individuals, teams, and organizations are capable of transcending any of the challenges that stand between them and their highest aspirations. Grand Dynamics helps organizations overcome their toughest challenges, taps into people's sense of adventure, and pushes the limits of possibility, producing bottom-line business results.

Teambuilding with a Twist

- Excerpted from an article by Sharon McDonnell, NY Times, Late Edition - Final, Section C, Page 7, Column 3 August 23, 2005

One trade group claims it has found statistical evidence that outdoor team-building exercises pay off. The Construction Financial Management Association in Princeton, N.J., which represents 7,000 financial professionals, has held annual retreats for new chapter presidents in Jackson Hole, Wyo., since 1995. It asked Grand Dynamics, a consulting firm, to create exercises based on the best sellers "Who Moved My Cheese?" by

Spencer Johnson, on workplace change, and "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stephen R. Covey.

William Schwab, the association's chief executive, said 27 chapter presidents who attended four out of six years had a net annual membership growth rate of more than 10 percent and a membership renewal rate of 81 percent, compared with the average renewal rate for associations of 75 percent. He said 34 chapter presidents who never attended had a 19 percent membership loss in that time.

"Without a doubt, we've been able to map our chapters' development based on whether or not the chapter president went through this experience," Mr. Schwab said.

Engaging Retreat Format

The retreat format is experiential learning, where leadership and management concepts are literally "brought to life." The design and flow over the four-day period keeps participants engaged and energized. The program balances indoor and outdoor segments, and it marries fun and learning. Prework, in the form of pre-assessments and pre-reading materials, creates an up-front expectation that this will be a working retreat.

For more information on how to create a retreat that will yield a valuable return on investment, call Grand Dynamics at 1-800-989-8434. They can provide you with a customized proposal for your business development needs.

SBIR Success Stories

Congratulations to the following companies and individuals on their recent successes with the SBIR program.

Hawkins And Powers Aviation Inc., Greybull, Wins USDA Phase II

Project Title: Computer Controlled Automatic Loading Water Bucket System For Aerial Firefighting

Principle Investigator: Duane Powers

Email: duane@hawkinsandpowers.com

Award: \$296,000

Non-Technical Summary: Millions of dollars in personal property and thousands of acres of natural resources will be saved annually if wildfires can be controlled effectively by increasing the safety and efficiency of helicopters in aerial firefighting. The purpose of this project is to research and develop a computer controlled water bucket system to increase safety and efficiency by automating weight management of loading, load-splitting and flow-control features.

Objectives: The objectives of Phase II are to utilize the Phase I research and design to identify necessary changes to construct a fully operational Water Buoy II for use and testing during Phase II. Drop testing and evaluation criteria will be developed to evaluate the system operationally. Improvements to the Phase II bucket will be made using the evaluation results. Previously committed and new SBIR commercialization support will be utilized. The ultimate objective is to increase the safety, effectiveness and efficiency of a new line of improved WBII water bucket systems to be commercialized using the simplest most cost-effective method that is capable of complex slung vessel compliance.

Additional information about Hawkins and Powers Aviation can be found on their web site: www.hawkinsandpowers.com

Big Horn Valve, Sheridan, Wins NASA Phase II

Project Title: In-Space Cryogenic VOST Connect/Disconnect

Principle Investigator: Zachary Gray

Email: zg@WyomingSilicon.com

Award: \$600,000

Abstract: Two novel cryogenic couplings will be designed, fabricated and tested. Intended for in-space use at cryogenic propellant depots, the couplings are based on patented Venturi-Offset Technology (VOST) and will provide small fluid and heat leakage at high flows with a low pressure drop. Entirely mechanical, insertion opens the passage, removal closes the passage. Mating force and alignment requirements are small. With only eight major parts, reliability is high and mass is low. Redundant seals, integrated health measurements, and robotic control are possible.

DeltaNu LLC, LARAMIE, WINS DARPA PHASE II

Project Title: Miniature Long-Range Stand-off Imaging Raman System for Detection of Biological Materials Principle

Principle Investigator: Keith Carron

Email: keith@deltanu.com

Award: \$750,000

Non-Technical Summary: An urgent national defense need is the ability to detect WMD chemical and biological agents and improvised explosive devices (IED) at a distance with high sensitivity and specificity. The goal of this DARPA Phase II STTR project is the development of a prototype hand-held telescopic Raman spectroscopy system capable of sensitive, high-specificity, stand-off identification of chemical (including IED explosives) and biological materials at distances of up to one kilometer, dependent upon "seeing" conditions. Among the issues addressed by this development are signal interferences from sunlight, fluorescence and other out-of-phase sources of noise. Eye safety issues are also addressed. This development will lead to a number of commercialization opportunities, especially in multiplexed bio-assay and hazmat chemical identification at long distances.

Additional information about DeltaNu can be found on their web site: www.deltanu.com.

For more information on the SBIR program contact Jill Kline, Outreach Coordinator for the Wyoming SBIR/STTR Initiative. Phone: 307-682-2660, Email: jillkline@vcn.com or visit the website at <http://www.uwyo.edu/sbir>.

Eight Firms Win A Total Of \$40,000 In Grants For Technology Innovation

The Wyoming Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer Initiative (WSSI) awarded \$40,000 in research grants to Wyoming firms during the third quarter of 2005.

These WSSI grants are made possible through a program funded by the Wyoming Business Council and administered through the University of Wyoming Research office. These companies represent four Wyoming communities: Cheyenne, Jackson, Laramie and Sheridan.

Alces Technologies of Jackson was awarded \$5,000 towards research for a high-resolution light valve array for head mounted displays. They plan to submit a Phase I proposal to the Air Force for a high-resolution light engine to be used in training and simulation head-mounted displays (HMDs). The Air Force is requesting a compact light engine that can generate 6000x3000 pixels at 60 Hz.

Alces Technology has a proprietary light-valve based light engine that can produce resolutions in excess of the Air Force requirements.

Alces will demonstrate the feasibility of using this technology as part of a HMD.

Panamax35 LLC, a Cheyenne company, was awarded \$5,000 towards research for a shock and vibration mounting system.

To ensure safe operations on naval ships, the Department of Defense plans to instill more stringent shock and vibration mitigation requirements for machinery and electronics on board surface combat vessels. Panamax35 has an innovative, low cost hybrid vibration/shock mitigation system, which has absorption qualities beyond normal passive shock mounts that surpasses existing solutions and will satisfy the newly proposed requirements.

This system utilizes three proven technologies simultaneously for additional benefits: active noise control, remote shock absorption, and standard shock mounts. This technology can be retrofitted to existing shock mount configurations. Its use may save lives by making ships less detectable from recent improved sensitive acoustic detection systems. Other commercial possibilities may improve the ride of standard automobiles and or reduce sound transmission through building structures.

Another winner was Square One Systems Design from Jackson, Wyoming, proposing a novel robotic workcell based on lightweight, interlocking linear modules. Experiments by the space science community have demonstrated the feasibility of large, plant-based bioregenerative systems. These experiments identify crop production automation as a critical enabling technology.

Advanced sensory capabilities and a sophisticated end effector exchange system will allow this workcell to perform delicate seeding and propagation tasks, transplant seedlings, arrange growing trays, monitor the physiological development of individual plants, harvest fruit and tubers and clear inedible biomass.

WyoBiGen of Laramie seeks to develop a system for

the production of useful spider silk fibers. Silks have important biomedical applications such as sutures, artificial ligaments, and more. Silk fibers are composed of proteins, among which spider silk proteins are the best characterized. Cloning of spider silk genes has enabled biotechnological production of synthetic spider silks.

Dr. Kevin J. Fleming of Jackson says the goal of his Phase Zero project is to prove the feasibility of applying innovative executive/corporate change models to health behavior transformation and to effectively deliver those services at a low cost in underserved, rural settings.

Laramie firm DeltaNu won an award for a project that will develop a handheld biological warfare detection system. This system will use Raman spectroscopy as the method of detection. DeltaNu proposes to make 25 different barcodes to enable an assay to detect 25 different biological warfare agents at a time.

Sheridan's Wyoming Silicon is trying to develop a miniaturized sensor electronics package, which will be based on newly released commercial integrated circuit. The package will occupy a volume roughly equal to a deck of playing cards and yet provide the computational equivalent of a 200 MHz PC. It will be optimized for analog and digital I/O to support sensors used in rocket propulsion testing.

Big Horn Valve, also of Sheridan, hopes to develop a miniature cryogenic control valve using patented Venturi-Offset Technology (VOSTTM). Intended for in-space use on next generation Joule-Thompson cryocoolers, the valve will exhibit precise mass flow control with low-pressure drop, low energy requirements, low mass, and excellent thermal performance.

The federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs make up the WSSI alliance and provide more than \$2 billion annually in Research and Development (R&D) grants and contracts to qualified small businesses.

Eleven federal agencies are required by law to provide these funds by setting aside 2.5 percent of their annual extra-mural R&D budgets for use exclusively by U.S. small businesses for new product R&D. Hence, these programs provide a unique source of start-up and seed capital for small businesses to develop new innovative product concepts.

The SBIR Phase 0 Program helps Wyoming companies develop competitive proposals for the federal SBIR and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. Under these programs, Wyoming businesses have the potential to receive up to \$850,000 in federal funding to develop their ideas into products through a two-stage process. The SBIR Phase 0 program is a project of the Wyoming SBIR/STTR Initiative (WSSI).

The WSSI initiative is funded by the Wyoming Business Council and gives out \$120,000 in Phase 0 grants each year.

Federal Agencies To Fund Research Ideas

NOAA and NIST Presolicitations Available in November

The Department of Commerce's (DOC) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) plan to seek proposals from small business firms for participation in Phase I of the 2006 SBIR program. The following are the NOAA research and development topics available for Phase 1:

- Ecosystems
- Climate
- Weather and Water
- Commerce and Transportation

The SBIR solicitation will be issued on or about November 1, 2005. The SBIR solicitation will be available at the Federal Business Opportunities website www.fbo.gov and on the NOAA website www.ago.noaa.gov/ad/solindex.shtml.

The Government anticipates making multiple Phase 1 awards with a period of performance of six (6) months and a budget not to exceed \$95,000.

Any organization submitting a response to the above described solicitation must have current registration in the Central Contractor Registration (see website at www.ccr.gov).

For more information, including a complete copy of the presolicitation notice, visit:

www.fbo.gov/spg/DOC/NOAA/AGAMD/NRMC0009%2D6%2D00001/listing.html.

The Department of Commerce's (DOC) National Institute of

Standards and Technology (NIST) released the topics for their upcoming 2006 SBIR Solicitation. The topics for this solicitation are:

- Development of a Large-Area Solar Simulator using Light Emitting Diodes;
- Development and Manufacture of High-Efficiency, Low-Dark- Count Detectors for IR Photon Counting;
- Gigabit/second Random Number Generators;
- Applying AI Tools and Techniques to the Real-Time Control of Intelligent Systems;
- Imaging Variable Kinetic Energy (0.1 to 8 KeV) Electron Analyzer;
- Vibration Detection for the Suppression of PM Noise;
- Multiple Contact Nano-probes for Electrical and Optical characterization;
- Spatial Light Modulators for Programmable Spectral Projectors;
- Commercially-Available Electrically Substituted Bolometer;
- Emergency Beacon for First Responder Radios;
- High Performance NIR Array Detectors for Advanced Sensors;
- Broadly-Tunable CW Terahertz Single-Port Source;
- Emergency-Vehicle Electrical System Conducted-Interference Test System;
- Reference Flat Pulse Generator;

- 40 Gb/sec Bitstream Generator;
- RFID-Based Supply Chain Optimization and Simulation;
- Ideal Liquid Optical Particle Sensor;
- Wide-Bandgap Photodiodes for Extreme Ultraviolet Radiation;
- High-Speed Non-Contact Thermography;
- DC Substitution Microwave Power Detectors

The NIST 2006 solicitation will be issued on or about November 3, 2005 and will close January 26, 2006. Electronic copies of the solicitation will be located at www.nist.gov/sbir and www.fedbizopps.gov.

For more information, please visit:

www.fbo.gov/spg/DOC/NIST/ACAsD/NIST%2D06%2DSBIR/listing.html.

Department of Education Solicitations Available On-Line

The US Department of Education (DoEd), via the Institute of Education Science's National Center for Education Research, intends to solicit offerors for the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program.

The opening date is on or around November 4, 2005, the closing date is January 6, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. EST. Program information is available at on the DoEd website at www.ed.gov/programs/sbir/index.html.

The DoEd notice can also be found on the FedBizOpps site at www.fbo.gov/spg/ED/OCFO/CPO/errd080008/SynopsisP.html

Your Business Questions Answered



Arlene Soto

A quarterly look at Wyoming business questions from the Wyoming Small Business Development Center (WSBDC) at the University of Wyoming.

**By Arlene Soto,
WSBDC
Region 4 Director**

Do I need a city business license?

- George, Thermopolis

In Wyoming, licensing requirements depend on where you live and in what industry you are working. Even if you do not need a local business license, you may need to meet certain statewide requirements.

You will want to check with the local city or county government to determine what licenses are required in your community. Another source of licensing information is Paul Howard, business permit program manager of the Wyoming Business Council -- call him at (307) 777-2843 or e-mail phowar@missc.state.wy.us. He will research licensing and permitting questions free of charge for business people anywhere in Wyoming.

The Wyoming Business Council Web site offers information about general state licensing and permitting questions at www.wyomingbusiness.org. The site also is a resource for many other business questions.

If you plan to operate a business from your home, you need to check on local zoning ordinances when you check on the licensing requirements. Food service businesses must meet many state requirements to ensure proper handling of the products being sold to the public. They cannot operate from a home kitchen. If you are selling products to consumers you also need to obtain a sales tax license from the state.

The Small Business Development Center counselors are good sources of information to make sure you have identified all the licenses and permits necessary to operate legally within the state. Their counseling services are free and confidential. To locate the office nearest you, go to the Web site at www.uwyo.edu/sbdc or call toll free in Wyoming at 1-800-348-5194.

Use the free resources provided in Wyoming to get answers to

licensing and permitting questions to ensure that you are operating legally in the state. It could save you time and money later.

Is key person insurance a taxable employee benefit?

- Leo, Jackson

Key man insurance is generally a life insurance policy a company purchases on the life of a key employee or owner whose loss would negatively impact the company. Since the insurance is purchased to protect the company, not specifically the employee, it is not a taxable employee benefit. The company owns the policy, pays the premiums and is the beneficiary. Usually premiums are not tax deductible and generally the death benefits are received tax free.

Proceeds from key man insurance are used for such things as providing funds to recruit and train a replacement; replace profits lost as a result of the death of the employee; or strengthen company working capital to assure creditors the company is viable. It can also be used to buy out heirs in a partnership arrangement.

Insurance might not be the only option a company can pursue to protect against the loss of a key employee or owner. The company could set aside funds in savings to take care of future losses. Owners will need to consider the costs and benefits associated with owning an insurance policy.

The best way to know if key man insurance is a good option for your company is to talk with an insurance professional. Tax issues are best handled by a tax accountant or by contacting the Internal Revenue Service directly.

If an employee quits, do I have to pay them accrued sick or vacation leave?

- Valerie, Torrington

According to the Fair Labor Standards Act, employers are not required to provide paid leave time to employees unless it is part of a collective bargaining agreement or part of the company's policies. Employers are not allowed to discriminate against employees, so if benefits are offered as a part of the company policy, they must be provided in a non-discriminatory manner.

Generally, if an employee quits or is terminated, an employer is required to pay for unused vacation leave time, but not unused sick leave time. Since labor law is such a complicated area, it's best to seek the advice of a professional on a case-by-case basis. Some employers are covered under the federal labor laws and some under the state labor laws. Employers involved in interstate commerce generally are covered under the federal laws.

To learn more about regulations affecting employment in Wyoming, call the Wyoming Department of Employment at (307)

777-7261 or visit the Web site <http://wydoe.state.wy.us/>. The Fair Labor Standards Act can be found at the Department of Labor Web site www.dol.gov. Questions about human resource issues also can be directed to Pete Reis at the Wyoming Business Council at (307) 777-2822 or preis@state.wy.us.

How do I know if I should classify someone as an employee or an outside contractor?

- Robert, Cheyenne

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has specific guidelines in Publication 15-A to help you determine if you have an employee or an outside contractor. This publication can be downloaded from www.irs.gov.

In general, a person should be classified as an employee if you control when, where and how a job is performed. An outside contractor has the right to work independently, as long as the contracted tasks are performed.

It is important to classify workers correctly. If you are not sure whether an individual is an outside contractor or an employee, you can file with the IRS a form SS-8 "Determination of Worker Status for Purposes of Federal Employment Taxes and Income Tax Withholding." IRS forms can be downloaded from their Web site. Misclassifying workers can result in charges for back taxes, penalties and interest both for the state and federal governments.

Here are some of the guidelines you can use to determine if someone is an independent contractor: Independent contractors usually have their own tools or equipment. They generally have a business license and do work for more than one company. They should have their own insurance and you may want to request proof of insurance. Often they work under a signed contract that stipulates what work is to be done and by what date and for what fee.

Also, most independent contractor relationships are for a specified period of time or for a specific project. Contractors do not receive benefits such as paid days off or medical insurance. Contractors are responsible for profits or losses within their business.

Your accountant can also be helpful in determining whether workers are employees or independent contractors.

The WSBDC is a partnership of the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Wyoming Business Council and the University of Wyoming. To ask a question call 1-800-348-5194, (307) 766-3505, e-mail wsbdc@uwyo.edu or write Dept. 3922, 1000 East University Ave., Laramie, WY 82071-3922. Additional help is available at the WSBDC Web page.

Shaping Technology In Wyoming

Founded in August 2005, the Wyoming Technology Organization speaks for technology business, driving the success of member companies while building the image of Wyoming as a leader in technology development and application. The WTO is comprised of members that are companies or individuals who offer a technological product or service or work in a technology related field.

The focus of WTO is to establish an identity for Wyoming's technology sector. The Wyoming Technology Organization is dedicated to fostering an environment that:

- Creates an atmosphere that fosters technical and monetary growth.
- Develops a local, national and international voice for Wyoming's technology sector.
- Evolves to maintain a thriving diversified technology economy.

Learn how to help drive this success by joining the Wyoming Technology Organization (WTO) today!

Why Join the Wyoming Technology Organization?

• Networking

Have a business problem or issue? Need

help with HR, finding a good bank, seeking angel or VC money, Intellectual Property or patents? As a member you can ask the question to other members and experts. The goal of the WTO is to get you relevant answers - fast.

• Receive the monthly newsletter

It will be chock full of information important to technology companies and professionals.

• Video & Webinars

WTO offers a series of video/web seminars planned utilizing the services of the state-of-the-art capabilities of the Business Incubator and the expertise of its CEO, Jon Benson

• A Voice In The State Legislature

Annually, the WTO will be presenting your issues to the state government lobbying for technology innovation and enhancement across the state.

• WTO will evolve to meet member's needs!

Feedback will be key so the organization can grow to exceed members' expectations.

Learn more or become a member by visiting www.wyomingtechnology.org.

Gillette Chamber Honors SBDC Regional Director

Judith Semple's background and past experiences allow her to relate to entrepreneurs looking for answers to their business-related questions.

Semple is the region 5 director for the Wyoming Small Business Development Center. Before her work with the WSBDC, she owned and operated movie theaters with her husband and managed her own public relations firm for a total of 11 years.

"I think it's important that people have had their own business to experience the trauma of making a paycheck every two weeks," Semple said. "That's an experience that you can't read in a book and talk about."

It's her experience that earned her recognition as the Kelly Swenson business person of the year at the 50th annual Campbell County Chamber of Commerce Awards on October 29th. Six awards were handed out during the event.

The Kelly Swenson award is presented to business people for significant contributions to Campbell County's business community. It was named after Kelly Swenson who was largely responsible for founding the Chamber of Commerce.



Judith Semple

"(Wyoming Small Business Development) really is a counseling service," Semple said.

The center helps people put together information to write a business plan. It offers market research services and helps people put together a financial plan, she said.

"(People) come either with a skill, such as mechanic or carpenter, or have business experience but don't know what they want to do," she said. Semple steers them down a suitable path. Semple has been with the Wyoming SBDC since 1996.

By KATIE BALDWIN, News-Record Writer, Gillette, Wyoming

The Research File.....

By Mike Lambert

Manager, Wyoming Market Research Center

"Marketing Research is something that huge companies with unlimited budgets do...we're too small and too busy to be able to do any research. Besides, we're doing just fine without it."



Mike Lambert & Brett Housholder

How many times have you heard this comment or something like it? The problem is that without at least some kind of market research, you are running your business like riding a Harley with a blindfold over your eyes. At some point in time, something unexpected is going to surprise you and perhaps negatively impact your business.

Just what is market research? A quick check on Google for a definition came up with 18 different definitions. One that I like is from the Market Research Society which states that market research is "the means used by those who provide goods and services to keep themselves in touch with the needs and wants of those who buy and use those goods or services."

You are doing market research when you ask your customer how they like your new product or service, or if you walk into a competitor's store to see what's new. However, in order to be competitive in today's world, you may need to have access to more sophisticated tools. Banks are increasingly insisting on seeing a business plan in order to lend money, and market research is a major component of any business plan. Like any military general, you can best steer your command if you know where the market is headed and what the enemy (your competition) is doing.

The Wyoming Market Research Center is funded by the Wyoming Business Council and the University of Wyoming. Our mission is to provide timely, accurate, cost-effective and actionable market intelligence to allow its

clients to make reasoned decisions about business investment in Wyoming. To accomplish this we have a staff of three full-time researchers, as well as a wide selection of tools and resources that would be beyond the resources of even most medium sized businesses.

Services that the WRMC can provide your business include:

Basic Research

- Market Lists
- Competitive Intelligence
- New Product Releases
- Competitive Product Profiles
- Industry Trends
- Local, State and National Demographic Trends
- Industry Financial Data
- Federal and State Regulations
- Updating of Client Customer Databases
- Mailing Lists/ Labels
- E-Business Opportunity Analysis
- Customer Satisfaction Assessment
- Construction Project Reports

Geographic Information Systems Services (GIS)

- Competitor Lists and Mapping
- Customer Demographic and Psychographic Profiles Mapping
- Site Selection
- Customer Drive-Time Analysis
- Customer Prospecting
- Market Penetration
- Store Market Analysis

Evaluation of Marketing Materials for Fit with Research Results

- Brochures
- Direct Mail Pieces
- Web Site Design

Original Research / Developing Raw Data

- Customer Satisfaction Surveys
- Price Sensitivity Analysis
- Focus Panels

You can access the services of the WMRC through your local Small Business Development Center, Wyoming Business Council Regional Manager, Manufacturing Works, GRObiz or the WSSI program. Our services are generally free of charge to Wyoming businesses, unless your request requires purchasing custom data. In this case, we would pay the first \$150 dollars and the client would pay the balance.

However, you don't need our thousands of dollars of databases and resources to do some basic research. There is an amazing amount of information available for free on the web. Some sites that can prove useful are:

www.dataplace.org. This program provides demographic and mapping for cities and towns across the USA.

<http://sbdnet.utsa.edu>. This website from the SBDC provides a variety of demographic and business resources.

www.sba.gov/advo/research. This website from the SBA's office of advocacy has links to a wide variety of demographic information.

<http://easdiv.state.wy.us>. The website for the Wyoming State Data Center Program has Wyoming specific data and reports.

For information on your specific industry, try locating an industry association or trade journals webpage. Often times these will have industry size and trend information that can be very valuable.

Using the tools that are out there, whether it's the WMRC, your local library or the Web can help you steer your business through competitive and market pitfalls and help ensure that you become successful and profitable.

New Market Research Center Employee



Liz Parks

The staff of the Wyoming Market Research Center continues to grow with the addition of its newest employee, Liz Parks. Liz graduated in June from the University of Washington, Seattle, with a Masters in Library and Information Science and has a BA in Business Administration from Eastern Oregon University (EOU), La Grande, OR. Last summer she worked as an intern at EOU where she was involved in an Economic Gardening project initiated to spur the economy in Eastern Oregon. She has lived in rural Oregon for several years and can appreciate the need for Wyoming businesses to expand and grow. With her research and business background, Liz should be able to jump in and immediately help to decrease project lead times.

SAVE THE DATE

Multi-Billion dollar Federal Market Procurement Opportunity for Small Businesses

4th Annual GRO-Biz Conference-February 22 & 23, 2006

Sheridan Holiday Inn

U. S. Senator Mike Enzi and GRO-Biz invite small businesses in Wyoming and regional states to a once-a-year event marketing your business to federal and state contracting agencies and prime contractors. More than 60 federal and state contracting agencies will be available to talk about products they buy and special requirements.

Why Should You Attend?

- The perfect opportunity to meet one-on-one with federal and state contracting officers.
- Networking with professionals, contractors, and small businesses in one place saves time and money.
- Increase your knowledge about the government contracting process.
- A chance to market your business to the US Government and Prime Contractors.

Conference registration is \$110 and \$90 for each additional person

Register toll free in Wyoming 877-733-3618 ext 1
or register online: www.gro-biz.com

For exhibitors info, call 307-362-2110

Conference Hotels:

Sheridan Holiday Inn - Sheridan, WY
307-672-8931 or 888-HOLIDAY

Mill Inn

307-672-6401 or 888-FLR-MILL

Ask for the special GRO-Biz conference hotel rate of \$65

GRO-Biz Partners: Defense Logistics Agency, Small Business Development Center, University of Wyoming, Wyoming Business Council, U.S. Small Business Administration

Wyoming Small Business Development Center
Dept. 3922, 1000 E. University Avenue
Laramie, WY 82071-3922

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Winter 2005-2006

Business Voice

News for Wyoming's Small Business Community

Business Ready Community Program Honored

The Business Ready Community Grant and Loan (BRC) program, administered by the Wyoming Business Council, will be honored by Business Facilities Magazine with an Economic Development Award in its December issue.

Business Facilities' Economic Development Awards (EDA) program brings national recognition to state and local economic development organizations, utility companies, corporations, and individuals whose leadership and ability to partner in new and creative ways are paramount towards meeting economic challenges. Three tiers of awards (Gold, Silver, and Bronze) will be given in the "Best Program" division of the Economic Development Awards, plus honorable mentions. The overall winner will be distinguished with The Platinum Award and one award is given in each tier.

This year's Platinum winner was The North Dakota Department of Commerce's Ambassador Program. The campaign was a relationship-based program using the University of North Dakota's alumni base for business leads and solutions, as well as helping fund a venture capital account.

The Wyoming Business Council was awarded the silver tier with its Business Ready Community program. The Business Ready Community Grant & Loan Program (BRC) provides financing for publicly owned infrastructure that serves the needs of businesses and promotes economic development within Wyoming communities.

"Business leaders rarely choose states - they choose communities,"

said Gov. Dave Freudenthal. "I'm proud of the state's efforts in giving our communities an advantage in that process, and I'm pleased that they have been recognized outside of the state, too. This is a program that we can and should continue well into the future; I believe we will be more than paid back by a diverse economy in the long run."

That infrastructure served by the Business-Ready Community Grant and Loan Program includes water, sewer, streets, telecommunications, airports, right of way, land, spec buildings, or amenities within a business park, industrial park, industrial site or business district or other appropriate physical projects in support of primary economic development. Educational development infrastructure, such as workforce training facilities are eligible. Recreation facilities, landscaping and convention centers are also eligible.

Cities, towns, counties, joint powers boards are primary applicants for the Business Ready Community program.

To date, 45 awards have been given to cities and counties in Wyoming for over \$43 million. An estimated 1,140 jobs have been created or retained thanks to the BRC program.

For a complete list of BRC projects throughout the state, see the Wyoming Business Council Web site at (<http://www.wyomingbusiness.org/cd/c/brc/index.cfm>) A 12-judge panel, all of whom are also part of Business Facilities' editorial advisory board, made the Economic Development Award selections for Business Facilities Magazine. According to Business Facilities Editor-in-Chief

Karim Kahn, the judges are asked to grade the programs on three categories: innovation, effectiveness and pro-business impact.

"This is the 13th year of our awards, which we write up in our December issue," Kahn said. "This year we asked our judges to consider the innovation - how new or original the approach is. For the effectiveness score, we were looking for numbers that really backed up and showed results. The pro-business impact is an attempt to measure if this is going to have a lasting positive effect on the community that the organization serves."

The BRC program caught the eyes of the judges including Frank Sherwood, the vice president of Staubach Corporate Services, who said, "Creating 1,140-plus jobs in the least populated state is a fabulous achievement. The BRC grant and loan program is an innovative way to overcome the infrastructure limitations of the state of Wyoming."

"Wyoming has taken certified sites and shovel-ready sites a step further to attract a business base. The BRC grant and loan program is unique in the country as far as I know. It certainly re-enforces the image that Wyoming is a pro-business state," added Jan Dickinson, President and CEO of the Dickinson Consulting Group.

Established in 1968 as a national site selection magazine, Business Facilities provides monthly news and resource information for more than 40,000+ corporate executives responsible for the expansion or relocation of their companies.

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For NxLevel Classes in Wyoming, call the WSBDC state office for registration information for fall classes at 1-800-348-5194.

Wyoming Ag Trends

About 20 percent of Wyoming agricultural operations market 80 percent of the value of production in the state, and 10- to 49-acre enterprises are the fastest-growing land category.

Researchers harvested those and more Wyoming agriculture trends from 2002 Census of Agriculture data and published their findings in Trends in Wyoming Agriculture (B-1164). The booklet is produced by the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service, College of Agriculture. It is available on-line at <http://www.uwyo.edu/ces/economic.htm>.

The booklet, written for the general public, distills information from several sources, says Thomas Foulke, research scientist in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics. He wrote the booklet along with department head Roger Coupal and Professor David Taylor.

"We have put them together in this way to help the citizens, business people or state or local officials try to make sense of some of the changes we face here in the West and particularly Wyoming," Foulke says.

Technology and land parcel size are just two factors found to have implications for Wyoming.

"Pick just about any field and the technological changes have been enormous," says Foulke. There were 1,000 tractors in Wyoming in 1920. Only about 30 percent of the farms had telephones, 7 percent had water piped to the house and only about 5 percent had electricity.

"Today, there are almost 20,000 tractors in the state and, well, everything else on the list we take for granted. Clearly, we have come a long way," he says.

Everything comes at a price, he notes. "Sometimes the cost is up front and easy to see and other times it is down the road or hidden."

The increased use of tractors lead to increased production, lower prices, and consolidation of farms and ranches. "And it is still going on today," he says. "As producers become more efficient, the amount of hired labor one needs declines and the amount of land that one person can farm or ranch increases."

Ranches are getting both bigger and smaller. About 47 percent of the operations sell less than \$10,000 a year and 20 percent of the operations market 80 percent of the value of products.

"Clearly, there is something else happening that would lead people to go into agriculture on something other than a full-time basis," says Foulke. "The short answer is what we call lifestyle enterprises."

These are sometimes referred to as hobby farms or ranchettes, "but whatever you call them, they are part of our landscape here in Wyoming and the West," he says.

The 2002 Census figures show small acreages, those 10-49 acres, in Wyoming increased more than 27 percent over the 1997 figures.

Owners need income from somewhere else to make ends meet, and the small parcels contribute jobs and income to the local economy through goods and services required by small landholders," Foulke notes. They also contribute to a certain quality of life.

"We see growth in these types of enterprises around some of the larger towns in Wyoming, such as Cheyenne, Casper, Laramie and Gillette," says Foulke.

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