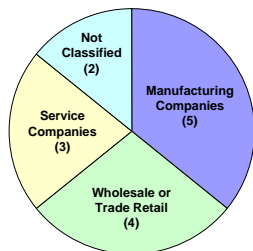


Business First! Program

The Business First! Program is designed to gather intelligence on local businesses, and to organize a regional economic development partnership that assists businesses as they confront challenges. The Program focuses on workforce, sales, e-commerce, and facility needs, as well as business perspectives on municipal services and the business climate.



This report provides a snapshot of 14 Vandalia companies, representing 1,028 employees, which participated in the Business First! program last year.

Challenges

While the types of companies vary, the challenges they face are quite similar.

- Remaining competitive**
- Finding qualified, motivated employees**
- Overcoming barriers to growth**

Challenge 1: Competitiveness

Businesses center on two essentials--retaining employees and customers.

Challenge 2: Employee Recruitment

Businesses express the challenge as finding employees who are compatible with their work culture, are adaptable, and work quickly.

Challenge 3: Barriers to Growth

Businesses described facility-related barriers, such as the need for affordable, flexible space; the need to obtain financing for expansion; and the need for broadband infrastructure.

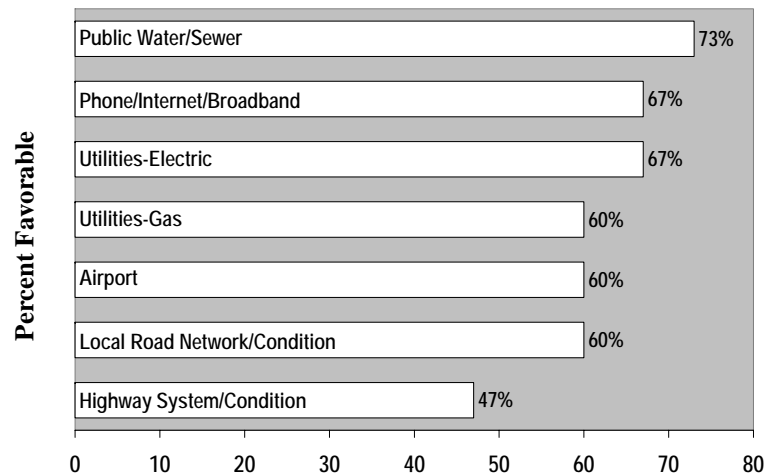
Special points of interest:

- ✓ 8 of the 14 companies expect to increase their number of employees
- ✓ 13 project sales growth next year
- ✓ 2 companies get 26 to 75% of their sales from their top 3 customers
- ✓ 6 of the 14 have difficulties recruiting employees
- ✓ 2 have a majority of employees near retirement age
- ✓ 6 of the 14 companies use over 90% of their facility space
- ✓ 2 companies are already running 24 hour operations

Municipal & Regional Report Card

12 out of the 14 businesses stated that they have a positive attitude toward the local community. Below is a graph showing Vandalia Businesses' level of satisfaction with Municipal Services. Businesses are the most satisfied with local utilities, and least satisfied with the highway system and its condition. This may be explained due to the fact that the City of Vandalia is within a close proximity to I-75, which is under constant construction.

Satisfaction with Municipal Services



Besides infrastructure, businesses rely on community assets like educational and cultural amenities to retain and train employees and attract customers.

- 93% of the businesses favorably rate colleges/universities
- 83% rate technical training highly
- 79% rate recreational/cultural amenities positively

Success Stories

One goal of the Business First! Program is to provide customized assistance to businesses and get results. These success stories show how the Program can help.

Eurand



In the company interview with Eurand, Eurand discussed the expense of conducting medical trials out of state and out of country. Eurand could save money by conducting its trials at Ohio State University (OSU). Vandalia's Economic Development (ED) professional contacted a State Representative, who contacted the Ohio

Board of Regents, who contacted OSU. A resolution is still under investigation. Eurand also discussed a need to do local test marketing of over-the-counter drugs. Vandalia's ED professional checked with a convenience store chain headquartered in the area to assess the possibilities. Vandalia also assisted Eurand in obtaining a Montgomery County ED/GE grant, thus solidifying Vandalia's dedication to Eurand, which has been noted by Eurand's parent company.

Unibuilt Homes



Unibuilt Homes constructs pre-manufactured homes and delivers them to residential sites in two parts. Unibuilt uses beams to lift the two parts of the home off of the truck bed. As homes have become larger, the beams have had to be enlarged. The beams are becoming too heavy to manage. In the company interview, Unibuilt mentioned this dilemma and the company's interest in investigating composite beams as a lighter substitute. Vandalia's ED professional contacted the National Composite Center (NCC) located in Kettering, Ohio. The NCC found the answer to the composites question.

Other Assistance

Vandalia has also added signage to improve traffic flow and safety around one company's location.

- Allowed the conditional use of trailers on construction sites.
- Provided procurement assistance for companies to do business with Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.



Business Profile Report for. . .



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Center for Urban & Public Affairs
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May 2004

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Street Address
City, ST Zipcode

First Name Last Name
Street Address
City, ST Zipcode

**Partial Listing of Business First!
Regional Resource Partners**

- Advanced Integrated Manufacturing (AIM)
- Ameritech/SBC
- Antioch University McGregor
- City Wide Development Corp
- COUNTY CORP
- Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce
- Dayton Area Graduate Studies Institute (DAGSI)
- Dayton Power & Light
- Dayton Regional Development Alliance
- Downtown Dayton Partnership
- Dayton Tooling & Machine Assoc.
- Edison Materials Technology Center
- The Entrepreneurs Center
- Greater Dayton Foreign Trade Zone Inc.
- Greater Dayton IT Alliance
- Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority (GDRTA)
- I-Zone
- Kettering-Moraine-Oakwood Chamber
- Miami Valley Career Technology Center
- Miami Valley International Trade Assoc.
- Minority Contractors & Business Assistance
- Montgomery County Building Regulations
- Montgomery County Port Authority
- NCIC Fund
- Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation
- Ohio Department of Development
- Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)
- Sinclair Community College
- South Central Ohio Minority Business Council
- South Metro Chamber of Commerce
- State of Ohio
- TechSolve
- The Job Center
- U.S. Small Business Administration
- University of Dayton
- Urbana University
- US Department of Commerce
- Wright State University