

**Small Business & Technology Development Center
at
Western Carolina University**

**ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT
2012**

sbtdc
Your business. Better.



College of Business

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Message from the Regional Director

Last year brought expanded services to the region's entrepreneurs from the Small Business & Technology Development Center at Western Carolina University (SBTDC at WCU). International business development, e-commerce counseling, strategy & organizational development services and government procurement assistance all grew to **meet the needs of businesses as they compete in today's complex economy**. Our counseling, training, student projects and specialized services continue to have positive impacts on small and mid-size businesses in the region. We invite you to learn more about how we are supporting economic development in Western North Carolina in this report, at www.sbtcd.org/wcu or on Twitter @SBTDC_WCU.



Wendy R. Cagle

Regional Director, SBTDC at WCU

SBTDC at WCU Staff

Wendy Cagle, Regional Director

Annice Brown, Assistant Regional Director

Patricia Costello, Business Counselor

Clark Fields, Government Procurement Counselor

Adrienne Gordon, Business Counselor

Ryan Taylor, Business Counselor (Rapid Center)

Tommy Dennison, Business Counselor

Noah Raper, Assistant Counselor

Impact of SBTDC at WCU in the 14 western counties of North Carolina.



In 2012, our clients reported:

- ✓ Creation of **85 new jobs**
- ✓ Investment of **\$2.3 million** from loans, venture capital & owner contributions
- ✓ Retention of **82 employees** who would have been laid off or downsized
- ✓ **\$4 million** in increased revenue
- ✓ **\$9 million** in government contracts

Counseling

Business owners and would-be entrepreneurs need **sound advice in a confidential setting from dedicated professionals** who receive continuing education to stay abreast of the latest trends and resources. Our counseling covers a wide range of business areas: exporting, financial, government contracting, human resources, marketing, product development, and more.

In 2012, SBTDC staff along with students from three universities provided:

6,400 hours of counseling to 404 clients

81% of all counseling hours went to established businesses.

Client Spotlight

Prometheus Computing

This six year old Cullowhee software development company came to the SBTDC as a rapidly growing business in need of assistance with management, accounting and navigating government contracting. They received a detailed financial analysis of the company which helped the business **better manage growth, understand profitability and budget for future growth**. SBTDC also helped the firm develop a marketing strategy to reach additional federal agencies and prime contractors. While working with the SBTDC, Prometheus' sales have doubled and they have received nearly \$6 million in government contracts. Business manager Robert Edwards said, ***"The SBTDC has provided Prometheus Computing with marketing strategies that have led us to new business opportunities in the Federal marketplace and this has been instrumental in our growth."***



Strategic & Organizational Development

The SBTDC's statewide team of facilitators and trainers provides tools and resources to **develop strategies, effectively implement those strategies, evaluate results and improve performance**. Last year small and mid-size business in the region received:

8 fee-based strategic retreats & customized trainings

Many of these events also included high quality **assessments** of organization performance such as our Strategic Organizational Assessment or the DiSC personality profile.

Learn more at www.sbtddc.org/strategy or contact Wendy Cagle at 828.227.3441 or wcagle@sbtddc.org

Government Contracting

sbtddc | PTAC
Procurement Technical Assistance Center

Selling to local, state, and federal government agencies requires **specific strategies to successfully find, bid, and win contracts**. As part of the SBTDC, the North Carolina Procurement Technical Assistance Center (NC PTAC) provides comprehensive counseling, training, webinars and publications to help businesses compete for government contracts. SBTDC at WCU clients reported:

\$9 million in government contract awards in 2012.

These clients represented a wide range of industries including industrial coating companies, software developers, employment screening services and green energy contractors.

For more information, visit www.sbtddc.org/ptac or contact Clark Fields at 828.251.6025 or cfields@sbtddc.org.

Student & Faculty Contributions

Connecting the resources of the University to the business community is at the core of the SBTDC's mission. This engagement allows students to gain real world experience while businesses receive research, ideas and support through faculty expertise and student projects.



25 SBTDC at WCU client businesses were fortunate to be assisted by **109 students** in the form of student teams and interns last year:

- ◆ 90 Western Carolina University undergraduates
- ◆ 1 Western Carolina University graduate student
- ◆ 5 Montreat College graduate students
- ◆ 13 Wake Forest University graduate students

Students assisted clients with business and marketing plans, financial analysis and reporting, advertising, special event planning and implementation, market research and other services. Overall, **clients indicated a high level of satisfaction with student work** performed last year.

Our thanks to:

**Dr. Carroll Brown & Dr. Bill Richmond
of Western Carolina University**

&

Dr. Kevin Gorman from Montreat College

for their support of student engagement projects,
area businesses and the SBTDC at WCU.

EDA University Center



The EDA University Center is a collaboration of WCU's Rapid Product Realization Center, SBTDC at WCU and the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. The Center helps clients, whether start-ups or an established company, refine existing products, develop new ones and improve business practices. The industry-experienced faculty and staff work with businesses to remove obstacles to **product commercialization and process improvement**. Students, working with faculty, address real problems while they gain hands-on engineering experience during the senior capstone project.

To learn more, contact Ryan Taylor at 828.227.2798 or rtaylor@sbtdc.org.

Client Spotlight



Suspension Experts owners Kevin and Shelley Booth came to the EDA University Center to commercialize a new product for the mountain bike suspension systems they service. The eight year old Asheville company sought to **expand and improve profitability**. After product commercialization assistance and technical analysis from the Rapid Center's engineers, it was decided to postpone product development and instead increase profitability through existing products and services. SBTDC counseling addressed several core business areas: debt management, sales and marketing strategies, pricing models, accounting methods, technology utilization, business plan development, and financial analysis. In the two years since, Suspension Experts have hired 2 new employees, won a business plan competition award, nearly doubled its service department, and is now experiencing strong growth with higher margins. **"SBTDC helped us examine our business practices and identify opportunities for both improvement and growth. With their help, we're growing, more profitable and things are running more smoothly in the shop,"** said Kevin.

International Business Development

For some small and mid-size businesses, competing in the global economy means finding **overseas markets to export** their products. The SBTDC's International Business Development team provides confidential, no cost counseling to:

- Evaluate export readiness
- Identify potential export markets and customers
- Locate and evaluate export sales representatives
- Research and evaluate supply chain options
- Analyze financials, costing, pricing, and budgeting
- Assist with SBA and Ex-Im financing

To learn more about how we assist companies in developing **strategies for exporting**, visit www.sbtdc.org/export or contact us at 828.251.6025.

Training

In 2012 **over 800 people received low or no cost training** provided or sponsored by SBTDC at WCU on a range of topics



The SBTDC is a business development service of The University of North Carolina system.

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