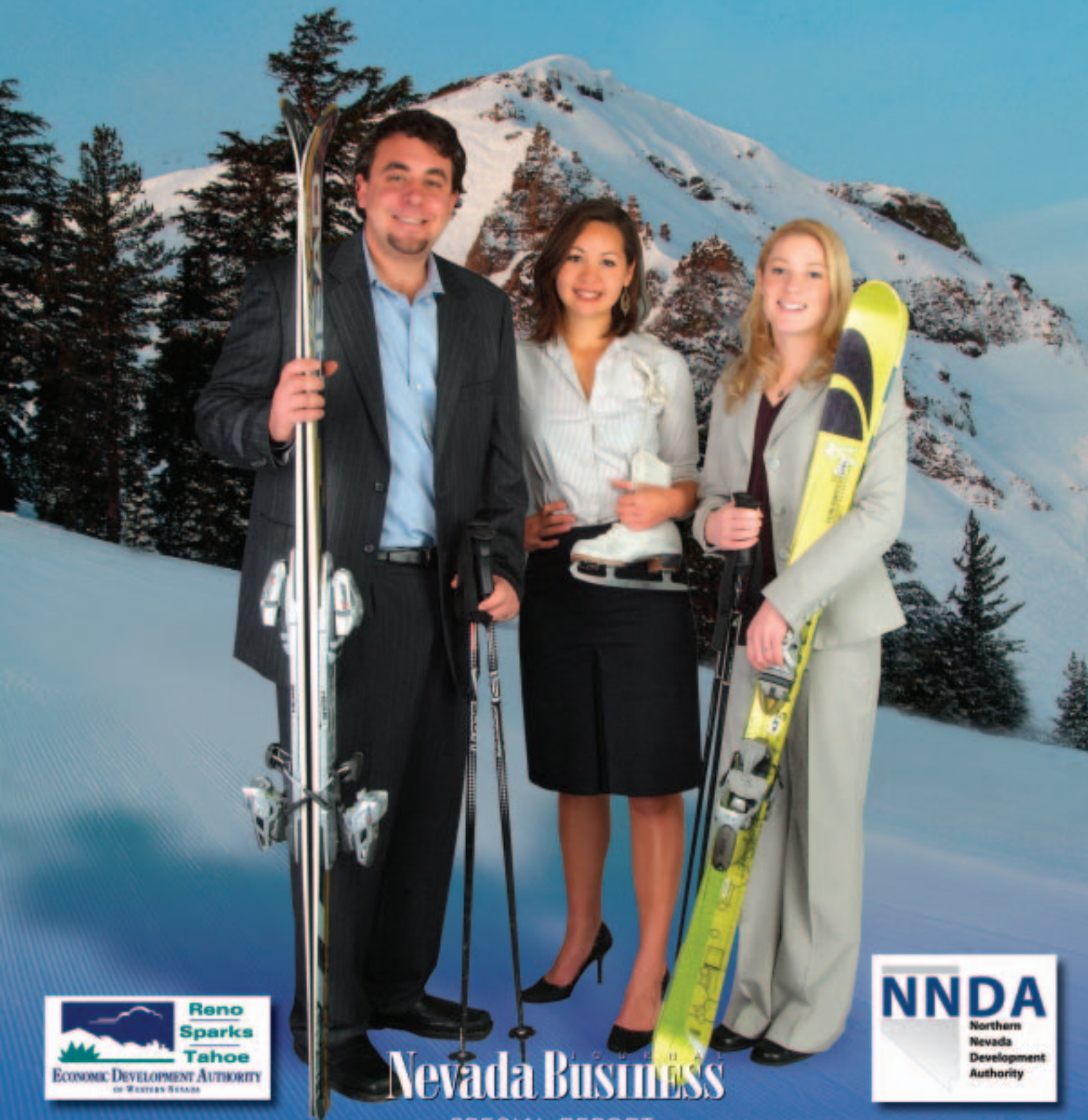


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Nevada Business

SPECIAL REPORT



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It is an exciting time for Northern Nevada as our region is thriving in business growth, economic diversification and quality of life. Spurring our continued growth, the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN) and the Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDA) are working together to ensure the region's strong economy continues to flourish, by assisting potential new companies as well as current, expanding and start-up companies that bring skilled positions and a commitment to giving back to the Northern Nevada communities.

With the help of AngelouEconomics, a national economic development consulting firm, in 2006, EDAWN and NNDA conducted strategic economic planning studies to determine how best to grow Northern Nevada's economy, while maintaining its desirable quality-of-life. As a result of the two studies, Target2010 and NorthernNVision, our organizations have a strategic action plan to elevate economic development and prosperity in the region, and to generate high paying jobs and opportunities for citizens that bridge the gap between the cost of living and average wages.

This past year of economic development planning has included extensive community-wide input from thousands of businesses and citizens to incorporate their priorities and concerns with future business development initiatives in the region, which includes Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Lyon, Mineral, Pershing, Storey and Washoe Counties. Additionally, EDAWN and NNDA have identified key business sectors to target including business and financial services, clean energy, advanced manufacturing, logistics and software, to name a few. These industries are known for their high-paying, skilled jobs and connection to higher education.

Businesses looking to relocate or expand don't see city or county boundaries, they see opportunities for growth and prosperity. Entrepreneurs and young professionals seek locations with the right mix of assets, regardless of county lines. Through regional economic efforts and key community partnerships, EDAWN and NNDA are working to make Northern Nevada a dynamic, thriving region that boasts one of the nation's best business-friendly climates and an unbeatable quality-of-life.

Afterall, we love this place!

Chuck Alvey
President/CEO, EDAWN

Ron Weisinger
Executive Director, NNDA

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Northern Nevada is a great place to live and work. Those of us already here know that. It's the quality businesses and people who aren't here yet that we want to reach.

Throughout 2006, the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN) and the Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDA) both worked with AngelouEconomics, a national economic development consulting firm, to produce comprehensive studies of the region and how businesses and individuals can collaborate to create a vibrant economy, while maintaining the quality of life cherished by Northern Nevada residents.

After a year-long process, AngelouEconomics delivered two reports: Target2010 to EDAWN and NorthernNVision to NNDA, providing analysis and action plans for the region

designed to increase prosperity, and identify key industries that can thrive in Northern Nevada.

"The results of both reports helped us realize how and where we need to focus to be sure we aren't coming from behind but working and leading Northern Nevada," said Ron Weisinger, executive director of NNDA.

"The intention was to raise the bar on economic development," said Chuck Alvey, president and CEO of EDAWN. "We're growing rapidly, and we want to make sure this is still a quality place to live in 10 to 20 years. One of the things we can do to ensure that is to recruit companies, expand companies and assist startup companies that are the best suited to this region." Target2010 was made possible by funding from Nevada Governor Kenny Guinn in the 2005 Legislature.

The Reports: NorthernNVision and Target2010

AngelouEconomics worked with EDAWN, NNDA, their partners and a steering committee of business leaders in key sectors, focus groups and respondents to 2,100 surveys from businesses and citizens to create an economic development roadmap.

When identifying industries Northern Nevada should develop and expand, AngelouEconomics considered the economic development desires of each community in the region, as well as existing resources that can support these industries to thrive here or support those already thriving here to expand.

“These are industries that pay above-average wages, offer advancement opportunities, and offer a diversity of employment from urban centers to rural areas,” said Ben Loftsgaarden, project manager for AngelouEconomics. “They’re industries that require skilled workers, from blue collar through advanced degrees; they don’t have a large footprint, or if they do, they’re likely a good candidate for rural counties where there’s a little more physical room to grow. They’re also clean industries that don’t use massive amounts of water.”

Some of these industries already exist in Northern Nevada, but Loftsgaarden points out, when attracting new businesses or startups, often improvements need to be made in a local community. Some of the economic development priorities include: help entrepreneurs thrive (including bringing in venture capitalists and angel investors); create a world-class workforce (including forming a business network for young professionals); maintain a high

“These industries pay above-average wages.”

quality-of-life (including continued downtown revitalization); build a high-tech infrastructure (including a technology incubator); and broaden the economic development scope and vision.

With today’s global economic picture, regions that thrive will be regions that work together, which EDAWN and NNDA have chosen to do.

Companies looking at Northern Nevada aren’t interested in county lines. They’re interested in where the workforce is and if

there’s enough land and services to support them. Working together gives economic authorities more clout, combines energies without duplicating work, and means companies wanting to locate here don’t have to call multiple agencies to get their questions answered.

“Companies don’t see county lines or where one city starts and another ends,” said Weisinger. “NNDA and EDAWN are committed to regional economic development. Future success will be based on how we connect as one region from rural counties to urban core. There is a need for all of us to work together for the benefit of all. Competition for business is fierce with cities, regions and states all vying for top companies and talented workers.”

The AngelouEconomics reports allowed both authorities to identify common ground to collaborate, and identified where their efforts are complementary rather than redundant.

Key Business Sectors

EDAWN and NNDA have identified key business sectors to relocate, expand, and start-up in the region:

Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN)

- Advanced manufacturing
- Advanced logistics
- Business and financial services
- Clean energy
- Life sciences
- Software

Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDA)

- Business and technology services
- Clean energy and bio-agriculture
- Light, advanced manufacturing
- Logistics and distribution
- Regional health services
- Tourism and hospitality



Business executives and young professionals not only benefit from the business-friendly climate, but also enjoy the quality-of-life that Northern Nevada has to offer.

L to R: Jarrod Lopiccoco, Noble Studios Marketing and Web Development; Erin Kuo, Reno-Tahoe Young Professionals Network; Emily Lowe, Nevada Center for Entrepreneurship and Technology.

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The strategy was three-fold: to create an economy based more on entrepreneurial development, to make this a thriving region for young professionals, and to strengthen the region collectively. The strong, cohesive, business-friendly region then needs to be marketed nationwide to companies and workers looking to relocate. To that end, AngelouEconomics has presented Northern Nevada with a challenge: create a regional brand for business that will represent Northern Nevada as a place companies and individuals can be successful.

While recommendations in NorthernNVision and Target2010 are fairly specific for advancing economic development in Northern Nevada, Alvey admits these are more than five-year plans. "This is a long-term plan where we'll still be working on a lot of these recommendations a decade from now," he said. Efforts are already underway to implement the recommendations by AngelouEconomics. The reports include feasibility studies for regional incubators, to serve the rural counties and

This is a long-term plan where we'll still be working on a lot of these recommendations a decade from now."

Washoe County, discussions about wireless networks, starting a young professionals networking group and creating a Northern Nevada brand identity for business.

We're on our way.

Targeting the Best of the Best

The key business sectors identified in the NorthernNVision and Target2010 reports prepared for Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDa) and Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN) are

similar for both entities. These industries can, and already do, thrive here. In order to compete in today's global economy, these are the business sectors Northern Nevada wants to recruit, expand or start-up.

Business and Financial Services

These businesses are generally non-polluting and don't leave a large footprint. Related niche industries are call centers, shared services centers, data centers and back office financial services.



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But there's more to it than taking any company that falls into this category. Northern Nevada is looking for high-paying jobs requiring skilled workers. According to Chuck Alvey, president and CEO of EDawn, a call center wanting to fill 500 seats with people making outbound calls at \$10 an hour is going to have a hard time finding employees.

"We tell them they're not going to be competitive because the average here is over \$12 an hour," said Alvey. "That's raising the bar. We don't want to tell them no, but they're not going to be competitive if they come here."

But an inbound technical advice center with skilled employees making \$15 to \$25 an hour would find it easier to hire and retain skilled workers. "We'll help them find those employees or bring the employees into the market," said Alvey. "That's a business that's going to contribute to the marketplace and make our community better by its being here."

Twelve Horses North America

Aztec Cyberspace started up in Northern Nevada in 1995 and merged into Twelve Horses in 2002. The marketing technology company makes software that marketers use to communicate globally with customers and investors. The company is based in Reno because of "Quality-of-life, first and foremost," said David LaPlante, CEO. "One of the best things about Northern Nevada is that it's still a small place, which is advantageous for start-ups in many ways."

Twelve Horses has found opportunities here it might not have found elsewhere. Local businesses are more willing to take a chance with new software, which has catapulted its success, making it possible for the company to take products into global markets like New York and Europe.

"While it's a popular belief that what entrepreneurs need most is capital financing, in reality, what they need most

is customers," said LaPlante. "Customers prove the business model and give entrepreneurs the ability to get feedback from the market in order to perfect their product."

JFG Systems, Inc

Started in 1991, when company president Ron Baker escaped Southern California, JFG Systems Inc., provides information technology solutions to businesses, including IT infrastructure, planning, design and support – everything necessary for businesses to use IT as an effective tool.

The business climate in Carson City makes it the right place for JFG Systems. "It's so different than Southern California," said Baker. "People trust each other. It's a small town mentality that makes it a pleasant place to interact with the business community. In Southern California it's a dog-eat-dog, never-drop-your-guard environment. This is a much better place to live and raise kids and everything else."

For JFG Systems, Northern Nevada brings attention from their vendors who have already sold everything they can to Fortune 500 companies and are looking for smaller and mid-sized companies to work with. "Those companies see growth coming from places like this," said Baker. "So since we're in Northern Nevada, we get a lot of attention. We're in a great location to help the business we keep through relationships with our major vendors which we rely on to deliver the solutions we provide. Our physical proximity to Silicon Valley doesn't hurt either."

Advanced Manufacturing

Across the U.S., manufacturing is declining – except in Northern Nevada, where it's growing. Many niche markets in advanced manufacturing – manufacturing materials, nano-technology, creation of building supplies, content publishing and production, and manufacturing medical devices – bring in high-paying jobs and aren't highly polluting – exactly the kind of businesses Northern Nevada wants.

Lewis and Roca LLP

The firm's 55 year history has a rich tradition founded on integrity and trust. Did you know that Lewis and Roca attorneys represented Ernesto Miranda who said, "You have the right to remain silent," and welcomed the first woman partner of any law firm in the southwest? Lewis and Roca is a full-service law firm with offices in both Las Vegas and Reno. The firm provides a depth of legal experience in numerous areas including gaming, commercial litigation, intellectual property, land use, planning and zoning, and governmental relations.

What sets law firms and attorneys apart from their competitors? According to Tom Ryan, chair of the firm's Nevada offices, "Our commitment to building long-term relationships is a primary point of emphasis. We not only take pride in our work, but never lose

sight of the fact that it is our privilege to be retained. We're high-quality without be high-maintenance." Accordingly, Lewis and Roca lawyers are well-respected within the community and known for their enthusiasm and dedication to providing first-tier service at all times. Another benefit clients can rely on is that the majority of our Nevada attorneys are natives of Nevada. In fact, a principal of the firm has government affairs experience dating back to 1987.

Lewis and Roca LLP is a law firm with strong community ties, and a legacy of integrity and trust. If you haven't already discovered, you will find they are dedicated and committed to the businesses of Nevada.

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Economic Development Plus

If the idea behind economic development is to attract quality businesses that generate skilled high-wage jobs, then what's Economic Development Plus? It's the new philosophy behind how EDAWN conducts and measures economic development by recruiting companies that not only generate jobs and economic impact, but also enhance quality-of-life.

"It's a mix," said John Breternitz, chairman of EDAWN. "It's not giving up on what EDAWN is already doing, working to recruit, expand and start-up companies, but we also want to quantify what companies bring into a community beyond jobs, payroll, taxes and capital investment."

That's the Plus part: making sure companies doing business in the community have a positive social impact. Economic Development Plus values how companies give back to the community through philanthropic giving, strong employee benefit programs, volunteerism and a connection to the educational system. EDAWN is in the process of developing a system to measure the social contributions a company brings to the region in addition to the economic impact criteria it currently reports.

"It's an exciting and progressive way to shape Northern Nevada's future economic growth. EDAWN is starting to emphasize the community benefits that a company and its employees bring to Northern Nevada and its citizens," said Breternitz. "One might say that a company doing business in Northern Nevada should not be judged by what it does today, but what it will do to make the community a better place tomorrow."

Clean Energy

Nevada: Rich in Clean Energy Resources

Talking to Jason Geddes, clean energy lead generator for Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN), is an instant education in clean alternative energy resources. As the country reels from high energy prices, Nevada finds itself uniquely positioned to lead the charge toward energy independence. Geddes, who is also EDAWN's manager of government affairs, points out:

The Silver State is No.1 in geothermal resources, No.2 in solar and No. 4 in wind. The federal delegation (especially Senators Harry Reid and John Ensign) strongly supports the continued and accelerated development of these resources, and can help direct research and application dollars to the state. At the state level, Nevada Renewable Portfolio Standards are the only ones in the country to include conservation.

Nevada is one of only two states to get an A rating from the Union of Concerned Scientists (along with California). Nevada's state goals are aggressive when it comes to future energy generation (unlike many states that only look at current generation).

As new technologies are making clean alternative energy more competitive, Nevada is primed to lead the country in clean alternative energy innovation and implementation. A diverse energy portfolio is important for every state. It's just a little easier in Nevada.

Server Technology, Inc., moved to Reno from the Bay Area more than six years ago. "We moved up here for a variety of reasons," said Brandon Ewing, president. "Really, the biggest thing is quality-of-life – being so near Lake Tahoe, the lack of traffic. We were coming here to go skiing every weekend anyway." Why not combine work and play?

The company, which manufactures power distribution products for data centers, felt it would be more advantageous to grow a business in Nevada than in California. Twenty-one of their original 25 employees agreed and moved with the company. Server Technology is now more than 100 people strong.

"For us, the combination of access to good talent from the University of Nevada, Reno, the fact that people are moving here from Northern California with good tech backgrounds, and the easy access in and out of the airport continues to make Northern Nevada the right place," said Ewing. "We're glad we're here."

Basalite Concrete Products started here. The existing plant was built in Carson City in 1971, and the unique demographics of the area – the small town feel – has helped the company prosper. They're comfortable providing building products in the area – most Carson and Washoe County schools are constructed using the concrete blocks Basalite produces – and Basalite is expanding.

"Over the last nine months we've been putting in another plant adjacent to our current manufacturing facility to manufacture concrete pavers," said Gordon Hinkel, general manager for Basalite Concrete Products. Hinkel said the use of concrete pavers – interlocking blocks used in driveways and landscaping – has exploded in the last five or six years, and they're all imported from California – hence Basalite's \$15 million investment.

"One of the things I enjoy about this area is the fact that from my driveway, Mt Rose Ski Resort is only 25 minutes away," said Hinkel. Pyramid Lake is 45 minutes away, and his work is 15 minutes away. "It's still a relatively small community, and that's what I enjoy about it."

Advanced Logistics

Advanced logistics is the process of planning, implementing and controlling the efficient flow of goods and services through the supply chain from producers to consumers. Such companies include freight carriers (air, water, trucking and intermodal) and warehousing. Logistics and distribution melds low-tech (trucks, airplanes, ships) with high-tech (value-added systems that coordinate the entire flow of goods from producer to consumer). As the rest of the U.S. has seen decreases in manufacturing, Nevada has bucked the trend and finds itself in good shape to support, import and grow logistics and distribution companies.

Ron Weisinger, executive director of Northern Nevada Development Authority (NND) said that the region's success originally came from Interstate-80 being such a convenient, efficient transportation

corridor. Companies formed distribution centers here, soon followed by refrigeration facilities. Then companies began to notice they should be doing more. Adding to I-80's assets, the tax climate, combined with a good quality of life, led many companies to relocate and expand in Northern Nevada with manufacturing, distribution and logistics.

Griffin Transport Services

Griffin Transport Services is a global supply chain management company offering end-to-end solutions. The company, founded in Nevada in 1975 and located in Reno, offers the kind of value-added services usually found in larger cities. Transportation, customs clearance, warehousing, distribution and a host of services to ensure visibility throughout the process – Griffin Transport offers one point of contact to help manage the entire flow of goods. The company also operates Northern Nevada's only foreign trade zone.

"Nevada has been a vibrant, growing market over the years," said Russ Romine, president. "The business climate is so good that businesses are comfortable moving here, which supports our ability to grow."

Veltec Sport

Veltec Sport, a distributor of high-end bicycle components, selling to 2,500 retailers across the U.S. and Canada, used to have its North American headquarters in California. Josh Greenberg, managing director, said they knew they had to move. "It got so expensive to live in Monterey that it was hard to hold onto employees." When he started to look for a new home, Greenberg wanted to find a place that offered employees an opportunity to grow in their business lives and personal lives as well. With a team of young, active employees, Carson City's access to outdoor recreation and affordable homes seemed ideal.

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“We sent every employee up to the area for a weekend, one at a time,” Greenberg, said, so that everyone could vote on the move. They did and have been quite happy in their new home. “The economic development authorities have been great,” said Greenberg. “They’ve been able to help in every way we’ve challenged them.”

Coming Clean

Skyrocketing fossil fuel prices have the entire country looking to diversify its energy portfolio, and Nevada has the natural resources, from the sun, the wind and the water, to take the lead.

“I don’t know of any communities that would not list clean energy as a target,”

said Ron Weisinger, executive director of Northern Nevada Development Authority (NND). “With oil costs rising daily, we all have a responsibility. In order to live in affordable ways, we need to look at other means of energy to propel us into our children’s and our children’s children’s generations.”

Ormat Technologies, Inc.

Paul Thomsen, public policy manager for Ormat Nevada, Inc. (a subsidiary of Ormat Technologies) has seen alternative energy initiatives around the world. Ormat Technologies is the third largest producer and operator of geothermal energy in the country and has its worldwide headquarters in Reno. Ormat actively designs, engineers, buys and installs sustainable energy products. The company has eight geothermal power plants in Northern Nevada producing 110 megawatts of power (one megawatt supplies power for 1,000 homes).

In 1984, Ormat was looking to come to North America. “We sent representatives to the East Coast and the West Coast, and when we came to Nevada, we were able to meet with then-Governor Richard Bryan and have a lengthy sit-down,” said Thomsen. “The governor was very interested in geothermal. And our idea was that if we could come to a state and immediately meet the governor, then that’s a climate that would be very beneficial to the growth of the company.”

But clean energy is only part of the economic picture. EDAWN and NND are also looking for clean companies: companies that are stewards of this place we call home.

Mike Compston, owner/partner with Western Dairy Specialties of Yerington, is a home-grown businessman with roots in the land. This fifth-generation Nevadan has a background in farming and ranching, and teamed with some friends to create a business utilizing a patented technology for bottling of liquids (primarily milk). Western’s technology allows for bottling and pasteurizing fluid food products, but with a caseless system that doesn’t use traditional milk crates. Instead, the “bottles,” made from

Bank Of Nevada

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Founded in 1994, Bank of Nevada is now the largest locally-based financial institution in Nevada with \$2.8 billion in assets and 15 locations.

Over the past year, the bank opened its new Las Vegas area regional offices in Centennial Hills, Warm Springs and Durango, and its Aliante Regional Office in North Las Vegas. The Bank also announced the completion of a new 36,000 square-foot operations center, with state-of-the-art facilities to provide greater capabilities and service efficiency. In early 2007, the bank is scheduled to open a new Hualapai Regional Office at Hualapai/Charleston.

Structured as a “super community” bank, Bank of Nevada provides a broader product array and larger credit capacity than a traditional community bank through locally-experienced relationship managers who serve as a single point of contact for bank clients.

The Bank focuses on serving local businesses, professionals, the real estate community, nonprofit organizations and individuals seeking a quality personal banking relationship.

Founded originally as BankWest of Nevada by William S. Boyd, the bank’s board of directors is led by Chairman Arthur Marshall and consists of some of the top Nevada business and community leaders. Veteran Las Vegas banker Bruce Hendricks was recently promoted as the new president of Bank of Nevada.

Bank of Nevada is the flagship institution of Western Alliance Bancorporation (NYSE: WAL), a \$4 billion bank holding company headquartered in Las Vegas. Western Alliance offers financial services in Nevada, Arizona and California through its subsidiaries, including Bank of Nevada, Alliance Bank of Arizona, Torrey Pines Bank, Alta Alliance Bank and its affiliates, Premier Trust and Miller/Russell & Associates, Inc. Information regarding products and services offered by Bank of Nevada can be found at www.BankofNevada.com.

corn-based resin, are compostable. But Western doesn't end its stewardship there. The design of the facility includes water conservation, membrane filtration for clean water and HEPA filters for clean air. And the company requires a level of environmental stewardship from its suppliers that goes beyond legal requirements. "We all have a responsibility to have the least impact we can," said Compston. And Western is showing other businesses how it is done.

Branding Northern Nevada for Business

Northern Nevada has a competitive business climate, a robust, growing economy and workforce, strong university and research presence, a good mix of urban and local sites for businesses, and a great quality-of-life. Now we need to let everyone else know about it.

AngelouEconomics, a leading national economic development consulting firm, started the brand ball rolling, tapping into Northern Nevada's knowledge base for messages relevant to national audiences. Now it's up to us.

Brands aren't taglines or logos. "It's the thought or feeling your target audiences have when they hear about Northern Nevada as a place to work and conduct business," said Ben Loftsgaarden, AngelouEconomics. A brand expresses the reasons why many of us choose to live and work here, and why others should consider the region, as well.

What do people outside our market expect from Northern Nevada? Casinos? That we're right next door to Vegas? "We need to distinguish ourselves from the southern half of the state and establish our independence and quality," said Jarrod Lopiccolo, business development director, Noble Studios Marketing & Web Development, who chairs Northern Nevada Development Authority's (NNDa) marketing workgroup. "We need to focus on things that brought people here in the first place – proximity to Lake Tahoe and the Bay Area, great schools, great workforce and a nationally-ranked airport."

"The critical reason for a brand is to communicate who we are in Northern

"We're all in this together, large and small, urban and rural."

Nevada to potential businesses and workforce looking to locate here. We need to ensure our out-of-market target audiences – young professionals, site selectors or decision makers – who make the decisions on where to relocate or expand – clearly understand Northern Nevada's brand," said Lorna Shepard, Red Dog Consulting, a Truckee-based marketing research and communications strategy firm working with the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN).

R&R Partners has been brought in to develop Northern Nevada's regional brand for business, along with a steering committee and as much community input as possible. The brand won't be EDawn's or NNDA's, but Northern Nevada's.

"We're all banding together to brand," said Ron Weisinger, NNDA. "We're all in this together, large and small, urban and rural. If we do it together, we can implement it on local levels, each county putting its own emphasis on the brand."

"The essence of a brand is never something you didn't already know," said Shepard. "We just crystallize it in a way so not only does it resonate with us here locally, but also with the audiences nationwide."

The end goal is for Northern Nevada to have as unique and distinctive a brand for business, as we do as a tourism and gaming destination. "There's a lot of competition for businesses, and we want to be well-recognized and well-understood by potential businesses and young

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professionals considering a move,” said Shepard. “A brand helps us do that by establishing an understanding of who we are and what makes us distinctive.”

First Impressions in the Electronic Age

“Web sites have become a primary tool for expanding and relocating businesses,” said Elizabeth Scott, research manager at the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN). Scott says site selectors and business executives are turning to the Web for their first impressions of regions they are considering moving to. If they don’t like what they see, they may never make the call to talk to someone with expertise in that area.

A strategic task force, comprised of EDAWN, Nevada Commission on Economic Development, Nevada Center on Entrepreneurship and Technology, NNDA, Sierra Pacific, University of Nevada, Reno and other partners, has been making progress in developing cohesiveness among the region’s various business and community Web sites. Part of that cohesiveness includes a regional branding effort, a geographic information system and collaborative data. “It makes sense for us to work together,” said Rafael Cappucci, vice president of NNDA and owner of visionASP, Inc. “We can share resources and expand our branding effort without repeating each other’s work.”

The information available through the program will not only help outsiders learn about Northern Nevada, but it will also help businesses understand the resources available in each area. Quality of life and workforce information, vendor lists, supplier lists and community calendars will be part of the program—all allowing Northern Nevada to put its best face forward.

The Regional Web Site System being facilitated by NNDA strives to bring consistency, up-to-date statistical information and a forum for information-sharing across Northern Nevada, including 11 chambers of commerce and five economic development



A quaint Northern Nevada street filled with boutiques and specialty shops.

organizations. Through a grant from the NCED, visionASP, Inc. and MacWest Marketing are standardizing the region's Web presence. Cappucci said the program "is a means to exchange data information and share that information with a number of agencies, businesses and members."

It's important that those interested in moving companies to Northern Nevada be able to get pertinent, accurate, understandable information that allows them to compare one area to another. It is also important that the Web sites for the region show a level of competence and sophistication to better serve companies and individuals considering the region.

The Regional Web Site System program will coordinate the efforts of the region. There is no reason for every county to be calling the state demographer for current demographic statistics. There's no reason for three different sites to list three different state population numbers. "A site selector representing a company sees all these different numbers and assumes we don't have our act together," said Ron Weisinger, executive director of NNDA. "This program will interlink information so that a site selector can go to any site, get information and see that we are working together."

Developing the Home Team

The traditional role of economic development has been to concentrate on bringing new businesses to the region. In Northern Nevada, it's so much more. Regional strategies embrace supporting local startups, growing local ideas and developing local talent — all while continuing to attract companies that will benefit existing communities.

Entrepreneurs

The NorthernNVision and Target2010 reports have targeted entrepreneurs as an important component of a bright economic future for the region. "EDAWN as part of Target2010, has identified that successful entrepreneurs are just as important as our

"It makes sense for us to work together. We can share resources and expand our branding effort without repeating each other's work."

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Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center, part of the Carson Tahoe Medical Campus, opened in December 2005. The new state-of-the-art facility features 144 private rooms, expanded emergency services, a 5-star women and children's center, enhanced medical and oncology services and a progressive open heart surgery program. Also part of the campus is the first freestanding, comprehensive cancer center in Nevada, Sierra Surgery Hospital, The Merriner Cottages and several physician offices.

to build an innovation-based economy." The community has many of the pieces in place to encourage and grow entrepreneurship, but more needs to be done.

One of the basic steps necessary to build entrepreneurship in Northern Nevada communities is to establish an entrepreneurial network. "We want to take the recent successes and tell that story," said Chuck Alvey, president and CEO of EDAWN. "That way people who are entrepreneurs feel connected and excited about starting a business here."

The spirit of entrepreneurship, according to Angelos Angelou of AngelouEconomics, comes from a community that understands entrepreneurial challenges, government and financial entities that ease the journey from idea to viable business, an educational system that encourages entrepreneurial thinking in schools, a network that helps start-ups find funding, incubators to connect individuals with research opportunities, and a community that spreads the word of local successes.

Incubators

One way to support entrepreneurship is to strengthen the link between businesses and educational entities. Incubators connect the business mind with the research mind. Higher education institutions, such as community colleges, the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) and Desert Research Institute (DRI), offer the research capabilities and resources to spur invention and innovation. At the same time, entrepreneurs envision how to take the fruits of such research and create viable products and businesses.

Northern Nevada's economic development entities are uniquely poised to facilitate ways in which communities can solicit businesses to add to research, and create companies that take advantage of intellectual findings.

NNDA, through funding from the Nevada Commission on Economic Development (NCED) and a variety of partners, is helping bring a major incubator to the rural

efforts to relocate, expand and retain businesses in the region," said Michael Thomas, director of investor development for EDAWN. While many entrepreneurial businesses reside in the area, business activity is not yet sufficient for entrepreneurship, as a sector, to reach the tipping point where it has its own momentum. "We haven't had the critical mass, and we're

changing that," said Thomas.

EDAWN and Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDA) have recognized that a vibrant business community is fueled by healthy start-up activity and thriving home-grown businesses. AngelouEconomics states in the Target2010 report that Northern Nevada is "on the brink of entrepreneurial success and has the capability



Harley-Davidson Financial Services (HDFS) is located in Carson City and offers a wide range of financial products and services to motorcycle enthusiasts and Harley-Davidson dealerships.

communities. Ron Weisinger, executive director of NNDA, said the project, to be located in Fernley (centrally located), managed by Western Nevada Community College and supported by both UNR and DRI, will be a general incubator for a variety of disciplines. From low-tech to high-tech, agriculture to intellectual property, the goal will be to facilitate entrepreneurial thinking.

"The first phase will have up to 10 companies or entrepreneurs selected," Weisinger explains. The second phase will be a virtual incubator, offering distance education for the rural regions of the state.

At the same time, EDAWN is supporting the feasibility study for a technology focused incubator at DRI. The project is a partnership between UNR and DRI. "We are looking at how we can take research being done at these unique facilities, and how that research can be used in the community," said Thomas. He said the key is taking a look at who is already offering entrepreneurial opportunities and support those programs rather than duplicating existing efforts – even if those opportunities are anchored outside the region. "Money is money and will go across borders," he said. "We can partner with other emerging markets and connect investors and talent in each area."

Workforce Development

With an unemployment rate of between 3.7 percent and 4.1 percent, Northern Nevada faces significant workforce challenges. As jobs continue to increase faster than the number of people able to fill those jobs nationwide, finding, attracting and developing a suitable workforce remains at the top of the list for economic development authorities in the region.

Workforce development is key to regional development "because no matter how great retention and expansion and recruitment are, if no one is around to take the jobs, it won't do any good," said Weisinger. "We are all involved in addressing this challenge – EDAWN, Nevada-Works, NNDA – we are working on recruitment now, not just planning."

The Company We Keep

The three prongs of economic development are supporting and encouraging home-grown businesses, relocation of businesses to an area, and helping local businesses expand. While it is usually the businesses moving to the area that get the media coverage, neither EDAWN or the NNDA take existing businesses for granted.

Both EDAWN and NNDA use a nationally recognized database (called Synchronist) that allows them to gather and organize data from specific sources to look at trends without identifying sources. Chuck Alvey, president and CEO of EDAWN, said, "We have probably one of the most robust business expansion and retention programs in the country." And Business Builders is at the heart of that vigor.



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Donna Crooks, business expansion manager for EDAWN, runs the Business Builders program and explains that with the help of volunteers, she interviews around 200 companies a year to get a good understanding of the needs and challenges of the existing business community. All the interviews are strictly confidential (one of the attractive capabilities of the Synchronist program).

"A lot of communities don't even have business expansion and retention programs," said Crooks. "They might have an interview process, but then they don't do anything with the information. We take it a step further and pool the information into an aggregate report to be released to the community." This helps community and regional planning, economic development groups with retention, expansion and recruitment, site selectors who may be considering the region, and existing businesses share knowledge and grow industries. But none of it would be possible without the volunteers, Crooks emphasizes.

"We have a very active Business Builders group," she said. "They are all high-energy, highly successful people who are committed to helping EDAWN. They assist in identifying companies for interviews, conduct research, gather information and conduct interviews."

Keeping our Eyes Open

"Fifty-one percent of our economic impact for the last fiscal year was from expanding companies," said Alvey. "If we're so busy with the new ones that the old ones are falling off the back of the truck, we don't make any progress."

Ron Weisinger, executive director of NNDA, said, "Retention is really an expansion project. If a company is going to expand, we want them to expand here and keep good primary jobs here." Alvey agrees, saying, "It's much easier to keep a customer than try to find a new one." Northern Nevada is committed to doing both. ■

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Benefits of Joining EDAWN

Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada

EDAWN is a public/private partnership committed to recruiting, expanding, retaining and starting quality companies that make a positive economic impact on, and contribute to the quality-of-life in the Reno/Sparks/Lake Tahoe region. EDAWN spurs regional collaboration in Northern Nevada to maintain and grow its vibrant economy. The expertise and market connections of member companies are vital to the overall success of economic development in Northern Nevada.

Membership opportunities include: the chance to support quality regional growth by investing in economic diversification; enabling visionary regional economic planning efforts like Target2010; marketing visibility for member businesses; connecting with "key players" in the business community; being first to know about incoming and expanding companies; and exclusive news and economic insight for the region.

To join EDAWN, or for more information, visit www.edawn.org or call (775) 829-3727.



Benefits of Joining NNDA

Northern Nevada Development Authority

NNDA serves a diverse and strong business community and is responsible for results-oriented economic development in Carson City, Douglas, Lyon and Storey Counties. With over 300 business and community leaders enjoying membership, NNDA is large enough to provide you significant networking opportunities, but small enough to ensure your ability to get involved and make a difference.

Membership opportunities include: reach business executives and community leaders via networking breakfasts, workgroups and other high profile special events; access to businesses and organizations in our rapidly growing region; help build a strong business environment and healthy, diversified economic base for Northern Nevada; be informed of important issues that affect your business and quality of life.

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EDAWN 2007 Calendar of Events

February 6

Directions 2007

Join more than 1,000 regional businesses and organizations at Northern Nevada's largest economic forum addressing national trends and their impact on Northern Nevada. Co-hosted with Reno/Sparks Chamber of Commerce. Reno/Sparks Convention Center 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

April 18

EDAWN Annual Luncheon

Network with more than 1,000 business and community leaders and hear a national speaker on the power of branding your business. Grand Sierra Resort 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

June

Summer Social

This annual event gives EDAWN investors an exclusive preview of Artown's July celebration of the arts. Complimentary wine tasting.

Fall

Governor's Industry Appreciation Awards Dinner

Recognizes new companies that have relocated to Northern Nevada, and acknowledges existing companies for significant growth. Keynote speaker is Nevada's governor. Co-hosted with Northern Nevada Development Authority in cooperation with the Nevada Commission on Economic Development. Location TBA

EDAWN's Morning Business Buzz

Quarterly investor breakfasts. Guest speakers discuss topics of key interest to the business community.

Topic and location TBA

New & Expanding Company Receptions

Quarterly receptions. A chance to rub elbows with executives from Northern Nevada's hottest companies.

Topic and location TBA

**For more information,
visit www.edawn.org/events
or call (775) 829-3712.**

NNDA 2007 Calendar of Events

February 28

EntrepreneurWeek USA-The First Step Workshop: Starting or Expanding Your Business

Meet organizations to help your business grow
10 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Special luncheon presentation by POP and NCET

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The Plaza Hotel Conference Center, Carson City

March 28

Membership Breakfast Meeting: Balancing Water Needs and Growth

Speakers: Tracy Taylor, P.E., Nevada State Engineer

Doug Maurer, Senior Geologist, USGS

Ed James, Carson City Water

Subconservancy,

Dwight Millard, Developer/Builder

Dayton Valley Country Club 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.

April 26

Brown Bag Luncheon Series

Topic and location TBA

May 23

Membership Breakfast Meeting: Nevada Association of Employers

Topic and location TBA

May/June

Annual GOLF-A-THON/Workforce Training Scholarship Challenge Grant

Location and information TBA

July 25

Membership Breakfast Meeting County forum updates

Location TBA

September 28

Fifth Annual Northern Nevada Regional Business and Tech Expo

Location, information TBA

Fall

Governor's Industry Appreciation Awards Dinner

Co-hosted by NNDA and EDAWN in cooperation with NCED

Location, information TBA

November 28

Membership Breakfast Meeting

Topic and location TBA

December 4

Annual Christmas Holiday Party

Topic and location TBA

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