

Center for Economic Vitality

2010 Annual Report



Center for Economic Vitality
Western Washington University
College of Business and Economics

What we do

Advancing the economic vitality of our communities

The Center for Economic Vitality (CEV) provides strategic business counseling to businesses in Whatcom County; business research services to Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) and underserved Economic Development Councils (EDCs) throughout Washington state; and export assistance to all businesses in Washington state.

Cost

No-cost to businesses due to the financial generosity of our funding partners.

Letter from the Director Tom Dorr



As we all know 2010 was another challenging year with continued layoffs and challenges with job creation. Yet, I am happy to say our clients are not at all about doom and gloom. In fact, over one-third did better in 2010 than in 2009 and many actually expanded their businesses. Also 2010 was about keeping businesses afloat and sustaining jobs at risk.

The CEV continues to emphasize new market opportunities with expanded export assistance, access to conventional and alternative financing and innovative marketing strategies. The CEV is committed to advancing the economic vitality of our communities through innovative economic development programs that help to sustain jobs in our community. This process takes cooperation with other economic development organizations, professional service partners, clients, and funders.

In the last 10 years the CEV has helped over 5,000 businesses to stabilize, seek new opportunities and overcome challenges and expand their operations. We invite you to call to learn how we can assist your business.

Hopefully 2010 signals the end of our challenging economy and is the first step towards economic prosperity in the future.

Thank you for your continued support!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Dorr". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Tom Dorr
Director
Center for Economic Vitality
College of Business & Economics
Western Washington University

Client Testimonials



Steve Roguski
Owner
Fairhaven Runners
& Walkers

“The fact that this caliber of guidance was free and non-biased was incredible to me, and I could not imagine anyone starting or developing a business without consulting Tom or his staff at the CEV. Having been in business now for 11 profitable and enjoyable years, I can and often do say that I owe much of our success to Tom’s help and the resources at the CEV.”



Terri McCalla,
DVM, MS, DACVO
Owner
Animal Eye Care

“The mentoring I obtained from the CEV that truly set me up for success. Mentors at the CEV gave me not only the tools and the information, but also the encouragement I needed, and the reinforcement that my business would be successful.”



Paul Van Metre
Co-owner
Pro CNC

“I am convinced that if we hadn’t seen Tom, we would have gone out of business. He has helped us control costs, market in a bad economy, learn how to staff appropriately, and understand all about the financing side of business including managing accounts payables and receivables. Tom has been a mentor that has made a significant difference in our business.”



Dave Adams
Co-owner
Emergency Reporting

“I value the time invested with the Center for Economic Vitality for strategic counsel in sales, marketing and administration matters for Emergency Reporting. Their services are valuable in growing a business or service.”

2010 Highlights of Three Core Services



Business development counseling expands into export assistance for all Washington state

All businesses in Washington state can now receive expanded export assistance from us. Our special export initiative is funded by the Washington State Department of Commerce and is available through chambers of commerce throughout Washington.

Export services include no-cost confidential business counseling and match-making activities connecting foreign buyers directly with Washington state producers, with special emphasis on British Columbia/Canada.



CEV outreach offers Competitive Intelligence Workshops for business owners

Competitive Intelligence Workshops teach business owners how to use research to grow sales, increase margins, manage costs, and market effectively by using consumer preferences, industry data, and financial analysis. The no-cost workshops were held in Ferndale and at the Mount Baker Theatre in Bellingham. More workshops are planned across Washington state in 2011.



Special projects continue to help communities

Dairy farms, convenience stores, customer satisfaction surveys for process improvement, a succession plan, a health clinic, and a manufacturing summit were special projects the CEV was engaged in during 2010.

The CEV undertakes projects on a fee-for-service basis for local governments, non-profit organizations, and economic development service providers. Surveys, work-feasibility studies, cost/benefit analysis, and business plan development are examples of our past special projects.

Client Testimonials



Jim Anderson & Cindy Heins
Co-owners
Parts Warehouse

“The CEV has helped us acquire export financing for our international sales and relieve the cash flow challenges of selling abroad. They also helped us manage our inventory levels to take into account our growing export sales.”



Will and Mari Kemper
Co-owners
Chuckanut Brewery and Kitchen

“James helps us see the big picture and has worked to help us grow our business. This business is competitive and we started in a difficult time. It is important to have someone that can provide the technical business input that we need and can relate to the emotional aspect of running a business that I need. And we have found that in James, our business advisor.”



Trudy Scherting
Owner
Moka Joe Coffee

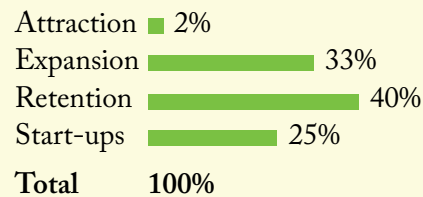
“Last year alone my counselor, Eric Grimstead, at the CEV helped me evaluate the option of selling out, versus taking on an equity partner, versus tackling how to stay put and grow. I developed a strong sense of empowerment through understanding the options presented.”

Business Development Counseling

Since 1983 we have been helping businesses stabilize and grow. Our knowledgeable and personable business strategists provide in-depth, confidential counseling to businesses, free-of-charge. Services include:

- Business plan development
- Strategic planning
- Export assistance
- Labor and personnel solutions
- Access to capital, loan information and finance packaging
- Marketing plan development
- Cost/financial analysis
- Market research and strategies
- Succession planning
- Valuation of a business for sale or purchase
- General business problem solving

Whatcom County Businesses Served



From back/left - Tom Dorr & Eric Grimstead. Front/left - James McCafferty, Debra Lee & Lee McClain. The photo was taken at the Mount Baker Theatre, Bellingham.

Client Testimonials



Debbie Gann
Owner
Home Attendant Care

"I have used the CEV's research services extensively over the years to help make strategic decisions in planning for growth, to secure additional bank financing when the need arose as well as for validation of [employee] compensation plans and benchmarking. Their research staff is thorough, knowledgeable and attentive to details in their reports and client interaction. I would highly recommend their services."



Tom & Theo Wanne
Co-owners
Theo Wanne Classical Mouthpieces

"It doesn't matter how great our product is; if we build our business ineffectively it will fail. The CEV has been dynamically working with us during our growth. We are in a dynamic mode and at times need to change on a dime."

As we developed our marketing strategies and tactics, we tapped the CEV's research sources for targeted demographic and competitor information. This allowed us to focus our marketing resources in areas of the greatest potential return."

Economic Gardening Research Services

Economic Gardening is an economic development strategy that helps to retain and support existing businesses with research tools to be more competitive, more profitable, and more successful.

Businesses and communities throughout Washington are strengthened by our customized research that is integrated with business advising. We believe businesses can best stabilize and grow when they have the right information to make the necessary strategic decisions.

Services are obtained through CEV business strategists in Whatcom County, SBDCs and underserved EDCs throughout Washington state.

Research services can include:

Business Development

- Competitive analysis
- Identifying customers
- Locating capital

Financial Analysis

- Wellness checks
- Feasibility analysis
- Proforma projections

Market/Industry Research

- Marketing plans and strategy
- Industry trends and information
- Competitive intelligence



From back/left – Jenn Hill, Jenny Spurgin, Jack Marolich, & Ashley Zender.
Front/left – Nichole Reeves & Allison Carrie. The photo was taken at the Mount Baker Theatre, Bellingham.

Special Projects 2010



Sustainable Dairy Farms Initiative

We continue to work to preserve dairy farms in Whatcom County by identifying additional revenue opportunities for local farmers.



Succession Planning for Farms in Whatcom County

On another farm retention project, we are helping to create a succession plan for family owned farms in Whatcom County.



A Special Study for Lummi Nation

The Lummi Nation hired us to study and recommend ways for two convenience stores to generate more revenue and profits. The project studied operational efficiencies and marketing strategies.



A Feasibility Study for the Nooksack Tribe

We researched and wrote a feasibility study for a new community healthcare clinic for the Nooksack Tribe and the Foothills community.



City of Bellingham Permit Center

The CEV continued conducting the quarterly surveys of recent City of Bellingham Permit Center customers. The surveys are an on-going effort to improve customer satisfaction and process efficiency. Obtaining customer contact information, collecting satisfaction data via an online survey, the CEV analyzed the data to identify trends, barriers, and areas for improvement.



Port of Douglas Manufacturing Summit

We facilitated a day-long manufacturing workshop with the Port of Douglas in Wenatchee, Washington.

International Economic Gardening Conference, 2010



Photo by Jenny Spurgin

The Center for Economic Vitality and the City of Tacoma hosted the 8th Annual International Economic Gardening Conference in Bellingham,

Washington on June 16-18, 2010. Ninety-two economic development practitioners and speakers from the United States, Canada, and Japan attended the conference held at the Bellingham Cruise Terminal.



Photo by Jenny Spurgin

The conference began with a Washington state style dinner and networking event at the Squalicum Boathouse, followed by a sunset cruise on Bellingham Bay. Attendees also participated in an optional shopping and sightseeing trip to Vancouver, Canada.

Social Media Conference NW 2010, Evolving Marketing Conversations

The Social Media Conference NW 2010 was a collaborative partnership between the CEV and the Technology Alliance Group for NW Washington (TAG).

The event was held at McIntyre Theater in Mt. Vernon, Washington on March 25, 2010. The 286 attendees and speakers came from California, Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Oregon, Washington, D.C., Wyoming, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, and Washington state.



A “social media experience” was integrated throughout the day-long event. A Social Media RockStars contest was held before the conference for the first time.



The winners were: Terrence Klein, Barlean's Organic Oil and John and Dorie Belisle, Bellewood Acres.



More info: cevforbusiness.com at [about us/conferences](http://about.us/conferences).

SALUTING OUR FUNDING PARTNERS FOR 2010

Port of Bellingham
 Western Washington University's
 College of Business and Economics
 Washington Department of Commerce
 City of Bellingham
 City of Ferndale

City of Blaine
 City of Lynden
 City of Sumas
 Whatcom County
 Economic Development Administration
 Private donations

Impacts and Outputs for Washington State

We track and measure what we do

ECONOMIC GARDENING RESEARCH SERVICES FOR WASHINGTON STATE 2007-2010		
IMPACTS	2010 Total	Since 2007
Jobs saved and created with research support	143	847
New investment generated with research support	\$5,536,197	\$25,501,288
OUTPUTS		
Number of businesses supported	422	1,298
Number of hours the research saved economic development service providers	2,586	12,934

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COUNSELING IN WHATCOM COUNTY 1996-2010		
IMPACTS	2010 Total	Since 1996
Jobs saved/created	200	4,945
*New investments created	\$13,581,836	\$181,504,733
OUTPUTS		
Number of businesses counseled	421	5,948
Number of counseling & business research hours	3,517	46,553
Average number of hours per client	8	

Providing a return on investment of \$56:\$1

We leveraged our financial partner's investment; for every dollar of local funding we received, our clients generated over \$56 new dollars in new investments for our community.

Learn More

To learn more about our services and programs visit our Website at www.cevforbusiness.com or call (360) 733-4014.

The printing of this annual report is made possible by the support of:



*New investments include new loans and owner investments.