

A Proven Approach to Help Businesses Survive and Grow

The Business Resource Network (BRN) is a unique approach to help businesses survive and grow. It works closely with them to identify and access a host of business services with as little red tape as possible. The BRN operates in Trumbull, Mahoning and Columbiana Counties.

A collaboration of chambers of commerce, workforce and economic development organizations, universities, career & technical centers, state and local government agencies, the BRN partnership targets businesses with growth potential as well as those facing challenges. It then conducts in-depth interviews with the owners and managers of the businesses.

After learning a business's goals and the obstacles it may be facing, BRN Partners present the business with a package of suggested incentives, technical assistance, training and other programs designed specifically for that business.

This all happens through a single point of contact—the BRN Account Executive—assuring tight coordination of services and minimal bureaucracy. There is no charge for the interview and proposal and many services are available at no cost.

Once the business chooses the programs and services it wants to pursue, the BRN Account Executive continues to work with the business and participating BRN Partners over time to deliver quality services and identify new ways to assist the business.

Salem's Barclay Rolls Uses BRN To Help Expand Overseas Markets



John Dance, Barclay Rolls' Compliance Officer

Working with the Business Resource Network since 2010, Barclay Rolls that manufactures and refurbishes production rolls for steel, aluminum and food industries, has taken advantage of many of the offerings of BRN's partners including: Bureau of Workers' Compensation's safety program, MCTA's OJT program, Ohio Small Business Development Centers' (SBDC) export program, Ohio Development Services Agency and One-Stop recruitment efforts.

At present, the Salem company is looking at the export market and Mousa Kassis, SBDC's International Trade Assistance Center (ITAC) International Trade Advisor, has provided a significant amount of assistance including an introduction to the Export-Import Bank of the United States. The Ex-Im Bank's Small Business Express can provide a company with inexpensive insurance to mitigate the risk of exporting, according to John Dance, compliance officer for Barclay Roll.

John, a former banker who handles much of the day-to-day operation of the company, is very interested in expanding the company's export business. Currently Barclay Rolls, exports to Mexico and Canada and he is exploring more countries for potential exports including Nigeria. It was a presentation under the auspices of ITAC that alerted John to the potential for business in the African nation that is rich in oil but short on infrastructure.

Barclay Rolls, a 114-year-old company that employs about 15, prides itself on weathering many economic storms. It is looking to expand its markets geographically and to extend its reach in industries already served as well as move into new industries.

Mickey's Quick to Recognize Advantages Offered by BRN

Mickey's Army-Navy in Warren has the ongoing challenge of "right sizing" for the area's ever changing population. Mickey's owner Marty Cohen, son of the founder, turned to the Business Resource Network just a few months ago and is already reaping benefits.

The BRN connected Marty to Mahoning Valley Economic Development Corp. (MVEDC) for a consolidation loan and to the Small Business Center at Youngstown State University for assistance in developing a business plan. Marty said he hopes to continue to work with the BRN especially in the area of marketing and website development.



Marty Cohen in his Warren store

"At first I was a bit leery when approached by The Business Resource Network to do an on-site interview because I have done surveys in the past with limited results. However, after completing the process I was glad I participated. Owners often get caught up in day-to-day responsibilities and lose sight of the big picture. The 45-minute exercise not only allowed me to rethink many aspects of my business but also forced me to think realistically. The end result opened some doors for future funding options. I thank the Business Resource Network for taking the time to focus on my small business."

Marty Cohen



Company founder Paul and son, Tim Crowe

Crowe's Cabinets Continues 4-year Relationship with BRN

Crowe's Cabinets has been working with the Business Resource Network since 2009 and intends to continue working with it into the future. Tim Crowe, general manager, said, "They've been helpful" referring to the BRN and its partners. The company that builds custom commercial cabinetry has done two BRN interviews and received two proposals. Among the services accessed through the BRN was assistance from the Bureau of Workers' Compensation in setting up its new manufacturing facility in Poland. Tim has also found the on-going relationship with a BRN account executive to be very helpful along with the One-Stop recruiting efforts and MCTA's On-the-Job Training contracts.

BRN Partners

Compass Family & Community Services
Choffin Career & Technical Center
City of Warren
City of Youngstown
Columbiana County Commissioners
Columbiana County Career & Technical Center
Columbiana County Office of Econ. Development
Congressman Tim Ryan's Office
Congressman Bill Johnson's Office
Eastgate Regional Council of Governments
Family Recovery Center
Kent State University Columbiana County Campus
Kent State University Trumbull Campus

Kent State University Tuscarawas Campus
Main Street Warren
Mahoning & Columbiana Training Association
Mahoning County Career & Technical Center
Mahoning County Commissioners
Mahoning County Dept. Job & Family Services
Mahoning Valley Economic Development Corp.
Mahoning-Yngst Community Action Partnership
Mfg. Advocacy & Growth Network (Magnet)
NEO HealthForce
Ohio Apprenticeship
Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation
Ohio Development Services Agency
Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission

Ohio Treasurer of State
Salem Area Chamber of Commerce
SBDC - KSU Tuscarawas
SBDC - YSU
SCORE
Southern Columbiana County Regional C of C
Trumbull Career & Technical Center
Trumbull County Commissioners
Trumbull County Dept. of Job & Family Services
U.S. Senator Sharrod Brown's Office
Village of Lowellville
Western Reserve Port Authority
Youngstown State University
Youngstown-Warren Regional Chamber