Economic Strategy Project

Highlights from Cluster Employer Meetings (Report 2)

On May 19-20, the EVC convened more than 100 senior business executives gathered to discuss opportunities and requirements for their business sectors to prosper in San Luis Obispo County.

At these meetings, each cluster group first identified the top opportunities for continued prosperity in San Luis Obispo County, followed by the top requirements to ensure prosperity. The report contains highlights of these cluster group discussions.

PROJECT BACKGROUND
This vital project is a multi-phase approach to determine challenges and opportunities through key information gathering and analysis. Driven and supported by the business community and the County of San Luis Obispo, a strategy to be completed in the Fall of 2010. Read this first report by our consultants at COLLABORATIVE ECONOMICS which provides a deep assessment of our county’s economy and highlights sectors that have provided most of the job growth in recent years.

Thank you to all of the sponsors on this project.

See list of project sponsors

County Business Improvement District (CBID)
CBID teamed up with Carl Ribaudo (Strategic Marketing Group) to present the CBID Marketing plan, brand and new website URL to a group of over 45 local leaders.

The cornerstone of a recent presentation was a spirit of collaboration supported by the CBID’s vision:

*To develop and implement a Countywide tourism effort with the CBID taking a lead role with a focus on quality of purpose and a common goal.*

With a focus on projects such as a Sustainable Tourism Program, a Highway 1 Scenic Loop, way signage and tourist information kiosks, the CBID’s mission is to draw more travel dollars to our region and in turn increase occupancy within the 731 lodging properties that make up the CBID constituency.


The CBID ended the presentation with a request that all BIDs come together to form a BID Travel Industry Alliance in an effort to encourage “cooperation and less duplication” among the 5 area BIDs, and together support one of the county’s most important economic engines, tourism.

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**SLO County Regional Airport Updates**

The Airport is seeing several bright spots:

- As reported on USAToday.com’s Airline Schedule Changes at US Airports site, according to the Official Airline Guide for May 2010, SBP experienced a 23.7% increase in daily available seat capacity from May of '09, amounting to approximately 520 seats.

- Since December 2008, our community air service marketing group has created and funded 6 campaigns promoting our existing carriers. Since December 2009, SkyWest Airlines added two additional LAX flights.

- A 4th US Airway’s flight on a 50 passenger regional jet is
scheduled for a trial monthly run starting July 4th. It will be a weekly Sunday morning flight.

• Enplanements for March, April & May 2010 were up on average, approximately 10% from the same period last year.

The Air Service Development Group consisting of Airport Management, the San Luis Obispo County Air Transportation Alliance (SLOCATA), EVC, SLO Chamber, regional marketing professionals and other volunteers. They have achieved positive results in improving our air service, but more effort is needed to reach the level of service our community needs.

SAVE THE DATE

SLO SEED VENTURES announces first event - July 30, 2010

An inaugural event by SLO Seed Ventures and Cal Poly's Innovation Quest.

Eight companies will be giving their investor pitches.

WHEN: Friday July 30, 2010 | 9:30AM - Noon
WHERE: Cal Poly Orfalea College of Business, Room 213
RSVP: to Jo Anne Miller at joanne@sloseedventures.com
Lunch available for participants.

EVC Board Member Update

With warm gratitude, we wish to thank out-going board member, John Shoals.

The Staff and Board of Directors of the EVC would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to Grover Beach Mayor John Shoals for his dedication and contributions which have made a lasting impact on this organization.
A Good Time to Dream Again

BridgePoint Custom Strategy’s Adi Ringer provides insight on companies thriving during tough economic times

Remember when you started your company? You probably had a vision of what you wanted it to be, what it would look like and where it would take you. Dreaming was a lot of fun. And while it may seem like the thing to do during these tough economic times is to hunker down and do whatever it takes to survive, you could also take proactive measures and realize that it’s a great time to dream again.

Sponsor Updates
**Compass Health**

We are pleased to welcome our newest sponsor: Compass Health at $1,000.

As one of the largest health care providers on the Central Coast, their mission is to offer specialized, professional services without sacrificing the importance of personal concern and attention. Compass Health offers innovative programs such as continuing education training and proactive resident council. The locally based company is also a proud sponsor of the Cuesta College LVN Class. Visit: [www.compahealth.com](http://www.compahealth.com) for more info

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**Fleet Management Solutions**

Press Release: June 22, 2010

US Department of Homeland Security Announce Operation Success of Fleet GPS Tracking and Mobile Resource Management

The GPS Fleet Tracking equipment and online application deployed during the last 12 months by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Detention and Removal (DRO) has been deemed a success, announces Fleet Management Solutions, Inc. (FMS).

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**Digital Foundation**

Digital Foundation partners with Microsoft BizSpark to drive innovation by offering server and development software for $100.

Digital Foundation (DF) is a local IT company specializing in computer networks for fast-growing businesses. Under this partnership, DF will work with local start-ups and help them get access to Microsoft's BizSpark program, a program designed to give start-ups in the technology sector, server and Development software for only $100.

For more info:

[www.bizspark.com](http://www.bizspark.com) | [www.digitalfoundation.net](http://www.digitalfoundation.net)

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**Client Spotlight**

The EVC is proud to help the following local entrepreneurs:

**SMS Masterminds**
SMS Masterminds, a mobile marketing firm for small to medium sized business is about service. Alex Minicucci, CEO and Founder, saw a need for easy, cost-effective and innovative marketing. SMS Masterminds was soon born out of his drive to help a multitude of locally-owned companies develop a better relationship with their clients and potentially drive revenue. This San Luis Obispo-based firm developed the SMS Masterminds Mobile Marketing Business Opportunity. They offer carrier-compliant commercial grade SMS messages, an interactive web portal to drive Subscriber opt-ins and generate new business for advertisers, 24/7 technical support in addition to a host of other tailored services.

FunRide

FunRide gives 150 Free Miles! After a bit of market research on car sharing services in the United States FunRide has adjusted their rate structure based on that research. FunRide has increased the hourly rate by $1/hour, but you get up to 150 miles for free with each reservation. After the 150th mile, then you pay 30 or 40 cents a mile, depending on your plan. We believe these new rates will save our members money with a flat hourly rate unless you exceed the 150 miles during your reservation.

Penny Revolution

Penny Revolution Inc., based in San Luis Obispo, is a green packaging startup that manufactures patented, reusable coin banks called Toggle Tubes®. Made to precise specifications, the self-counting Toggle Tubes capture loose change in standard roll sizes, requiring no tedious hand counting. Users simply fill the tube and snap the ends closed, and the change is counted. This clever packaging is made with a minimum of 30% curbside-recycled milk jugs. Each tube can be used hundreds of times.
Upcoming Events

**SOFTEC: Open House at Promega Biosciences**

Come learn about this business, network, and enjoy an evening of learning and sharing. Promega Biosciences, the chemistry experts for the Madison, WI based firm Promega Corporation, provides key reagents that enable their parent company to develop cutting edge life science research products.

**WHEN:** Wed. July 28, 2010 | 5:30 - 8:00 PM

**WHERE:** Promega Biosciences | 277 Granada Drive, San Luis Obispo

**REGISTRATION:** Free | [www.softec.org](http://www.softec.org)

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**On the Business Front**

The Bay Area Council Economic Institute

**Economic Analyses - Recession and Recovery: An Economic Reset Bay Area Economic Profile**

April 2010 - This report is the seventh in a series of biennial Bay Area economic profile reports that benchmark the region's economic performance against other cities and regions, in the U.S. and globally, with which we compare and sometimes compete. This year's document continues the practice of recent reports by analyzing the structural forces at work in the economy that will make it more or less competitive. As the Bay Area emerges from a damaging recession, our ability as a region and a state to understand and address these trends is urgent.

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Entrepreneur.com

**The New Blueprint for Successful VC Funding**

June 8, 2010 - VC firms have gone tight-fisted, and limited partners--the investors who supply capital to private equity funds--are skittish, afraid of being burned again after suffering a decade of negative returns. Mix in a contentious debate over the taxability of profits derived from successful venture capital investments, otherwise known as carried interest, and entrepreneurs are being forced to clear hurdles not seen since the 1980s, says Roger Novak, a partner with Novak Biddle Venture Partners in Bethesda, Md. "I think we're going back to the old days, and better companies are going to be born."

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**In the News**

Cal Poly

**Cal Poly’s Technology Park Signs New Tenant**
June 30, 2010 - Cal Poly recently signed a lease with Couto Solutions Inc. for approximately 3,500 square feet of space in the newly opened Cal Poly Technology Park. Couto Solutions is a software development firm specializing in custom social networks for businesses and online communities. The company was founded in 2004 by Justin Couto, a former Cal Poly business graduate. Couto Solutions will maintain its headquarters, which includes its core software and development team, at the Tech Park.

EVC Press Release

California’s leading statewide economic development organization elects Michael Manchak to its Board of Directors

June 28, 2010 - The Board of Directors of the California Association for Local Economic Development (CALED) elected Michael Manchak, President and CEO of the Economic Vitality Corporation of San Luis Obispo County, to serve on the CALED Board. Manchak joins a large Board of business and government leaders from throughout California and the central coast business community will have access to a CALED’s network of experts to build healthy communities through business expansion, retention, and attraction.

Paso Robles Press

Paso, Atasc. chambers present Mid-Year Economic Forecast

June 4, 2010 - There is light at the end of the tunnel - but it’s "still a long, long tunnel," to quote Bay Area-based Beacon Economics Founding Principal Christopher Thornberg during a speech delivered to an audience of local businesspeople, government officials and stakeholders in San Luis Obispo County.

EVC eNewsletter

SLO County Mid-Year Economic Forecast: UCSB Economic Forecast Project Presentations by Beacon Economics

June 3, 2010 - Following yesterday’s economic forecast event in Paso Robles by the UCSB Economic Forecast Project, please find below links to both presentations that were made by economists Chris Thornberg and Brad Kemp of Beacon Economics, a partner organization to the EVC. For those who did not attend, the presentations were excellent. The big take away was that the recession is recovering, but the recovery will be long and slow.
EVC Board of Directors

Executive Committee

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Tom Sullivan
Board Member Emeritus

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For questions or feedback, please contact June Parent at (805) 788-2012

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