
July 20, 2021

Small Business Makes A Big Impact

MICHIGAN CELEBRATES SMALL BUSINESS
17th Annual Awards Gala

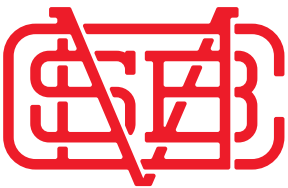


DISCOVER NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

No matter what stage your business is in, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation is here to help you succeed. By connecting you to the resources your business needs, granting access to necessary capital and introducing you to the right partners, the MEDC helps your business reach new potential.

Find out how we can help propel your business forward with customized support at michiganbusiness.org/pure-partnership

MICHIGAN ECONOMIC
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Michigan Celebrates
Small Business

8thirtyfour	15
AdvaitaBio	15
Anna's House	16
ATI Group	16
Aunalytics (formerly Naveego)	17
Awecomm.....	17
Barber Packaging Company	18
BBCetc	19
Blackrocks Brewery	19
The Botanical Co.	20
Careline Health Group	20
CertifID	21
Cheboygan Cement Products Inc.	21
Chicken Shack	22
Crown Industrial Services Inc.	23
DLN	23
Encompass Therapy Center	24
F.D. Hayes Electric Company	24
Forming Technologies.....	25
Frankenmuth Cheese Haus	25
Ganas Manufacturing	26
GLSV Inc.	26
GreenTree Cooperative Grocery	27
Hausbeck Pickles and Peppers	27
HealthBridge	28
Hil-Man Automation LLC	28
Homewatch Caregivers of Ann Arbor	31
IPS Technology Services	31
Jacquart Fabric Products	32
Kalamazoo Candle Company	32
Mammoth Distilling.....	33
Merchandise Outlet	33
Micro Visions Inc.	34
Motor City Gas	34
National Composites	35
Northern Biomolecular Services	35
Odanah Construction	36
Orri Corporation	36
Orthopaedic Rehab Specialists	37
Peak Performance Physical Therapy	37
Ripple Science	38
Riveer Environmental	38
Shoshana Technologies.....	39
SMT Automation LLC	39
Spark Business Works	41
TGG Solutions	41
Tri-Mation Industries	42
Uncle Ducky Outdoors	42
Virtual Systems	43
The Wicked Sister	43

2021 Award Categories and Winners	4
Helping Small Business Succeed	7
Economic Impact: 2021 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch.....	10
Building an Economy that Works for All Michiganders.....	11
Michigan 50 Companies to Watch	14
Michigan 50 Distinguished Alumni Awards.....	45
Best Small Business Awards	48
Thank Yous	67

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MCSB is a collaboration of trusted statewide organizations who offer collective resources to support, connect and celebrate small business. Michigan Celebrates is presented by its founding organizations: Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC); Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM); Michigan Business Network; Edward Lowe Foundation; Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC); and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)–Michigan District Office.

Kinexus Group is the Managing Partner of the MCSB gala.

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MICHIGAN 50 COMPANIES TO WATCH

The **Michigan 50 Companies to Watch** is the premier MCSB awards category recognizing 50 up-and-coming small businesses with high potential for the future. Award criteria includes annual revenue between \$750,000 and \$50 million, a workforce of six to 99 full-time equivalent W2 employees, as well as a demonstration of substantial

growth and a sustainable competitive advantage. The 2021 cohort of the Michigan 50 were selected from a process that included more than 550 nominations, multiple rounds of judging, and due diligence research performed by Gordon Advisors P.C.

2021 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch Award Winners

8thirtyfour Integrated Communications	Grand Rapids	Hil-Man Automation LLC/ Precision Dispense Technologies	Zeeland
AdvaitaBio	Ann Arbor	Homewatch Caregivers of Ann Arbor	Ann Arbor
Anna’s House	Grand Rapids	IPS Technology Services	Troy
ATI Group	Flushing	Jacquart Fabric Products dba Stormy Kromer	Ironwood
Aunalytics (formerly Naveego)	Traverse City	Kalamazoo Candle Company	Kalamazoo
Awecomm	Troy	Mammoth Distilling	Central Lake
Barber Packaging Company	Bangor	Merchandise Outlet	Mt. Pleasant
BBCetc	Chelsea	Micro Visions Inc.	Grand Rapids
Blackrocks Brewery	Marquette	Motor City Gas	Royal Oak
The Botanical Co.	Lansing	National Composites	Troy
Careline Health Group	Jackson	Northern Biomolecular Services	Kalamazoo
CertifID	Grand Rapids	Odanah Construction	Wyoming
Cheboygan Cement Products Inc.	Cheboygan	Orri Corporation	Waterford
Chicken Shack	Warren	Orthopaedic Rehab Specialists	Jackson
Crown Industrial Services Inc.	Jackson	Peak Performance Physical Therapy	Lansing
DLN	Byron Center	Ripple Science	Ann Arbor
Encompass Therapy Center	Bay City	Riveer Environmental	South Haven
F.D. Hayes Electric Company	Lansing	Shoshana Technologies	Ann Arbor
Forming Technologies	Muskegon	SMT Automation LLC	Roseville
Frankenmuth Cheese Haus	Frankenmuth	Spark Business Works	Kalamazoo
Ganas Manufacturing	Detroit	TGG Solutions	Grand Rapids
GLSV Inc.	Houghton	Tri-Mation Industries	Mattawan
GreenTree Cooperative Grocery	Mt. Pleasant	Uncle Ducky’s Outdoor Adventures	Munising
Hausbeck Pickles and Peppers	Saginaw	Virtual Systems	Grand Rapids
HealthBridge	Grand Rapids	The Wicked Sister	Sault Ste. Marie

BEST SMALL BUSINESS RECOGNITION

Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs), Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), and SmartZones are organizations located across the state that provide support services to Michigan small businesses. Each region of these various support organizations select a company to be recognized as a **Best Small Business Honoree** for demonstrating a strong relationship with the organization, as well as promising growth as a company.

Michigan SBDC Best Small Businesses

Dancing Meadows Homestead LLC	Cottrellville	The Poke Bowl	Flint
E & S Graphics Inc.	Ithaca	Stormy Kromer Cap and Ale House	Cheboygan
Elderly Instruments	Lansing	Sunrise Bliss®	Petoskey
Found	Ann Arbor	Umami Ramen LLC	Battle Creek
Hillcrest Lanes	Belding	Uncle Ducky Outdoors LLC	Munising

SmartZone Best Small Businesses

Airway Innovations LLC	Grand Rapids	NTL Industries	Sterling Heights
ARUtility	East Lansing	Rhombus Energy	Dearborn
Campfire CoWorks	Marquette	SightLine Inc.	Houghton
Clear To Go Inc.	Rochester	Versah LLC	Jackson
DB Delivery Solutions	China	Videka Pet Food	Kalamazoo
Geofabrica	Rochester	Wedge	
Lýseon Additive Manufacturing	Flint	Workit Health	Ann Arbor

PTAC Best Small Businesses

Advantage Mechanical Refrigeration Inc.	Comstock Park	SafeSense Technologies LLC	Portage
Amigo Mobility	Bridgeport	TentCraft LLC	Traverse City
ESS Universal USA LLC	Holland	Walter Mechanical Services Inc. dba ATI Group	Flushing
RCO Engineering	Roseville	Watermaster North America LLC	Ann Arbor
Ryba Marine Construction Co.	Cheboygan		

MICHIGAN 50 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

The MCSB awardee alumni community is now 800 companies strong, and grows each year. This community represents a substantial amount of the vitality that is foundational to the Michigan economy. MCSB recognizes alumni companies each year that best demonstrate the continued success of the alumni community.

The **Great Place to Work Award** recognizes a previous Michigan 50 Companies to Watch recipient for increased contributions to their community and that have fostered a creative, collaborative workplace culture to enhance performance and sustain a competitive advantage.

The **Strategically Focused Award** recognizes a previous recipient that has strategically increased their sales since they were awarded to ensure continued sustainability in the ever changing economy.

Michigan 50 Distinguished Alumni Award: Strategically Focused

Atomic Object	Grand Rapids
Tech Defenders	Grand Rapids

Michigan 50 Distinguished Alumni Award: Great Place to Work

Ruby + Associates Inc.	
Structural Engineers	Bingham Farms

CHANGE IS:
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Your small changes can have a big impact — for your bottom line, the community you serve and the planet we share.

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for Michigan. Visit [ConsumersEnergy.com/change](https://www.consumersenergy.com/change)



Helping small businesses SUCCEED

Small businesses are the backbone of our communities—providing goods and services from agriculture, manufacturing, construction and professional services to health care, dining and retail.

Hundreds of small businesses and family-owned companies, like Christoff & Sons Floor Covering, Presidential Brewing Company, and Whitey's Restaurant have worked with Consumers Energy to uncover energy savings and put money back into their operations.

These businesses and many others—including current and past award winners of Michigan Celebrates Small Business—are working toward the betterment of Michigan and our communities. And that's something to celebrate.

As everyone works to move Michigan forward, Consumers Energy also encourages small businesses to explore the variety of rebates and programs that save energy and money.

A simple walk through assessment—onsite or virtual—could lead to big savings. This will allow businesses to shift their focus to areas that will help them grow including buying new equipment, expanding their operations and growing their employee base. Request your assessment at www.consumersenergy.com/business/energy-efficiency.

Meanwhile, Consumers Energy continues to serve small businesses while moving forward with a clean energy transformation to support people, the planet and

Michigan's prosperity. To learn more clean energy solutions for your business, visit www.micleanenergy.com.

"We don't succeed if our businesses and communities don't succeed," said Valerie Christofferson, director of economic development at Consumers Energy. "We're committed to a triple bottom line of people, planet and Michigan's prosperity. That doesn't change in times of crisis. We'll be here to help every step of the way."

COVERING ALL THE BASES

Christoff & Sons

A Jackson, Mich., gem since 1979, Christoff & Sons made a commitment to refurbish and relocate to the site of a former toy store. Owners Tom and Ted made a stand for the environment by installing energy efficient lighting, renewable solar power and an electric vehicle (EV) charger.



Christoff Flooring

The upgrades and grand opening came prior to the coronavirus pandemic and allowed the company to remain open during the crisis.

Working with a Consumers Energy business account manager, Christoff moved into its new location, complete with energy efficiency improvements and special touches that are friendly to the planet, highlight their products and reduce their annual energy budget. Updates include:

- A new programmable thermostat controls the entire 30,000-square-foot building.
- New solar panels capture renewable energy and help lower electricity bills.
- An EV charger for customers encourages overall better health through reduced emissions.

It’s one way they are leading by example to make Michigan a better place to live. And they credit their work with Consumers Energy for helping them reach that goal.

“Consumers Energy has been there for us since day one,” said Ted Christoff. “We couldn’t be more thrilled with how things are going, and the sky’s the limit for the future of our business.”

THE FIRST FAMILY OF PORTAGE BEER

Presidential Brewing
Over at Presidential Brewing in Portage, Mich., a family venture to make interesting beer flowed into an energy savings incentive of nearly \$2,000 for the new brewery and tap room.



Presidential Brewing

They converted a vacant building into an energy efficient space and are using energy efficient systems that will save an estimated 8,484 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity over industry standard brewing systems. Last year, Presidential was

named the 2019 “Energy Efficiency Project of the Year” award winner for small commercial by Consumers Energy.

“At our core, our business is most excited about trying to build community,” Presidential Brewing’s president and founder, Jake Lohse, said about the family’s vision. “I think that seeing that tap room space finished, where people would be eating and drinking, really set the stage for what we wanted to do.”

TASTY FISH WITH A SIDE OF ENERGY SAVINGS

Whitey’s Restaurant
Before the pandemic, Whitey’s Restaurant worked with Consumers Energy to save money and focus on serving more of their award-winning fish and chips.

Whitey’s— family-owned and operated in Davison, Mich.— created a brighter working environment for employees along with a safer parking lot for customers.

They replaced incandescent light bulbs with LED bulbs, upgraded to a new energy efficient refrigerator motor, and enhanced the lighting in the parking lot. That all led to savings of 33,521 kWh annually and resulted in an incentive payment of \$5,395.



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Economic Impact of the 2021
Michigan 50 Companies to Watch 50 Awardees

Economic Impact in 2020

\$304 million in total annual revenue

12% increase in total annual
revenue compared to 2019

2,371 full-time equivalent employees

2,120 in Michigan • 251 out of state

577 net new jobs projected for 2021

553 in Michigan • 24 out of state

Increasing Impact*

4-year look

From 2017 through 2020, these companies generated \$1 billion in revenue and added 1,038 employees (both in Michigan and out of state), reflecting a 33.9% increase in revenue and 77.9% increase in jobs for the four-year period. That translates into a 10.3% annual revenue growth and 21.4% annual growth in employees.

5-year look

These companies project continued growth in 2021, with a 31.9% revenue increase and 24.3% growth in employees (both in Michigan and out of state) compared to 2020. If their projections hold, these companies will have generated \$1.4 billion in revenue and added 1,615 employees over the last five years—a 76.7% increase in revenue and 121.2% increase in jobs since 2016.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 (projected)
Revenue in \$ millions	227	257	271	304	401
Employees*	1,333	1,617	1,810	2,371	2,948

* full-time equivalent in Michigan and out of state

Regional Distribution

Region	# of Companies
Capital	3
Great Lakes Bay	5
Greater Washtenaw	8
I-69 Trade Corridor	1
Northeast	2
Northwest	2
Southeast	7
Southwest	6
Upper Peninsula	5
West	11

Business Sector Distribution

Business Sector	# of Companies
Accommodation or food services	4
Agriculture	1
Construction	2
Entertainment and recreation	1
Finance or insurance	2
Health care or social services	5
Information technology	6
Life sciences	1
Manufacturing	17
Professional services	3
Retail trade	4
SaaS	3
Scientific or technical services	1

Disadvantaged Classes
of Business Ownership

	# of Companies
Minority owned	2
Rural location	8
Veteran owned	2
Woman owned	6
Woman and minority owned	3
Woman and rural owned	4
Woman, rural and minority owned	1

BUILDING AN
ECONOMY
THAT WORKS
FOR ALL
MICHIGANDERS

As Michigan works to
emerge from the global
pandemic following 16
months of emergency
relief, response and
recovery efforts, we now
find ourselves in a position
where we can reflect on
what we have learned
and how, together, we can
rebuild our economy to be
even stronger than before.

By Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

Perhaps the most valuable lesson we can take away from this time is the critical role that our small businesses will play in our economic jumpstart going forward—and how we at the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) can help to create a more equitable, inclusive and resilient economy for every Michigander.

After all, it is small businesses that make economic development relevant to most people in Michigan. Most Michiganders may not ever set foot on the floor of an automotive assembly plant—but nearly all will eat out at their favorite restaurant, visit a local shop to find the perfect gift, or stop at the drycleaner up the street once or twice a month.

We know that the most meaningful way to create significant, lasting impacts on Michigan families, businesses and communities is to come together—as one Michigan—to listen, to collaborate, and to make sure we are providing a seat at the table for everyone when it comes to resources available to support our businesses and our economy.

And thanks to the success of our vaccine rollout to date—with more than 9 million total vaccine doses having been administered already and growing every day, we are already able to come together and celebrate in person the resilience, innovation and grit of Michigan’s small businesses over the past year. There could be no better combination than taking in the best of our Pure Michigan summer weather while we recognize and celebrate our state’s small businesses and look ahead to a more inclusive future for all.



As Michigan moves forward, the MEDC remains committed to doing all it can in return to support the continued success of small businesses by providing the funding, resources and opportunities that they need to continue not just surviving, but thriving here in Michigan.

SMALL BUSINESSES ARE THE GLUE THAT BINDS COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

The past year has tested all of us in ways we could not have imagined, for businesses, workers and communities alike. At the MEDC, we were proud to launch 23 economic relief and recovery

programs in response to the pandemic, supporting more than 25,000 businesses in the state and helping them retain more than 200,000 jobs in every single county across Michigan.

Much of our own impact and support during this time would not have been possible without the steadfast support and collaboration of regional and local economic development organizations, along with other key partners like the Small Business Development Center. Through our combined efforts, we were able to create a pathway for Michigan's small businesses to outlast this global pandemic.

For small businesses themselves, rather than being discouraged by the pandemic's overwhelming impact, these businesses pressed on, demonstrating a commitment to growing and evolving their business, while supporting the hope and optimism of their communities through it all.

Traverse City-based TentCraft, for example, had never manufactured products for the health care or medical industries; for 13 years it had served the event industry, creating custom prints and tents for event booths and sports arenas. Yet when COVID-19 began to spread throughout the nation, sporting events and business attraction opportunities began to postpone and cancel altogether. Refusing to consider shutting down its production altogether, the company recognized it needed to pivot quickly to stay afloat and keep its workers paid.

After rallying its team to support the growing global need for greater testing and screening efforts, the company received MEDC support

to begin quickly providing local installations of medical tents while filling national orders, supporting not just the Munson Medical Center in Traverse City, but also hospital systems in Texas, Massachusetts, Illinois and Pennsylvania. Later, by working with its local Procurement and Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) office—also supported by the MEDC—TentCraft was able to secure various contracts to provide medical tents in support of government efforts to combat the pandemic.

In Royal Oak, meanwhile, the Motor City Gas whiskey distillery is a beloved community staple, serving award-winning cocktails and homegrown spirits. When indoor dining restrictions became necessary to keep workers and customers alike safe from the pandemic, the distillery pivoted to selling cocktails to go with their internationally celebrated whiskeys, providing their community a way to support the local business while staying safe in the process.

From being the only minority woman-owned distillery in Michigan and one of only four nationwide, to being named “a top 10 whiskey bar in the U.S.” by Yelp; “a top 20 distillery in the U.S.” by *Travel & Leisure Magazine*; and “the Michigan

whiskey distillery of the year” by *US Business News*, Motor City Gas takes pride in its local roots and continues to find creative ways to support its community in return.

When faced with adversity caused by a coinciding public health and economic crisis, Michigan's small businesses stepped up to be their community's helpers in 2020 while finding innovative ways to support their customers and keep their employees paid. But that was not all; they also continued supporting their community in other ways by assisting with local youth programs, helping feed the hungry and comfort the homeless and engaging in other local activity that contribute to the vitality of the cities and towns that they call home.

MICHIGAN'S PATH FOR INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH LIES WITH SMALL BUSINESSES

Throughout the pandemic, Michiganders all over the state stepped up and came together to slow the spread of COVID-19 and save lives. Now, Michigan's task is to unleash the potential of our people, to drive innovation and investment in our small businesses, and create tens of thousands of jobs and economic prosperity for all. At the MEDC, we work every day to achieve this kind of long-term economic prosperity for Michiganders by investing in communities, enabling the growth of good jobs and promoting Michigan's strong image worldwide.

However, since we adopted this mission through our five-year strategic plan in September 2019, we have witnessed a clear need for not only our agency, but all of Michigan to find ways to create a more equitable and resilient economy for all Michiganders, which has become even more urgent in the wake of COVID-19.

For example, the need for more intentional and inclusive policies to support minority-, veteran- and women-owned businesses in the state has been underscored this year, as the pandemic has been particularly damaging for diverse-owned businesses that make our communities vibrant places to visit and call home.

Research already suggests that up to 40 percent of GDP growth in the U.S. economy between 1960 and 2010 can be attributed to greater participation of women and people of color in the labor force through improved talent allocation. Furthermore, economies grow faster and more vigorously—not to mention for longer periods—when prosperity is more equally distributed across segments of the population.

This trend was underscored over the past year, as too often the federal support provided in response to the pandemic missed a significant segment of small businesses in Michigan—despite those businesses being some of the hardest hit by COVID-19.

In moving beyond the pandemic, it is critical that we continue to offer inclusive, targeted support for these small businesses—often staples in their local communities—if we want to achieve comprehensive, meaningful and generational success for the people, businesses and communities of Michigan.

After all, across every corner of the state, small businesses are significant contributors to communities, providing accessible job opportunities for community members, building wealth among working families and creating upward economic mobility for women and minority-owned business owners.

In Troy, IPS Technology Services demonstrates exactly that, with president and CEO Pradip Sengupta leading his company in offering IT support services to businesses, including staffing, CIO advising, digital marketing, systems development and both health care and engineering IT support. Through support from its local Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) office, along with the Edward Lowe Foundation and TechTown, a Detroit-based SmartZone, IPS Technology Services has experienced some of the fastest growth in southeast Michigan over the years, while continuing to expand its team and support the surrounding community.

Small businesses also help create more vibrant communities throughout the state that support a higher quality of life that defines our way of living here in Michigan.

Consider Munising's Uncle Ducky Outdoors, which demonstrates a fierce passion and commitment to its hometown roots while offering customers from around the world a chance to experience the beauty of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. By embracing its Yooper culture, the business generates critical economic activity each year in support of the region's tourism industry, while caring for the community and environment that supports its success.

At the MEDC, we recognize that our organization is uniquely situated to create significant and powerful economic opportunities for the 10 million residents and businesses that call our state home.

And every single day, small businesses across the state also play a critical role in fostering inclusive economic growth throughout Michigan, by investing in their workforce to create opportunities for future prosperity.

Now, by working together, we can stay laser-focused on growing the economy and getting Michiganders back to work, while building back a future that works better for us all.

Small businesses also help create more vibrant communities throughout the state that support a higher quality of life that defines our way of living here in Michigan.



**MICHIGAN ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

To learn more about how MEDC works with small businesses to create long-term economic prosperity, go to michiganbusiness.org/partnership.

Small business makes a big impact!

Michigan’s economy is thriving thanks to the help of our state’s small businesses. In the past year, these small businesses have gained a deep understanding of how to navigate through the unknown and readjust to their new normal. Covid-19 has tested each one of these small businesses and while it may have impacted them differently, they all share the same outcome; success. Not only have these companies exceeded expectations, but they have made waves in their communities through hard work and dedication.

Since 2005, Michigan Celebrates Small Business has dedicated itself to acknowledging businesses that continually have an impact. The MCSB gala aims to recognize those who are making an impact in their communities and are driven, innovative, and resilient. This year, 87 small businesses will be honored for their achievements at the 17th annual awards ceremony. The leadership and perseverance that shines through each one of these companies guides them down the path of success and open doors of opportunity.

In particular, the companies honored as the “Michigan 50 Companies to Watch” have made a distinct impact on Michigan’s economy through innovation, marketplace performance, and company culture. Out of 575 well-qualified nominations, these 50 companies exuded all of the necessary qualities that are looked for in an up-and-coming small business with high potential for the future. These Michigan-based companies represent growing, second-stage companies that employ between six to 99 full-time equivalent employees and have between \$750,000 and \$50 million in annual revenue.

The “Michigan 50 Companies to Watch” climbed their way to the top and exuded leadership,

diversity, and dedication which is why Michigan Celebrates is beyond pleased with this year’s nominees. The 2021 “Michigan 50 Companies to Watch” have made a substantial economic impact and are responsible for \$304 million in total annual revenue during 2020, a 12 percent increase in total revenue compared to 2019. Together, they provide 2,371 full-time equivalent employees, 2,120 within the state of Michigan, and are projected to create over 553 new jobs in 2021.

Michigan Celebrates Small Business understands that not every company’s path to success looks the same and it is important to celebrate differences and uniqueness. Each business has a story of success and Michigan Celebrates Small Business wants to help tell that story. Join us in learning about these 50 companies and what makes them unique, their impact, and their plans for the future.

SO WHY CELEBRATE SMALL BUSINESSES?
Small businesses account for 99.6 percent of Michigan businesses and provide an abundance of benefits and opportunities in local communities. Small businesses provide families with jobs, they care about the role they play to strengthen their community, they take steps in helping the environment, and most importantly, they support one another. Small businesses have more of an impact than what meets the eye. It is important to Michigan Celebrates Small Business to give credit to the businesses that continue to make a big impact in our state.

Follow the subsequent pages to see these stories unfold, learn more about Michigan’s small businesses, and honor these hard-working and dedicated companies.



8Thirtyfour
Integrated Communications
Grand Rapids

Kim Bode, owner

Founded in 2006

Industry: professional services

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.8thirtyfour.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
A truly integrated communications agency.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
In the next year we will increase our earnings by 40 percent and continue to garner national media attention for our clients.

What makes the company truly unique?
We threw hourly billing out the window. Our pricing is value-based, our clients know the results they can expect for a cost that makes sense.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Covid-19 made things very challenging for us; however, we grew our revenue, retained our staff, and made Forbes “Top 200 PR Agencies of 2021.”

Describe the company culture in three words.
Inclusive, fun, persistent.



AdvaitaBio
Ann Arbor

Sorin Draghici, CEO

Founded in 2007

Industry: life sciences

Full-time equivalent employees: 8

www.advaitabio.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
AdvaitaBio helps life scientists accelerate discoveries and improve health care by translating high throughput experimental data into knowledge.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Become the world leader in our market segment.

What makes the company truly unique?
The use of proprietary cutting-edge technology and a fanatic dedication to quality and customer success.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Innovative, impactful, relentless.





Anna's House
Grand Rapids

Josh Beckett, CEO

Founded in 2003

Industry: accommodation or food services

Sites in Michigan: 9

Full-time equivalent employees: 196

www.annashouse.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

A retro-modern, diet and allergen-friendly breakfast and brunch restaurant.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

Saving the world from an ordinary breakfast.

What makes the company truly unique?

We blend breakfast classics and modern takes on everyone's favorite dishes. We separate ourselves by using quality ingredients and with our ability to accommodate nearly all dietary restrictions.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Talent acquisition and staffing.

Describe the company culture in three words. Food, friends, life.



ATI Group
Flushing

Michael Bunting, CEO/owner/principal

Founded in 1986

Industry: professional services

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 23

www.atigroupinc.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

We provide sustainable building solutions, focusing on innovative and cost effective building solutions.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

The installation of green technologies and practices that will benefit our customers.

What makes the company truly unique?

Our diversity to completely understand how buildings operate and align with our customers goals.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The installation of air filtration systems for Covid-19.

Describe the company culture in three words. Innovative, imaginative, environmentally conscience.



Aunalytics (formerly Navego)
Traverse City

Tracy Graham, CEO

Founded in 2014

Industry: information technology

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.navego.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

We provide a data platform to bring together data from across an organization and make it analytics-ready in real-time.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

Combining forces with Aunalytics (a Midwest-based data company), the Navego solution is now embedded in the Aunalytics AI powered analytics platform to provide an end-to-end solution.

What makes the company truly unique?

We seek to make AI and machine learning accessible for mid-market businesses in the Midwest, so that the businesses of our community can better compete with national enterprises in our local markets. We leverage mid-market personal touch and white glove service with the power of data and analytics in industry specific solutions created to answer business questions and provide actionable insights.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Acquisition by a strategic investor.

Describe the company culture in three words. Diverse, inclusive, humble-genius.



Awecomm
Troy

Brent Yax, CEO

Founded in 1999

Industry: information technology

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 20

www.awecomm.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

Awecomm enables the advancement of small to mid-size businesses by cultivating trust with our client partners, increasing knowledge around technology, and executing an IT strategy that aligns with the businesses' goals for the future.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

Doubling the company's size over the next 3-4 years.

What makes the company truly unique?

Our unique IT service model that creates a true partnership with our clients and utilizes the right tech strategy to help businesses grow.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Mobile-first initiatives are affecting Awecomm as well as most of our clients. Adjusting current systems and employing new technologies to allow for anytime/anywhere flexibility is becoming a new norm for small businesses.

Describe the company culture in three words. Exceptional, transparent, helpful.





Barber Packaging Company
Bangor

Luke Barber, President/CEO

Founded in 1989

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.barberpackaging.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We design and manufacture engineered packaging solutions.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Scale our newly acquired second manufacturing site.

What makes the company truly unique?
We are blessed with a team and culture to have each others back every day. This enables us to achieve against the odds.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The acceleration of the digital marketplace.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Truth, trust, team.



Michigan Celebrates
Small Business
**TABLE
SPONSORS**

Edward Lowe Foundation
Founding organization

Ngage Management
*2020 Michigan 50
Company to Watch*

BBCetc
*2021 Michigan 50
Company to Watch*

IPS
*2021 Michigan 50
Company to Watch*

Fenton Winery
*Michigan 50 Company
to Watch*



BBCetc
Chelsea

Kris Bergman, managing partner

Becky Aistrup, managing partner

Founded in 1990

Industry: professional services

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.bbcetc.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
BBCetc provides complete assistance for SBIR/STTR from assessment to grant proposals to post-award administration.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Continue to work with Michigan's strong business ecosystem to maximize SBIR/STTR awards and commercialization within the state.

What makes the company truly unique?
Our consultants offer a wide range of small business expertise developed from being business founders, managers and entrepreneurs. This allows BBCetc to provide customized solutions for clients rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Finding the right talent at the right time.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Trust, energy, collaboration.



Blackrocks Brewery
Marquette

David Manson, co-founder

Andy Langlois, co-founder

Founded in 2010

Industry: accommodation or food services

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.blackrocksbrewery.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Brewing beer in Marquette and having a blast doing it.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Opening up our new pub expansion.

What makes the company truly unique?
The people, both our customers and our employees.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? It's hard to not mention the elephant in the room – Covid-19 was obviously a large hurdle to navigate.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Active, fun, passionate.





The Botanical Co.
Lansing

Russell Chambers, chief executive officer/owner
Founded in 2016
Industry: cannabis retail and manufacturing
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.carbidexllc.com
www.thebotanical.co
www.franklinfields.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We bring good people together to enhance lives by creating extraordinary cannabis experiences.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Becoming 100 percent vertically integrated with the opening of our processing division, BioBizz, while also becoming GMP certified.

What makes the company truly unique?
Our people and our culture. We strive daily to truly live our mission.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Lack of fair banking in the cannabis industry.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Positive, passionate, supportive.



Careline Health Group
Jackson

Joseph Mead, CEO
Founded in 2019
Industry: health care or social services
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.carelinehealthgroup.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We are population health managers for the frail and elderly.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
To bring our level of care to the frail and elderly throughout Michigan.

What makes the company truly unique?
Our culture and willingness to innovate.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Staffing.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Family, exceptional, care.



CertifID
Grand Rapids

Tom Cronkright, CEO
Founded in 2017
Industry: SaaS
Sites in Michigan: TBD
Full-time equivalent employees: 10
www.certifid.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
CertifID is a digital identity and device verification solution that enables secure and timely real estate wire transfers, all backed by insurance.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
We are in the process of fully integrating with several title production softwares. This will be a major accomplishment for the company once all of these are completed.

What makes the company truly unique?
Our fraud recovery services have become a very unique point in our business because we are able to do something no other company can do. We can help clients who have been victims of wire fraud get their money back in a real estate transaction.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Connected, progressive, transparent.



Cheboygan Cement Products Inc.
Cheboygan

Catherine Gildner, owner
Founded in 1964
Industry: Manufacturing
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.cheboygancement.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We are a block and cement products manufacturer.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
To update and improve our equipment.

What makes the company truly unique?
We are a family-owned company that services all of northern Michigan.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Growth in the construction industry.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Rewarding, family, community.



Chicken Shack
Warren

Michelle McNulty, president

Founded in 1956

Industry: accommodation or food services

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 8

www.chickenshack.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Chicken Shack is a family-run restaurant chain that serves high quality meals of chicken, ribs and seafood.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

We are planning on expanding our restaurant chain outside of Michigan and are looking to open stores in Ohio and other states.

What makes the company truly unique? Our company is unique because we have four generations of Sobeck's working together to help grow our restaurant chain. A lot of other businesses don't have the strong family presence at their companies and we truly cherish the opportunity to work side by side with family members.

What small business trend is impacting you the most?
The increased demand for carry-out and delivery throughout the pandemic accelerated our growth last year.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Community, craft, heritage.



Crown Industrial Services Inc.
Jackson

Mark Beck, president

Founded in 1998

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 2

Full-time equivalent employees: 147

www.crownindservices.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Crown Industrial Services is committed to customer satisfaction by working together to surpass customer expectations and growing the business by serving each customer and employee with integrity and honesty.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Although Crown currently has over 300,000 square feet of industrial warehouse space across two locations, we envision growth and expansion enough to potentially open an additional facility to better suit the needs of our customers.

What makes the company truly unique?
With the acquisition of Midbrook Industrial Washers Inc. in 2015, Crown Industrial has over 100 years of service and knowledge base in order to better assist our clientele including various industries such as automotive, alternative energy, industrial, and military and defense.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? For Crown, the digital marketing trend becoming more prominent has been a struggle that our sales and marketing teams are facing head on. Our sales and marketing personnel are working diligently to create a digital platform that is more accessible for our customers.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Inclusive, collaborative, rewarding.



DLN
Byron Center

Phil Schaafsma, president/owner

Founded in 2002

Industry: automation design and implementation

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.dlninc.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
DLN provides comprehensive integrated material handling solutions for distribution centers and production facilities.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Launching additional warehouse software and robotics solutions.

What makes the company truly unique?
We bring the talent and capability of a company much larger than DLN, but retain the agility of a small company.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The rise of e-commerce and delivery expectations of consumers.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Collaborative, supportive, engaging.



Your Business,
Our Team...
Great
Results.



Encompass Therapy Center
Bay City

Ashley Blake, executive clinical director/owner

Founded in: 2017

Industry: health care or social services

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.encompasstherapycenter.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Pediatric therapy.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Encompass Pediatric Feeding Clinic.

What makes the company truly unique?
Encompass specializes in the treatment of language, communication, social, oral motor, behavioral, and feeding skills.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Utilizing zoom and connecting with professionals using social media platforms (e.g., technology).

Describe the company culture in three words.
Passionate, reinforcing, life-changing.



F.D. Hayes Electric Company
Lansing

Megan Doherty, president

Founded in 1923

Industry: construction

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.fdhayes.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Electrical and data communications construction and service.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
In 2023, we will celebrate 100 years in business!

What makes the company truly unique?
We are unique based on our diversity of services—we offer a full range of solutions to our customers power needs.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The small business trend of shopping local has had a positive impact for us. We live, work and give back in Lansing and the surrounding area.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Family, quality, safety.



Forming Technologies
Muskegon

Jacob Miller, president

Founded in 2004

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: TBD

Full-time equivalent employees: 70

www.formtech.org

Describe the company in one sentence.
Forming Technologies is a custom thermoformer specializing in packaging and material handling products.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
We are in the process of implementing a new ERP system that will improve the way we manage and track projects from receipt of order through product realization.

What makes the company truly unique?
I believe that our culture makes us unique. We strive to create an environment promoting teamwork and valuing family.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? We are currently struggling with labor. Finding people to work has become very difficult.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Teamwork, innovation, family.



Frankenmuth Cheese Haus
Frankenmuth

Judy Zehnder Keller, president/owner

Founded in 1968

Industry: retail trade

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.frankenmuthcheesehaus.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We create enjoyable experiences and memories for our guests and team members through the merchandise we sell.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Opening our 100 seat banquet space above our store for cheese tastings and pairing events and private banquets is our next major project at the Cheese Haus.

What makes the company truly unique?
With over 270 different cheese flavors from around the world, we are a one-stop shop for meats, cheeses, accompaniments, gadgets, gifts, and more. We make 12 cheeses “in haus” that can only be purchased at our store.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? With more people staying home and cooking, they are trying new cheeses they read about and we provide those cheeses. Also, the #shoplocal movement has helped our small family business.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Cheesy, hospitable, trustworthy.





Ganas Manufacturing
Detroit

Richard Ganas, founder/CEO

Founded in 2015

Industry: architectural millwork, metalwork, and bespoke

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.ganasmfg.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Ganas is a Detroit-based company specializing in the design and fabrication of architectural millwork and bespoke furniture.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Launch “Ganas Home,” a residential furniture brand that is currently in development.



What makes the company truly unique?
We are fabricators with design backgrounds, allowing us to produce pieces that are functional, beautiful, and ultimately designed with each unique end-user in mind.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Now more than ever we have seen small businesses looking to create unique environments for both public and private spaces.

Describe the company culture in three words.
We build anything.



GLSV Inc.
Houghton

Steven Mattson, president

Founded in 1996

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.glsv.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Provide complete, customer specific solutions for sound, vibration and shock problems in the North American defense market.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Fifty employees.



What makes the company truly unique?
Provide the career opportunities that keep small town family and friends together.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Increased government restrictions have been detrimental to our supply chain.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Resilient local team.



GreenTree Cooperative Grocery
Mount Pleasant

Sarah Christensen, general manager

Founded in 1970

Industry: retail trade

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.greentree.coop

Describe the company in one sentence.
GreenTree Co-op is a community-owned natural foods grocery store.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
We are moving from our current location, just 2,400 square feet, to a new, mixed-use development. We are quadrupling in size.



What makes the company truly unique?
We are community-owned, which means any shopper or customer can purchase a share and become an owner in our store. We’re the longest-running grocery store in Mt. Pleasant. We focus on local, organic, fair trade and sustainably produced products.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Other than Covid-19, the trend that’s impacting us the most is probably consumer interest in supporting local as well as interest in ready-to-eat foods.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Convivial, progressive, inclusive.



Hausbeck Pickles and Peppers
Saginaw

Timothy Hausbeck, CEO/president

Founded in 1923

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.hausbeck.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Manufacturer of pickled vegetables for sale to wholesale food and beverage distribution centers that ultimately are sold to quick service restaurants.

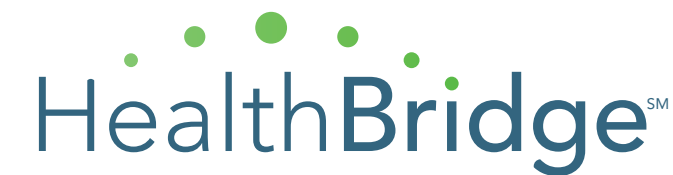
What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Bringing on new customers has been our highest initiative the past 15 months, which we see that happening in year 2021.



What makes the company truly unique?
Hausbeck is a loyal and trusted supplier who supports their customers with a full operational team with real time analysis, so they can strategically make good business decisions. We also provide the customer with R&D resources to help their chefs innovate new trending products ensuring a high quality product.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? At this moment, many quick service restaurants have come out with a new chicken sandwich with pickles as a condiment. We are pleased to be part of the new launch with one of our customers.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Elevate, energize, enhance.



HealthBridge
Grand Rapids

Gregory VandenBosch, CEO and co-founder
Amy O'Meara Chambers, COO and co-founder

Founded in: 2017

Industry: health care fintech

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.myhealthbridge.com

Describe the company in one sentence. HealthBridge is revolutionizing the way Americans access and pay for health care by embedding a financial security instrument into the health plan design to help individuals pay for and manage their out-of-pocket medical expenses.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company? HealthBridge is expanding its program across Michigan, as well as outside the state, with the goal to help as many individuals as possible access excellent and affordable health care when they need it and not just when they can afford it.



What makes the company truly unique? HealthBridge's team of experienced operators set out with a unique vision to create a solution that benefits every participant in the healthcare ecosystem—the patient, the provider, the insurer, and the employer. We believe that we have achieved that. Our team has always rejected the notion that there will always be winners and losers in health care.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? HealthBridge continues to attract and keep great talent thanks to the quality of life associated with living in Michigan and working for a Michigan-based company. Our offices in Grand Rapids and Traverse City offer high-caliber employees the ability to engage in meaningful, cutting-edge work while living affordably in a beautiful state with reasonable commutes (with work-from-home during Covid-19) and a Midwest emphasis on work-life balance. Planting its roots as a small business within the state of Michigan has allowed HealthBridge to grow in a way that could have occurred in a few places.

Describe the company culture in three words. Embrace big thoughts.



**Hil-Man Automation LLC/
Precision Dispense Technologies**
Zeeland

Tim Boeve, owner/president

Founded in 2003

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.hil-manautomation.com

Describe the company in one sentence. Hil-Man Automation offers the commitment, versatility, expertise and creativity to deliver a turnkey system to fully integrate on any production line.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company? Hiring great people, landing new customers, and exciting new projects!

What makes the company truly unique? We're a small business and that allows us to work really closely with our customers to give them the quality system that they're looking for.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The hardest struggle right now for us is looking for individuals to hire.

Describe the company culture in three words. Quality, dedication, integrity.



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August 26, 2021
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Marshall, MI

sbam.org/golfouting

BENEFITS MICHIGAN CELEBRATES SMALL BUSINESS



Michigan Celebrates
Small Business



Homewatch Caregivers of Ann Arbor Ann Arbor

Breanne Stuart, president/CEO

Founded in 2008

Industry: health care or social services

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.hwcg.com/annarbor

Describe the company in one sentence.

Our company provides private in-home care to the elderly for recovery, comfort and peace of mind.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

Our plan in the next year is to double our number of employees in order to serve the growing surge for home care.

What makes the company truly unique?

Our company is unique because of our mastered social workers, the owner's tenure, and the teams' average longevity with the company.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Families ability to choose and get educated through multiple sources

Describe the company culture in three words. Integrity, authenticity, gratitude.



*IPS Technology Services
We Make IT Happen*

IPS Technology Services Troy

Pradip Sengupta, president and CEO

Founded in 2009

Industry: information technology

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.ipstechnologyservices.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

IPS provides IT staffing and delivers enterprise web and mobile applications to businesses and makes them more competitive.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

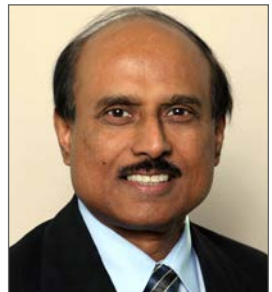
Double revenue in the next three years through acquisition and/or expanding in AI and autonomous vehicles.

What makes the company truly unique?

100% assurance on delivery of value and customer delight.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Niche technology solution at aggressive price is providing an incredible opportunity for small businesses.

Describe the company culture in three words. Diversity, dedication, knowledge.





**Jacquart Fabric Products
dba Stormy Kromer
Ironwood**

Bob Jacquart, CEO
Founded in 1958
Industry: manufacturing
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.jacquarts.com
www.stormykromer.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We offer a full-line of rugged, high-quality outdoor lifestyle apparel and accessories, with the 118-year old original Stormy Kromer cap as our flagship product.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
We are investing in and implementing automation in our shipping department to support our continued growth.

What makes the company truly unique?
We are building on the legacy of a 118-year old iconic product by bringing an artisan mindset to traditional sewing production, while also building a community of people who share similar values.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Shifting consumer behaviors to online shopping.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Problem-solving, family, passion.



**Kalamazoo Candle Company
Kalamazoo**

Adam McFarlin, owner/CEO
Founded in 2013
Industry: manufacturing
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.kalamazooocandle.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Kalamazoo Candle Company sustainably crafts and distributes honest, hardworking 100 percent natural soy artisan candles made with the highest quality American-made materials—hand-poured, packaged, and sold with integrity in the city that inspires them.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
We look forward to building upon this year's 100 percent growth year-over-year and leveraging those gains to expand into new markets.

What makes the company truly unique?
We put people and community first. Our commitment to sustainable practices and locally sourcing the highest-quality materials to create an artisan product at a fair price is uniquely "Kalamazoo."

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Customer enthusiasm for consciously crafted, locally sourced, sustainably made goods—especially those made by small local businesses—has benefited our business and encouraged us to look for more ways to reduce waste. We're proud and happy to provide customers with opportunities to shop their values.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Honest, transparent, inclusive.



**Mammoth Distilling
Central Lake**

Chad Munger, CEO/managing member
Founded in 2013
Industry: manufacturing
Sites in Michigan: 1
Full-time equivalent employees: 21
www.mammothdistilling.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We make spirits, experiences and opportunities drawn from the land, water, people, and feeling of going "Up North."



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
We will open a second farm in partnership with a co-op of Antrim County farmers to grow more of our own botanicals, to grow more crops for the local community and to provide a single space where small farmers can more efficiently market and sell what they grow year-round.

What makes the company truly unique?
Our focus on creating collaborations and opportunities for our employees and neighbors in the small towns where we live and work.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Bespoke products and customization.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Gritty, generous, creative.



**Merchandise Outlet
Mount Pleasant**

Douglas Schuette, owner/president
Founded in 1984
Industry: retail trade
Sites in Michigan: 11
www.merchandiseoutlet.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Discount retail store.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
We are currently opening up our 11th store in Baldwin, Michigan.



What makes the company truly unique?
Merchandise Outlet provides an immense value to our customers through the buying of deeply discounted merchandise, allowing our customers to stretch their hard earned dollar a bit further.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Supplying essential goods to our customers over the past 12 months has been an impactful reason our stores are continuing to strive and provide value.

Describe the company culture in three words.
One big family.



Micro Visions Inc.
Grand Rapids

Julie Lough, president

Founded in 1989

Industry: information technology

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.microvisionsinc.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We deliver managed IT environments where data is secure, accessible, and recoverable.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Our next major accomplishment will be the dedicated delivery of focused IT security solutions.

What makes the company truly unique?
Our culture makes us unique. We are committed to the application of our gifts and talents to help each other and our clients experience more fulfilling work lives, striving to create the perfect IT user experience.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The emergence of a ubiquitous “remote workplace” has been the most immediate and impactful development during the past year.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Integrity, responsiveness, collaboration.



Motor City Gas
Royal Oak

Rich and Tonya Lockwood, owners

Founded in 2015

Industry: agriculture

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.motorcitygas.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Manufactures small batch craft bourbon and whiskey from grain to bottle.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
The launch of statewide retail distribution of Motor City Gas manufactured products to stores, bars and restaurants.

What makes the company truly unique?
We are a “dirt to bottle” distillery, which means that Motor City Gas not only does 100 percent of the manufacturing process of whiskey, but we also grow our own organic heirloom varieties of grain for production of those whiskeys at our own farm in Ann Arbor (Motor City Gas Farms).

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The “Buy Local” trend along with the consumers trending away from craft beer in favor of craft distilled spirits.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Creative, authentic, hardworking.



National Composites
Owosso

Adam Fenton, COO

Founded in 2017

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 4

www.nationalcomposites.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
OEM supplier of custom composite and plastic products.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
In the upcoming months we will be opening a new production facility in Missouri.

What makes the company truly unique?
We have taken a unique approach to the composites industry, with a focus of being truly vertically integrated. We have built a company where we have all the different molding methods and advanced engineering capabilities under one umbrella. This has allowed us to serve a diversified market base and become a one stop shop to all of our customers.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Positive, family, dedicated.



Northern Biomolecular Services
Kalamazoo

Shane Woods, president

Founded in 2019

Industry: scientific or technical services

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 5

www.nbslab.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
A rag-tag band of do-gooders who want to change the world by helping to cure some of the most devastating diseases known to humankind.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company? Clinical study support. Currently we focus on the pre-clinical safety and efficacy testing of new gene and cell therapies. The next phase is typically a clinical phase which precedes the regulatory approval. Our goal is to expand our service offering to support clinical studies which has the potential to reduce our clients’ costs and accelerate their timelines.

What makes the company truly unique? The people and our ideas. We have the experience and conviction to challenge the status quo and try and build something better.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Buying power. Our market has been going through a period of consolidation and we compete with a lot of well established players who have the ability to negotiate and lock in supply agreements with various vendors. This can leave us with supply shortages or long lead times for delivery. It is compounded by the fact that many of our supplies are also used by hospitals and the Covid-19 pandemic has compounded the shortage of critical resources.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Passionate, diverse, agile.





Odanah Construction
Wyoming

Richard vanVugt, CEO/owner
Amber vanVugt, CFO/owner
Founded in 2015
Industry: construction
Sites in Michigan: 1
Full-time equivalent employees: 18
www.odanahconstruction.com

Describe the company in one sentence.Odanah Construction provides general contracting construction management services; design concept to finish quality at a fair price; and trusted delivery.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company? Odanah Construction has strategically grown its capacity and is ready to leverage the potential of the SBA Native 8(a) minority certification. This milestone provides significant positioning and opens revenue options in the federal market.

What makes the company truly unique? Richard and Amber van Vugt started Odanah Construction with a goal to deliver high-quality construction work at a fair price and provide for their family. Today, they've established an honest and trusted company that prioritizes treating its employees well and always puts client needs first. For a small company, they accomplish big things and are a one-stop shop when it comes to projects. With subcontractors in all trades, Odanah Construction can navigate a wide variety of projects from start to completion; metal or wood framing and custom work. As a proud member of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, Rich is one of the only builders with Native American heritage in west Michigan.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The Covid-19 marketplace has required a virtual presence in order to maintain and grow contracts. Odanah Construction recognized its virtual presence as an essential prerequisite to continued growth. With this understanding, Odanah Construction enhanced and redesigned its virtual presence in 2020-2021, with refreshed branding and new website development to showcase its success, achievements, and value.

Describe the company culture in three words. Trust, teamwork, quality.



ORRI Corporation
Waterford

Lori Doa, president/CEO
Founded in 2001
Industry: manufacturing
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.orrincorp.com

Describe the company in one sentence. Wire harness and cable assembly manufacturer.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company? Our next major accomplishment is to double our size in one year and provide higher level job opportunities for our community.

What makes the company truly unique? ORRI is unique because our employees come first; they are the root of everything we do. We encourage employee creativity and initiative from top level to entry level. All employees' ideas and opinions matter, regardless of their position.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Remote work has impacted us the most. Shifting our policies to allow employees to work from home when possible has created a positive experience for all employees.

Describe the company culture in three words. Integrity, passion, commitment.



Orthopaedic Rehab Specialists
Jackson

Kevin Barclay, PT, ATC, chief executive officer
Brandon Klump, PT, ATC, chief operating officer
Aaron Holly, PT, chief clinical officer
Founded in 1987
Industry: health care or social services
Sites in Michigan: 11
www.orsmi.com

Describe the company in one sentence. We provide physical therapy, athletic training, performance coaching, and massage therapy services.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company? Open a 12th mid-Michigan location.

What makes the company truly unique? Service culture, leadership development, community involvement.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Expansion.

Describe the company culture in three words. Service, environment, H.O.P.E.



Peak Performance Physical Therapy
Lansing

Jill Marian, CEO/founder
Founded in 2011
Industry: health care/outpatient rehabilitation
Sites in Michigan: 4
Full-time equivalent employees: 48
www.peakperformanceompt.com

Describe the company in one sentence. Peak Performance Physical Therapy is revolutionizing the way that rehabilitation is delivered through quality, compassion and education to the communities they serve.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company? Peak Performance Physical Therapy will have 10 clinics in 10 years

What makes the company truly unique? The quality of care that you can expect to receive at any one of the four Peak Performance Physical Therapy clinics.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The small business trend that is impacting Peak Performance Physical Therapy the most would be technology. This past year, Peak Performance Physical Therapy was one of the 20 percent of physical therapy companies to introduce telehealth services to their patients. Peak Performance Physical Therapy looks forward to advancing and growing their practice through this new avenue.

Describe the company culture in three words. Servant-focused, collaborative, gratitude.





Ripple Science
Ann Arbor

Peter Falzon, president/CEO

Founded in 2016

Industry: SaaS

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 22

www.ripplescience.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Ripple Science empowers clinical trial teams to recruit and retain patients with our cloud-based software platform.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Ripple Science is applying data science to the Ripple platform which will provide clinical trial sites and sponsors the analytics they need to inform future projects.

What makes the company truly unique?
The Ripple platform was designed by researchers for research teams which assists and automates the patient engagement experience based on the way they work.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The trend to conduct virtual trials by teams that work remotely is driving new demand for the Ripple software platform.

Describe the company culture in three words.
The Ripple team is a customer driven team of experts that develop solutions and enhancements through an agile process.



Riveer Environmental
South Haven

Matt Petter, president

Founded in 1983

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 48

www.riveer.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Riveer is a global manufacturer of wash racks, wash water filtration, cleaning solution reclamation and power washers.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Grow the physical size of the company.

What makes the company truly unique?
Riveer technology leads the washing and water recycling industry in ease of use, performance, and efficiency.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The lack of skilled labor in the area to hire.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Fun, challenging, rewarding.



Shoshanna Technologies
Ann Arbor

Linda Teaman, CEO

Founded in 1989

Industry: SaaS

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 15

www.rosemarksystem.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We've created powerful, yet simple, software applications to help home health care agencies manage their most critical resources: people, payors, outcomes, and data.

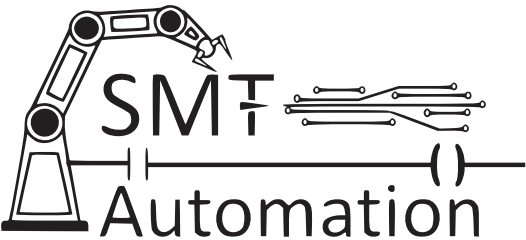


What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Continuing to Improve interoperability to enable agencies to better serve their clients and employees with tools and software easy access, efficiency.

What makes the company truly unique?
We understand the limitations of the industry high in technical skills but high in caring skills. What we provide is easy-to-use tools and a customer care team that is known as being the best in the industry. This combination allows agencies to grow and thrive in a very competitive industry.

What small business trend is impacting you the most?
There is a care worker shortage that is caused by several factors contributing to many families unable to find qualified care for their elderly family members. This has kept the growth of the entire home care industry to a minimum in Michigan and most states.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Elegant people care.



SMT Automation LLC
Roseville

Elena Morales, CFO/finance director

Founded in 2017

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 23

www.smtautomationllc.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We are dedicated to the integration of machinery, engineering, control design and automation. We offer start-up services, commissioning, problem solving, hardware selection, and programming. We have experience to improve existing machinery or develop a new solution.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
To grow our talent staff to offer more solutions to our current and new potential customers.

What makes the company truly unique?
Our main value is our people. Our company core values are the building blocks for our company and everyone involved in it.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Trying to have as much local talent as possible. Local expertise is very limited.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Accountability, commitment, teamwork.

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Spark Business Works Kalamazoo

Robert Armbrister, president/CEO

Founded in 2017

Industry: information technology

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.sparkbusinessworks.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

Spark Business Works designs and builds custom software, mobile apps, dashboards and websites to make your business better.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

Spark is planning to double our team in three years while also bringing to market our semi-custom product for small to mid-sized construction and service firms.

What makes the company truly unique?

Spark designs solutions that fit perfectly at the intersection of innovative and practical—just revolutionary enough to make a real difference for small, mid-sized and growing businesses.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? SMB leaders know they need to leverage workflow automation for efficiency *and* optimize digital experiences for their customers. Spark's approach to custom and semi-custom solutions allows us to reach under-served markets where off-the-shelf tools don't work well.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Client-focused, innovative, fun.

TGG Solutions

TGG Solutions Grand Rapids

Keith Huckaby, CEO

Founded in 1960

Industry: finance or insurance

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 75

www.tggsolutions.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

We thrive on innovating enterprise solutions for small businesses, because in a world where automation is king, our high-touch personal customer service model sets us apart.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

TGG Solutions is embarking on expanding our services to more technology solutions and new customers!

What makes the company truly unique?

TGG Solutions' culture is what sets us apart! It is designed by living out desired behaviors that result in having employees who feel valued and having satisfied customers. This is the core of what makes our white-glove service desired by many companies!

What small business trend is impacting you the most? At TGG, our culture is key. Covid-19, like many, required TGG to have a primarily remote workforce. Remote work has forced TGG to think outside of the box to keep our culture as prevalent as before Covid-19.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Intentional, inclusive, driven.



Tri-Mation Industries
Mattawan

Blaine Borkowski, president

Founded in 1995

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 48

www.tri-mation.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Tri-Mation Industries is an automated system builder in multiple industries focused on customer and associate relationships.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Tri-Mation Industries continues to work towards doubling our current sales by 2025.

What makes the company truly unique?
We value our associates and strive to provide a thriving, equitable, and safe environment. We also recognize that teams, open communication, and continuous improvement are key to our success. We continue to invest in people, software, and machinery to allow us to compete in an ever changing space.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? We are impacted most by the availability of ready skilled labor. Access to skilled labor will directly impact our ability to meet our 2025 goal.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Determined, resourceful, equitable.



Uncle Ducky's Outdoor Adventures
Munising

Wiliam Duckwall, president

Founded in 1964

Industry: entertainment or recreation

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 30

www.paddlingmichigan.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We are a multifaceted summer tourism company specizing in kayaking tours in Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, unique camping facilities with yurts, safari tents, tipis and primitive camping, a motel, the Paddlers Inn; a boat cruise around Grand Island National Rec Area; a restaurant, the Duck Pond Eatery and Beer Garden; and retail locations.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
We are currently reviewing several ideas for growth.

What makes the company truly unique?
We offer unique outdoor adventures in the Upper Peninsul for families to enjoy and make unforgettable memories that will last a lifetime.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Tourism continues to be a growing industry.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Adventure, family, memories.



Virtual Systems
Grand Rapids

Larry VanderVeen, CEO

Founded in 2017

Industry: information technology

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.vsystems.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Virtual Systems provides cloud-based IT solutions to businesses throughout North America.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Virtual Systems will be recognized this year as being in the top 1 percent of **two** different affiliate partners in 2021.

What makes the company truly unique?
Our unique value is in our commitment to combine the best cloud technologies with the highest level of customer service.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? As a global pandemic decentralizes workforces across the country, businesses are looking for cloud solutions to help their employees do their work efficiently and securely. This trend toward cloud-based IT platforms has impacted us the most.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Committed to excellence.



The Wicked Sister
Sault Ste. Marie

Catherin Howell, owner

Founded in 2016

Industry: accommodation or food services

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.wickedersistersault.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
The Wicked Sister is a restaurant/ caterer and expanding into food production of its signature sauces.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Securing a facility to produce retail and wholesale foods for the Wicked Sister as well as other companies.

What makes the company truly unique?
As a restaurant highly impacted by Covid-19, the Wicked Sister was able to find ways to not only survive, but thrive during mandated restrictions. Launching a supporting business will diversify revenue streams while increasing brand awareness.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? State mandated Covid-19 restrictions/safety protocols to ensure safety, compliance and remaining profitable.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Creative, employee-centric, community-minded.





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Atomic Object
Grand Rapids

Carl Erickson, president
Founded in 2001
Industry: : custom production software
Sites in Michigan: 1

Describe the company in one sentence.
Atomic Object helps companies innovate and grow with custom software that's beautiful, reliable, and easy to use.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
We're looking forward to celebrating our 20th anniversary as we launch our third office and enjoy record revenue.

What makes the company truly unique?
We are Michigan's only "Certified B Corporation" software consultancy. Certified B Corporations are businesses that meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? As many businesses plan to continue working remotely, Atomic will embrace co-location when safe in order to continue cultivating our tight-knit culture and delivering unique client experiences.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Curious, analytical, passionate.

Tech Defenders

James Dolezky, CFO ; Garry VonMyhr, CEO
Founded in 2015
Industry: information technology
Sites in Michigan: 1
Full-time equivalent employees: 150
www.techdefenders.com

More information available soon



Great Place to Work

ruby+associates

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS

Ruby + Associates Inc.
Structural Engineers
Bingham Farms

Tracia Ruby, president/CEO

Industry: engineering

Site in Michigan: 2

www.rubyandassociates.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

Ruby+Associates Inc. is a structural engineering firm dedicated to serving the construction industry and helping our clients build it better.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

In 2020, Ruby+Associates became certified as an official women business enterprise (WBE) through the Women's Business Enterprise National Council. We look forward to this new certification expanding industry visibility, increasing opportunities and elevating the Ruby brand.

What makes the company truly unique?

Ruby's culture is second-to-none. As a certified Great Place to Work® since 2016, we are proud to be recognized with a transparent, trust-based workplace that encourages staff to lead and contribute at all levels, develop new initiatives and programs, recognize each other, and grow professionally.

What small business trend is impacting you the most?

An efficient and seamless remote workforce has become not just a trend but a necessity in response to Covid-19. Ruby's crisis management plan, developed in 2017, included operational direction and a technology plan for staff to work remotely as they self-quarantined, which supported uninterrupted service to our clients.

Describe the company culture in three words.

Trust, transparency, team.



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SBDC Best Small Businesses



Dancing Meadows Homestead LLC
Cottrellville

Melodee Beals. CEO

Industry: agriculture

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.dancingmeadowshomestead.com

Describe the company
in one sentence.

Dancing Meadows Homestead provides clean, local, organically grown produce available at the farm or directly to your home.

What is the next major
accomplishment planned
by the company?

We are looking to expand our organic orchard as well as value-added product.

What makes the company truly unique?

We focus on heirloom and unusual products featuring great flavors, as well as listening to our customers and providing the convenience of delivery.

What small business trend is impacting you the
most?

The delivery has impacted our business deeply.

Describe the company culture in three words.

Creative, quality, respect.



SBDC Best Small Businesses



E & S Graphics Inc.
Ithaca

Nick Houghton

Industry: professional services

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.esgraphics.com

Describe the company
in one sentence.

E & S Graphics Inc. is a print, signage, engraving, promotional products and design company servicing Michigan and beyond.

What is the next major
accomplishment planned
by the company?

We are focused on launching our online ordering system which will streamline our processes and open up new channels for us.

What makes the company truly unique?

E & S Graphics Inc. is your one-stop shop for your marketing needs. We strive to offer the best quality of products served up with the highest level of customer service.

What small business trend is impacting you the
most?

The largest trend that we are looking to get in front of is the online shopping experience. We understand that as the baby boomers retire, we have to be at the fingertips of their successors.

Describe the company culture in three words.

Family, innovative, friendly.



SBDC Best Small Businesses



Elderly Instruments
Lansing

Stan Werbin, owner

Industry: retail trade

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.elderly.com

Describe the company
in one sentence.

Elderly Instruments is a musical instrument dealer and servicing center specializing in the buying, selling and trading of new and used fretted and stringed musical instruments.

What is the next major
accomplishment planned
by the company?

To successfully transition to the second generation of ownership, while celebrating 50 years in business.

What makes the company truly unique?

It is harder these days to find a [music] retailer that genuinely cares about people and the services/products they offer. Elderly's willingness to go the extra mile stems from Stan Werbin's friendliness, customer service ideals, and integrity, all of which he has passed on to the employees and Lily, his daughter.

What small business trend is impacting you the
most?

Elderly has always tried to be on the cutting edge of technology, using online platforms to reach customers all over the world. With the transition of everything moving virtual, we had a firm foundation to grow upon but are continuously innovating to stay ahead of the curve.

Describe the company culture in three words.

Welcoming, authentic, resilient.



SBDC Best Small Businesses



Found
Ann Arbor

Mary Cambruzzi, owner

Industry: retail trade

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.foundgallery.com

Describe the company
in one sentence.

Found provides a great shopping experience in Ann Arbor's historic Kerrytown District.

What is the next major
accomplishment planned
by the company?

Continue to build community engagement.

What makes the company truly unique?

Passion for finding great goods and sharing stories.

What small business trend is impacting
you the most?

That so many people are mindfully supporting local businesses.

Describe the company culture in three words.

Kind, quirky, welcoming.



2021 BEST SMALL BUSINESSES

SBDC Best Small Businesses



Hillcrest Lanes Belding

William Smith, owner

Industry: entertainment or recreation

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.hillcrestlanes.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

Hillcrest Lanes is a 12-lane bowling center that offers a safe, clean, and a family-friendly environment for our customers to have fun and make great memories.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

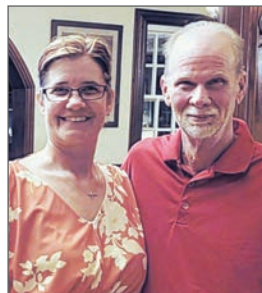
Our first and most important accomplishment is staying open while Covid-19 is still a major concern around the world. If we can do this, we will be fixing our roof and updating the outside of our center.

What makes the company truly unique?

We are a small center and that allows us to be more personable and welcoming to all that walks through our doors. You instantly feel like a part of our bowling family. We also concentrate heavily on our youth. We support and encourage children three-years-old and up. And are never limited to a disability. We are a platform for these kids to be safe, have fun and encourage them to go for their dreams.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Again, Covid has impacted us the most. Expensive, new technology is a trend that impacts us as well. We need to stay on top of these new “bells and whistles” to continue giving the best all around family entertainment possible.

Describe the company culture in three words. Diversity and inclusion.



SBDC Best Small Businesses



The Poke Bowl Flint

Jeron Dotson, co-founder

Industry: accommodation of food services

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.thepokebowlflint.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

At the Poke Bowl, we serve just that. It's not our bowl, it's yours.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

The grand opening of our “brick & mortar” location in Flint, summer of 2021.

What makes the company truly unique?

The idea of “The Poke Bowl” concept came while two brothers from Flint, were visiting California for the first time (in hopes of shooting a music video). While attempting to find the “freshest seafood we could taste” before coming home, we stumbled across a dish known as “Pokeh.” We then brought this idea back to our city.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The social media/ marketing aspects.

Describe the company culture in three words. Inclusive, fresh, unique.



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SBDC Best Small Businesses



Stormy Kromer Cap and Ale House
Cheboygan

Marcella Costin, owner

Industry: retail trade

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.stormykromercapandale.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

Stormy Kromer Cap & Ale House is an authorized dealer hosting an intimate shopping experience offering an exclusive legendary brand accompanied by incredible customer service and a vintage bar serving Michigan-made ales.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

Stormy Kromer Cap & Ale House has become one of the top three highest sales accounts in Michigan and are planning to be No. 1 in the country by 2022.

What makes the company truly unique?

Not only is the Stormy Kromer Cap & Ale House an original experience, it is also a downtown Main Street location which is surrounded by a live music theater, a martini lounge, an English pub, and an exclusive boutique—all of which are accessible under one roof under one ownership.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? During the pandemic, Stormy Kromer Cap & Ale House has provided a safe and unique shopping environment for individuals and families while offering special customer service which is not found with online shopping.

Describe the company culture in three words. Happy, unique, passionate.

SBDC Best Small Businesses



Sunrise Bliss
Petoskey

Pamela Colby, co-owner

Industry: retail trade

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.sunrisebliss.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

Sunrise Bliss makes organic cotton t-shirt hair towels to dry hair gently, while improving its health, making it the perfect partner for your getting-ready routine.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

We hope to continue this strong momentum of revenue growth with a better performing website and by partnering with new retailers. Also, we are working on a private label opportunity with a hair product line.

What makes the company truly unique?

1. We designed an original and organic product that quickly becomes part of a daily routine. It performs so well that customers even travel with it; 2. We make by-products with fabric scrap, even as little as one inch wide, to meet our sustainability goal of zero waste; 3. We provide an additional revenue channel for salons, shops, and other small businesses locally in Michigan and across the country.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The increase in online shopping and focus on self-care have simultaneously increased our B2C business.

Describe the company culture in three words. Collaborative, friendly, dynamic.

SBDC Best Small Businesses



Umami Ramen LLC
Battle Creek

Peecoon Allen, chef and owner

Industry: accommodation or food services

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.umamiramenbc.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

Our small fast and casual restaurant provides an underserved part of Battle Creek with cross cultural cooking, which brings in people from many different cultures and economic backgrounds who are drawn to our community style seating where they talk and share their love for food.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

Expansion to a new and larger location.

What makes the company truly unique?

Bridging cultural understanding and community through food.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Social enterprise.

Describe the company culture in three words. Employee upward mobility, community, culture.

SBDC Best Small Businesses



Uncle Ducky's Outdoor Adventures
Munising

Wiliam Duckwall, president

Founded in 1964

Industry: entertainment or recreation

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 30

www.paddlingmichigan.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

We are a multifaceted summer tourism company specizing in kayaking tours in Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, unique camping facilities with yurts, safari tents, tipis and primitive camping, a motel, the Paddlers Inn; a boat cruise around Grand Island National Rec Area; a restaurant, the Duck Pond Eatery and Beer Garden; and retail locations.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

We are currently reviewing several ideas for growth.

What makes the company truly unique?

We offer unique outdoor adventures in the Upper Peninsual for families to enjoy and make unforgettable memories that will last a lifetime.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Tourism continues to be a growing industry.

Describe the company culture in three words. Adventure, family, memories.

SmartZone Best Small Businesses



Airway Innovations LLC
Grand Rapids

Eric VanMiddendorp

Industry: medical devices

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.airwayinnovations.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Airway Innovations produces solutions for patient airway management, beginning with our TubeTrac® endotracheal tube holder.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Airway Innovations launched a new and improved TubeTrac® in May 2021 that we'll be monitoring closely.

What makes the company truly unique?
What makes our company unique is the focus on patient care and improved outcomes. The TubeTrac began as a problem identified by a clinician at Spectrum Health, who was an important partner in developing this solution.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Covid-19 has been a significant trend impacting the launch of our TubeTrac® endotracheal tube holder. It has increased the occurrence and severity of the problems associated with other solutions.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Nimble, collaborative, customer-focused.



SmartZone Best Small Businesses

ARUtility
East Lansing

Joseph Eastman

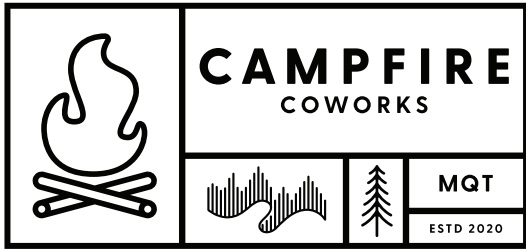
Industry: Saas

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.arutility.com

More information available soon

SmartZone Best Small Businesses



Campfire CoWorks
Marquette

Keith Glendon, founder

Industry: professional services

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.campfirecoworks.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Campfire CoWorks connects entrepreneurs, social impact leaders and creatives with resources for collaboration and innovation in the digital economy.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Beta launch of our digital platform and nationwide community affiliate program for rural innovation communities.

What makes the company truly unique?
We are a grassroots, rural and small-town innovation company, built on collaboration, community and shared value in the digital economy.

What small business trend is impacting you the most?
Innovation and entrepreneurship are not just confined to big, well known epicenters. There is a return to decentralized innovation and the democratization of the digital community is empowering small business to once again be a dominant force of growth in our country and the world. This is our time. And together, we shine.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Transformational, not transactional.



SmartZone Best Small Businesses



Clear To Go Inc.
Rochester

Scott Garretson

Industry: SaaS

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.cleartogo.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Clear To Go helps its customers become more efficient and effective at dealing with workforce disruptions at both a strategic and tactical level.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Rolling out our “Be Resilient” set of software tools that help companies become resilient in the face of unknown changes to workforce conditions.

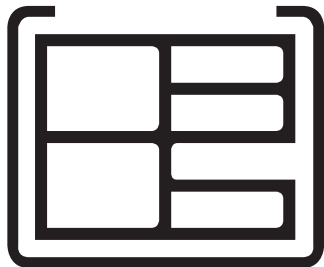
What makes the company truly unique?
The market offers many software applications aimed at HR. However, none of them do what Clear To Go does—that is, streamline the entire process of keeping people safe, healthy, and engaged. We are leaders, not followers in this field; we are spearheading the evolution of a whole new category of tools, not just offering one more product that replicates others in the marketplace.

What small business trend is impacting you the most?
Finding help and talent. Whether it's help with marketing, sales, or technology, we are having to get creative to fill our gaps.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Partner, resilient, pioneer.



SmartZone Best Small Businesses



DB Delivery Solutions
China

Mike Janas, founder
Missie Nordrum, founder
Industry: manufacturing
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.dbdeliverysolutions.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
DB Delivery Solutions provides a safe and secure receptacle for your home and office deliveries.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
DB Delivery Solutions plans to sell at least 300 units in 2021, and build an assembly and storage facility.

What makes the company truly unique?
DB Delivery Solutions invented the first through-the-wall residential drop box which can accommodate most any delivery, including groceries and prepared foods, which you retrieve from the inside.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? As people order more items to be delivered, they want a secure way to receive their deliveries with minimal contact, and the receptor meets that need.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Integrity, visionary, customer-focused.



SmartZone Best Small Businesses



Geofabrica
Rochester

George Carvias, CEO
Industry: manufacturing
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.geofabrica.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Geofabrica is a developer of advanced manufacturing devices and systems, primarily for defense applications.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Product and services introductions.

What makes the company truly unique?
Geofabrica's team is especially adept at rapidly implementing technology improvements to create strategic advantage in manufacturing.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Industry 4.0, especially additive manufacturing, distributed manufacturing, and data-driven quality production.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Innovative, young, results-oriented.



SmartZone Best Small Businesses



Lýseon Additive Manufacturing
Flint

Chris Williams, Co-CEO
Industry: manufacturing
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.lyseonam.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We are an additive manufacturing service bureau that utilizes 3-D printing technologies to supply products to our customers.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
To expand our service offerings into mid and northern Michigan.

What makes the company truly unique?
We are a face-to-face, hands-on solution-focused company. We want and need to understand our customers needs and wants when it comes to the additive manufacturing process and our systems are set up to provide just that.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Positive disruption, team oriented, fun.



SmartZone Best Small Businesses



NTL Industries
Sterling Heights

Greg McArthur, owner
Industry:
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.ntlindustries.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Our manufacturing expertise consists of reliable and highly skilled machining capabilities.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Our next major accomplishment is to become AS9100 Revision D certified and CMMC Level 3 compliant.

What makes the company truly unique?
Building relationships one at a time is what sets our company apart from our competitors.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The small business trend that has directly impacted NTL is our social media presence.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Encouraging, upbeat, structured.



SmartZone Best Small Businesses



Rhombus Energy
San Diego

Rick Sander, president and CEO

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.rhombusenergy.com

Describe the company
in one sentence.

Rhombus Energy Solutions manufactures the best, bi-directional electric vehicle chargers in the U.S.

What is the next major
accomplishment planned
by the company?

Engineering the next technology solutions that combat climate change.

What makes the company truly unique?

Rhombus Energy Solutions is the only company in the U.S. that makes UL-Certified, vehicle-to-grid EV chargers for electric vehicle fleets.

What small business trend is impacting you
the most? Being fast to adapt in engineering complex
technologies.

Describe the company culture in three words.

Dedicated, exceptional, respectful.



SmartZone Best Small Businesses



SightLine Inc.
Houghton

Ashley Kern, founder and CEO

Industry: information technology

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.sightlinedata.com

Describe the company
in one sentence.

SightLine empowers colleges and universities to enroll and retain students through predictive analytics.

What is the next major
accomplishment planned
by the company?

SightLine is excited to double the size of our team and support more universities across the U.S. over the next year.

What makes the company
truly unique?

We are providing a hands-on approach to serve universities, but leveraging the power of rigorous analytical processes to scaler our services.

What small business trend is impacting you the
most? The acceptance of remote work over the past
year has allowed us to serve a wider range of universities,
affordably without travel. This opens more doors for us
and our customers.

Describe the company culture in three words.

Innovation, accountability, flexibility.



SmartZone Best Small Businesses



Versah LLC
Jackson

Dr. Salah Huwais, president

Industry: manufacturing, dental

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 25

www.versah.com

Describe the company
in one sentence.

Versah is a medical device company that manufactures and sells a proprietary technology that improves bone quality in patients, so they may have better success with dental and medical implants.

What is the next major
accomplishment planned
by the company?

Continue expanding into other countries. Currently the technology is being sold in 54 countries worldwide.

What makes the company truly unique?

Versah® was founded in 2014 by Dr. Salah Huwais, a practicing periodontist in Jackson, Mich. While placing implants over his 18 years of practice, Dr. Huwais consistently experienced the limitations of excavating bone using conventional drills when preparing osteotomies. He wanted to find a way to maintain a healthy bone while preparing osteotomies. He developed the procedure called “osseodensification,” achieved by proprietary instruments he invented, the Densah® Burs.

What small business trend is impacting you the most?

Finding local human resources to accommodate the growth.

Describe the company culture in three words.

Family, innovative, inclusive.



SmartZone Best Small Businesses



Videka Pet Food
Kalamazoo

Rob Caseria, managing director

Industry: TBD

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.videkapetfood.com

www.videkasolutions.com

Describe the company
in one sentence.

We provide antioxidant and other food protection solutions to petfood manufacturers.

What is the next major
accomplishment planned
by the company?

New lab build-out and commercial launch in Europe (Q4, 2021).

What makes the company truly unique?

We're a joint venture with U.S. and France corporate parents. We are only 18 months into the joint venture, but we have several of the largest global pet food manufacturers doing business with us.

What small business trend is impacting you
the most? 1. Petfood and human food regulations are
different; 2. Costly ingredient sourcing; 3. Transportation
costs; and 4. Import/export/tariffs/Brexit.

Describe the company culture in three words.

1. Offering customized solutions that work; 2. Getting good at quickening the pace; and 3. Doing business with 20 customers in eight countries.



2021 BEST SMALL BUSINESSES

SmartZone Best Small Businesses



Wedge Grand Rapids

Matt Baxter, CEO
Founded in 2015
Industry: software and human resources
Full-time equivalent employees: 10
www.wedgehr.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

Wedge is the one-way video screening solution that helps recruiters make authentic connections with candidates.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

100,000,000 candidates going through Wedge.

What makes the company truly unique?

Wedge is establishing a new category in HR technology: video screening. Unlike any other video-based tools on the market, Wedge's cutting-edge technology enables candidates and recruiters to access the platform on any device, anytime with no downloads required. With Wedge, users create short videos, six minutes or less to help them demonstrate who they are beyond their résumé.

What small business trend is impacting you the most?

Wedge removes inefficiencies and enhances the recruiting function overall to make hiring easier. Stemming from Matt's experience while recruiting and hiring employees for his first business—a lawn care company—Matt created a video screening tool to make the hiring process more efficient and enable candidates to show their authentic selves.

Unlike any other video-based tools on the market, Wedge's cutting-edge technology enables candidates and recruiters to access the platform on any device, anytime with no downloads required.

Describe the company culture in three words.

Energetic, collaborative, flexible.



SmartZone Best Small Businesses



Workit Health Ann Arbor

Lisa McLaughlin, Co-CEO and co-founder
Robin McIntosh, Co-CEO and co-founder
Industry: health care or social services
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.workithealth.com

Describe the company in one sentence.

Workit Health offers digital evidence-based substance use disorder treatment including medication for opioid and alcohol use disorders in Michigan and beyond.

What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?

Adding co-morbidity care to our telehealth substance use disorder programs so that people are able to receive treatment for common conditions, psychiatric disorders, and mental health support.

What makes the company truly unique?

Patient-driven virtual care.

What small business trend is impacting you the most?

Telemedicine being so prevalent now.

Describe the company culture in three words.

Empathetic, trustworthy, driven.



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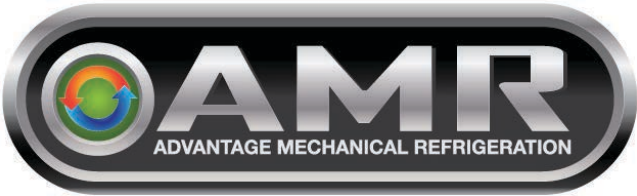
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PTAC Best Small Businesses



Integrity. Service. Solutions.

Advantage Mechanical Refrigeration Inc.
Comstock Park

Jodi Van Haren, owner and CEO

Industry: information construction

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.advmechref.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Complete construction, maintenance and service of commercial and institutional heating, ventilation, air conditioning, refrigeration, and plumbing systems.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Two goals for the next three years: win a “Best Place to Work Award,” and double our sales revenue from our highest revenue year from 2019.

What makes the company truly unique?
Although a small business, we are established like a large business in that we are very well-rounded in our mechanical services, and our customers experience fast response times and competitive pricing, yet we give the customer experience of that of a small business with high integrity and a strong sense of caring.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Technology, from the office to the field. We have become virtually paperless in the last three years.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Team, fun, respect.

PTAC Best Small Businesses



Amigo Mobility
Bridgeport

Beth Thieme, president and CEO

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.myamigo.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Founded with the mission of Improving Lives Through Mobility®, we are a family-owned and operated business with the goal of finding quality innovative solutions for mobility needs.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Using our expertise to expand into new markets and new capabilities.

What makes the company truly unique? Amigo is a family-owned business and one of our four core cultures is, “Care for customers and co-workers like family.” This culture creates long term relationships with our customers and radiates to our employees and to their families.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The pace of development of IoT and how it applies to our products. Amigo has developed anti-theft devices using GPS and sensors for collision avoidance however we know this is just the start of electrification.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Family, innovative, growing.

PTAC Best Small Businesses



ESS Universal USA LLC
Holland

Philip Bouman, owner

Industry: furniture

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.heavydutybunkbeds.com

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- Business Meetings
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- Retirement Parties
- Engagement Parties
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- Anniversary Parties
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- Theme Parties
- Family Picnics
- Graduation Open Houses
- High School Reunions

3000 Vine Street
Lansing, Michigan 48912
Website: www.mieventsandmoore.com
Phone: 517-862-6089

Hours are by Appointment from:
9:00 am—9:00 pm Monday–Saturday
1:00 pm—6:00 pm Sunday

Describe the company in one sentence.
At ESS Universal, we think that everyone deserves a bed that’s durable and comfortable, because strength comes from a good night’s rest.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
Eco-friendly packaging.

What makes the company truly unique?
Our steel bunk beds are seam-welded and fully sealed to keep those pesky pests out for good—creating the most bed-bug proof bunks in the industry.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Mobile marketing.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Family, innovative, transparent.

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PTAC Best Small Businesses



RCO Engineering
Roseville

Stephen Carollo, general manager

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.rcoeng.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We offer automotive, aerospace and military products from concept design and engineering, through scalable production across a wide-range of certified manufacturing capabilities organized to bring quality products and services to market on time every time.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company? Two priorities for RCO are to secure our footprint in aerospace seating and a full-service low-volume production supplier. RCO plans to grow our agility pipeline for products and services that will grow our customer’s ability to be a differentiator in land, air, space and sea mobility, for both civil and military applications.

What makes the company truly unique?
We take skill trades talent, tools and technology to eliminate work waste and worry with policies and procedures that are aligned to multiple industries. We drive “change” every day to keep our employees in front of your future needs.

What small business trend is impacting you the most?
Skilled workforce is shrinking.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Always moving forward.

PTAC Best Small Businesses



Ryba Marine Construction Co.
Cheboygan

Zachary Morrish, CEO

Industry: construction

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.rybamarine.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We are a Hubzone certified small business providing heavy civil construction and marine construction services throughout the Great Lakes.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
To expand our markets outside of the Great Lakes and diversify our job capabilities within the Great Lakes.

What makes the company truly unique?
We are an employee owned family business, you’re not just a number, everyone is treated like family. We are the largest provider of dredging services in the Midwest and the only employee owned stock ownership (ESOP) in our area and industry.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Adapting to a remote/online world with the development of Covid-19. Costs associated with regulations, such as USCG Sub Chapter M and cyber security. Our ability to find reliable introductory talent and experienced talent in our industry.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Teamwork, integrity, perseverance.

PTAC Best Small Businesses



SafeSense Technologies LLC
Portage

Binu Narakathu, co-founder and president

Industry: scientific or technical services

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.safesensetech.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
SafeSense Technologies is developing innovative products, using flexible hybrid electronics for the sports performance, military, and medical consumer markets.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
The company is looking forward to commercializing an innovative technology for the Department of Defense (Army).

What makes the company truly unique? The products developed by the company are cutting edge and based on the emerging field of flexible hybrid electronics.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? Funding from the Department of Defense through the SBIR program for small businesses is enabling the development of our innovative technology.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Innovative, motivating, collaborative.



PTAC Best Small Businesses



TentCraft LLC
Traverse City

Matt Bulloch, president

Industry: manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.tentcraft.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
Historically, TentCraft was a manufacturer of outdoor advertising supplies, but in 2020, TentCraft pivoted to produce structures for Covid-19 screening and other health care applications.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
We are continuing to vertically integrate and have two completely new initiatives that we are developing in-house to serve new markets.

What makes the company truly unique?
We are the only vertically integrated manufacturer of these types of products in the U.S.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The trend towards re-shoring manufacturing production back to the U.S. has validated the decisions we’ve made for the past 10 years to do things ourselves.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Fun and (a little) weird!

2021BEST SMALL BUSINESSES

PTAC Best Small Businesses

PTAC Best Small Businesses



Walter Mechanical Services Inc.
dba ATI Group
Flushing

Mike Bunting, owner
Michelle Landon, president
Industry: construction
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.atigroupinc.com

Watermaster North America LLC
Ann Arbor

Jonathan Dreyfuss, president
Industry: manufacturing
Sites in Michigan: 1
www.watermasterna.com

Describe the company in one sentence.
We build confidence and trust in building owners and operators by being the first choice, single-source provider of value-based long-term energy and systems solutions.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
To get into serial production of the AMD 5000 and increase the number of skilled manufacturing jobs.



What makes the company truly unique?
Our diversity to completely understand how buildings operate and align with our customers goals.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The increase infiltration for air delivery systems to fight against diseases like Covid-19.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Innovative, imaginative, environmentally conscience.

Describe the company in one sentence.
WMNA is the licensed manufacturer of the state-of-the-art AMD 5000 multipurpose dredging machine, engineered in Finland and now manufactured in Michigan.



What is the next major accomplishment planned by the company?
To get into serial production of the AMD 5000 and the resulting increase of skilled manufacturing jobs.

What makes the company truly unique?
Introducing new technology and solutions for more efficient and economical waterways remediation than ever before.

What small business trend is impacting you the most? The shift to digital marketing platforms, from traditional in-person sales methods.

Describe the company culture in three words.
Innovative, visionary, passionate.

THANK YOUS

MICHIGAN CELEBRATES SMALL BUSINESS is made possible because of countless individuals and organizations across the state of Michigan. Thousands of hours of service and significant financial contributions have been invested throughout the past year to provide a celebration suitable for awardee companies. We would like to extend a sincere thank you to the following:

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