

GROWING CHAIN ON THE PLAINS

Pizza Ranch began as a single restaurant in Hull, Iowa. Today, it has more than 140 restaurants spread across nine states and the chain is growing at a rate of 20 new restaurants each year. To support that growth, the company has built a new 20,000 sq. ft. headquarters and support center in the northwest Iowa community of Orange City.

According to Pizza Ranch vice president Ryan Achterhoff, the new building houses offices of more than three dozen accounting staff and franchise consultants. The facility also has a state-of-the-art research kitchen and a lecture hall and classrooms for Pizza Ranch University where both new and existing franchisees and managers train on new products.

The restaurant business is not for the weak of heart, says Achterhoff. "It's an ultra-competitive industry with fierce rivals such as McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Dominos, KFC and others." But Pizza Ranch continues to grow, and with its new headquarters comes advancements in research and development, marketing and training.



"Built on old-fashioned values of serving good food and treating customers right, we will continue to grow," says Achterhoff.

Lighting up Google data center



Shown at Google ceremonies (from left) are: Bob Mundt, Council Bluffs Area Chamber of Commerce; Dan Kinney, Iowa Western Community College; Iowa Representative Paul Shomshor; Paul Froutan, Google director of operations; Iowa Representative Doug Struyk; Governor Chet Culver; Council Bluffs Mayor Tom Hanafan; Kelly Sears, Boys and Girls Club of Council Bluffs; and Chris Russell, Google data center manager.

Governor Chet Culver led the ceremonial "plugging in" of network fiber for Google's new \$600 million data center in Council Bluffs. "This is going to send a really strong signal to other companies that Iowa is a great place to do business. It really puts our state not only on the national map, but on the international map as well when it comes to information technology," said Governor Culver.

Paul Froutan, director of Google hardware operations, said the new data center in Iowa will add to the Google's efficiency and flexibility. "We never stop. This is just the beginning

and we will continue to grow for a very long time to come. There will certainly be more and more jobs and different types of jobs," said Froutan.

Council Bluffs is one of a handful of locations around the world with the infrastructure capacity to support an Internet data center of this size. About 200 people will staff the new facility when fully built out. At an average salary of \$50,000, that's an annual payroll of \$10 million. Google was awarded tax benefits from the Iowa Department of Economic Development for the creation of higher paying jobs.



STRONG LINKS OF TECH INDUSTRY TO IOWA'S ECONOMY

Iowa's technology industry contributes \$22.7 billion to the state economy, according to a report prepared for the Technology Association of Iowa. The report "Estimating the Economic Impact of Iowa's Technology Industries" was written by economics professor David Swenson of Iowa State University.

Key findings about the industry include:

- Jobs at technology firms on average pay \$50,779, 48 percent more than the overall state norm for all jobs.
- The industry generated \$6.27 billion in value added (or gross domestic product) in 2007.
- Technology firms represent 3.8 percent of the state's jobs and 5.6 percent of employee wages.
- Iowa's technology firms, either directly or

indirectly, support 156,641 jobs earning \$6.3 billion in employee compensation. The industry accounts for \$10,696 billion (8.8 percent) of the state's value added or GDP.

- Iowa technology workers in all firms – both technology and non-technology industries – total 54,750 jobs. These workers support 26,471 additional jobs in the state earning \$717.6 million worth of employee compensation and \$1.4 billion of the state's value added.

"The report reinforces what we have known all along – Iowa's technology industry is a vital part of not only our state's economy but also our competitiveness as a state to lure more attractive jobs and businesses within the market," said Leann Jacobson, president of the Technology Association of Iowa.



Leann Jacobson, *President
Technology Association of Iowa*

Wet lab incubator open for life science start-ups



The BioVentures Center, a 35,000 square-foot incubator providing wet lab and office space for life sciences companies, is open at the University of Iowa Research Park. The \$8.5 million BioVentures Center was supported in part by the Grow Iowa Values Fund from the Iowa Department of Economic Development. Among first tenants are ASL Analytical, Cellular Engineering Technologies, Exemplar Genetics, KemPharm, Terpenoid Therapeutics and Vertex.

New organic processing in northwest Iowa

A new canola processing plant in Cherokee could give greater strength to organic farming. It's the first of its kind in the state of Iowa. And its owners believe it's only the beginning of a new movement to organic crops.

This is not the first time Mark Schuett and his wife Julie—owners of American Natural Soy—have given a boost to the burgeoning organic movement in the Midwest.

The \$2.3 million canola facility joins American Natural Soy's dedicated soybean and flax processing plants. What's more, the company also has a wheat flour plant going up in Hartley, Iowa and has plans to build an alfalfa plant as well.

"In 2000, we realized that the future of farming was changing. Because of increasing consolidation, it was becoming difficult for small family farmers to compete," says Schuett. "I was convinced that organic production was one course that could help sustain small operations." So he, along with a handful of farmer

investors, formed American Natural Soy, Inc. Today, his state-of-the-art processing facilities have helped American Natural Soy grow into to one of the largest organic oil seed processors in the U.S.

"The canola acres aren't here right now, but with our new canola crushing facility, farmers now have a good place to deliver it, and we know production will grow."

The oil from canola is regarded as healthier than other food oils. Schuett formed Iowla LLC to build the facility and distribute the oil nationally. The plant will be able to process 150 tons of canola grain per day.

Iowla's canola oil crushing facility received a \$50,000 award from the Iowa Department of Economic Development's Value-Added Agricultural Products & Processes Financial Assistance Program (VAAPFAP) as well as tax benefits from the High Quality Job Creation (HQJC) Program.

GLOBALVETLINK USES DEMONSTRATION FUND

Kevin Maher started GlobalVetLink (GVL) in the basement of his Ames home in 2001. Today, GVL has 12 employees located in offices in the Iowa State University Research Park, and with each day the company comes closer to fulfilling its vision of creating a single database that could serve veterinarians who work with breeding stock, show animals, pets and even exotic zoo animals.

"We digitize and transmit data on horses and other livestock, companion animals, and even exotic animals to produce electronic certificates of health for animals moving between states or between countries," says Maher. He predicts paper health certificates and animal-health forms will be obsolete within the next decade.

Maher says Iowa has been a natural fit for his technology company. "The people in our state have a passion for agriculture and are knowledgeable about animal agriculture," he says. "Being on the ISU campus helps us find qualified interns and we've had no problem finding high skilled workers."

Maher has found Iowa to be a pro-business partner for his company as well. GVL received a \$169,500 award from the Iowa Department of Economic Development's Demonstration Fund to develop an innovative GoPass® system that would expedite animal movement for a six month period — rather than the current 30 day expiration health certificate process.

"Not only will this product reduce the burden of owners carrying paperwork for each state of travel for animals," says Maher. "It will also provide animal health officials far more accurate animal movement data on a real-time basis."

If you would like more information on the Iowa Demonstration Fund, contact Doug Lewis in IDEE's Innovation and Commercialization Division, 515.725.3195 or doug.lewis@iowalifechanging.com.

REBUILDING CEDAR RAPIDS INDUSTRY

Acting on a request from the city of Cedar Rapids, the Economic Development Board has awarded \$435,000 (forgivable loan/loan) from the Community Economic Betterment Account (CEBA) for flood recovery costs at Diamond V Mills.

The award retains 87 jobs at Diamond V, which suffered more than \$6 million in facilities damage and production costs from the floods last June.

Only \$2 million of the flood damage was covered by insurance. Diamond V is the world's leading supplier of fermented yeast products used to optimize animal nutrition and health.

FORTUNE 500 & FORTUNE 1000

2009 Ranking of America's Largest Corporations

Five companies headquartered in Iowa included in Fortune rankings

Iowa Rank	Company	Fortune 500/1000 Rank	Revenues (\$ millions)	City
1	Principal Financial	273	9,935.90	Des Moines
2	Rockwell Collins	488	4,769.00	Cedar Rapids
3	Casey's General Stores	516	4,429.30	Ankeny
4	Terra Industries	704	2,909.80	Sioux City
5	HNI	785	2,477.60	Muscatine

CALENDAR

- July 28-31 Discovering Opportunities—
Best of Iowa
Sioux City, Fort Dodge, Marshalltown,
Davenport
- Aug. 13-23 Iowa State Fair
- Aug. 25-26 Iowa Downtown Summit
Ames
- Oct. 6-7 Iowa Venture Capital & Entrepreneur
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Technology success in Adel

Submittal Exchange LLC of Adel has a proven computer system that allows architects, engineers and contractors to electronically review construction submittals online. The company wants to hire six additional sales and support staff to launch a national sales campaign and provide support for the next level of growth.

SUBMITTAL  EXCHANGE™

To assist the expansion, the Economic Development Board has awarded \$125,000 from the Entrepreneurial Ventures Assistance (EVA) program, which will be repaid by a royalty agreement on future sales. Submittal Exchange has established a customer base in the upper Midwest, including Iowa.

Award to unique technology education project

A career awareness award of \$240,000 was approved by the Economic Development Board for the Iowa Business Council to head a unique project to put donated Virtual Reality (VR) systems into up to seven high schools. Known as the Iowa Virtual Reality Education Pathfinder (I-VREP), the project builds on success at East Marshall high school (Le Grand) where a VR system, donated by the Mayo clinic, is being successfully used by students to create computer visualizations that explain science concepts. The equipment is getting students more interested in science and math.

VR equipment has also been installed at Perry high school. Additional high school

installations are planned for Boone, College Community (Cedar Rapids), Sigourney, Van Meter and Waukee.



Iowa Business Council

The Iowa Business Council heads a partnership formed by private industry, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Department of Economic Development, and the Virtual Reality Applications Center, Iowa State University to expand the concept and provide support and training.