Part 1 – Agency Profile

Agency Overview

In 1993, the Idaho Department of Commerce convened 45 representatives of economic development groups who supported the manufacturing extension center concept. One year later, the Governor and ten key economic development entities pledged support for manufacturing extension by signing Idaho's Technology Partnership Agreement. Approval to establish "TechHelp" within the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) was granted in late 1995. In 1996, TechHelp was established at Boise State University and the first director and field engineer were appointed.

Today, TechHelp is a partnership of Idaho's three state universities and an affiliate of the NIST/MEP system. It is also Idaho's EDA University Center, targeting economically distressed areas of Idaho. TechHelp specialists have access to cutting-edge knowledge through links to local universities and to a national network of over 2000 manufacturing specialists through the MEP system.

TechHelp's team of nine manufacturing specialists operates out of offices in Boise, Post Falls, Idaho Falls and Twin Falls. TechHelp's primary mission is to provide technical assistance, training and information to strengthen the competitiveness of Idaho manufacturers, processors and inventors through product and process improvements. TechHelp also provides internships to Idaho university and graduate level students at the New Product Development Center (NPD) at Boise State University. Internships give university students the opportunity to gain real world experience with innovative Idaho companies and exposes Idaho companies to talented young professionals looking to enter the state's workforce.

TechHelp Advisory Board

TechHelp's executive director, Gary Thompson, takes advisement from a board made up of representatives from private industry, education and government. TechHelp Board bylaws state that a full board consists of 17 members; twelve from manufacturing and five from the public sector. The Director appoints ex-officio members with approval of the Board. TechHelp is currently seeking new board members to fill empty manufacturing and the public sector positions.

Manufacturing Members		
Name	**Position**	**Company**
Jim Bean (Chair)	General Manager	Preco, Inc.
Terrance McDevitt	President	JST Manufacturing Inc.
Lynn Harker	President	Woodland Furniture
Rick Jackson	Production Manager	Louisiana Pacific
Herb Minatre	President/Owner	Bay Shore Systems
Barry Ramsay	President	D8, Inc.
Jerry Whitehead	President/Owner	Western Trailers
Phil Duckworth	VP	Buck Knives
OPEN		
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Public Sector and Services Members		
Karl Tueller	Deputy Director	Idaho Department of Commerce
Laura Johnson	Bureau Chief	Idaho Department of Agriculture
Jay Kunze	Dean	College of Engineering, Idaho State University
Jim Hogge	State Director	Idaho SBDC

OPEN		
Ex-Officio Members		
John Andreason	Senator	Idaho Legislature
Richard Bowen	President	Idaho State University
Shirl Boyce	V.P. of Economic Development	Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce
Bill Lathen	Dean of College of Business	Boise State University
Roger Madsen	Director	Idaho Dept. of Labor
Larry Stauffer	Dean College of Engineering	University of Idaho
Pat Takasugi	Director	Idaho Dept. of Agriculture

TechHelp Partners
TechHelp works with state and federal partners, listed below, to meet its mission of assisting Idaho manufacturers and processors. In addition, TechHelp works with and participates in local groups such as chambers of commerce and local economic development organizations to stay abreast of community development issues and meet the needs of Idaho companies.

Partnership	Center Role	Required/Desired of Center
U.S. EDA	EDA University Center	Serve remote/distressed areas of Idaho Serve non-manufacturers in Idaho
State of Idaho	Economic Development	Serve all manufacturers in Idaho Participate in implementation of Science & Technology Plan with product development service
Idaho State Universities	Contracted Partner (outreach program for economic development)	Build University reputation through professional development activity, training and internships
Idaho SBDC		Available for referrals
U.S. Dept. of Labor		Help Idaho food processors implement Lean Manufacturing practices and educate Hispanic employees in Lean English Essentials (LEE)
Idaho Commerce & Labor	Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)	Increase government contracting by Idaho manufacturers
Idaho Dept. of Agriculture		Available for referrals

Core Functions/Idaho Code
TechHelp finds solutions for Idaho manufacturers primarily through one-on-one contact with companies. This contact ranges from major collaborative projects, which usually address a fundamental challenge facing the company, to smaller "value-added" projects, which typically bring a specific improvement to some aspect of company operations.

TechHelp's team of experts provides personalized solutions in every area of manufacturing including:

- **New Product Development**
  - Product Planning
  - Product Design
  - Prototyping & Testing
  - Manufacturing Assistance
  - Marketing Assistance

- **Process Improvements**
  - Lean Manufacturing
  - Lean Manufacturing for the Food Industry
  - Lean Manufacturing for the Wood Products Industry
  - Lean Office
  - Lean Enterprise

- **Quality Systems**
  - ISO 9000
  - Six Sigma Belt Certification
- **Human Performance**
- **Business Systems**
- **Marketing and Sales**
- **Information Technology**

Testimonials:

Trus Joist – Boise, ID – New Product Development
"I was most impressed by TechHelp's flexibility and willingness to work with us to meet our needs. By making use of TechHelp's ability to rapidly produce and test prototypes, we were able to move quickly from about a 65% level of product satisfaction to about a 95% level." **Scott Soule, Corporate Engineer - Trus Joist**

TechHelp worked with Trus Joist to create a bolt collar used to help set rebar in concrete during installation of the TJ® -Shear Panel, a new product designed to give greater structural integrity to buildings in high-wind and earth quake areas. TechHelp conducted finite element analysis of various virtual models and materials to assess stress, strain and deformation characteristics and to develop a model that would best meet TJ's needs. The team created and tested a series of prototypes that led to the creation of a final product. The TJ®-BoltCollar and anchor bolt spacer ensure that anchor bolts are accurately placed during construction and require no measuring to set the proper depth and spacing.

- The TJ®-BoltCollar & Shear Panel were conceived, designed, modeled, prototyped and tested in Idaho.
- Panels are produced in a Boise pilot plant and the TJ®-BoltCollar is made by a local manufacturer.
- TJ is building a new 30,000 foot production plant in the U.S.
- Sales of TJ®-Shear Panels reached 18,000 in 2004 and are expected to hit 28,000 in 2005.
- Trus Joist expects to sell 40,000 TJ®-BoltCollars by the end of 2005 and about 75,000 in 2006.

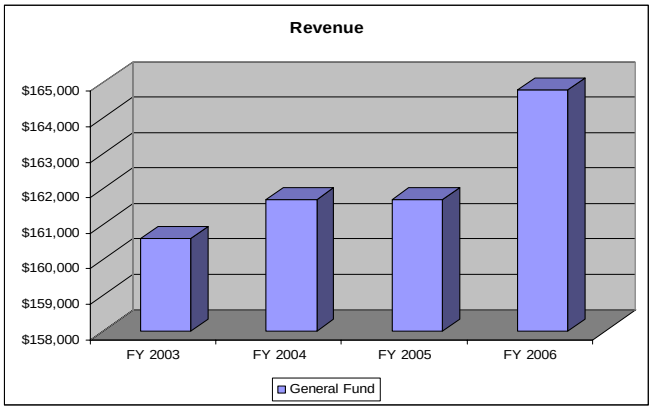
Idaho Wrecker Sales – Mountain Home, ID – Lean Manufacturing & New Product Development
"The investment I made in TechHelp services paid off beyond my wildest expectations. TechHelp made my small operation in rural Idaho look like a Billion dollar business. I can't believe more companies don't take advantage of TechHelp services." **Chuck Ceccarelli, Owner - Idaho Wrecker Sales**

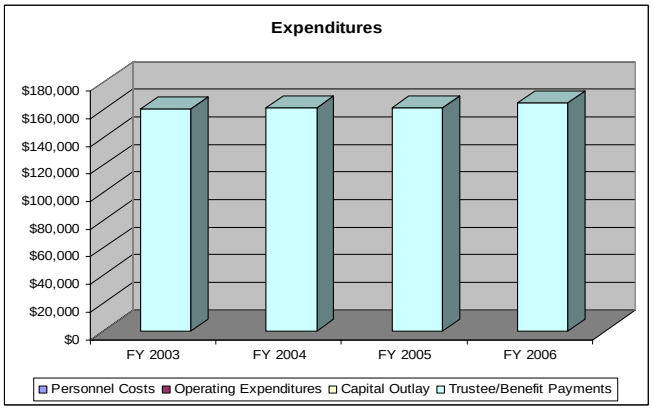
Idaho Wrecker Sales invents and manufactures products designed to meet the needs of the wrecker industry. The company's signature product is the "side puller" that allows a wrecker to rescue a vehicle from a side pull position without having to turn sidewise and block the road. TechHelp first worked with IWS owner, Chuck Ceccarelli, on a material analysis problem for a new side puller. Chuck was so impressed by the quickness and thoroughness of TechHelp's analysis that he invited the team in to take a look at his business and see if there were other areas where TechHelp might provide solutions.

- TechHelp provided an onsite Lean Manufacturing class for the entire IWS team that led the company to reduce inventory, lead time and work in progress and saved IWS from having to purchase two new buildings to accommodate growth.
- IWS's Lean implementation created a cleaner, more efficient, more orderly and safer workplace.
- TechHelp helped IWS spec and install a Plasma Cutter that allows the company to produce parts quickly as per customer demand and redesign on the fly resulting in better quality, less inventory, less scrap and improved lead time.
- Lean helped IWS reduce the lead-time on Side Pullers from 30 to 4 days. This led to a sales increase of 42% and improved customer service and relations.
- Product and process documentation produced by TechHelp allowed IWS to improve product quality, service and sales.
- TechHelp standardized IWS training documents for equipment and products that allowed workers to reduce product cycle time and work in process resulting in less inventory and increased cost savings.
- IWS added two new employees to meet increased product demand.
- IWS used TechHelp design specifications and documentation of its new Speed Dolly product to outsource production within Idaho. This allowed IWS to avoid costly capital investment and to quickly ramp up sales.

Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006
General Fund	$160,600	$161,700	$161,700	$164,800
Total	**$160,600**	**$161,700**	**$161,700**	**$164,800**
Expenditure	**FY 2003**	**FY 2004**	**FY 2005**	**FY 2006**
Personnel Costs	$0	$0	$0	$0
Operating Expenditures	$0	$0	$0	$0
Capital Outlay	$0	$0	$0	$0
Trustee/Benefit Payments	$160,600	$161,700	$161,700	$164,800
Total	**$160,600**	**$161,700**	**$161,700**	**$164,800**





Profile of Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided

Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006
Bottom-line Impact Ratio (per Fed $)	9.48	11.18	19.6	Available Sept
Investment Leverage Ratio (per Fed $)	4.64	20.23	19.5	Available Sept
Cost Per Impacted Client	28,235	24,477	17,345	Available Sept
No Jobs Created or Retained	75	102	130	227
Manufacturers Served	190	200	210	Available Sept
Impacted Clients (NIST survey)	26	56	65	Available Sept
% Clients quantifying impact	NA	71%	73%	Available Sept
% Clients Satisfied/Highly Satisfied	99%	100%	97%	Available Sept
Average Satisfaction Level-out of 5	4.42	4.47	4.53	Available Sept

Performance Highlights

All TechHelp clients are surveyed upon project completion by a NIST contracted independent survey house. TechHelp clients served from January through December 2005 reported a positive economic impact of $29,500,000 and indicated that due to TechHelp services they:

- Improved bottom line performance by $9,107,494
- Invested $7,367,948 in plant and equipment, information systems and workforce training
- Created or retained 227 jobs with a $13,052,500 economic impact

Respondents also indicated that they were highly satisfied with TechHelp services, giving the center a rating of 4.53 out of a possible 5. These results earned TechHelp a perfect score of 100 on MEP's standard used to gauge the impact of individual MEP Centers. Evaluation is a key element of all NIST MEP programs. TechHelp clients are surveyed quarterly and results are used to assess the effectiveness of TechHelp services and the impact on the performance of client firms.

Part II – Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2003	2004	2005	2006	Benchmark
1. Bottom-Line Client Impact Ratio	4.59	8.45	17.89	NYR*	3.0
2. Investment Leverage Ratio	3.44	20.23	11.68	NYR*	3.0
3. Customer Satisfaction Score	4.47	4.46	4.59	4.6	4.4
4. Survey Response Rate	80%	94%	94%	90%	70%
5. Percent Quantified Impact	68%	70%	64%	65%	50%

*** Not Yet Reported**

Performance Measure Explanatory Note:

1. BOTTOM-LINE CLIENT IMPACT RATIO: The sum of cost savings (cost savings, avoidance of unnecessary investments, and savings on investments) reported by clients plus 15 percent of total sales impact (new sales plus retained sales) divided by the federal investment in a center. This measure was designed as a proxy measure of the bottom-line impact on the client of the services delivered by a center. Only 15 percent of the sales impact is captured in order to reflect an estimate of the gross margins for all manufacturers based on an analysis of data from the 1998 Annual Survey of Manufacturers published by the US Census Bureau. This indicator provides a measure of new and retained resources available to a firm that could result after the services are delivered.
2. INVESTMENT LEVERAGE RATIO: The sum of new investment reported by clients (defined as new investment in plant and equipment, information systems and software, workforce skills and practices and

other areas) divided by the federal investment in a center. Investing in human and physical capital is an important ingredient in improving the productivity and competitiveness of small manufacturers. Investment leverage ratios are a commonly used performance metric in many economic development programs.

3. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SCORE: Based on a 5 point scale
4. SURVEY RESPONSE RATE: The number of clients completing the survey divided by the number of clients selected to be surveyed. The survey response rate provides a measure of the quality of the survey responses in terms of non-response basis and is also an overall measure of customer satisfaction.
5. PERCENT QUANTIFIED IMPACT: The number of clients that quantified at least one business impact (new sales, retained sales, cost savings, avoidance of unnecessary investments, savings on investments, jobs created, jobs retained, new investment in plant and equipment, information systems and software, workforce skills and practices or other areas) divided by the number of clients selected to be surveyed. This measure provides an indicator of the center's ability to perform services that have positive business impacts for a large number of their clients.

For More Information Contact

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