

Washington SBDC STATEWIDE NETWORK 2018 ECONOMIC IMPACT



SBDC ADVISORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

	2018	2009-2018
Served by the SBDC CLIENTS	2,397	16,400
Start New BUSINESSES	184	1,173
Created & Saved JOBS	1,700	10,619
Generated SALES	\$65,688,137	\$248,996,145
Change in Sales EXPORT	\$19,023,797	\$58,700,671
Access Investment CAPITAL	\$73,477,330	\$508,351,089

Economic Impacts are self-reported and client-verified

STATEWIDE IMPACT

Washington SBDC Locations



For every **\$1** invested in the Washington SBDC, our clients generate **\$3.92** in incremental tax revenue.



96% of our clients say they would recommend SBDC services to others.

10-year average (2009-2018) of Independent Annual Survey by Dr. James Chrisman, Mississippi State University

SUCCESS STORY: FLEXHIBIT, Spokane, WA

When Coleen Quisenberry created Flexhibit in 2012 to design, assemble and install hands-on, interactive science exhibits for discovery centers and children's museums, she assumed her primary customers would be in the United States.

But in June 2015 she used money from a Washington State STEP grant provided by the Washington Department of Commerce to attend the European Collaborative for Science, Industry & Technology Exhibition (ECSITE) in Trento, Italy, and her strategy changed.

At the conference, she said, she heard presenters talk about the need for exhibits that were hands-on, interactive and focused on STEM concepts—exactly the kind of exhibits FLEXHIBIT designs and sells. But FLEXHIBIT had even more, modular wall systems that exhibits could be set up and taken down quickly, floors reset and combined in a variety of ways to keep things fresh for the visitors to the centers.

"While other exhibit companies seemed to be getting away from classic hands-on exhibits, we had gone back to them and it really stuck a chord," Quisenberry said.

Quisenberry returned to Spokane and revamped her marketing materials, updated her website and started getting her export ducks in a row.

Flexhibit's entry into international trade was aided by several people or programs. John Brislin of EXIM Bank first talked with Quisenberry about export and referred her to Vern Jenkins, an international trade business advisor with the Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Doug Kemper, president of the Export Finance Assistance Center of Washington, provided direction on how to assure payment from foreign buyers and Janet Bauermiester of the U.S. Export Assistance Center helped Flexhibit qualify for two STEP grants so they could attend international conferences.

In October she and her team were able to get another STEP grant to attend the Association of Science and Technology Centers conference in Montreal as trade show exhibitors.

"We hit the nail right on the head," she said, smiling. "No one signs contracts at trade shows, but we were signing contracts right there."

That one conference, she said, led to more than \$200,000 in sales and contracts with museums or science centers in a variety of countries, including China, Malaysia, Norway and Israel.

"They came to us," Quisenberry said. "They are at the shows and they get it."

What these science center directors understand, Quisenberry said, is that FLEXHIBIT exhibits are well-designed, well constructed and affordable. Customers can choose from different exhibits including Air Rockets, Vertical Flyer, Bernoulli Bench, Sail Cars, Air Cars and Circuit Bench and Ring Launcher.

Too often, Quisenberry said, the cost of new exhibits is so high that centers can't afford to change them up very often. With FLEXHIBIT exhibits, centers can keep the exhibits fresh and their visitors coming back again and again.

Jenkins' experience and expertise in international markets made his advice incredibly valuable, Quisenberry said. "Having that resource available to us made a big difference in our confidence." Because they could move forward with confidence, they were able to move forward quickly and avoid mistakes. "We have avoided mistakes we probably would have made without Vern's experience guiding us," she said.



Coleen Quisenberry, owner

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Washington Small Business Development Center
Network Headquarters
901 E 2nd Ave., Suite 210
Spokane, WA 99202
509-358-7765
Info@wsbdc.org

The Washington SBDC network, hosted by Washington State University, is an accredited member of America's SBDC. Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, institutions of higher education, economic development organizations and other public and private funding partners.



wsbdc

www.WSBDC.org



washingtonsbdc