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It is MEDA's privilege to submit this report for the current contract to Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Department of Labor and Industry and Montana BEAR Team participants regarding Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program activity in the state. The following is a summary of MEDA BEAR activities as provided for in the Scope of Work under Amended Contract MT-MEDA-ED-12-01 for the month of August 2015.

ACTIVITY REPORT FOR August 2015 MONTANA BEAR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AT WORK – ONE TEE AT A TIME

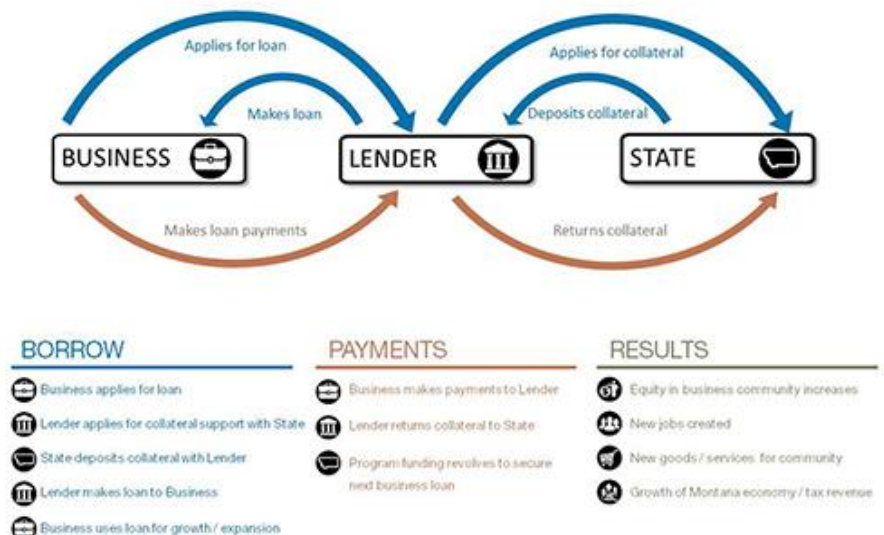
At times those working in the fields of economic, community, and business development have a hard time describing to others just what it is they do.

Storytelling is all the rage these days as it has been proven that through telling a story, better understanding is shared. Mike Jackson, who has retired more than once, is serving as the BEAR meeting coordinator in Kalispell. Mike gave his permission to share this short story. Keep it handy when you need to explain what it is you do – even while networking or playing golf. [Economic Development at Work](#)

NEW TOOL FOR INDIAN COUNTRY CLIENTS

The Montana Department of Commerce has recently rolled out a new loan support opportunity for funders to include more Native American owned businesses in their loan portfolios. The Native American Collateral Support Program (NACS) provides collateral support funding to lenders for Native American owned businesses that have all the C's of lending except for a shortfall of available collateral. Lenders identify an eligible Native American owned business, complete the NACS Lender Participation Form and then apply for collateral support funding to offset the lack of collateral the business is experiencing. To review program guidelines and to access NACS forms, please go to:

<http://businessresources.mt.gov/NACS>



BEAR OUTREACH DATA FOR AUGUST

Number of business surveys conducted: 10

Flathead County - 1	Anaconda/Deer Lodge County - 1	Lewis and Clark County - 1
Lincoln County - 1	Gallatin County - 6	

BEAR Team Members conducting visits:

Mike Jackson - 1	Warren Vaughan - 6	Julie Schroeder - 1
Kristy McKay - 1	Gloria O'Rourke - 1	Brian Obert - 1
Kari Martell - 1		

IWT FIRST QUARTER FUNDS EXPENDED

Chris Wilhelm sent a notice on August 14th to announce that the First Quarter Funds for IWT had been allocated:

1st Quarter Allocation: \$135,374
 Funding Awarded: \$130,809
 Applications -
 Submitted: 75
 In draft status: 24
 Awarded: 54 (a few more awards to finish)
 Claims Filed: 3 (already!)
 Pending Determination: 10
 First App Submitted: Headframe Spirits out of Butte
 First App Awarded: Botanie Natural Soap out of Missoula

On October 1st, funds will be available for the Second Quarter.

DATA SUMMARY

The following summaries were pulled from business responses for visits held July - August.

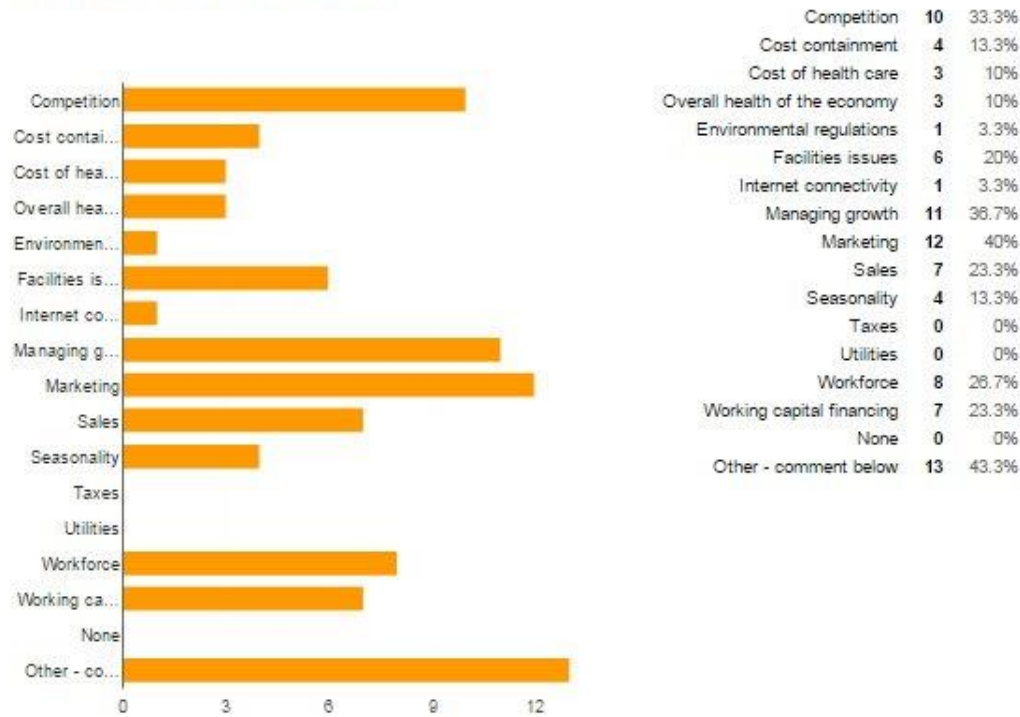
Does the business plan to expand in the coming 6 - 12 months?



Should the business need to expand, is the current site adequate?



What are your top business challenges?



Do you have the following available for your business and employees:



BEAR SURVEY LINK

[New MT BEAR Survey](#) [Link for the survey in Word format](#) for easy note taking as it matches the form. Users must eventually enter the information directly into the survey.

TRAINING

Mike and Gloria are available either via webinar or in person to conduct a BEAR training, refresher course, or organize presenters for a specialized business topic. Contact the office by dialing 406.563.5259 or emailing gloria@medamembers.org.