

Business Retention and Expansion Case Studies: A 30-Year Retrospective

2016 NACDEP/ANREP Annual Conference
Burlington, VA



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Program Agenda

- Retrospective overview
- Case studies
 - Van Wert, OH
 - Menahga, MN
 - Strongsville, OH
- Sharing and Q&A



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30 Years of BRE*

- Pioneered by Extension in 1986 – now 30 years old
- Origins at Ohio State Extension – George Morse
- Program has spread to all 50 states and world
 - Extension-led BRE Programs (Ohio, Minnesota and others)
 - Local and regional EDO's
 - State-level BRE programs
- BREI founded in 1994 to provide national and international leadership and training



What's Changed

- Technology expanding communication tools and survey platforms
 - New mobile application being beta tested through NCRCRD grant
- Programs are more strategic, targeting specific sectors/geographies
- More state and regional-level ED programs
 - Shift from place marketing to growing existing businesses (the 80%)
- Evaluation strategies aimed at producing clear and measurable outcomes and increasing the effectiveness of BRE



What's the Same

- The business visit: “the heart of BRE” - Darger
- Coordinator/dedicated leadership to implement the program
- Seeking to understand existing business needs
- Building community capacity
- BRE report and communicating results



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Van Wert, OH



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Over 20 Years of BRE in Van Wert

- Started by OSU Extension in 1994 to build capacity/understanding of business community
- An annual program since 1999
- Shifted from manufacturing-only
- Coordinator and team approach
- Measured outcomes



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Evolved into 8-county regional BRE

- OSU Extension (research and outreach)
- West Central Ohio Network (8 counties)
- State ED (JobsOhio)
- Regional workforce devel.
- Chambers of Commerce
- CC's and career centers
- SBDC
- Elected officials



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Regional Targeting Strategies

1. Top 25 employers
2. Targeting clusters or specific sectors, i.e. manufacturing or agribusiness
3. Focus on growing or 2nd stage companies (green flag approach)
4. Specific geographic areas



Regional Communication Strategies

- Annual Member/Investor Meeting and Reception
- Annual Chamber/ED Dinner/Report
- Websites/blog
- Facebook/twitter
- Newsletter
- Presentations to civic groups
- Highlight new and expanding companies in media



Sample Outcomes

Establishment of a new service. A need was identified for an LPN to RN training program which graduated its' first class of 25 students in 2005. by 2014, the program had graduated over 500.

Response to an emergency. A 2002 tornado destroyed an industrial park, displacing 7 small manufacturers and over 500 jobs. Disabled employers represent lost jobs, and payroll.



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Menahga, MN



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3 Waves of BR&E Innovations & Small Town Success Story

MICHAEL DARGER

www.bre.umn.edu

WAVE 1 – ESTABLISHING THE RESEARCH BASE (1990-1998)

Making connections thru the red flags process
(McLaughlin)

Most valuable objectives delivered (Smith, et al)

- Pro-biz & providing data for ED were top 2

Factors influencing success (Loveridge, et al)

- Focus on mfg. and written recommendations for priority projects were top 2

Implementation of Long Term Projects (Morse, et al)

- **# of paid professionals involved and a written report specifying who is responsible** (these 2 factors showed strongest correlation to level of project implementation)

Highest Participation Expected from (Allanach)

- Hi unemployment, higher income, mfg.-centric, higher educated

WAVE 2 – PROFESSIONALIZING A SIGNATURE PROGRAM (1996-2006)

Classic 5-booklet How-to Manuals (Loveridge & Morse)

First workshop BR&E Course (Morse, et al)

First online BR&E Course (Love, et al)

The campus research review session

Diversifying the BR&E leadership team (Morse, et al)

Professional leadership of the program (Darger, et al)

Partial cost recovery

Wave 3 – contemporizing & partnering (2006-today)

**Major evaluation (Bosma)
spurred process improvements
(Darger, Cody, et al)**

Partnering with:

- MN Dept. of Employment and ED
- MN Chamber of Commerce
- UM Duluth

Robust program website

Benchmarked community BR&E data
back to 1993 (Tremper, Paine, et al)

First hybrid BR&E course

Online BR&E Course II

Leaders in Front retreat agenda

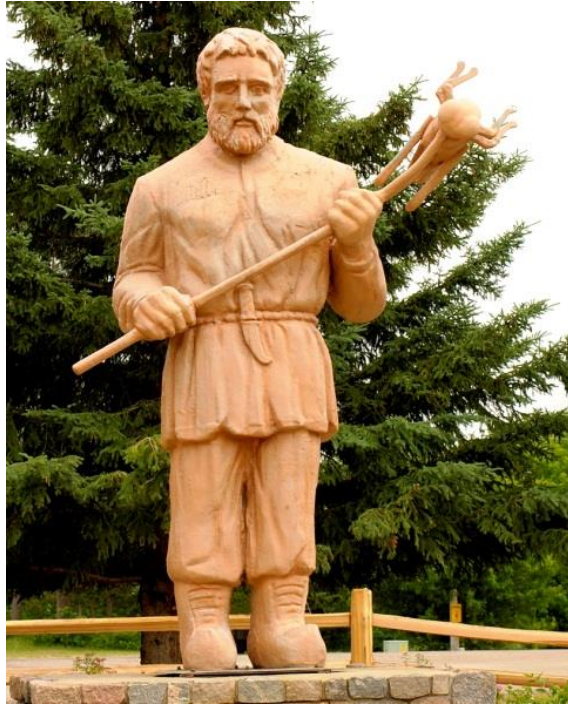
Research report improvements

Ripple Effect Mapping



MENAHGA -- THE LITTLE TOWN THAT COULD

The spirit of St. Urho

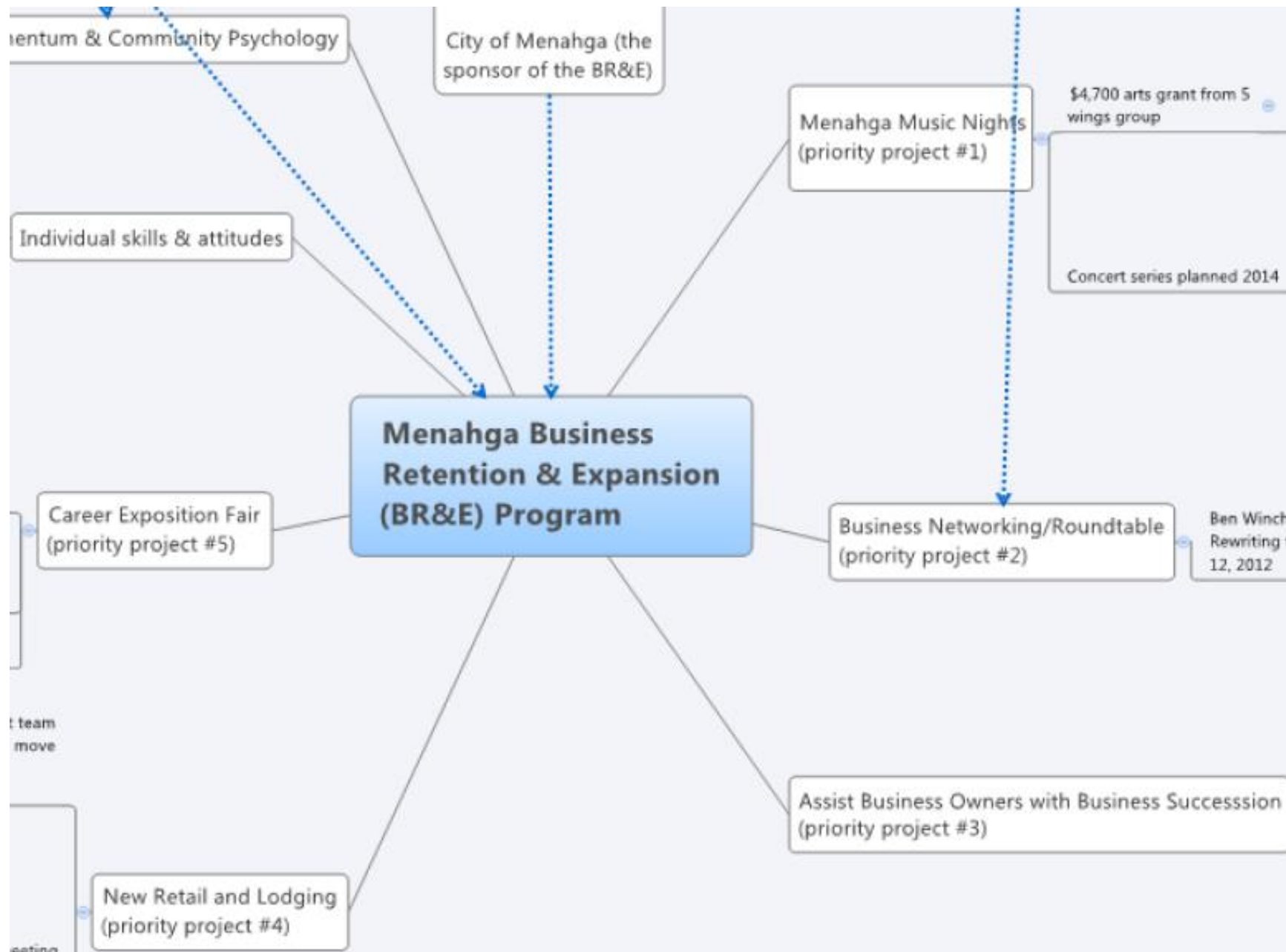


BR&E Inputs/Outputs

2012 - Visited 53
businesses

Went thru our whole
program

Community readiness:
they went thru 3 other
Community Vitality
Extension programs



Menahga Civic & Commerce

Menahga Music Nights (priority project #1)

\$4,700 arts grant from 5 wings group

5 Concerts held - The Sounds of Spirit Lake

150 to 800 attendees each event

Resources

- Grants are not guaranteed
- Grants have continued
- Civic & Commerce, nonprofits, & businesses contributing \$\$\$ now

Impacts

- Positive support from community
- More gas sales
- Gives economical entertainment
- Frequent compliments from outsiders, guests, neighboring towns
- 30% increase in one restaurant's sales per concert night
- More food vendors possible this summer
- Methodist food vendor does well and returns funds to community
- Contribute to new motel success
- Sound system is used by other community groups
- More awareness of our small town
- Families moving back with their children

Developing Event

Secured for 2016 concerts

Ideas

- Possible church services, weddings, etc.
- Musicals, other performances
- Events for kids

Eval. Survey results were strong

Donut, root beer, other vendors

Cafe saw huge volume pre-concert

Burger night at VFW did well

Neighboring community folks attended

One attendee was a former resident

He moved back and opened a barber shop (partial credit)

Concert series planned 2014

5 concerts planned

Future growth based on success?

Third series held in 2015

Fourth series planned for 2016

Sound stage planned

Seasonal bandshell to be complete by July 15th, 2016

Project was designed to boost cultural amenities

- Many new musical genres introduced to our residents
- World class groups that are Grammy winners or nominees

Strongsville, OH



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STRONGSVILLE, OHIO

Strongsville

- Suburban community of south of Cleveland
- Used to be a small village rooted in agriculture
- Current population: 45,000
- Pro business leadership
- Productive and diverse industrial and commercial base
- Relationship started in 2000
- Since then have conducted 4 “traditional” BR&Es and one residential quality of life survey



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Strongsville and Business Retention and Expansion

Economic Development Goals:

- Encourage development and redevelopment of the industrial and commercial districts within the City of Strongsville for increased economic vitality.
- To concentrate on retaining and expanding existing city businesses.
- Strengthen, expand, and diversify the City of Strongsville's tax base.
- Assist local firms in finding appropriate development sites for expansion.



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Strongsville and Business Retention and Expansion

OSUE Role

- At first, work with local economic development professional and committee to develop questions.
- A lot of hand holding
- Now, much more of a hands off approach
- More guidance to professional staff
- The residential quality of life study.....



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Strongsville and Business Retention and Expansion

Outcomes and evaluation

- A long standing relationship passed on to different professionals on both sides
- New business to business relationships as a direct result of the survey- quarterly business meeting
- Thousands of new jobs
- Creation of material used at National Trade Shows
- Creation of Corporate relocation guide- details city location, community profile, business environment, and various tax incentives



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Strongsville and Business Retention and Expansion

Outcomes and evaluation

- Creation of Startup and Management Guide for Small businesses- designed to help entrepreneurs and established businesses find resources needed to start grow, and maintain a successful small business
- Moody's bond rating Aaa. Survey results used in discussion with Moody's



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Strongsville and Business Retention and Expansion

Outcomes and evaluation

- Our biggest promoter of our BRE program
 - Present their Eco Dev program to statewide governmental entities
 - Will be presenting in September at BREI with OSUE to share their story.



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Sharing and Q&A



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