

Fall 2018

"Growing Business in Nevada"

THE BUSINESS ADVOCATE



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GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON BUSINESS 2018 PREVIEW:

Where businesses and entrepreneurs can network, learn, and grow

In early 2012, Governor Brian Sandoval introduced an economic development plan and challenged Nevada's business community to create 50,000 jobs by 2014. The plan envisioned bringing new businesses to the state, helping existing businesses grow and supporting entrepreneurs. To support this plan, the Department of Business and Industry instituted the Governor's Conference on Business, an annual one-day event that offers networking and learning opportunities, comprehensive resources, and an opportunity to hear the Governor address the business community.

On October 18, 2018, the seventh Governor's Conference on Business will be held at the Rio All-Suite Hotel and Casino. Since the inaugural event at the Orleans Hotel and Casino in November 2012, the conference, like the economy, has expanded and improved. Although Nevada does not face the same types of challenges as during the Great Recession, different challenges and needs have emerged and the conference goal of providing a comprehensive one-day event where entrepreneurs and businesses can network, learn and grow remains unchanged.

The 2018 conference will focus on getting back to basics and embracing the innovations and technologies that are propelling Nevada ahead of the curve. Morning breakout sessions will include a three-part series on the *Road Map to Start or*

Grow Your Business in Nevada, as well as panels offering *Startup Insights from Past Pitch Competition Participants* and *Urban Mobility and Smart Technology: On the Forefront*.

The conference's Business Resource Expo will feature 100+ service providers, lenders, business development agencies, B2B companies and government entities. Whether you're an exhibitor or an attendee, the expo is an easy way to make the

connections you and your business need to succeed. Make sure to stop by the Microsoft booth in the rotunda for a free professional headshot to use for your online business networking profiles! Expo booth registration is available to companies that provide a business product or service. Booth selection is first-come, first-

served, so register today to have access to the best booth locations.

The conference culminates with an all-conference luncheon program. Mark Shunock, creator of Mondays Dark and In-Arena Host for the Vegas Golden Knights, will serve as the program's master of ceremonies. Conference speakers will include C.J. Manthe, Director of the Department of Business and Industry, and Joseph Okpaku, Vice President of Public Policy at Lyft, an on-demand transportation company. The luncheon and day's events will conclude with a keynote address by Governor Brian Sandoval.

(Continued)



P2 / Ask an Expert:
Getting the most from your tradeshow attendance



P3 / Breakout Session:
Startup Insights from Past Pitch Competition Participants



P5 / Breakout Session:
Road Map to Start or Grow Your Business in Nevada



P7 / Breakout Session:
Urban Mobility and Smart Technology

Conference preview

Whether you are thinking about starting your own business, interested in hearing how Nevada's investment in urban mobility and smart technologies is helping to shape our state's infrastructure and impacting the economy, or want an easy way to network with other business professionals, the 2018 Governor's Conference on Business has something for you. Mark your calendars for Thursday, October 18, and visit business.nv.gov/GCB/Home today to register to attend.



GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON BUSINESS 2018

CONFERENCE AGENDA

7:30 AM Registration, networking, light breakfast

7:30 AM - NOON Business Resource Expo

8:00 AM - 11:30 PM Breakout Sessions

Track 1 Roadmap to Start or Grow Your Business in Nevada, 3-part series

8:00 AM – Getting Help

9:00 AM – Licensing and Certification

10:00 AM – Funding for Your Business

Track 2-

9:00 AM – Startup Insights from Past Pitch Competition Participants

10:00 AM – Urban Mobility and Smart Technology: On the Forefront

NOON - 1:30 PM Conference Luncheon with master of ceremonies **Mark Shunock**, Vegas Golden Knights In-Arena Host; speakers **C.J. Manthe**, Department of Business and Industry Director, and **Joseph Okpaku**, Lyft Vice President of Public Policy; and keynote address by **Governor Brian Sandoval**



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Q: How can I make the most from attending a resource expo or tradeshow?

A: Trade shows are like short business boot camps. Everything that you need to start or grow your business is right there – potential partners, providers of goods and services, mentors, and much more. But you need a strategy to get the most out of a trade show. Here are four tips:

1) Prepare

Trade shows offer the opportunity to network, attend educational sessions and to visit exhibitors. However, they can be almost overwhelming, so plan your visit well in advance. Check out the show's website, establish your priorities, and create a schedule and checklist to ensure you accomplish your goals. Bring professionally printed business cards and a professionally produced name tag.

2) Network, network, network!

Networking is still by far one of the most valuable aspects of a trade show. But networking is not sales. It's an opportunity to start a relationship. And it's quality – not quantity – that counts. Far better to make five good contacts than simply hand out fifty business cards.

At trade shows, you can network with three different groups – speakers, fellow attendees and exhibitors:

- With speakers, prioritize those you most want to meet, attend their sessions, and introduce yourself at the end.
- With fellow attendees, make a point of meeting a broad cross-section of the trade show audience. If you're naturally reserved, set a goal of meeting and exchanging business cards with a specific number of attendees.
- Networking with exhibitors is a separate tip:

3) Respect the Exhibitors

Exhibitors are always happy to talk with the attendees. However, they have many people to meet, so be respectful of their time. If they appear to be very busy, ask them if you can continue the discussion at a later date.

4) Soak up Skills and Knowledge at the Educational Sessions

You can use the trade show's educational sessions to learn new information and come away with an action plan for business growth. Come to the sessions with a notepad or laptop in hand and write down action items as they occur to you. You can also ask the speaker for a copy of the handout – which may open up an opportunity for an email exchange with the presenter.

Have a question for one of our guest experts?
Email cfoley@business.nv.gov.

Entrepreneurs to offer startup insights during breakout session



GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON BUSINESS 2018
October 18, 2018 | Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas

Breakout Session:
Startup Insights from Past GCB Pitch Competition Participants



Colin Seale, Esq.
thinkLaw



Dr. Denis Phares
Dragonfly Energy



Jeff Saling
StartUpNV

No company presentation or sales pitches... just plain talk and advice from three entrepreneurs who have taken the leap- and made it.

Breakout Session Track 2- 9:00 am

To learn more about the panelists and topics for the breakout sessions, visit <http://business.nv.gov/GCB/Home>

Every new entrepreneur faces some tough questions. How do you take an innovative idea and launch it as a business? How do you *prepare* to do that? How do you develop the necessary interest and support that might make your business a sustainable success? What things should you focus on first?

To provide some answers in this area, the upcoming Governor's Conference on Business will feature a panel session offering insights into the challenges and

opportunities of being a startup founder. The panel will include three past participants in the conference's Business Pitch Competition – Colin Seale of thinkLaw, Denis Phares of DragonFly Energy, and Jeff Saling of StartUpNV – who will share and discuss their views of the startup experience 'before and after the pitch.'

In anticipation of this event, staff at *The Business Advocate* asked Jeff Saling for some preliminary perspective on what he and his colleagues encounter at StartUpNV. StartUpNV is a nonprofit statewide business incubator with workspaces in Las Vegas and Reno, as well as relationships with SBDC offices in rural Nevada. It offers businesses "an opportunity to go from idea through beta testing to a revenue-producing business – with the appropriate capitalization for growth." According to Jeff, StartUpNV sees three pitches every week from Nevada businesses and admits about 1 out of 20 to its incubator program. There, the businesses receive help in growing, scaling, and – in some cases – raising capital.

"Most people who pitch believe their idea is the most important part of the pitch," said Jeff. "They're disappointed to find out that, most of the time, the idea itself is a minor consideration compared to the founder's ability to execute on it. We've heard more than 100 pitches from Nevada startup founders in the past year — and have seen many good ideas, but not enough of our founders are properly prepared to execute those ideas."

To address the lack of preparation, StartUpNV provides specific guidance to those who make an appointment to pitch. In addition to the usual admonition to research one's market, competitors, etc., StartUpNV recommends a six-point approach to assessing your business and developing your pitch. The six points are:

- Problem** - Know what 'pain' your idea or product addresses and why people should care
- Market** - Understand share of market + your customer + how to reach them + the competition
- Solution** - Be prepared to demonstrate or explain what your product or idea does
- Business Model** - Be able to describe how customers will buy what you want to sell
- Team** - Be able to explain why you / your team are qualified
- Ask** - Know what you want from the target audience you are pitching to

"The Nevada ecosystem hasn't produced the DNA – yet – where pitching is a natural thing and the prospective business is put in the best possible light," Jeff noted. "We're trying to help change that."

To hear further insights from Jeff and his fellow panelists about the journey from startup to success, join them at the Governor's Conference on Business on October 18. The panel will begin at 9 am and is intended to complement the adjoining breakout track sessions on starting and growing a business in Nevada.

Nevada Entrepreneur Spotlight: The Abbi Agency



If timing is everything, The Abbi Agency had an inauspicious start. Founded in the depths of the great recession, in a town reeling from the effects of the deteriorating economy, Abbi Whitaker staked her claim and tied her company's success to Reno's future.

The first years were defined by gritty, all-hands-on-deck public relations work which helped establish the agency's reputation as being unafraid to pursue new ideas and new approaches. Working on small budgets, tight timelines and clients with high expectations, the agency built and executed successful public relations campaigns for regional and national clients.

The agency worked with agile, rapidly growing technology companies like ShortStack and New York-based Offerpop, launched Reno restaurant Campo, and helped build the market for nationwide franchise launches.

As Reno continued to struggle to emerge from the recession, founder Abbi Whitaker and a group of Reno community members developed a successful PR campaign to help rebrand Reno and remake the public image of the community they love. Because of that experience, The Abbi Agency, guided by CEO Ty Whitaker, added a full creative team and a web development division that worked to transform the perception of travel destinations across the Western United States for clients such as Travel Nevada, Carmel-by-the-Sea, Fly Reno-Tahoe, Goleta, North Tahoe, Henderson and many others.

The agency also worked on other projects close to the hearts of the agency's staff. Prime among those projects was a school funding campaign for Washoe County that most had pegged as a long shot because of Nevada's anti-tax environment. But the agency pushed the ballot measure successfully across the finish line,

changing the future of northern Nevada students who had found themselves in overcrowded and deteriorating schools in the suddenly fast-growing Reno.

In addition to the community-based work, the company stayed true to its roots, continuing to work with technology companies like Bay Area-based BrightEdge and Kahuna, and Austin-based employee loyalty technology platform YouEarnedIt.

The company's rapid growth landed it in its new Midtown Reno offices and on the list of the *Inc. 5,000*, which recognizes the nation's fastest growing companies. Being in the middle of one of Reno's most vibrant and eclectic districts is fitting for a company that bet it all on Reno's ability to bounce back from hard times.

As Tesla, Google, Apple, Microsoft and other leading multinational companies have moved divisions to Northern Nevada and helped put Reno back on the economic development map, The Abbi Agency takes pride in being a part of that resurgence.

And even now, during one of the strongest economies in Nevada's history, the resourcefulness, grit and innovation imprinted on the agency's DNA during the depths of the recession are still at the very core of the company's identity.

Learn more about The Abbi Agency at www.theabbiagency.com



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Generate new leads at the Business Resource Expo



B2B companies and business resource development or assistance organizations looking to develop new leads or connect with the Nevada business community should consider exhibiting at the Business Resource Expo at the Governor's Conference on Business.

Staffing a booth at this one-stop event is a cost effective way to get your product or service in front of 650+ local attendees including entrepreneurs and small business owners. When you're not making new connections with the attendees on the show floor, visit with your fellow exhibitors which include lenders, service providers, business development organizations and government entities that provide licensing and regulatory oversight.

But don't wait too long— in 2016, booths were sold out several weeks prior to the conference. Registration includes exhibitor space and admission to the luncheon and all other conference activities for two (a \$100 value). Registration fees: B2B: \$375, Nonprofit: \$275.



For more information or to register, visit <http://business.nv.gov/GCB/Home>.

Workshop series set to explore the Road Map to Start or Grow Your Business in Nevada

Years ago, paper road maps were ubiquitous in our culture. If you were taking a trip by car, you would acquire a paper road map from AAA or your local gas station and be on your way. The only thing standing between you and your destination was the dependability of your vehicle and your skill at reading the map.

Today we have cell phones, digital maps, mobile GPS and bodiless voices to take us where we want to go. Cars are becoming autonomous and self-directed. A paper road map, if you can find one, lives on only as a curiosity from the past.

Yet the purpose of a road map endures. Technology has changed, but the human need for comfort and understanding when setting out to navigate the unknown has not. In this sense, a road map remains an important construct of the human mind – it is a power tool giving us control over our own direction. We decide where we want to go and the road map helps us get there.

One of our goals at the Department of Business and Industry is to help people start and grow businesses in Nevada. One way we do this is by working hard to connect people to the right resources for their particular situation. To assist folks in understanding some of what's involved in starting a business, we developed a downloadable interactive Guide that provides an overview of various business topics, as well as direct links to hundreds of business support resources. At the center of that Guide is "The Road Map."

The Road Map is the visual directory of contents for the Guide. You navigate the Guide by navigating the Road

Map. Clicking on a Road Map topic takes you to a page with information, resources and contacts related to that topic. Everything is hyperlinked, so you can immediately access things from the convenience of your internet-connected mobile phone, tablet or desktop. The Road Map is intended for the beginning or established business person – anyone interested in learning more about how to do business in Nevada.

For the upcoming Governor's Conference on Business, we've dedicated an entire breakout track to discussing The Road Map and several of its topics. Comprised of three sessions, the track will focus on Getting Started, Licensing/Certifications, and Funding. Each session will involve a panel of 2-3 subject matter experts who will discuss the respective topic(s) and answer questions from the audience. The goal of the sessions is to provide

prospective and current business owners – and people who assist in business development in our state – an opportunity to learn more about what's involved in starting or running a business, what's available in terms of

help, and how to go about getting that help.

If you're interested in starting or growing a business in Nevada, consider attending the conference's Road Map track on Thursday, October 18, 2018. The track will kick off the conference and breakout sessions at 8 am, with the Getting Started session at 8 am, Licensing/Certifications session at 9 am, and Funding session at 10 am. The conference itself will take place in the convention center area of the Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. Come join us – we'd love to see you there and help you find your way to business success!

GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON BUSINESS 2018
October 18, 2018 | Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas

The Road Map

**Breakout Session Series:
The Road Map to Start or
Grow Your Business**

A step-by-step approach to help you start and find your way to business success!

8:00 a.m. Getting Help
9:00 a.m. Licensing and Certification
10:00 a.m. Funding for Your Business

To learn more about the panelists and topics for the breakout sessions, visit <http://business.nv.gov/GCB/Home>

A few thoughts on the Governor's Conference on Business

By Marcel F. Schaerer, Deputy Director, Department of Business and Industry

The Department of Business and Industry staff is working hard to finalize and implement the details of the Governor's Conference on Business (GCB) taking place on October 18. Throughout the process of planning this year's conference, our primary objective has been to include activities and opportunities for entrepreneurs, small business owners/operators and the business community to network, learn and grow. Helping to develop and support an ecosystem that aids in the success of your business is at the heart of what we do. The event has given me an opportunity to once again reflect on how impactful yet challenging it is to operate a small business here in the United States. Consider:



- More than half of our friends and neighbors work for a small business, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration
- With the latest advances in technology, such businesses develop in all shapes and sizes. Many of them operate out of homes, while others hire workers and conduct business out of bricks and mortar, serving customers in retail spaces as well as online.
- Owners wear lots of hats. According to Laura Norman in the article "*10 Stats You Don't Know About Small Businesses*," two-thirds, or 66 percent of small business owners and leaders are personally responsible for three or more of the following functions of their business: operations, finance, sales, marketing, human resources, customer service, product development, or information technology.
- The top funding methods for small businesses are cash, friends or 401(k)'s, according to Guidant Financial

Given these realities, and our objective for this one-day event, we've dedicated a special breakout track to *The Road Map to Start and Grow Your Business in Nevada*. The Road Map is a central element of the Department of Business and Industry's free *Guide to Starting and Growing a Business in Nevada* – a downloadable interactive pdf with 15 topics and hundreds of hyperlinks to key agencies and resources. The tool allows prospective or existing small business owners to find information or resources quickly using a mobile phone, desktop or tablet. With sessions on Getting Started, Licensing/Certifications, and Funding, the GCB Road Map track will offer attendees the chance to hear from experts in each of those Guide topics, as well as ask questions.

For several years, one of our signature events at the GCB was a business pitch competition. Each year from 2015 through 2017, we had 10 finalists take to the stage to make a two-minute pitch about their business idea. A panel of judges, along with the audience, made their selections, and winners were presented with cash and services packages. Although winning such an event is exciting, I think the participants would tell you that the real benefit of the competition came from learning how to improve the presentation of their business idea, being able to network with people in similar startup situations, and discovering new resource opportunities.

This year, we're foregoing a pitch event in favor of a panel session offering *Startup Insights from Past GCB Pitch Competition Participants*. The panel will feature two past winners of the competition: Dr. Denis Phares, founder of Dragonfly Energy, a battery manufacturer and Colin Seale, founder of thinkLaw, a critical thinking educational curriculum. The panel will also feature pitch finalist Jeff Saling, co-founder of StartupNV, a firm that specializes in helping other startups launch here in Nevada. The panel will be a time to explore what it takes to become a successful small business and to hear about the challenges of scaling a business to the next level. It will also be a time to celebrate the amazing things these three businesses have accomplished since competing. If you're at the conference, consider attending the panel to hear their valuable perspectives.

For 2018, the GCB is focused on getting back to basics and the importance of accessing key business resources. All of us know the Silver State is a great place to build a business, yet many entrepreneurs and business owners overlook the vast number of local organizations that offer resources and support. I encourage everyone attending the conference to network, learn from others, and capitalize on this opportunity to see what Nevada's business support ecosystem has to offer. I look forward to seeing you there!

Local and global experts to convene for insightful discussion on the future of urban mobility

Why is Nevada betting on autonomous mobility and what does it mean for the future? How can you partake in an industry that is expected to grow to more than \$100 billion in the next decade? What will the impact of smart technology be on your business and daily life? A panel of global experts from AT&T, Nevada Institute for Autonomous Systems (NIAS), the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) and Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC) will answer these questions and more at the *Urban Mobility and Smart Technology: On the Forefront* panel on October 18 at the Governor's Conference on Business 2018.

The term urban mobility now incorporates all things related to unmanned aerial systems (UAS), autonomous vehicles, cutting edge transportation management and the smart technologies used to integrate them. The industry not only promises to be one of the most dynamic and impactful over the next 20 years, but will also lead to increased safety and a higher quality of life for Nevadans. As stated by Governor Sandoval, "Nevada...played a significant role in the pioneering use of drones and is well positioned...to continue the integration of this technology into our airspace, economy and daily lives."

Nevada is a pioneering state in autonomous ground transportation and UAS. In 2013, the Federal Aviation Administration designated the Silver State as one of only six in the country to begin UAS testing. Furthermore, in 2017 we were the first state to allow operation of autonomous network vehicles by adopting legislation to make it easier to allow testing these vehicles on the road. Being on the forefront of urban mobility allows Nevada to attract businesses in this industry, sprout high tech development, create high paying jobs, and

continue to diversify and grow our economy.

Another area where Nevada is making a difference is in the collaboration of Transit-Oriented Development. Nevada hosts the only transportation authority in the nation that is solely responsible for a region's public transit system, traffic management, roadway design, construction funding and transportation planning. In fact, the national Transit Database named the RTC as one of the most efficient transit providers in the nation. Further, through Southern Nevada Strong, the region has achieved a rare cooperative agreement where jurisdictions and stakeholders have a shared vision for the future.

During this informative breakout session, panelists will bring a big-picture view as well as present real-world examples of the impact that smart urban mobility is having right now on Nevada's roadways. Transportation leader Tina

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October 18, 2018 | Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas
Breakout Session Track 2, 10:00 am:
Urban Mobility and Smart Technology: On the Forefront

Greg Belaus AT&T
Tina Quigley RTC
Dan Langford GOED
Brett Kanda NIAS
Moderator Chris Walach, NIAS

To learn more about the panelists and topics for the breakout sessions, visit <http://business.nv.gov/GCB/Home>

Quigley will highlight the RTC's efforts to actively integrate cutting edge smart technology now and in the future. Seemingly small improvements in traffic management data are increasing traffic flow, safety, and aiding in the development of real-time and long term solutions to address anticipated growth and the addition of 700,000 more residents and 8 million more annual visitors by 2040. In addition, panelist Greg Belaus from AT&T will share the inside track on smart technology integration nationally and globally. Or, if you are seeking the entrepreneur's perspective, hear from panelists Dan Langford from GOED, and Brett Kanda from NIAS. Dr. Chris Walach from NAIS will moderate the discussion and provide valuable insights as well.

No matter what your interest, this rare convening of expertise will be sure to demystify the topic and inspire new ideas as the experts have a collaborative discussion of what the future holds.

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- Networking opportunities
- Informative breakout sessions
- Conference luncheon with Governor Brian Sandoval



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- Calendar of events and trainings
- Video and article libraries
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INTERACTIVE GUIDE TO STARTING A BUSINESS IN NEVADA

An essential guide to navigate the road to business success, with topics including:

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