



Our mission is to encourage economic development and growth and improve the business conditions of the Falls City area.

edge

FALLS CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH ENTERPRISE VOLUME II . 2008

Governor Welcomes Vantec to Falls City



"I applaud Vantec's decision to expand operations here in Nebraska and commend everyone with Vantec for helping to create jobs here in Falls City. I know everyone has invested a lot of time and energy in this project and I want to offer my appreciation to all those who have supported business development in this community."

Governor Heineman

Iowa-based [Vantec, Inc.](#) announced in May it will be expanding its manufacturing operations into Falls City. The custom plastics injection molding company will locate in the 40,000 sq. ft. spec. industrial building and will employ over 25 people with plans to expand operations and employment in the future. The total project investment is \$4.4 million. The company anticipates the plant will be operational by November of this year.

Vantec serves many different Original Equipment Manufacturers located throughout the United States and abroad. Company principals Willie and Bev Van Wyhe (photographed above with Gov. Heineman) have grown the company into a total manufacturing partner by providing assistance with

product development and engineering to ensure complete customer satisfaction.

Vantec chose Falls City after an extensive site search to better serve the needs of a major customer in the region and to take advantage of a readily available labor pool.

"We are excited to be able to employ more people and help take on more opportunities with our customers, and potential customers," said the Van Wyhes in the company's press announcement.

The announcement was attended by over 150 people including the Governor, Senator Heidemann and Nebraska Department of Economic Development Director Richard Baier and Business Consultant Phil Michels.

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EDGE Website Recognized

Internet presence rated highest among economic development tools in national survey of corporate executives

One of the survey questions asked respondents to rate the effectiveness of seven typical marketing techniques—advertising, direct mail, hosting special events, internet/web, planned visits to corporate executives, public relations/publicity, and telemarketing by economic development organizations. **“Internet/ website” advanced dramatically in the 2008 survey to capture the highest rating among all economic development marketing tools, pointing to how essential a strong internet presence is.**

Sixty-four percent of the respondents indicated a strong likelihood that they would use an economic development organization’s web site in their next site location search. The executives named “information on available incentives” and demographic information” as the most useful features.

Since its launch in February 2007, the EDGE website has received a total of 204,154 hits, 39,449 page views and 13,499 unique visitors. The website is updated frequently. If you have not visited recently, please do so. We also encourage you to forward a link to the site to your colleagues and friends in other cities.

www.fallscityedge.com



Upcoming EDGE Sales Opportunities

- September - EDGE in collaboration with its regional economic development partners will co-host a “get acquainted” weekend for site selection consultants from around the country. The weekend event will include a golf outing and Nebraska football game.
- November – EDGE will be participating with the [Lincoln Area Development Partnership](#) at [Pack Expo Trade Show in Chicago](#). The regional sales team will also be making calls on Chicago area site selection consultants.

NEBRASKA RANKS HIGH ON BEST STATES LISTS

- Nebraska ranked 10th on *Forbes* list of “The Best States for Business.” On specific indices, *Forbes* ranked Nebraska 9th in “quality of life”—based on schools, health, crime, cost of living and poverty rates; 12th in “regulatory environment”—based on incentives for businesses, regulatory and tort climate, transportation and bond rankings; and 13th in “business costs”—based on cost of labor, energy and taxes. (*Forbes* – 2008)
- Nebraska ranked 4th in the “Top 10 States for Quality of Life.” Nebraska made an excellent showing by moving from 9th to 4th place this year. (*Business Facilities* – 2008)
- Nebraska ranked 5th in the “Top 20 States for Education Climate.” (*Business Facilities* – 2008)
- Nebraska ranked 16th in the “Top 20 Most Educated Workforce.” (*Business Facilities* – 2008)
- Nebraska ranked 6th “Most Livable State.” Nebraska jumped from 11th to 6th this year. (*2008 State Rankings*, CQ Press)
- Nebraska ranked 7th “Most Healthiest State.” (*2008 State Rankings*, CQ Press)

Nebraska Super Advantage Passes

The second session of the 100th Nebraska Legislature was a busy one. Despite a full plate, the 49 state legislators found time to positively impact Nebraska's business and tax climate. The Governor was determined to pursue a more favorable tax climate to enhance economic development efforts. Because of that, Senator Ray Janssen introduced LB 895 on the Governor's behalf. The bill, named the Nebraska Super Advantage, expanded the state's already successful Nebraska Advantage Act (2005) to include innovative incentives that encourage companies to create high paying jobs or to invest heavily in the state. Businesses will qualify for the Super Advantage if they invest \$10 million while creating 75 jobs paying either 200% of the county average wage or 150% of the state average wage, whichever is greater. Businesses will also qualify with a \$100 million capital investment if they create 50 jobs at the above thresholds. In return for a company's investment and job creation, they would receive a 15% investment credit, 10% wage credit, tangible personal property exemption for 10 years, and a sales tax refund on all capital purchases. In addition, the company may use their credits to offset their real property taxes at the site of the project as well as apply them to sales tax, income tax, and employee withholding. The entitlement period is 10 years for these benefits as opposed to the next highest entitlement period at 7 years.



One activity received special attention in LB 895 as legislators added web-portal businesses as eligible business activities in tiers 2-6. They also added an exemption of personal property tax on computer systems for the investment only Tier 5. High-tech jobs are important for 21st century success. These changes will put Nebraska on the leading edge to attract companies offering these services. **With all of these incentives on top of Nebraska's world class workforce, high quality and low cost living and central location, Nebraska is primed for success in every aspect of the economy.**

In addition to the Super Tier within LB 895, other programs were augmented to expand opportunity for businesses throughout the state. The Nebraska Rural Advantage received more money for 2009, and more businesses will be eligible applicants. Effective July 1, 2009, a qualifying business in any village can apply for Rural Tier 1. Qualifying businesses in any second-class city in the state can apply for Rural Tier 2. Senators also placed language within the Rural Advantage that extends incentives to businesses in Omaha located in "any area consisting of one or more contiguous census tracts, which contain a percentage of persons below the poverty line of greater than 30 percent." This will mean greater competition for incentives in this tier and growth for more communities throughout the state. For more information, visit [The Nebraska Department of Economic Development - Incentives & Financing website](#). (Read more about the passing of the Nebraska Super Advantage bill in how "Nebraska is Building an Economic Force" in the most recent issue of [Business Facilities Magazine](#).)



Nebraska Diplomats, Inc.

Diplomats Passport to Nebraska Weekend Scheduled for September

The [Annual Diplomats Passport to Nebraska Weekend](#) takes place September 12-13, and is the signature event of the [Nebraska Diplomats](#). Business prospects from around the nation and world are treated to Nebraska's unparalleled hospitality. On Friday, September 12, the events kick-off with Diplomats Annual Meeting at 2 p.m., with the CEO roundtable at 3:30 p.m. The reception begins at 5:30 p.m. with the Annual Banquet following at 7 p.m. and Past-President's Reception at 9 p.m. On Saturday, a tailgate will take place at the Governor's Residence, followed by the Nebraska vs. New Mexico State football game. **Kevin Malone and Steve Kottich, EDGE Board Members, are members of the Nebraska Diplomats. EDGE will be represented at this event.**

View the entire 22-page newsletter online at the [Nebraska Department of Economic Development's website--www.neded.org](#).

Mayor Vandenberg Appointed to NE State Highway Commission

In May, Gov. Dave Heineman announced the appointment of Mayor Rodney Vandenberg to serve as [District 1 Commissioner on the Nebraska State Highway Commission](#). He will complete the term of Duane Acklie, who resigned earlier this year. The term runs through the fall of 2011.

"I have known Rod a long time and I have great respect for him as a business and community leader," Gov. Heineman said. "Senator LaVon Heidemann's endorsement of Rod was a key factor in my decision. I'm confident Rod will be an outstanding Highway Commissioner."





UNL Chancellor Perlman Visits Falls City

University of Nebraska-Lincoln [Chancellor Harvey Perlman](#) visited Falls City June 25-26 on a tour that highlighted new developments and historic strengths in Falls City.

The day was part of the Chancellor's regular visits to all of Nebraska's 93 counties to hear feedback from local residents, to share news about the University, and continue the dialogue about the partnership between communities and the university in building a stronger Nebraska.

"The tour was excellent," Perlman said at its conclusion. *"It highlighted a variety of small and large businesses and showed Falls City's community commitment to revitalization through the construction of the new library."* Perlman said he was impressed with the turnout at the community luncheon.



Accompanying Perlman on the community visit in Falls City was Senator LaVon Heidemann, Michelle Waite, his assistant for community relations and Ben Steffen, local extension board member.

In Falls City they met Chuck Whitney, Economic Development Director, at Falls City Edge, followed by a tour of Watkins Air Service Production, where they met general manager Bradley Albu.

Following lunch the group toured Heritage Falls Candles and Gifts and then visited Falls City Library, meeting director Hope Schawang. They visited with *Falls City Journal* Publisher Scott Schock to end the visit.

The University of Nebraska is an important partner in economic development. To learn more about the University's business, industry and government resources, visit www.unl.edu.



It's back to school time, reminding us of the important role our schools play in the economic growth and vitality of our community. EDGE would like to recognize our outstanding school staff and students for all the positive contributions you are making to our community. We wish you much success in the coming school year. See you Friday nights under the lights!



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- Charlie Radatz
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- David Sickel
- Mayor Rod Vandeberg

Welcome New EDGE Member Investors In 2008

Grand Weaver Hotel

Chuck Sailors

Bill Schock

Vision 20 Motel

We would like to thank all of our members for their investment in Falls City's economic development program. For a current list of all member investors, visit the [EDGE website](#), "About EDGE" section. If you are interested in becoming a member of EDGE, please contact Chuck at 402.245.2105 or email director@fallscityedge.com.

For EDGE member announcements, updates and reports, check the EDGE website "[Member Investors Login](#)" section. If you need assistance with accessing this password-protected section, please contact Chuck.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

- [I2E Club - Inventors, Investors and Entrepreneurs Club](#) - meets the second Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Kimmel Education & Research Center, 5985 G Road, Nebraska City. Each session begins with a networking social at 5:30 p.m. and is followed by introductions and an educational session or guest speaker at 6:00 p.m. Each evening ends with an "Ask and You Shall Receive" session, which enables participants to ask for what they want or need so the group can help them find solutions and break through barriers. A \$30 fee is charged to join the club; however, people are encouraged to attend 1-2 sessions before making a commitment. If you would like to be involved, contact Dr. Connie Reimers-Hild at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Kimmel Education & Research Center by phone 402.873.3166 or email creimers2@unl.edu -or- contact [Chuck Whitney](#) at the EDGE office.
- [Nebraska Economic Development Association \(NEDA\) Fall Conference, "Home Grown Innovation & Change," September 24-26, LaVista](#). The event is recognized by the [International Economic Development \(IEDC\)](#) as a professional development event. EDGE Director, Chuck Whitney, is a member of NEDA and will be in attendance.
- **Adult Basic Welding classes begin September 29** and **Intermediate Welding classes will start on November 3**. Both courses will be held for five sessions on Mondays from 6-8:30 p.m. at the Falls City High School. The tuition for each course is \$50 and the supply fee is \$15. Look for more information on the classes to arrive in the mail soon. Rick Johnson is the Local Director for Southeast Community College Adult Education and can be contacted at 402.245.3455 or email rjohnson@esu4.org.
- [Nebraska Governor's Conference on Rural Development, November 14, Kearney](#). The conference, themed "Renewable Nebraska," will feature local tours, networking opportunities, resource booths and a variety of workshops. For conference schedule, go to the [Nebraska Department of Economic Development's website--www.neded.org](http://www.neded.org).