

Accomplishments 2016-17

The First Year

This report summarizes some of the activities undertaken by the Beaufort Digital Corridor since launch in June 2016. This document is organized under the four pillars that define the organization – Community, Spaces, Talent and Capital.

Community

As a grassroots organization, understanding the needs of the Beaufort tech community is paramount. From these activities will emerge a set of company and professional relationships that enable the BDC to deliver economic value to its membership and the community at large. Year 1 was focused on developing the infrastructure and business environment that will serve as the foundation for future growth.

The **Fridays @ the Corridor** monthly series is an education and networking event held at BASEcamp on the second Friday of each month.

- To date, the BDC has held **eight** events with **120** attendees.
- These events brought awareness of the BDC to an ever-increasing number of members from the community and lead to suggestions, ideas and new memberships.

The recently announced **Leadership Profile** series is a monthly showcase of tech and business leadership in Beaufort. These profiles are featured on the Beaufort Digital Corridor website and distributed via social media.

- **Two** leadership profiles have been showcased – Ginger Wareham of Picklejuice Productions and Joe Floyd of InsureSign.

The BDC has established a **Membership Program** with a host of benefits. Membership is divided into three categories – members, partners and investors.

- Membership at the BDC is currently comprised of **30** members, partners and investors.

An important component of the BDC involves **Community Presentations**. These meetings allow the community to understand the organizations mission while deciding how to participate, support and benefit from the BDC.

- The BDC has given over **15** community presentations with several more planned.

The BDC will soon host a gathering of tech professionals for a **Tech Happy Hour** with the goal of learning more about their respective businesses and understanding how the business climate can be further improved to facilitate their growth.

Spaces

BASEcamp is Beaufort's premier business incubator and co-working office located at 500 Carteret Street in Downtown Beaufort, two blocks from Bay Street. This facility is designed to meet the transitional, professional office-based needs of tech and tech-related entrepreneurs taking adaptable, affordable office and conference facilities of the highest quality, while gaining access to the Beaufort Digital Corridor's network of entrepreneurs and professionals.

A major accomplishment in Year 1 was the renovation of BASEcamp into a **10-office** professional business incubator/co-working infrastructure. This project, completed on time and just under budget, benefited from financial participation by way of grants from Hargray Communications, the State of South Carolina and the Municipal Association of South Carolina.

- Of the 10 offices at BASEcamp, three offices are currently in use – one by Vireo Labs, a tech start-up; BDC staff office and one leased to USCB for a computational science faculty member.
- The **six** touchdown spaces are varyingly used by BDC members.

Talent

The economic vitality of a community depends on the skills of the workforce. Companies need well-educated, skilled employees to deliver their products and services. The need for these skilled employees, along with vetted outsourced resources, is magnified in the tech industry where the technology landscape is evolving at an unprecedented rate.

The BDC is currently exploring the needs of tech and tech-related businesses in the community by meeting with relevant stakeholders. Once complete, the BDC will identify and implement programming that is beneficial to the tech community.

- **One** piece of educational programming currently scheduled is a game development class. This once per week for six-week "Game On" course is designed for students in grades 7-12.
- BDC members can currently post open employment positions on the Charleston Digital Corridor's talent portal, as well as search the resumes in the database.

Capital

Capital is a critical component for any company seeking to grow. The BDC's role is not to aggregate capital but instead to aggregate and host individual investors, angel/venture groups and the like seeking investment opportunities in tech and tech-related companies in Beaufort.

- The BDC has leveraged the BASEcamp facility to host **two** Salt Marsh Angels investor forums.

PR/Communication

The BDC's primary method of marketing and communication is through the organization's website and social media channels, as well as communication with local and regional media. As a young grassroots organization, the BDC is focused on developing and sustaining its programming for a targeted audience instead of marketing hype.

- Since launch, the BDC has been covered **24** times through various media channels including print, television and digital.
- The BDC's social media audience is growing and currently has **161** likes on Facebook, **172** followers on Twitter & **98** followers on Instagram.

At the outset, the BDC expected our first year to be foundational and we believe that the majority of our objectives have been achieved. In year two, we will continue to build on this foundation and accelerate our impact and contribution to the community. We will be calling upon you to assist in these activities as we will need and welcome your help!