

Lane Business Link

One of the perhaps surprising impacts of the current pandemic has been the spurt of growth in business startups. As more and more people lost jobs when the society was forced to come close to shutting down, individuals scrambled to find ways to generate income. In many cases, the best hope was to offer a good or service that an individual was skilled at, either as a hobby or a side occupation. In this new and very different economic environment, Lane Business Link, a resource network developed by Robert Killen, the Director of the Lane Small Business Center associated with Lane Community College, can become a critical resource.



The project, which Mr. Killen began formulating when he was associated with the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce is designed to create a world class business support ecosystem in Lane County, a concept which Mr. Killen described as establishing a network of business to business partners, mostly consisting of public agencies and non-profit entities to provide resources to business that are, in total, greater than the sum of its parts.

Like many areas, Lane County is beset with an image that can frustrate developing businesses. As Mr. Killen explained, business organizations are defined by their stories – the stories that stick. These stories don't have to be true; they just have to be believed. In Lane County the stories are 1) I can't get money to help me grow; and 2) I can't get help when I run into problems. Mr. Killen said that in Lane County business don't suffer from a lack of resources so much as a lack of belief that there are resources available.

Lane Business Link is trying to change those stories. It is a searchable database of business to business resources, with over 50 partners. Mr. Killen's hope is that it not only can provide support to local businesses, but also can be used a hub by organizations to learn to work together to refer. When you call the wrong agency, they can help you get to the right resource. When a business is seeking help, each of the businesses can get them to the right resource.

The resources is accessible through its web site [Lane Business Link - Lane SBDC](#) and is free of charge to anyone seeking business support. Mr. Killen is also soliciting additional partners to join the network – any organization which offers business services can become a partner.