

GROW MINNESOTA! PARTNERSHIP

We know Minnesota's economy



MINNESOTA IS A STATE OF INNOVATION

BANNER ENGINEERING

Minneapolis

<https://www.bannerengineering.com/us/en.html>

Since the onset of COVID-19, businesses innovated to create safe workplaces for both employees and customers.

Chamber member Banner Engineering is taking this one step further, creating a solution that addresses workplace safety to help regulate occupancy totals, create proper social distancing, and ensure clean work spaces.

Headquartered in Minneapolis, this 54-year old company has over 1,300 global employees with offices in 13 countries, and distributors located all over the world. According to Banner, "Safe Work Solutions help companies meet and overcome the challenges they face today so they can more effectively serve and support their customers, employees, and communities while they plan for the future."

A perfect example of this innovation is Banner's wireless occupancy monitoring solution which tracks entries and exits in a business to regulate occupancy limits. A display then signals to



those outside the doors if it is safe to enter, or if the establishment is at full capacity.

As businesses navigate how to maintain proper social distancing, Banner's Safe Work Solution is being utilized outside of just retail environments. For example, the system could be used in manufacturing plants to maintain a limited number of employees in a certain area. And these new applications are leading to more demand of Banner's products. In fact, every 3.5 seconds, a Banner sensor is being installed somewhere in the world.



Grow Minnesota!® Partnership Provides Statewide Business Assistance and Recognizes Innovation

The Grow Minnesota!® Partnership visits with businesses, provides valuable direct business assistance, and shares innovative best practices year round. Now, more than ever, Grow Minnesota!'s assistance is needed. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has seen Minnesota businesses respond by using increased innovation to recover and poise their business for future growth.

As businesses scramble to figure out how to deal with the onslaught of new challenges that have resulted due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Minnesota Chamber-led Grow

Minnesota! Partnership has responded by providing direct outreach to close to 2,000 businesses since March 15 through emails, phone calls and virtual visits. The number of businesses assisted continues to climb.

Whether helping companies find new suppliers or access state and federal relief programs, Grow Minnesota! has been on the frontlines to provide information and connections where businesses need them most.



OVER 70%
of businesses
plan new products
or services
in the next year.

To view more business resources and/or to request a site visit, go to
<https://www.mnchamber.com/your-opportunity/grow-minnesota-partnership>.

SmartBase Solutions

Plymouth

<https://www.smartbasesolutions.com/>

Since 2005 SmartBase, a woman-owned and WBENC-certified Twin Cities business has been using cutting-edge technology and expertise to organize and analyze data. Grow Minnesota! Partnership staff learned more about this amazing business and its innovation during a recent virtual visit.

This spring, SmartBase implemented an expansive remote work policy for the safety of their team, quickly shifting their entire team to a remote workforce. Utilizing their private cloud, they were able to quickly and successfully convert to a fully remote team while maintaining productivity and creativity as well as the high security and data protection standards that their customers expect from them



and that their HIPAA-compliant and HITRUST-Certified status requires. With their Data Hosting Solutions, they offer fully managed environments in their private cloud to their customers as well allowing them that same flexibility to work from anywhere while maintaining security standards. With the increased popularity of telehealth solutions and remote work in their current environment, they work together to customize and build solutions to meet their secure hosting needs whether for the short term, long term, or both.



Entourage Events Group

Minneapolis

<https://entourageeventsgroup.com/>

Minneapolis-based Entourage Events Group is a collection of hospitality divisions that collectively provide first to last premiere onsite venue and off site catering and event design and production capabilities for any size event. Entourage has reimagined iconic venues in Minnesota including The Armory and First Avenue and the award-winning Minneapolis Event Centers in St. Anthony Main. They also sport a 53-foot travelling culinary kitchen. In 2019, as a natural extension of their corporate catering capabilities, their CEO and owner Steve Hark acquired Sky Food Airline Hospitality that operates out of MSP International Airport.

The Minnesota Chamber's Grow Minnesota! Partnership staff was intrigued by Entourage's innovation to address COVID-19 challenges faced by their events industry. New event services include, Enhanced



ENTOURAGE
EVENTS GROUP

elite catering • edgPRODUCTIONS

Event Communication where green, yellow, and red wristbands provide information for guests and services staff that allows them to understand individuals' personal contact comfort level. For weddings, their Events To Go Pack utilizes creative boxes filled with items as a hospitality offered by the host to provide for at-risk loved ones' safety.



Mickman Brothers

Ham Lake

<https://www.mickman.com/>

Founded in 1975 by John S. and Chris Mickman, Mickman Brothers is an industry leading provider of green goods and services.



Mickman Brothers approached the COVID-19 pandemic by going back to their local roots. They started by giving away approximately 1,500 Pansy plugged in what was deemed the Great Pansy Giveaway which saw over 500 cars take them home for a fun family activity during the initial quarantine.

On the heels of the Great Pansy Giveaway, Mickman Brothers also launched an online store in less than three days, providing the public a way to purchase plants, amendments, and more from the comfort of their home. Part of that launch was introducing the first ever Garden Center Drivethru, allowing for non-contact pickup.

Lastly, Mickman Brothers evolved their corporate gifting program to include spring gifts such as succulents and houseplants during the spring and summer months to pair with their popular holiday wreath corporate gifting program. This allowed businesses to thank employees, vendors, throughout all seasons.



Launch Minnesota Supports Innovation

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development is spearheading [Launch Minnesota](#), a statewide collaborative effort to accelerate the growth of startups and amplify Minnesota as a national leader in innovation. It helps startups by:

- **Increasing access to capital** through grants, tax credits, and direct and in-kind investments by Minnesota's private sector.
- **Building a collaborative statewide network** to support entrepreneurs at every stage.
- **Developing entrepreneurial talent** by ramping up lean startup education, access to expertise and other coordinated statewide efforts.

To date, it has awarded 72 grants totaling over \$1.6 million to support business operations, and housing and child care expenses so entrepreneurs can focus on growing their business. Launch Minnesota now has \$1.6M available through June 2021 or until fully allocated.

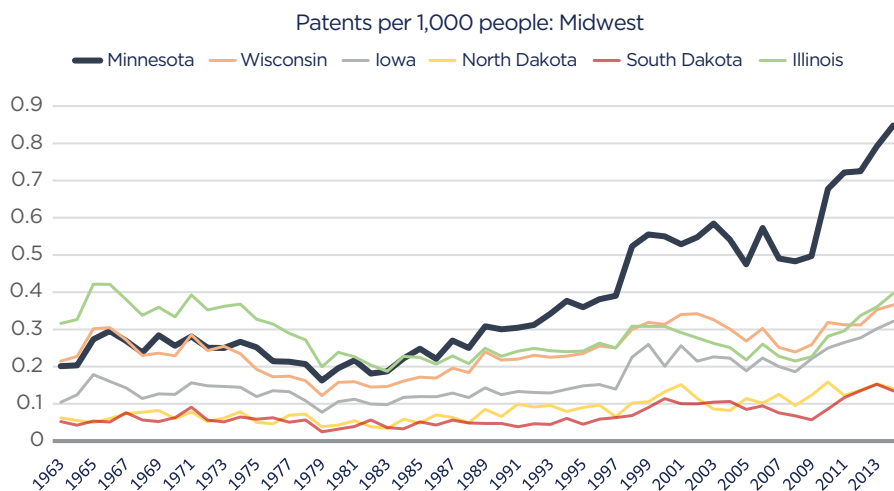
The [Launch Minnesota Network](#) has representation in five regions with six hubs – and over 60 program partners as well as one statewide partner – to help start and scale startups and new technologies. Here is a link to our most recent [six-month progress report](#).



LAUNCH MINNESOTA

*an initiative of the Department of
Employment and Economic Development*

Minnesota is the innovation hub of the upper Midwest



Source: Minnesota Chamber Foundation, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

To view the Grow Minnesota! statewide partners, visit:
<https://www.mnchamber.com/grow-partners>

Crookston Chamber of Commerce Takes “Shop Local” to a new Level

<https://www.kroxam.com/2020/05/05/crookston-community-turns-in-more-than-200000-in-receipts-resulting-in-15880-in-chamber-bucks/>

The Crookston Chamber and Crookston Housing and Economic Development Authority partnered with local businesses to hold a month-long shop local incentive program during the COVID-19 pandemic. Residents could submit their receipts to the Crookston Chamber and receive \$10 in Chamber Bucks for each \$100 spent up to \$500 per household. No one anticipated the amazing response by the community of Crookston. More than \$200,000 in receipts were submitted resulting in \$15,880 in Chamber Bucks. Those Bucks will continue to benefit the community as they are spent at local businesses.



MetroNorth Chamber - Relief. Re-Open. Recover.

<https://www.metronorthchamber.org/relief.-re-open.-recover>

The MetroNorth Chamber has developed a three-pronged campaign focused on helping their business members with, 1) financial **RELIEF** through connecting them to resources like grants, loans, and more, 2) business **RE-OPEN** guidance, e.g. they have partnered with the Minnesota Retailers Association on re-opening Main Street retailers, and, 3) resources for short and long-term needs to **RECOVER**.



Relief.
Re-Open.
Recover.

GROW MINNESOTA! PARTNERSHIP

We care about Minnesota businesses

The Grow Minnesota! Partnership is helping to grow our state's economy. Our passion to retain and grow Minnesota businesses aligns with the overall mission of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce.

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