

## Economic Development Agency launches website for entrepreneurs

BY SARAH KINGSBURY • Gallatin News Examiner  
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The Gallatin Economic Development Agency launched GallatinBusinessVisions.com, a new website to help potential entrepreneurs through the process of becoming small business owners.

Through the website visitors can find resources to help them start up businesses, including obtaining state tax identification numbers and filing business charters.

The site is aimed at a broad demographic to include "anybody who has an entrepreneur spirit and a dream of owning their own business," said Clay Walker, director of the EDA.

Walker said he hoped the site would be a conduit for startups to get the proper resources in terms of funding, marketing plans, licensing, tax liabilities and general business structuring.

"It's just a basic resource center for entrepreneurs," he said.

The site will likely have added resources in the future or there might be changes to existing ones. To keep it listed high on search engines, Walker said the site would need to be dynamic and evolving.

"Building a website's kind of like building a house — I don't know if you're ever finished with it," he said.

### High ratio of micro-businesses in county

The idea for the online resource center was born out of a study conducted by a consulting group for Volunteer State Community College and the EDA to determine if Gallatin and surrounding areas would be a feasible place to host a small business incubator facility. The study affirmed that the area would be suitable for such a resource center, citing in its concluding report that there are more than 13,500 businesses in Sumner County that are so

small that they do not have any employees.

The ratio of such micro-businesses, as they are called, to regular businesses is 55 percent above the national average, the study reported.

"As we worked on the incubator feasibility study and business plan, we identified that there's such an entrepreneurial spirit and so many micro-businesses here, we thought this website could be a good way to help those people along when they're researching what to do," Walker said.

The site is funded and operated by the EDA but is meant to work in conjunction and in support of resources offered by the Tennessee Small Business Development Center, which operates out of Vol State.

The goal of the site is "simply to encourage, make it easier, for would-be small business people and entrepreneurs to realize their career dreams right here in Gallatin and Sumner County," Walker said.

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