

NEWS RELEASE

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BRESNAN AND STATE ANNOUNCE NEW PROJECT TO BOOST SMALL BUSINESSES THROUGHOUT MONTANA

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE 11 A.M. MST April 27

Butte, MT. – Bresnan Communications and state economic development leaders on Friday announced the launch of a unique partnership to help would-be Montana entrepreneurs turn their business ideas into reality and enable a greater number of small businesses to succeed in the state.

The partnership, called the Bresnan Business Incubator, includes a commitment by Bresnan of as much as \$2.1 million through a combination of Public Service Announcements and grants to participating businesses.

According to Bill Bresnan, the company's founder and CEO, the goal of the partnership is to promote the work of the state's 10 regional Small Business Development Centers, advising and assisting businesses while also leveraging the infrastructure of Bresnan Communications, providing incentives for Montana entrepreneurs who are trying to develop new businesses.

"I personally had the good fortune to have been mentored in my earliest entrepreneurial ventures, a benefit which enabled me to move forward and build even stronger companies throughout the years," Bresnan said. "The state, through its Economic Development Centers and regional Small Business Development Centers, has significant mentoring and advising services already in place. The key goals of The Bresnan Business Incubator are to raise awareness, among the state's entrepreneurs, of these services and, through our various grants and other forms of assistance, help more of Montana's aspiring entrepreneurs and existing small businesses to succeed in today's competitive business environment."

The partnership will be formally unveiled Monday by Bill Bresnan and Jeffrey DeMond, President of Bresnan Communications, at the Montana Economic Development Summit in Butte. The event is being organized by Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont.

"I commend Bresnan for initiating this new program and for recognizing that small businesses drive Montana's economy," Baucus said. "My own top priority has long been the creation of more good-paying jobs and the strengthening of our state's economy. That's what the Economic Development Summit is all about. The Bresnan Business Incubator will be a real shot in the arm for our small businesses throughout the state."

Gov. Brian Schweitzer and Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., both of whom are attending the economic summit, praised the Bresnan partnership.

"Our Montana Main Street businesses are the backbone of our economy and of our communities," Schweitzer said. "On behalf of all of the residents of our state I thank Bresnan for giving Montanans another tool to start new businesses or further develop their existing ventures."

"In order to bring new jobs and positive growth to Montana, we've got to make sure small businesses get a jumpstart," added Tester, a member of the Senate Small Business Committee. "I want to thank Bresnan for providing the jumper cables and helping to strengthen Montana's economy."

"I'm excited about this new resource that Bresnan Communications, in partnership with Montana's Small Business Development Centers, is providing for local entrepreneurs," added Rep. Denny Rehberg, R-Mont. "We've got to keep working hard to grow our economy and the continued development of small businesses across the state is critical to that growth. I applaud Bresnan Communications for their actions to advance the entrepreneurial spirit of Montana."

The Ueland family, who is renovating the historic Metals Bank building in Butte as a restaurant, condominium, office, and retail space, and Bonnie Williams, who owns Antique Rose Care Management, a home healthcare service in Billings, are the first businesses taking part in the Incubator.

The idea for the Bresnan Business Incubator grew out of some very basic ideas, Bresnan officials said. The state's 10 regional Small Business Development Centers currently provide a variety of services to new and developing businesses, such as helping build business plans. "What we're really doing is taking what these regional centers have already done and expanding it," Bill Bresnan said. "Our hope is that by offering more incentives and using our cable presence in Montana to promote this program, we can help more entrepreneurs see their business dreams become reality."

Bresnan's \$1 million in Public Service Announcements will direct interested entrepreneurs to a website offering full details about the program plus information about assistance available at the regional SBDC offices. On the site, entrepreneurs will be able to fill out a short online questionnaire detailing their business ideas. The questionnaires will be forwarded automatically to the nearest SBDC office, where staff will begin the advisory process, evaluate each one and recommend appropriate candidates for the Incubator.

Initially up to 10 businesses per region will be chosen to take part in the program. Each will be eligible for a matching advertising grant from Bresnan worth up to \$10,000. For every dollar a business spends on advertising with Bresnan, the company will provide matching advertising funds.

"The idea here is to demonstrate how critical advertising is to a growing business or start-up venture," Bill Bresnan said. "We think our matching grants will really supercharge their advertising campaigns."

In addition to the matching grants, Bresnan will produce the advertising spots at no charge, and its advertising and marketing staffs will work one-on-one with participating businesses.

In addition to the advertising grants, Bresnan will also offer participating entrepreneurs service grants for the company's digital phone and high-speed Internet services totaling \$100,000.

"Bresnan is now in its fifth year as a growing member of the Montana business

community,” Bill Bresnan said. “Our entrepreneurial spirit has flourished here, especially as we’ve rolled out our line of commercial business services. The Bresnan Business Incubator is our way of honoring and encouraging that spirit in the communities we serve. We are extremely enthusiastic about the opportunities this new partnership presents.”

About Bresnan Communications

Bresnan Communications is a broadband telecommunications company founded by Bill Bresnan in 1984. The company serves more than 300,000 customers throughout Colorado, Montana, Wyoming and Utah. Today, Bresnan offers advanced digital voice, video and high-speed Internet services including digital phone service, digital cable, digital video recorder service, high-definition TV, video-on-demand and high-speed Internet service. The company also serves the business community through its Business Services and Advertising Sales divisions. More information about Bresnan is available at HYPERLINK "http://www.bresnan.com" www.bresnan.com.

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