PennTAP + Performance = Economic Impact

606 jobs created or retained

$23,296,334 in economic impact

4.8 out of 5.0 approval rating
PennTAP Clients, Partners, and Colleagues:

There is good news from PennTAP, despite the current challenges in our nation’s economy; we continue to add success stories from across the Commonwealth. However, a theme that seems to have become abundantly clear over the past year is that now, more than ever, our companies need to become more competitive to maintain their success. Our mission here at PennTAP is to help them accomplish this objective.

PennTAP made major changes in 2008 with the launch of our new Strategic Road Map, completed with the guidance of our Action Council. One of this initiative’s primary actions for advancing PennTAP is to strengthen our focus on industry-driven core areas of services, including energy, information technology, environmental health and safety, new product development, the food processing industry, and the health care industry. We are confident about PennTAP’s future course and the positive benefits we envision for our clients in the coming year.

Through part of our increased focus on energy in 2008, we helped an increasing number of businesses find sustainable alternative-energy solutions—a key way for businesses to save money and become more competitive. Because we draw from the University’s state-of-the-art resources for research and development of new energy sources, we provide clients with the most viable systems to reduce their energy costs and maintain peak efficiency.

An example of our more focused attention on information technology is our initiative to promote broadband services throughout the Pennsylvania Wilds, in the north central part of the state. This twelve-county area encompasses more than 1.6 million acres of state forest and game lands, twenty-seven state parks, and hundreds of miles of trails, bike paths, and trout fishing streams. To foster economic growth and make the region more attractive to visitors, PennTAP is promoting the use and procurement of broadband services for the schools, health care facilities, businesses, government organizations, and residents there.

Our powdered metals initiative, a cooperative effort between industry leaders in Pennsylvania’s north central area and Penn State, created a consortium of several small companies to provide them with a more economical and efficient way to conduct research and explore new markets. It has already resulted in opening shared lines of communication between its members and University-based consultants from PennTAP and Continuing Education at Penn State DuBois.

PennTAP’s success stories of 2008 are a direct result of the efforts of our technical specialists and partners throughout Pennsylvania. We thank them for their outstanding ability to adapt to diverse situations and for their tireless efforts to meet a broad range of economic challenges. As always, we are grateful to our sponsors and friends for their strong support and for our Action Council’s guidance.

As one of the nation’s first technical assistance programs, PennTAP has been at the forefront of advancing the economic well-being of the Commonwealth through both prosperous and challenging times. With fresh enthusiasm and strengthened resolve, we look forward to fostering the economic growth of the Commonwealth and empowering our clients to become more competitive and, in the words of our mission statement, to “succeed and thrive” in 2009.

Sincerely,

Wayne Figurelle
Director

Over the last five years PennTAP has provided more than 3,218 cases of technology assistance across all sixty-seven Pennsylvania counties.

Over the last five years PennTAP clients have reported more than $215,000,000 in economic benefits as a result of its assistance.

Mission Statement

The Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program (PennTAP) engages, guides, and empowers enterprises throughout the Commonwealth by outwitting objective and experience-based technical and workforce solutions that enable clients to succeed and thrive, stimulating economic growth for Pennsylvania.
During the past year PennTAP’s leadership role in promoting sustainable business practices and assisting client businesses to reduce energy consumption, prevent pollution, and increase job opportunities has expanded and evolved. In a statewide strategic effort PennTAP convened a first-of-its-kind energy industry convergence in Harrisburg this past May to focus on energy efficiency (E2) and pollution prevention (P2) initiatives in all the different energy sectors (i.e., agricultural, commercial, industrial, institutional, and residential). More than fifty representatives and decision makers from across the state participated to generate momentum on the energy efficiency front and map a future plan of coordinated action.

At the local implementation level, PennTAP’s Energy Team of technical specialists has expanded its capacity to:

- provide energy efficiency audits for identifying consumption and cost savings for clients
- work with available grant application processes to secure cost-sharing funds for implementation
- deliver informational training sessions, seminars, and workshops
- track reductions in energy consumption and pollution by quantitative metrics
- create and retain associated employment opportunities for multiple sectors of the economy

As we prepare for a future emphasis on energy efficiency and conservation, PennTAP will build on the momentum created in 2008 to establish a structured E2 industry partnership in Pennsylvania. The partnership will help companies/organizations become more competitive through money-saving smart energy investments, deployment of renewable energy technologies, and job growth in green workforce development. PennTAP will remain engaged in other industry needs, such as pollution prevention (P2). PennTAP’s technical capability to deliver a range of energy efficiency and conservation activities—combined with federal economic stimulus funding and Act 129 of 2008, which mandates energy reductions by Pennsylvania utilities—should make 2009 an exciting and energized year.

The ultimate outcome of these efforts will be the creation and retention of sustainable jobs across the Commonwealth, positioning Pennsylvania as a national leader in the goals of the nation.

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**PennTAP Success Stories**

**Construction Specialties, Inc.**

*County: Wyoming*

*Employees: 250+

*Industry: Manufacturing*

**The need:** Construction Specialties asked PennTAP to come and talk about their ISO 14000 environmental management system and gap analysis services.

**PennTAP connection:** PennTAP submitted a proposal through the Industrial Modernization Center (IMC) to perform a gap analysis, looking at the requirements of the ISO 14000 for Construction Specialties.

**The project:** PennTAP and the Electrotechnology Applications Center (ETAC) collaborated to perform the assessments. The Construction Specialties management team and other employees were called in to address specific information needs during the process. At the end of the second day, the management team received a verbal report of the gap analysis results. Shortly after, the written gap analysis report was submitted to the client.

In the following weeks Construction Specialties reached out to PennTAP again and expressed interest in having PennTAP provide implementation assistance for their ISO 14001–conformant environmental management system.

**The outcome:** Construction Specialties has begun designing an operable fume hood for the purpose of venting gases from the top of the finishing line acid tank. This system will be significantly more efficient than the wall fan exhausts they are presently using.

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**Energy Innovation Forum, Pennsylvania Small Energy Technology Companies**

*County: statewide*

*Attendees: 144

*Industry: Energy*

**The need:** Corporations need innovative technologies to provide market differentiation for products and services they offer clients, and more corporations are searching for partially developed technologies to reduce product development time and internal risk associated with ground-up development.

Energy technologies funded through private and government sector investments offer the opportunity for large corporations to acquire technology at reduced cost and risk. The Energy Innovation Forum project created a meeting point for Penn State and large corporations and small technology companies that have innovative energy technologies.

**PennTAP connection:** The Office of Economic and Workforce Development supports opportunities for commercialization of small technology companies. A study supported the idea of a statewide forum.

**The project:** The effects of the Energy Innovation Forum, held in October, will continue into the future as energy technologies are identified across the Commonwealth for major corporations interested in acquiring or licensing them. Penn State researchers present their technologies to key decision makers in a number of major corporations. The proven NASA TecFusion model suggests that forums align major corporate needs with validated technologies, resulting in corporate funding to advance technologies to a commercial level.

Value-added relationships with positive economic impact will result from the forum’s relationship-building format. The objectives are to provide opportunities for small Pennsylvania companies to meet with large national and international corporations, create a forum for Penn State researchers to present technologies and core competencies that align with the needs of large corporations and small tech companies, and provide a platform for students to present energy-related technologies to major corporations and build relationships for future employment.

**The outcome:** Eighteen small Pennsylvania energy companies presented technologies; twenty energy technologies were presented; seven major corporations attended the one-day forum; twenty-eight Penn State research technologies were displayed and discussed; sixteen graduate students involved in faculty research made short, overview presentations of their Penn State technologies; and nineteen energy industry–related exhibitors had booths.

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**Castle Co-Packers**

*County: Westmoreland*

*Employees: 30

*Industry: Food processing*

**The need:** Castle Co-Packers, which brews teas and prepares other products from powder mixes and bottles them on-site, needed an objective, external, on-site assessment by professionals who would evaluate operations and suggest ways of preventing pollution and increasing energy efficiency.

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**Meeting the Needs of Today’s Marketplace**

“The Energy Innovation Forum provided a great opportunity to meet with major corporations interested in KCF Technologies power-harvesting products. PennTAP created a well-focused forum for technology companies to interface with industrial customers. Recently, KCF participated in a PennTAP-NASA partnership program highlighted by a meeting with a Fortune 5 corporation interested in our technologies.”

—Jeremy Frank, president, KCF Technologies, Inc.
PennTAP connection: The Westmoreland County Economic Development Corporation referred Castle Co-Packers to PennTAP.

The project: A pollution-prevention, energy-efficiency (P2E2) site assessment was conducted for Castle Co-Packers by a senior PennTAP technical specialist based at the Penn State Greater Allegheny campus, and P2E2 specialists from the Electrotechnology Applications Center (ETAC). Recommendations were made regarding improvements and repairs to several high-energy-use items, including compressed air system leak repairs, boiler and steam system repairs and improvements, installation of energy-efficient lighting, closed-loop cooling water recirculation, and utility tax exemption analysis and application.

The outcome: Castle Co-Packers reduced its electric power consumption by 90,000 kilowatt hours per year, with a corresponding indirect reduction in power plant air emissions of more than 100,000 pounds per year. Additional environmental benefits included water consumption reduction of almost 72,000,000 gallons per year. Direct operational savings exceed $500,000 per year. Other economic benefits, including those from the utility tax exemption claim, exceed an additional $80,000.

York-Seaway of Lake City

Mercer Spring of Townville

County: Erie and Crawford, respectively
Employees: 80 and 35, respectively
Industry: Advanced IT

The need: Both companies needed someone to help with implementation of upgrades noted in PennTAP’s Web site assessment.

PennTAP connection: York-Seaway was referred through the Northwest Industrial Resource Center; Mercer Spring was referred through the Economic Progress Alliance of Crawford County. Both companies received PennTAP assistance before being put into touch with the professor and students of Penn State Erie’s Management Information Systems (MIS) 470 class.

The project: PennTAP had done Web site assessments for the two companies, both of which needed interactive capabilities to serve their clients. In a departure from routine procedure, the next step connected the companies with Penn State Erie’s MIS 470 business class, whose MBA and engineering students were looking for industrial projects they could complete in one year.

The outcome: The MIS 470 class teams designed and built a customized quotation tool for each company’s Web site. York-Seaway is further participating with the next MIS 470 class on a similar, more complex project.

Benedict Antique Lumber and Stone

County: Susquehanna
Employees: 10–19
Industry: Advanced IT

The need: Benedict Antique Lumber and Stone serves a niche market and needed to expand its marketing potential by using the Internet. The company was looking for assistance with search engine optimization on its Web site in order to obtain more sales.

PennTAP connection: Benedict contacted the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission, which recommended PennTAP.

The project: PennTAP performed a Web site assessment, then met with Benedict officials and their Web site developer, whose work so impressed everyone that he subsequently became a PennTAP resource. A number of good recommendations were provided, such as changes to the title tags.

The outcome: Benedict recognized $250,000 in increased sales for a total of more than $550,000 in economic benefits.

JW International Corporation

County: Bradford
Employees: 10
Industry: Food processing

The need: JW needed professional Web sites for packed yeast, imported from Turkey, and gluten-free flours, so that the company could successfully market its products.

PennTAP connection: JW owner Jack Wheeler has always kept abreast of the seminars provided by the partnership between PennTAP and the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission. After attending a session, “How to Make Your Web Site Work for You,” he asked PennTAP for one-on-one assistance with developing his company’s Web site.

The project: PennTAP evaluated Web developers and provided feedback to the company owner so that he could make an educated decision about which one would best design a professional Web site for packed yeast and gluten-free flours.

The outcome: The packed yeast project saw an increase in sales of $15,000, with a total economic benefit of more than $60,000. The benefit to gluten-free flours remains to be tallied, but sales from the bakery floor indicate a good beginning. Bakery sales for a single month amounted to $5,000, and in a recent month, gluten-free products accounted for 30 percent of bakery sales. The owner is quick to say he would not have gotten into gluten-free flour without the assistance of PennTAP.

“Quality improvements, more reliable product, consistency in the quality, reduction of potential hazards—Freshpet made significant achievements in all these areas, which indirectly helps make business grow and make it stronger.”

—Vir Narula, vice president of operations, Freshpet

“...helping us obtain a grant for $7,500 for the reclaim waste heat for the pasteurization. We really appreciate your help with saving money with your studies!”

—Julie Beck, controller, Castle Co-Packers
“Wonderful results. The site has been submitted to corporate officers with a strong recommendation for implementation.”
—Jeff Dahl, general manager, Mercer Spring

“Great RFQ. When can I hire a student to install this and other upgrades to my Web site?”
—Jon Braeger, project manager, York-SeaWay

**Vacuum Processes, Inc.**

**County:** Bedford  
**Employees:** About 20  
**Industry:** Advanced materials and diversified manufacturing (energy)  

**The need:** OSHA assessment  
**PennTAP connection:** Vacuum Processes was referred to PennTAP by the Bedford County Economic Development office.

**The project:** John Swatkoski, president and owner, asked for assistance in selecting a heating system for a new facility and in finding a consultant who could help with certification of equipment that was being built. PennTAP provided information on ground-source heat pumps and worked with the Penn State engineering library to find a list of consultants. PennTAP also assisted the company through the process of applying for a Small Business Advantage Grant, which was received and is being used to upgrade lighting and heating systems in an existing building and to install energy-efficient systems in a new building.

**The outcome:** PennTAP made recommendations to Vacuum Processes for improvements, many of which were implemented. Economic benefits totaled $46,120.

**Bless Precision Tool, Inc.**

**County:** Bucks  
**Employees:** 20  
**Industry:** Environmental health and safety  

**The need:** Bless Precision Tool got assistance from PennTAP in the aftermath of a 2006 federal safety inspection. So last year, when the company—a manufacturer of jigs, dies, and fixtures, in addition to doing precision prototype machining—needed to ensure 100 percent compliance with OSHA noise regulations and hearing protection, its officials again turned to PennTAP.

**PennTAP connection:** Bless was initially referred to PennTAP by a small private consulting firm.

**The project:** PennTAP assisted Bless with meeting federal OSHA standards for hearing protection by conducting a series of noise measurements throughout the facility. A dosimeter collected noise level data over a period of days, and eight-hour time-weighted averages were summarized for each critical work station. Along with the measurements, planning and training materials were provided to help the company comply with the standards as well as making the employees safe.

**The outcome:** Employee safety improved in regard to hearing protection, time was saved, and costs were avoided. Economic benefits totaled $13,645 as a result of the hearing protection case ($40,700 from the 2006 case).

**Freshpet**

**County:** Bucks  
**Employees:** 60  
**Industry:** Pet food processing  

**The need:** Freshpet, a dynamic new entrant to the North American pet food industry, claims a niche in refrigerated, ready-to-eat pet food. It needed to optimize product quality, safety, and shelf life through applied food science and technology.

**PennTAP connection:** Martin Bucknavage, food safety specialist in Penn State’s Department of Food Science, referred Freshpet to PennTAP for assistance with process and product improvement.

**The project:** PennTAP worked with Freshpet’s highly focused management team, reviewing the manufacturing process and products, as well as looking for opportunities for quality and safety enhancements. Together they worked through a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) food safety plan development process. In addition, numerous aspects of the company’s process and products were reviewed, and recommendations were made for needed improvements.

**The outcome:** A comprehensive HACCP plan was developed for all Freshpet products. Process and product alterations were implemented that resulted in improved product safety, quality, and shelf life. More than $1.2 million in economic benefits were realized, including significant retention of sales and generation of new sales due to enhanced marketability.

**Wyndham Healthcare, Inc.**

**County:** Dauphin County—based  
**Employees:** 100–249  
**Industry:** Health care, life sciences  

**The need:** Wyndham Healthcare, established in 2006 for the purpose of streamlining the health care process by helping clients identify the appropriate facility and determine the funding available without sacrificing care, needed three distinct technologies, namely, a congruent Web site, a small office network, and software for scheduling clients.

**PennTAP connection:** Wyndham Healthcare was referred to PennTAP by SEDA-Council of Governments, a regional, multi-county development group.

**The project:** Wyndham needed to set up a separate Web site for each facility under its umbrella and link all the sites to one another as well as to its main site. The company needed a simple brochure-type Web site with site-specific logos and graphics and the same basic site architecture for continuity. PennTAP recommended several vendors, and the company chose one of them to develop the sites. In addition, Wyndham wanted a small office network. After researching several options PennTAP recommended using an online file server with a group account. Finally, the company needed a way to electronically track the schedules of patients and staff for its visiting nurse component. The system had to meet a set of criteria for multiple users and many staff members. Several vendors were recommended to Wyndham.

“… the safety of our employees is of utmost importance. Additionally, we may have avoided fines from OSHA and employee issues related to future hearing problems.”
—Howard Bless, president, Bless Precision Tool, Inc.

“PennTAP is fast, efficient, and effective. They asked a lot of questions to get down to what we needed.”
—Jason Soucy, financial manager, Wyndham Healthcare, Inc.
The outcome: Wyndham reported more than $2,500 in savings as a result of PennTAP’s recommendations. The company also spent money on a new Web site design and used another small, local business for the project.

Clarion University Small Business Development Center

Counties: Numerous counties in northern and central Pennsylvania
Employees: Dozens of employees in 17 companies
Industry: Advanced IT

The need: Numerous small businesses throughout the region needed educational opportunities for their workers.

PennTAP connection: A longtime partnership has developed between PennTAP and other economic development organizations. When the need for training was identified, PennTAP was tagged to lead the way.

The project: PennTAP collaborated with other organizations to build and deliver a seminar to meet the educational needs of many small companies.

The outcome: The mantra of many cooperating economic development organizations has been “partnership.” The success of the seminar is how well PennTAP partnered with other organizations; it says we don’t just work with Penn State—we really do collaborate.

“The report exceeded my expectations and will allow us to reach beyond our initial goals. Add to the mix a personable PennTAP team, and I see many more opportunities for us to benefit from PennTAP’s assistance.”

—Howard Williams, vice president and general manager, Construction Specialties, Inc.

PennTAP Cases 2005-08

Total Cases = 2,400

Customer Locations

Note: 81 cases were located outside Pennsylvania. A single customer location can represent multiple cases.
2008 Annual Report

For assistance or further information, contact PennTAP by e-mail or phone: penntap@psu.edu, 814-865-0427. Visit us on the Web: www.penntap.psu.edu.

2008 Action Council Members

The Action Council, created in 2008, is composed of leaders in business and industry, government, higher education, and economic development. The council operates as a group and in small teams to support PennTAP in key strategic areas. We appreciate the efforts of our 2008 Action Council members and thank them for giving their time and expertise in guiding PennTAP into the future.

Michael Allen, Executive Vice President
Kish Bank

David Althoff Jr., Chief
Division of Energy Policy and Technology Deployment
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Pete Bordi, Director, Center for Food Innovation Associate Professor, School of Hospitality Management
Penn State

Steve Brawley, President and CEO
Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Central and Northern Pennsylvania

Cheryl Cook, Deputy Secretary for Marketing and Economic Development
Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

Ron Cowan, Vice President of Information and Management, and CIO
Lewistown Hospital

Eugene DePasquale, 95th Legislative District Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Wes Donahue, Director
Management Development Programs
Penn State

Brad Ehrhart, Executive Director
Clarion County Economic Development Corporation

L. P. Frieder III, Director
Corporate Research and Development
Gentex Corporation

Jack Gido, former Director (retired)
PennTAP

Michelle Griffin-Young, Vice President of Public Policy
Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce

Gregg Header, President
Solar Innovations

Rich Hudic, President and CEO
Team Pennsylvania Foundation

Rick Kester, Senior Manager
Program Management
Lockheed Martin

Nick Konzel, President
Distributed Network Software, LLC

Kelly Lewis, President and CEO
Technology Council of Central Pennsylvania

Joe Marinec, Chief Operating Officer
Joy Cone Company

Jeannine Marttila, Executive Director
Technology Investment Office
Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development

Joel Morrison, Program Development, Earth and Mineral Sciences
Energy Institute
Penn State

Ken Okrepkie, Assistant Regional Manager
Pocono Northeast Region
Ben Franklin Technology Partners

Carlo Pantano, Director
Materials Research Institute
Penn State

Joseph Pezze, Principal
Hilcrest Group Environmental Consultants

Debbie Prosser, Director of Business Development
Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission

Gerri Sarfert, Executive Director
Communications and Technology Committee
Pennsylvania State Senate

Joe Segilia, Director of Continuing Education
Penn State Fayette

Richard Shurgalla, Instructor in Health Policy and Administration
Penn State

Michael Vasilik, Director
Electrotechnology Applications Center
Northampton Community College

Howard Williams, Vice President and General Manager
Construction Specialties, Inc.

Eric Wolfe, President
Horizon Technology

Robert C. Wonderling, Senator
Pennsylvania State Senate

Wayne Figurelle, Director
PennTAP

Tim Franklin, Director
Office of Economic and Workforce Development
Penn State

PennTAP Services

We provide assistance regarding:

Advanced Information Technology
Energy
Environmental Health and Safety
Food Industry
Health Care
New Product Development