



# TECHHELP

SOLUTIONS FOR MANUFACTURERS

## University

Boise State University  
University of Idaho  
Idaho State University

## Center Director

Steve Hatten

## Center Location

College of Engineering

## Center since 1996

## Center Activities

- Assessments related to economy, energy, and environment programs
- Training and workshops
- Assistance related to standards
- Export assistance

## Clients

- Existing businesses
- Entrepreneurs

## Assessment Techniques

- Client satisfaction surveys
- Case studies
- NIST MEP surveys

## Contact Information

www.techhelp.org  
shatten@boisestate.edu

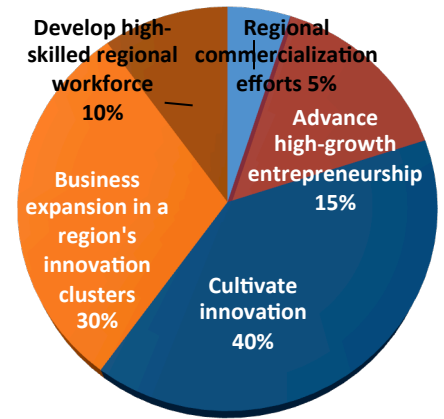
## TechHelp

TechHelp, the EDA University Center hosted at Boise State University (BSU) in Idaho, assists Idaho manufacturers to be more innovative to grow revenue, improve productivity, and add jobs. From offices in Boise, Post Falls, and Pocatello, TechHelp specialists and its network of public and private third party partners provide technical and professional assistance to Idaho manufacturers, food and dairy processors, and inventors with the goal of strengthening their global competitiveness through continuous innovation on new and improved products, markets, and processes. The Center focuses on increasing productivity and competitiveness through process improvements and on increasing export sales by Idaho firms. In addition, the Center strives to drive product and service innovation throughout the state. The Center is supported by the grant, the state government, the NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program, the University, and program fees.

## Activities

The Center provides Idaho manufactures with an assessment of potential energy, environmental, and efficiency (e.g., lean) savings, which is followed by training. Then the Center provides implementation support to realize those savings and improve economic performance.

Food and dairy safety are a concern to many state firms and the Center



provides training to food and dairy processors to enhance their food safety systems in order to meet requirements established by their customers and by the Food and Drug Administration. The Center holds public workshops and private in-plant food safety technical training and assistance for company leadership,

managers, and employees.

The Center also helps firms grow revenue through commercialization assistance such as public and private innovation workshops, innovation process and structure support, and implementation support. It also provides assistance with product

*“Tech Help is critical to the development of the Dairy Industry in Idaho. It provide excellent training initiatives and contacts with the University of Idaho faculty.”*

*--Center Client*

design, rapid prototyping, and testing services through the New Product Development Lab at Boise State University.

### Leveraging

The Center leverages their network of experienced staff and proven partners from private industry, Idaho’s universities, and the National MEP network to develop trusted and lasting relationships with Idaho companies and communities. In addition, the export program

leverages the Center’s relationship with the Idaho District Export Council and its members, as well as with international business students who help with the project. In addition, engineering students are highly engaged in the Center’s commercialization/new product development assistance projects. The Center leverages university resources including data sources, analytical expertise, specialized equipment for commercialization assistance, and the technology transfer office.

## Success

### Leveraging extensive partnerships and outside resources to reach companies statewide

TechHelp provides the state’s important manufacturing sector with a complete suite of services and brings expertise and best practices to the state’s distressed communities. For example, in 2011 Rekluse Motor Sports was selected for Idaho’s 2011 Export Excellence Program to receive help in assessing and entering global markets. A Boise State international business student and a Council member worked with the company to develop an export action plan for the company’s automatic clutch for dirt bikes (which had been developed with help from TechHelp in 2002). From this plan, Rekluse developed a

Strategic Export Action Plan designed to strengthen its EU distribution network and increase EU sales by 25% in 2012. In addition, Rekluse moved to a new modern plant in Boise in early 2012, and former student engineer of TechHelp and Boise State went on to become their R&D Manager.

A key element in this success has been TechHelp’s active leveraging of partnerships and outside resources to implement its programs. TechHelp is a partnership of three universities – Boise State University, University of Idaho, and Idaho State University. The Center can draw upon numerous colleges and departments within the three universities to meet client needs. This arrangement also allows

it to operate offices in four different regions around the state to better serve its clients in distressed and rural regions. In addition to serving as an EDA University Center, TechHelp is also an affiliate of NIST’s Manufacturing Extension Partnership, allowing it access to a wide range of advanced manufacturing best practices and expert consultants.

**TechHelp uses a heavily collaborative approach to providing technical assistance throughout the state by drawing upon the resources and expertise of three universities and by leveraging multiple federal funding sources.**