



The Pennsylvania Business Retention & Expansion Program Summary Report for the Period July 2008 thru June 2009.

Not surprisingly, "The Economy" is THE key issue on the minds of the 755 employers interviewed during the last year.

The 755 companies employ 60,719 people (23% of Lehigh Valley jobs), and average 80 people per employer. The overall Lehigh Valley average is 18 people per company.

252 or 34% of the companies visited were in manufacturing; 9% in construction; 14% in professional services and 9% in finance and insurance.

48% of all executives interviewed explicitly said that the "economy" was their top issue. Another 6% said that the need to "increase marketing", and 5% mentioned "competition" both of which are probably "code" for the economy. The total "implied" economy issue totaled 59%. 11% said that "workforce" was the key issue, down from 25% for all of last year.

All firms did more than \$500k per year in sales; 161 exceeded \$15 million. 14% of the companies are engaged in exporting.

52% of the companies indicate that they will still be making capital improvements, mainly for energy and cost savings improvements. 48% indicate they will not be making any facility or equipment investments.

75% of the companies are headquartered in PA; 20% in other states and 5% owned internationally. Most (82%) of the international firms are owned by European companies.

7% of the firms are unionized; 3% minority owned, 19% of those "certified". 8% are woman-owned, with 31% of those certified.

68% of firms indicate they will not be hiring over the next 12 months. 94% say they have no issues with their existing workforce.

63% say they have no problems hiring qualified people, up from 49% average for last year.

The hardest categories to retain are professional/ technical and sales people.

41 % or 310 of the visits generated a request for information or service.

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The Pennsylvania Business Retention & Expansion Program

An important resource to help grow the Lehigh Valley economy and jobs is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Business Retention and Expansion Program.

Eighty percent of all new jobs are created by employers already located in our region. While most people think about "attracting new business" as the key role of economic developers, "Business Retention" is by far the most efficient and effective means of job creation.

In 1996 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania created a proactive outreach to employers to find out their critical issues for growth and success. LVEDC and our partners are the agents who interview and introduce these employers to Federal, PA or local resources in order to satisfy their needs.

The Pennsylvania Business Retention and Expansion Program is financially supported by the Commonwealth and coordinated locally. The Lehigh Valley effort is coordinated by the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation (LVEDC). Each year we reach out and connect with more than 800 Lehigh Valley employers.

Key resources used to assist Lehigh Valley employers include Federal (SBA) and Commonwealth of PA financing programs coordinated by LVEDC; workforce development and training via the Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board and Community Colleges; site assistance by LVEDC, as well as other programs and providers.

Understanding the needs of Lehigh Valley businesses helps the Commonwealth and LVEDC measure the importance of current and new business retention and attraction initiatives.

To view the latest Lehigh Valley Business Retention and Expansion Program report on LVEDC's web site... click "BREP Report" at <http://www.lehighvalley.org/pdf/brep.pdf>

For more information or to arrange a visit by one of our representatives, please contact:

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Please visit our new web site www.lehighvalley.org for information on Business Services and Resources available through LVEDC and our Partners.

Need Demographic Data; Please Go to <http://www.lehighvalley.org/page.cfm?pag=296>

Lehigh Valley Video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9j8FjsRVB8k>