



Washington Global Small Business Assistance Network Reception Links Executives to New Export and Financing Programs

First-ever use of a social media platform to launch state and federally-sponsored programs promoting small business growth is organized by the Linked:Seattle business network working with the Washington State Department of Commerce

Seattle, December 1, 2011 – To help small business “go global” and grow more successfully, Linked:Seattle is working with the Washington State Department of Commerce to organize the *Washington Global Small Business Assistance Network Reception*, to take place at the Space Needle in Seattle on Wednesday, December 7, from noon to 2 p.m. The event—believed to be the first-ever use of a social media platform to introduce these type of programs—will help small business executives take part in Washington’s \$50 billion+ export business and get access to financing in order to grow and create jobs.

Only 4 percent of Washington companies export today, yet 95 percent of the world’s consumers and three-quarters of global purchasing power are outside the United States. And while 95 percent of Washington businesses are small businesses, many of them have had difficulty obtaining financing since the onset of the financial crisis. The primary goal of this unique networking event is to connect small business executives with sources of assistance for tapping into significant overseas sales opportunities and for financing.

In addition to Department of Commerce officials and trade specialists, participants will network with international business experts, small business finance representatives, and fellow small business executives. Joining Linked:Seattle and Commerce at the event are the Small Business Administration (SBA), along with UPS and Craft3/Enterprise Cascadia as sponsors.

Reception details, program agenda, and attendee list are available at <http://WAglobalSB.eventbrite.com>

Commerce is the lead state agency charged with enhancing and promoting sustainable community and economic vitality in Washington. At the Washington Global Small Business Assistance Network Reception, Commerce will introduce two new programs to the small business community designed to help them succeed:

- The State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) program, which will provide small businesses in Washington with logistical, sales and marketing assistance including a voucher program to help fund international expansion.



- The State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), which is expected to drive significant levels of new financing to Washington small businesses through 2016.

For more information on Commerce, visit www.commerce.wa.gov. For information on locating or expanding a business in Washington, visit www.choosewashington.com.

Olivier Taupin, Founder of Linked:Seattle, stated that “this reception at the Space Needle is a unique opportunity for the participants to network with The Washington State Department of commerce team, international business experts, and 250 expected small business executives. It’s fitting that this ground-breaking small business event takes place at such an iconic cultural and technological landmark.”

About Linked:Seattle: a LinkedIn group founded in October 2007, Linked:Seattle is the largest online business community in the Pacific Northwest, with over 31,000 members. Linked:Seattle regularly organizes events, which attract hundreds of professionals attracted by the unique networking opportunities offered by the community.

Small business executives interested in the Washington Global Small Business Assistance Network can visit <http://WAGlobalSB.eventbrite.com> or contact:

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