

MANUFACTURING

in Lehman's Terms

Hello, my name is Dave Lehman and I am digging into my new role of Advanced Manufacturing Business Development Manager with the North Dakota Department of Commerce. It's a long title, but simply put, my responsibility is to help grow manufacturing in North Dakota. This is done through recruitment, expansion and retention.

I've met many of you over the past 20-plus years in my manufacturing roles here in North Dakota; the first 11 years with a large compact construction equipment company, then through my outreach position with North Dakota State University's College of Engineering. I wanted to reach out to everyone to let them know what this new role entails. The North Dakota Department of Commerce (Commerce) is essentially the economic development arm for the state. Whenever the legislature passes bills aimed at helping industry, it is typically Commerce's responsibility to administer those programs.



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There are five areas in which Commerce targets its efforts for growth in North Dakota:

1. Agriculture
2. UAS
3. Energy
4. Technology
5. Manufacturing

In each of these areas, there is essentially a business (or economic) developer whose role it is to grow that particular industry. I am responsible for the manufacturing piece. We do this in many ways: through education, networking, incentives, etc. One example is partnering with entities like Impact Dakota and the North Dakota Trade Office to help add capacity and to grow our markets.

Another way we grow industry is through incentives. There are several manufacturing operations currently growing business by leveraging these incentives to invest in infrastructure, equipment, workforce, etc. Some manufacturers may be setting on worthwhile projects because they are not aware of available incentives.

In this series, I would like to focus on these incentives, advanced manufacturing topics and manufacturing in general. Stay warm, and I look forward to working with many of you in the future!

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