

A STARTUP **REINVENTION**

ACCELERATE ST. LOUIS **MESSAGING**

With a rich history of entrepreneurial success, St. Louis has been the launching ground for many of America's biggest and best companies - including Anheuser-Busch, Ralston Purina, and Enterprise Rent-A-Car among others -- entrepreneurship has evolved into an important growth driver of today's St. Louis economy.

Accelerate St. Louis is a regional effort to showcase the startup explosion reshaping the St. Louis region. Economic development, business, civic, political and venture capital leaders are united in supporting the movement. The region has fashioned a fertile landscape of best-in-class real estate, mentorship, and investors with high-growth startup companies - leading the way for St. Louis' next-generation economy and a successful future. Accelerate St. Louis provides information and resources to startups, connects entrepreneurs and investors, and helps tell the new St. Louis startup story as it evolves.

MESSAGING

Driven by an “all-in” collaborative regional effort to create an entrepreneurial support ecosystem, St. Louis has become a top region for innovation and investment in early-stage and high-growth companies.

- The region’s strengths in plant and life sciences sectors are well known and have driven startup growth in those sectors, while serving as models for expansion in other sectors such as information technology, advanced manufacturing, and financial services.
- An explosion of high-value entrepreneurship support organizations and service providers are working with companies to help them grow and find the resources they need to move to the next level.
- Startups are recognizing St. Louis’ fertile lifestyle and business assets: Competitive cost-of-living, a strong talent base, affordable commercial real estate, premiere education institutions, top cultural amenities, and a location in the center of the US with easy access to the entire country.
- Entrepreneurs have noted that unlike other regions, Saint Louis’ support resources work together for an “all-in” approach to assure their success.

Entrepreneurship is at the core of America’s economy – both past and present – and St. Louis has a rich heritage of startups evolving into America’s most recognizable companies.

- Jack Taylor turned a car leasing business in the back of a Cadillac dealership founded in 1948 into one of the world’s most successful car rental businesses that today owns the largest fleet of vehicles in the world.
- In 1990, Dave Steward founded start-up World Wide Technology which has become a \$3 billion supplier of advanced technology solutions to the U.S. Government.
- All net new jobs created between 1980 - 2005 in the U.S. economy were created by firms that were less than five years old and 40 percent of all net new job growth comes from the fastest growing 1 percent of startup firms (Kaufman).
- The startup ecosystem also feeds off many of the 18 Fortune 1000 companies and many of America’s largest private companies – from startup ag-tech companies and Monsanto to financial services and Wells Fargo Advisors and Edward Jones.

MESSAGING

Local investment in today's startups—both homegrown and imported—gives back and grows the region's economy by building and leveraging innovative technologies that are influencing broader industries.

- It is estimated that every dollar spent locally bring 3 times that amount back to the community in the way of commerce and sustainable job creation.
- Early accounts show St. Louis startups are producing over \$45 million in annual revenues and have created over 800 jobs in our local economy.
- Startups that are paving a successful path include:
 - aisle411 has created first-of-its-kind indoor mapping technologies that are allowing some of the nation's largest retailers to provide mobile application-based maps of their retail stores, helping customers find what they want more quickly.
 - Food Essentials: Specializes in aggregating food label data sources and processing the raw label information to assign additive, allergen, ingredient and nutrient properties to each product.
 - MediBeacon: An optical diagnostic company providing healthcare clinicians with critical information to improve patient care through monitoring, surgical guidance, and imaging of pathological disease in the human population. Its Optical Renal Function Monitor (ORFM) – MediBeacon's first product platform -- delivers non-invasive, real-time, easy to use, and cost-effective monitoring of kidney function.
 - LockerDome has created the sports-focused social media platform space and its global user-based is growing at breakneck speed.
 - Immunophotonics: A biotech company that is changing the way cancer is treated through its patented inCVAX vaccine.

MESSAGING

St. Louis region has a promising network of assets needed to ensure the success of startup entrepreneurship and innovation.

- Real estate: Leveraging the region's existing strengths in the plant and life sciences, centers of entrepreneurship and innovation have nurtured the need for startup-minded space including Cortex, T-Rex, BRDG Park, Lab 1500 and across the STL Ventureworks startup support network facilities. The cost-effective and available nature of real estate in the region means founders spend less on real estate than in other regions.
- Capital: Early-stage startup investment springs from a rich network of investors, ranging from a myriad of sources including venture capital (Cultivation Capital, BioGenerator, and Rivervest), active angel investors (Arch Angels, Prosper, and Billiken Angels), private investors as well as public support from the State of Missouri's non-profit startup investment vehicle the Missouri Technology Corporation (MTC) and the Helix Fund. Entrepreneurial competitions such as the first-of-its-kind non-profit engine Arch Grants, the Olin Cup or the St. Louis Startup Challenge also allow startups to compete for funding.
- Accelerators: Unique accelerator networks, including Capital Innovators and financial services-focused SixThirty, have created a tapestry of startup mentorship, funding and networking opportunities for hungry startups.
- Expert Mentoring services: The region has strong technology mentoring programs from the St. Louis Information Technology Entrepreneur Network (ITEN) and the Innovate Venture Mentoring Service (IVMS), as well as leading academic centers of entrepreneurship including the St. Louis University Center for Entrepreneurship and Washington University's Skandalaris Center for Entrepreneurial Studies.
- Education alignment: The region's competitive higher education network through its 13-university STLREE network (Saint Louis Regional Entrepreneur Educators) including Washington University, St. Louis University the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Harris Stowe State University, as well as not-for-profit Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, provides a teeming academic research and development component. The availability of competitively priced talent, and low cost of living, gives local startups a competitive advantage.