

Finding A Natural Fit For Your Location



More than just a pretty place—the state of Idaho has been found to be the perfect location for Lucky Bums, which makes outdoor gear for kids.

(NAPSA)—For many manufacturers and entrepreneurs, finding the right location for their business means more than square footage and reasonable costs. It's about location—literally—because the location is a natural fit for their business.

For Mark Coffman, president of Lucky Bums, which makes technical and functional gear for kids, the state of Idaho is a perfect location for his business. “We can field-test the ski clothing with our own kids on a day trip to the ski resort or hiking and camping gear in the mountains and rivers just a few minutes from our headquarters,” said Coffman, whose company is based in Boise. “Here, you get urban efficiency with rural lifestyle.”

Some companies need to consider whether their location is a natural fit for the type of products they produce. Surfboards designed in China, for instance, wouldn't have the credibility among aficionados that a label from Maui would have.

A number of outdoor-oriented companies have located in the northwestern state because of the variety of its terrain and outdoor culture. Everything from fly-fishing poles to ski goggles are designed, tested and manufactured there, taking advantage of the natural laboratory.

When does location matter? Outdoor equipment manufacturers in Idaho cite these advantages to matching their product to their

company's location:

- **Credibility.** The Scott Company, makers of ski equipment, started in Sun Valley, the legendary ski resort known for its luxury, killer slopes and its appeal to the rich and famous. The company was launched in 1958 by Ed Scott, a ski racer and engineer. While the company has grown enormously with operations around the world, it maintains its headquarters in Sun Valley.

- **Natural laboratory.** SJX Jetboats in Lewiston finds having the Snake River right outside its office door a benefit. The company can easily test its equipment on a river that offers both turbulent whitewater and shallow drafts.

- **Knowledgeable labor force.** At Lucky Bums, employees live the outdoor life, so they are familiar with how the products will be used. Employees will understand customer needs on a personal level, so they can be a more valuable resource to the company.

- **Lower costs.** Business costs can drop dramatically in a more rural setting, depending on the needs of the company. Buck Knives moved from San Diego to Post Falls, Idaho—a move that enabled the company to move manufacturing back to the United States from China.

To learn more about finding the right business location, visit www.commerce.idaho.gov/building-your-business.