



The BIO Bulletin

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BBAM continues to focus on international partnerships to grow and expand Minnesota's bioscience industries

The BioBusiness Alliance of Minnesota (BBAM) continues to work with Japan and Sweden in industries that have significant growth potential in Minnesota. This collaborative relationship stems from [Destination 2025](#) recommendations that aim to grow and expand bioscience industries including biologics/biopharmaceuticals and renewable energy. This is an opportunity for the industries and companies that are interested in forming partnerships with international talent.

Japan:

On February 25, 2010, [BBAM signed a memorandum of understanding \(MOU\) with the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry \(OCCI\)](#) in Japan. The goal of the MOU is to facilitate economic growth of the medical device, pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and other life science industries in both Minnesota and Japan based on our combined strengths in these industries.

There is a strong opportunity for economic growth in both Japan and Minnesota because our capabilities and skills sets are very complementary. Minnesota is a hub for medical device development. Minnesota is also strong in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology research area, but lacks commercial capability; however, Kansai is very strong in its commercializing sector of its pharmaceutical and biotechnology industry. Kansai is a hub for pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, but their medical device industry is not as well-developed. Kansai has excellent skills sets in engineering, high precision manufacturing, but they are not often applied in the medical industry.

We are already seeing fruitful outcomes from the relationship with Kansai. To date, one contract has been signed for a Japanese company to supply components to a Minnesota medical device company. Two more contracts for development collaboration are in the works, as are three academic and research collaborations.

Sweden:

In March, BBAM, in partnership with the [International Renewable Energy Technology Institute \(IRETI\)](#), located at Minnesota State University, Mankato, continued to expand its connection with the Kingdom of Sweden in the area of cleantech. During the week of March 8-12, BBAM's Senior Program Manager, Gregg Mast, participated in business meetings with over 25 Sweden-based renewable energy and environmental technology companies to discuss how these businesses could connect and participate as part of the International Renewable Energy Technology Institute's System for Technology Transfer (IRETI-STT). This public-private partnership is an effort whose primary mission is, "to accelerate the adaptation and implementation of renewable energy technologies around the world."

In late March, Mast also participated as part of an expert U.S. cleantech panel assembled by the Swedish-American Chamber of Commerce. The event, "Clean Tech Opportunities in the U.S.," took place in Gothenburg on March 25 and in Stockholm on March 26. It provided a "hands-on" perspective on how Sweden-based cleantech companies can enter the U.S. marketplace.

"We wanted to explain the American business culture, how you work with local and state governments, and which states are progressive when it comes to clean energy," said one of the SACC-USA organizers. "Our panelists shared several good examples of how you can approach the various U.S. markets."

To learn more about these international partnerships or the [Destination 2025](#) recommendations that outline these initiatives, please contact the corresponding person below:

Japan

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**Minnesota Cup - The "Who, How and Why" on the Statewide Competition
Information from www.breakthroughideas.org**

The Minnesota Cup is an annual, statewide competition that seeks out aspiring entrepreneurs and their breakthrough ideas. The competition is looking for the next great entrepreneurial success story in Minnesota.

This competition is for all entrepreneurs, whether the breakthrough idea is high tech or no tech, whether it is putting your ideas into a business plan or building a venture.

Who Should Enter:

This program is for Minnesota's entrepreneurs, inventors and small business people. It is for those individuals or early stage businesses that are pursuing their dreams and working on breakthrough business ideas.

Entering the Minnesota Cup is easy:

STEP 1: Click on "[Enter the Competition](#)" to begin creating your 2010 Minnesota Cup account.

STEP 2: Complete the contest entry form which includes a short executive summary and four questions that help Minnesota Cup understand your idea and how you will make it a success.

STEP 3: Continue to work on your entry. You can come back to the Minnesota Cup site as many times as you like to edit and revise your entry through midnight on May 21st.

Why Enter?

Minnesota Cup hopes to assist each entrant on their journey as an entrepreneur.

For some, it will be a chance to critically think about how to articulate their business idea or how to answer the questions that investors most want to know about their idea.

For others who advance further in the competition, there may be opportunities to expand networks by meeting leading investors, developing relationships in the business community, gaining valuable media exposure and even winning the top prizes of seed capital and professional advisory services from our partners.

For more information on the competition, go to www.breakthroughideas.org.

Social Media: Can it benefit your business?

Social media buzz is everywhere – how do you know whether or not your business should jump on the bandwagon?

Social Media Site	Dec. 2009 (# of unique US visitors)	Additional Info About User
Facebook	116 million	Average Age: 13-34
LinkedIn	24 million	Most have a college education; 33% have a graduate degree
Twitter	23 million	Most Users: Ages 18-34

The thought of social media can be overwhelming, but this article can help you decide whether or not your business can benefit from using social media. As shown in the table above, tens of millions of people visit Facebook, LinkedIn, and twitter.

Social media sites can help personalize your business and become the visual personality of your company. Unlike a typical website, you can interact with your audience because social media sites encourage two-way communication.

Utilizing social media sites require strategy, so think of it as an extension of your current marketing strategy – communicate the same messages, same brand identity, etc. Explore the sites and try to understand the user and their purpose for using each site. Once you have an understanding, you can decide whether or not it fits with your marketing strategy.

Here are a few tips to maximize your presence on social media sites:

Understand the sites:

- Familiarize yourself with a few of the most popular social media sites ([Facebook](#), [twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), etc.).
- Observe users and understand how they use the site.
- Select sites that can help achieve your marketing goals.

Develop a strategy:

- Create goals for chosen site(s), e.g. increase awareness, social engagement, and build loyalty.
- Invite key stakeholders to join your sites and encourage them to contribute to the conversation. It's about quality and not quantity. Build your community with the right people.

Keep the conversations going:

- Assign responsibilities. Who will manage the account? Who will initiate and contribute to discussions?
- Keep messaging and brand identity consistent with marketing strategy.

Remember, not every social media site is right for every business. Choose only the sites that support your overall marketing goals. Understand your target market, the messages you want to send them, and how you can reach them.

Maintaining social media sites requires time and people and the return on investment may be ambiguous; however, if you can implement the program to fit your business model, you just

might start seeing positive results.

For more information on this topic and an example, check out the following links: Social Media Revolution video and How to Market Your Business With Facebook article.

Also, follow BioBusiness Alliance of Minnesota on the following social media sites: [LinkedIn](#), [twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Calling all Cleantech Entrepreneurs

Partners, mentors and competitors gathered for the [Cleantech Open](#) North Central Innovator's Matching & Briefing in Minneapolis on April 29, 2010 at the University of Minnesota. The kick-off event was an opportunity for competitors to exhibit and meet potential mentors and other team members. The agenda for the evening included a high level overview of the Cleantech Open program and recognition of local partners of the North Central region.

The [Cleantech Open Business Competition](#) started in 2006. It is the largest cleantech business contest in the world. It was established to find, fund and foster the most promising clean technologies. The categories for the competition are:

1. Air, Water and Waste
2. Green Building
3. Smart Power
4. Energy Efficiency
5. Renewable Energy
6. Transportation

The annual event is sponsored by venture capital firms, corporations, foundations, universities, state and federal agencies and public utilities. The regional winners receive up to \$30,000 in cash and services and the national winner receives \$100,000 in investment capital, \$150,000 in national services and nationwide press and recognition.

Registration for the competition closes on May 22nd. Both professionals and students are welcome to participate. If you do not have an interest in competing but would still like to be involved, there are opportunities for mentors, partners and volunteers. For more information go to www.cleantechopen.com or follow Cleantech Open on Twitter at [cleantechopen](#).

BioBusiness Alliance of Minnesota would like to say THANK YOU to our web site/BIOMAP update sponsors:

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Thank you for your continued support to grow Minnesota's bioscience industry!

If you would like to receive The BioBulletin, please contact [Melissa Kjolsing](#).