



*Virginia Economic Development
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VEDP LAUNCHES NEW AND IMPROVED WEB TOOL

-Improvements to VirginiaScan offer business prospects simple, complete virtual tour of Virginia-

RICHMOND - The Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) recently launched the new and improved *VirginiaScan*, an innovative and interactive site-selection database located on VEDP's Web site, YesVirginia.org.

In addition to site and building specifications, *VirginiaScan* now enables a client to search for the ideal business location using Virginia workforce statistics, business location data and a host of other information that is driving today's business site-selection process.

"The new *VirginiaScan* is just one of VEDP's many efforts to stay ahead of the changing world of economic development," said VEDP Executive Director Mark Kilduff. "Consultants are using the Internet as a primary research tool for site elimination – not site selection. As the economy moves from manufacturing to the service industry, workforce statistics and characteristics have become as important as sites and buildings when determining a business location."

The improvements were begun late last year following a consultant survey conducted by the Virtual Virginia team, a team of VEDP employees. The survey found that as much as 90 percent of the initial site-selection process is now done online. To maximize Virginia's online presence, unemployment, labor force, prevailing wage and occupation statistics were added to *VirginiaScan*, as well as information about higher education facilities that includes fields of study and programs that are offered. Clients can also research employee counts and salary information for various occupations, read detailed profiles about Virginia's communities and compare Virginia to other states using economic statistics.

“The team's engineering design objective is to create a next-generation search engine for economic development-related projects, which allows the client companies or their consultants to take their lists of project specifications and perform conclusive database searches, coupled with interactive GIS mapping technology,” said Jerry Giles, Director of Finance and Virtual Virginia team leader.

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership, a marketing organization, was created by the Virginia General Assembly in 1995 to encourage, stimulate, and support the development and expansion of the economy of the Commonwealth. The Partnership is a state authority, which is governed by a 15-member board of directors appointed by the Governor. To accomplish its objectives of promoting economic expansion, the Partnership focuses its efforts on business recruitment, expansion and international trade development.

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