

Louisiana

Tech firms sets their sights on the Bayou

Louisiana maintained its status as a Modest Innovator this year. Though the state fell short in areas such as Tech Workforce, its rating in the category could soon improve, as companies seeking lower costs of operation look to expand in new jurisdictions.

The Pelican State's burgeoning software industry already contributed \$1.5 billion in business to its economy in 2016. And in 2017 IT company DXC Technology announced plans to open a new center in New Orleans, bringing 2,000 new tech jobs in the area. The DXC expansion comes four years after IBM opened its doors in the state.

To meet the demand of companies eyeing expansions, Louisiana universities are also receiving funding for improvements to their computer science programs. The deal to bring DXC to New Orleans, for example, includes \$25 million to help universities, including Louisiana State University (LSU), to boost the number of graduate students in their tech programs.

The challenge for Louisiana will be retaining graduates who receive offers to relocate to better-paying areas. State officials are optimistic, however, that large companies equipped to offer higher pay and benefits could stem the state's brain drain. "You have a home court advantage," said LSU Executive Vice President and Provost Richard Koubek. "If the pay is fair, and you're respecting them and they can live in Louisiana and it's a good career growth opportunity, you will usually win."

Sources: (Software) (The Advocate) (Business Report)

WHAT DID WE DO RIGHT?

In 2016, New Orleans established a short-term rental registry. Now, the platforms can operate statewide.

WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER NEXT YEAR?

In 2017, a bill to legalize ridesharing statewide was blocked, lowering the state's grade from a 'B-' to a 'C'.

WHERE HAVE WE MOST IMPROVED?

The Louisiana legislature passed a bill codifying the state's exclusive authority to regulate drones, superseding local rules, improving its grade from a 'D' to a 'B+'.

Best & Brightest	B
Fast Internet	C-
Grants Advanced Degrees	F
Tech Workforce	F
Tax Friendly	C-
Attracts Investment	F
Entrepreneurial Activity	B
Ridesharing	C
Short-Term Rentals	B+
Sustainable Policies	B
Self-Driving Vehicles	A
Drones	B+



Entrepreneurial Activity

Louisiana businesses created 271,209 net jobs between Q2/2011 and Q4/2016.



Best & Brightest

Though a Right-to-Work state, Louisiana lacks a law that protects workers from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.



Tech Workforce

Tech positions account for more than 100,000 jobs in Louisiana — about 22 per 1,000 people.



Fast Internet

More than half of Louisiana households have internet connections of at least 10 mbps, and 36 percent enjoy speeds of 25 mbps or more — a step ahead of neighboring Mississippi and Arkansas.

A Longstanding Louisiana Business Expands its Bayou Footprint with a Billion-dollar Investment



Dow Chemical Company is breathing new life into the Louisiana workforce with a \$2 billion investment and expansion that will create thousands of construction jobs, more than 70 new full-time positions with the company and 470 additional jobs in the surrounding area thanks to the multiplier effect.

Dow has had a presence in Louisiana for over 60 years and the new funds will enable it to grow even further, opening two new plants and a one million-square foot warehouse.

Virginia-based IT company DXC also plans to create new tech jobs in the Pelican State with plans to set up shop in New Orleans, in a move that will eventually create 2,000 high-tech jobs.

As part of its plan to expand its Louisiana footprint, DXC will offer \$25 million to help Louisiana State University enlarge and improve its computer science programs.

PHOTO CREDIT: Dow Chemical Company | Sources: (Post South) (Business Report) (Business Report) (The Advocate)