

WEST VIRGINIA ADVANTAGES: West Virginia Department of Commerce Sept. 2008
Page 1 - Open For Business Excerpts (Updated July, 2008)

| Topic | Text |
|--------------------------|---|
| Business Climate | <p>West Virginia's cost of doing business is 13 percent below the U.S. average. 2007 Milken Institute Cost of Doing Business Index www.milkeninstitute.org</p> <p>West Virginia ranks 8th among all 50 states for business recruitment and attraction. -2007 Expansion Management Magazine</p> |
| Location/ Transportation | <p>West Virginia is within overnight trucking distance of more than 50 percent of the U.S. population... ...and a third of the Canadian population.</p> |
| Raw Materials | <p>For 2007, West Virginia had the nation's second lowest electricity costs across all sectors - industrial, commercial, residential, and overall costs. West Virginia's industrial rate of 3.91 cents per kilowatt hour is nearly 40% below the national average of 6.36 cents per kilowatt hour. West Virginia's overall electric rate of 5.27 cents per kilowatt hour is 43% below the national average of 9.14 cents per kilowatt hour.</p> <p>-- Energy Information Administration data, 2007</p> |
| Pay equality for women | <p>West Virginia has best pay equity between Men and Women, says Time online</p> <p>A revealing study by the American Association of University Women found that even just one year after college graduation, women earn only 80% of what men do. And overall, the gap just widens over time. Louisiana has the biggest pay disparity, as college-educated women over 25 earn just 64% of their male counterparts, while West Virginia boasts the best figure: 89%</p> <p>http://www.time.com/time/2007/earnings/</p> |
| Work Force | <p>West Virginia's skilled and flexible work force has earned a reputation for dedication, loyalty, and low absenteeism. The state's labor turnover rate is 3rd lowest in the country. U.S Census Bureau</p> <p>-2007 US Census Bureau, Local Employment Dynamics Program</p> |
| International | <p>International Investment from 23 countries has created more than 22,000 jobs for West Virginians.</p> <p>In 2007, West Virginia companies exported more than \$3.97 billion in plastics, chemicals, coal, automotive components, machinery and other industrial consumer goods. This was an increase of nearly 23 percent over 2006. This rate of increase was the seventh-highest percent increase of all 50 states and nearly doubles the nationwide increase in exports of 12.2%.</p> <p>-Global Trade Information Services www.gtis.com</p> |

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| New Jobs | <p>Since 2005, West Virginia has created an estimated net increase of more than 22,800 jobs and attracted \$8.3 billion in new business investments.</p> <p>-West Virginia Development Office, 2008</p> |
| Education | <p>West Virginia's college-going rate of 61 percent exceeds the national average (57 percent).</p> |
| Toyota/Productivity | <p>The Buffalo, W.Va., Toyota plant, built 12 years ago, was rated as the most productive four-cylinder engine plant in North America. It is the seventh year in a row that the plant has obtained the superior ranking.</p> <p>-- The Harbour Report North America, 2008</p> |
| Morgantown | <p>Morgantown, W.Va., is sixth on the top 10 list for "Best Smaller Metros".</p> <p>-- Forbes Magazine, 2008</p> |
| Tourism | <p>West Virginia Tourism Industry has grown 6.1 percent since 2005. In 2006, tourism created 44,000 jobs, generated \$3.97 billion in spending.</p> <p>-Dean Runyan Report, 2007</p> |
| Energy | <p>West Virginia ranks second in coal production, at 148 million tons per year. The state's coal provides the major source of energy for 32 states.</p> |
| Education | <p>West Virginia's K-12 school system received the highest marks in technology in the U.S.</p> <p>-- 2007 Technology Counts Education Report, "Education Week"</p> |
| Cost of Living | <p>The state's cost-of-living is 4 percent below the national average.</p> <p>-- American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association, 2007</p> |

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| Recreation | West Virginia's 50 State Parks, Forests, and Wildlife Areas offer more than 800 miles of hiking trails and 5,000 acres of fishing waters. |
| The Arts | West Virginia is home to 1,584 arts-related businesses that employ nearly 8,000 people. -- AmericansForTheArts.org |
| The Arts | In 2006, Marshall University in Huntington, W.Va., was featured in a major motion picture from Warner Bros. Studios. "We Are Marshall" stars Matthew McConaughey, Matthew Fox and David Strathairn. |
| The Arts | National Public Radio's "Mountain Stage" is recorded live each week in West Virginia. It features performances by today's hottest musicians and is broadcast around the world. |
| Low Crime | West Virginia's 2006 violent crime rate was 40 percent lower than the national average. The state had the 12 th lowest crime rate in the United States. -- Dept. of Justice – FBI, 2006 |
| Homeownership | West Virginia's 2006 home ownership rate was 74.7 percent, the third-highest rate in the nation. |
| Workers Compensation | Privatization has reduced business worker's compensation costs an average of 27 percent, resulting in savings of approximately \$150 million for West Virginia companies. |
| Housing | West Virginia has the lowest average housing costs in the country. West Virginia's 2007 average price was \$168,764, only 40 percent of the national average price of \$422,343. -Coldwell Banker Home Price Comparison Index for 2007 |
| Population | West Virginia's population increased slightly (3,336 people or 0.2%) between July 1, 2006 and July 1, 2007. The state's total population is 1,812,035. - U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 - May 1, 2008 News Release |

