

Internet of Things (IoT)



Photo by Jim Craven | www.jimcravenphoto.com

MERLIN, OR - What do wearable heart monitors, home appliance sensors, traffic management and even inventory and supply chain networks have in common? They are all part of the new Internet of Things (IoT). The IoT is an exponential leap in technology made possible with innovations from Southern Oregon's Linx Technologies.

In the past, data input to computers and the Internet was time and labor intensive. Now it can be direct from a smart device via wireless channels—replacing the need for manual data entry. Linx Technologies develops and manufactures the wireless controls that other manufacturers use for IoT products. You may recognize the names Honeywell, Stanley Black & Decker, Garmin, United Technologies, The Toro Company, Google and 3M. All design products with Linx's wireless components.

by Chris Cook

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*With the
Rogue River
and nature trails
right outside the door
and a motivated team inside,
Linx has the best of both worlds.*

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The company founder, a serial entrepreneur, made a deliberate move from Southern California to Grants Pass in 1991, and launched Linx in 1997. After numerous exploratory trips around the country, Grants Pass was chosen for its affordable business costs and mild climate. The business is now located in the tiny Josephine County community of Merlin, just north of Grants Pass.

When Alpine Investors purchased the company in 2011, management had doubts about the region's resources. "We were convinced that to grow this business, we needed to cultivate talent that didn't exist in this valley. However, we found that the workforce in Southern Oregon has made our continued innovation possible," says Tolga, president and CEO. "Our team is as strong as any I've ever worked with—in Philadelphia, New York, Chicago and Houston. What you get in the Rogue Valley is talent, performance and loyalty."



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Over the last three years, Linx has developed a whole line of new high-tech products.

Linx looks to local institutions such as Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT) and Rogue Community College (RCC) to grow its team of engineers and hardware developers, says Shawn Hogan, vice president of engineering. He adds that it's not unusual for a student intern to be offered a job at Linx even before graduation.

"We quickly realized that we had exceptional talent here," Tolga recounts. "We are able to cultivate stars. As a result, many of our best people here are either home grown or picked from RCC or OIT's programming and electrical engineering students. We have an advanced high-tech team without the Silicon Valley cost structure. This creates a sustainable competitive advantage."

With 75 percent of its wireless module portfolio made up of new products, Linx's continued success relies on innovation. Technology and the Internet are changing fast. "In the future, everything will be connected to the Internet," says Tolga. "It's a new world where not just people will be connected to the Internet, but things will as well—automating much of our daily lives." Linx, a multi-million-dollar business with well over 20,000 active customers, does 35 percent of its sales internationally through distributors in 23 countries. Linx is just one of a growing number of international high-tech companies based in Southern Oregon.

"There are more high-tech and electronics companies here than most people realize," Shawn says. "Brammo, Met One Instruments, Radio Design Group, Quantum Innovations and Rogue Valley Microdevices are all within an hour of here. And there is a strong cadre of supporting organizations for the high tech sector as well—Rogue Hack Lab, Rogue Nexus, Sustainable Valley Technology Group and Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development Inc. (SORED), to name a few."

These companies have all learned that it's possible to have an internationally focused business thrive in Southern Oregon, amongst the rivers, mountains, lakes and seashore.



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