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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce



Wilmington, Winston-Salem make *Business Week* list

Business Week magazine has ranked Wilmington No. 7 and Winston-Salem No. 10 in its list of Most Fun, Affordable Cities, released Aug. 15.

Wilmington was praised for its many seafood restaurants and international dining options. The magazine listed Winston-Salem because of its arts district, new bars and restaurants, and residential developments.

[America's Most Fun, Affordable Cities](#) (*Business Week*, Aug. 15)



Visitor spending rises in 98 of 100



GE Aviation expands workforce near Wilmington

GE Aviation is planning to add about 20 to its [workforce](#) at their Castle Hayne facility. The announcement was made during an Aug. 10 visit to the facility by U.S. Senator Richard Burr.

Production demands are increasing for the [jet engine manufacturer](#). At the 49th International Paris Air Show in June 2011, GE Aviation generated billions of dollars in sales—more than 1,400 engines, plus service for those engines.

The expansive Castle Hayne plant produces parts used in the engines. For some engines, such as the ones ordered in Paris, parts are sent to Durham to be assembled. As production to fill the orders received at the Paris Air Show begins in 2013, GE Aviation expects to expand its North Carolina workforce to meet the demand. [Read more](#).



N.C. counties in 2010

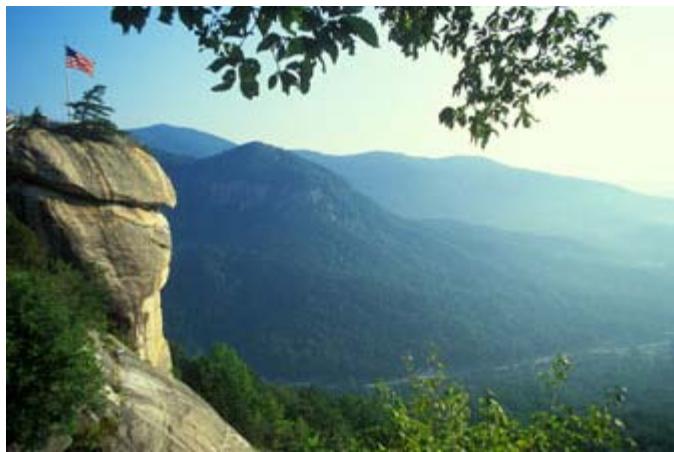
Governor Bev Perdue announced Aug. 16 that 98 of the state's 100 counties saw increases in visitor spending in 2010, including 13 counties that had double-digit increases. Data from the N.C. Department of Commerce, Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development, showed that three counties had more than a billion dollars in visitor spending in 2010 (Mecklenburg, Wake and Guilford), while Dare, Buncombe, Forsyth and Durham counties all had more than half a billion in spending.

Domestic visitors to and within North Carolina spent a record \$17 billion in 2010, an increase of 9 percent from 2009. Visitor expenditures directly generated 183,880 jobs and nearly \$4 billion in payroll income within North Carolina in 2010. Visitor spending in the state also directly generated close to \$1.5 billion in tax revenue for state and local governments in 2010, up 10 percent from 2009. [Learn more.](#)

Durham makes **Forbes** 'Geekiest Cities' list

Durham is No. 5 on the *Forbes* list of "America's Top 20 Geekiest Cities." The magazine defined a geek as "any worker with a bachelor's level of knowledge and education in science or engineering-related fields or workers in occupations that require some degree of technical knowledge or training."

[Geekville, USA: America's 20 Geekiest Cities](#) (*Forbes*, Aug. 2)



Chimney Rock State Park plans announced

Some four years after officially becoming a state park, Chimney Rock State Park finally has a road map to guide its future. The state's Division of Parks and Recreation recently released the park's master plan -- some 18 months in the making -- which outlines plans for trail improvement, visitor center construction, a new entrance road and future land acquisitions, and provides for new uses such as overnight camping and mountain biking.

[Park plan calls for mountain biking, camping in future](#) (*The Citizen-Times - Asheville*, Aug. 8)

CleanLinks Forum to take place Aug. 31

BLNC launches new website

The N.C. Department of Commerce's Business Link North Carolina (BLNC) launched its updated [website](#) on Aug. 12. The site is designed to direct North Carolina businesses and service providers to the resources needed to start, grow and expand businesses. The site is also designed to direct clients to a cost-free consultation with a BLNC business counselor. This service of the state is to ensure businesses have the most up-to-date information to help their business succeed. Visit BLNC at www.blnc.gov and call (800) 228-8443 for a consultation.

Business Link North Carolina, a service of the State of North Carolina, is a comprehensive business support network. BLNC partners include: The N.C. Department of Commerce, N.C. Community College System, The Small Business and Technology Development Center, The Employment Security Commission, N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, The N.C. Department of Revenue, The N.C. Secretary of State, The N.C. Community Development Initiative, The N.C. Institute of Minority Economic Development, The N.C. Rural Economic Development Center, N.C. State University's Industrial Extension Service and the University of North Carolina System.



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PTP Next announces business competition in partnership with N.C. IDEA

PTP NEXT announces a highly competitive, region-wide grant award program that will provide promising Piedmont Triad entrepreneurial companies with access to prospective grants up to \$50,000 and to expert guidance, while accelerating a collaborative culture of entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic engagement throughout the region.

Startup or existing companies in the Piedmont Triad region with innovative products, services, processes and/or technologies can compete for the grant awards. Details about eligibility and the application process are available now at www.ptpnext.com. The PTP NEXT Business Competition initial online application is currently live and will close on Sept. 9. [Read more.](#)

Year-to-date Metrics

Previous Green Business Fund winners will discuss their successes and challenges since receiving the grant during the Aug. 31 CleanLinks Forum at the American Underground classroom, American Tobacco campus, in Durham.

Featured speakers will be David Flagler of Clean Marine Solutions, Byron Owens of Vesture and Beth Rehbock of Microcell Corp. Cody Nystrom of SJG Ventures will moderate. [Read more.](#)

N.C. Travel Guide now has free iPad app

The 2011 Official North Carolina Travel Guide now has a free [iPad app](#), available in the iTunes App Store. The Official North Carolina Travel Guide app allows travelers to access articles and photos from the Travel Guide print publication on their iPads. The iPad app also features animation, photo galleries and embedded video and audio to give readers an exciting new way to experience the many wonderful places to visit in North Carolina. The app is user-friendly with large type and photos for readability, easy navigation and instant links to [VisitNC](#), where travelers can find more detailed information about attractions and accommodations across the state. Journal Communications, which produces the Travel Guide on behalf of the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Tourism, Film & Sports Development, partnered with Nxtbook Media, a provider of digital options for publishers, to develop the app.

The app release signals a continuation of the Division's innovative leadership in the area of digital distribution. The digital version of the Official North Carolina Travel Guide has been recognized as a technological trendsetter for state travel guides. North Carolina is only one of five states offering a travel guide app for iPads.



Video: Green energy companies thrive in N.C.

A new video produced by Governor Bev Perdue's office shows how the green energy sector is thriving in our state. Perdue has announced 629 green energy jobs in four months. In the video, CEOs from companies that are expanding or locating in the state talk about why they chose North Carolina. [See the video.](#)

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Business and Industry Development that illustrate some of the recent activities of the Division. The metrics include the number of new economic development projects assigned to B&I development staff; the number of economic development project announcements; the number of announced jobs created and capital invested; the number of interactions existing industry staff had with businesses throughout the state; and the number of contacts received by the Business Link North Carolina/Business ServiCenter.

Jan. 1 - Aug. 16, 2011

New projects assigned:	248
Projects announced:	107
Jobs announced:	9,911
Capital investment announced:	\$1.845B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	998
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	11,529

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Volvo gets major grant to build 'greener' truck](#) (*The News & Record* - Greensboro, Aug. 15)
- [Leaders celebrate broadband expansion with 'virtual groundbreaking'](#) (*The Independent Tribune* - Cabarrus County, Aug. 15)
- [Siemens Energy to make quick start at new production plant](#) (*The Charlotte Business Journal*, Aug. 12)

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