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Nebraska Diplomats
c/o Lisa Bivens
Nebraska Department of Economic Development
Box 94666
Lincoln, NE 68509-4666

Dear Diplomats,

I would like to add my support to the nomination of Dan Shundoff and his company, Intellicom, for the 2003 Business Innovation Award. Dan's story is the perfect example that will encourage other Nebraskans to grow their businesses and their futures in Nebraska.

Dan grew up in rural Nebraska, graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and left the state to begin his professional career. A few years of living on the east coast convinced him that he wanted to raise his family in Nebraska and so he returned to start his own company. It has been quite a success story.

He began as a one man shop, operating from the basement of his home. As his skills and energy became more widely known, his business grew. I used Dan's services extensively in establishing the Kearney FreeNet and the Kearney Public Library's Technology Learning Center, two programs that increased this community's IT skills and capacities. He was able to meet the demand for skilled employees by hiring students and graduates of the UNK Information Technology program. It was the perfect marriage, providing him with a steady flow of high quality workers and providing the students and graduates with on-the-job training and with career opportunities that would allow them to remain in Nebraska.

Dan's services are important for another reason. As a result of his innovative and service oriented approach to business, he is able to deliver on-demand and affordable technical support to businesses throughout the region, thus enabling them to integrate information technology into their businesses. Access to these kinds of services, rare in rural areas, will greatly increase the viability and growth potential of businesses throughout the region.

Dan is also a community builder, a trait that is unusual in a young man just starting his business. He is active in community affairs, in local leadership programs, and has been active with other community leaders in visioning and shaping the Kearney of the future. He has sought out the mentoring support of more experienced businessmen who can help him grow his company, and has researched how to institutionalize this mentoring into a program that will support other new businesses.

Dan is a truly remarkable young businessman. His story is a glowing illustration of the type of business and leader that will make rural Nebraska's future brighter. I urge you to recognize these qualities, and to use his story to encourage other young Nebraskans to build their futures and their communities in Nebraska.

Best regards from an old Diplomat,



Steve Buttress