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Hogan Administration's Maryland Business Express Website Receives National Awards

*Users Describe the Site as "Wonderful," "Simple," and the "Best
Government Site I Have Visited"*

The Hogan administration's [Maryland Business Express](http://businessexpress.maryland.gov) website was recently named "State IT Innovation of the Year" by StateScoop, and it also received a Gold Hermes Creative Award from the Association of Marketing & Communication Professionals. The state's new website, located at businessexpress.maryland.gov, is making it easier than ever for small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs to plan, start, manage, and grow their business in the state. Corbett Webb, Chief of Staff for the Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT), was also named "State Up & Comer" by StateScoop due to his efforts in spearheading the Maryland Business Express initiative.

"I am so proud of all of the hard work that went into developing this site, which is a fantastic resource for small business owners and entrepreneurs in Maryland," said SDAT Director Michael Higgs. "We are honored to receive these prestigious awards, and will continue to pursue our goal to make government services more accessible to Maryland business owners by providing more services online."

The national StateScoop Awards recognize innovative approaches to making state government more effective and efficient, while the international Gold Hermes Creative Awards recognize creative approaches to the concept, writing, and design of traditional and emerging media. The new Maryland Business Express is an inter-agency collaboration that combines information and resources previously spread across numerous state agencies and departments into one user-friendly and easy-to-navigate site.

"As a coordinating office of Governor Larry Hogan, it is our mission to connect Maryland's small business community to greater economic opportunities," said Jimmy Rhee, Secretary of the Governor's Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs. "The new Maryland Business Express brings greater cohesiveness to the vast resources spread across dozens of state agencies and serves businesses at every stage of the life cycle. It will undoubtedly become the premier tool for aspiring entrepreneurs as well as existing small, minority, and women owned businesses."

The site was officially unveiled at Governor Larry Hogan's Southern Maryland Regional Cabinet Meeting in March, and since has received very positive feedback:

Virginia Foster, Maryland small-business owner:

"I just accessed the businessexpress.maryland.gov site. I really like the interface. Clean, simple, everything organized by the function a new business owner would be looking to access. I think I will model my business website after this site's user's interface.

"Best government site I have visited."

David DiPaola, President & CEO of DiPaola Consulting:

"Today, I used the new Maryland Business Express to make my annual filings and it was awesome. Done in 45 minutes or less. Really seamless.

"In the past, I have strongly considered reopening in other states but with the improvements your team and Gov. Hogan has made that makes zero sense and I plan to stay in Maryland. Thank you for working so hard for small businesses in Maryland, you are really making great progress!"

Brendan Majev, Black Card Rogue

"It is so cool to play with the MD Biz Express web site. I run a web based business on the side and this is a fantastic place for me to start."

Keith Scott, President & CEO of the Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce and CEO of TALLsmall Productions:

"The Chamber strives to promote a sustainable business community across the region, and this new website will be a valuable resource to our hundreds of members and other entrepreneurs across the county. As a small business owner myself, I appreciate the clarity this site brings to the many functions spread across state agencies and how it actually guides you through the process of starting a business."

Bob Carpenter, President & GEO of the Calvert County Chamber of Commerce:

"The Maryland Business Express website will be a wonderful tool for those businesses looking to expand as well as those individuals looking to start a business. I found navigation of the site to be very easy and continually find useful information every time I go online. I am excited to share Maryland Business Express with my 400+ Chamber members and provide it to those who contact us looking to start a business in Calvert County."

Mark Stankiewicz, Connecticut Department of Labor:

"This is a wonderful site that combines so much information from different state agencies in one place. We are also trying to put something similar together, and can appreciate how difficult it is to break down silos in government. Congratulations on a job well done."

SDAT's efforts to make government services more accessible to businesses have dramatically decreased processing times and have allowed customers to interact with government when it is convenient for them. In fact, more than 50 percent of documents are now filed online with 40 percent of those occurring outside of normal business hours, and 20 percent being done through a mobile device. The new Maryland Business Express builds on this past success, and in the coming months will continue to increase access to government by providing more services online.

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