



The IDEA Center is a first-of-its-kind partnership among government, academia and private sector leaders in Rowan County, working together on a leading-edge business hub to support local ventures and small business growth.

**Key Obstacles and Insights:** Since the IDEA Center was a new and innovative concept for the community, it was critical to foster understanding, buy-in, financial support and participation from all branches of the community, including municipal governments, educational institutions, business leaders and others with a vested interest in the county's growth and development. With a goal of encouraging entrepreneurs to create new businesses, drive economic growth and offer young people job opportunities, the IDEA Center started with a county grant and was challenged to raise private money for its programs, as well as create a base of mentors to assist business startups.

**Solutions:** Miller Davis assisted the developers of this business innovation lab in conducting community research, identifying and informing community partners, and building strong working relationships with all entities involved in propelling the IDEA Center to success. Our team created an effective, original brand strategy, a logo, website, digital marketing plan, educational and fund-raising materials, large-scale display graphics and banners, and other collateral, as well as handling event planning, public presentations and public relations.

**Results:** The IDEA Center is successfully attracting new entrepreneurs and small businesses to the community, with more than 30 engaged, enthusiastic community leaders and supporters who attend regularly scheduled events and many others inquiring about local business development opportunities in Rowan County. Participating partners include the Rowan County Board of Commissioners, the Rowan Economic Development Commission, the Rowan County Chamber of Commerce, Catawba College, Livingstone College, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College and key business leaders.



EXPERIENCE

*"Miller Davis has been extraordinarily helpful with the Rowan IDEA Center rollout. Their understanding of the community environment and how to effectively engage has helped us create a successful program."*

– Addison Davis, Executive Director, Rowan IDEA Center.