



Rome Floyd Chamber

Business Brief

Here's what you need to know this week!

Important Dates

Click each title to learn more

- Economic Development Committee - 9/1 @8:15 a.m.
 - Small Business Action Council - 9/12 @ 8:30 a.m.
 - Courtyard by Marriott Rome Job Fair - 9/12 & 9/13 @9:00 a.m.
 - Ribbon Cutting - Living Proof Recovery- 9/12 @ 10:00 a.m.
 - Ribbon Cutting - The Avenue Wealth Management - 9/14 @ 4:00 p.m.
 - Rome-Floyd Development Authority - 9/19 @ 8:00 a.m.
 - Entrepreneur Seminar - 9/19 @ 5:30 p.m.
 - Ribbon Cutting- The Spires at Berry College - 9/21 @ 11:30 a.m.
 - Technology SquareTable @ 9/22 @ 12:00 p.m.
 - Business After Hours at McRae, Smith, Peek, LLP - 9/28 @ 5:30 p.m.
 - Ribbon Cutting - Line X of Rome - 9/29 @ 10:00 a.m.
 - Ribbon Cutting - Farmers Insurance Alma Roman Agency - @ 10/6 @ 4:00 p.m.
 - Business After Hours at JBM - 10/19 @ 5:30 p.m.
 - Business EXPO @ Forum River Center- 11/2 & 11/3
 - Business After Hours at Line X of Rome- 12/7 @ 5:30 p.m.
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Congratulations to Miniyar's International Food Court and Lofts on Broad on their Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

Business of the Week

Living and Giving

"Our customers call us a Lifestyle store! To us, that means Living and Giving is a destination shop for their relaxed and casual lifestyle. Curating a wonderful selection of unique gifts, homegoods, plants, beautiful containers, gourmet foods, home decor, apparel, jewelry and more, we have a passion for uniqueness and quality goods. We hope we can be your store for Living and Giving!"



To qualify for Member of the Week, must be a Chamber member for five consecutive years and must not have been a member of the week within the past two years.

Chamber Advantage

Papa John's Pizza (925 Turner McCall Blvd)

30% off the regular menu price.

Would you like to offer a discount? Email Jeanne Krueger, Director of Membership, at jkrueger@romea.com for details.



Rome Floyd Chamber launches All Things Digital initiative to attract high-tech industry, start ups and other growth opportunities.

The Rome Floyd Chamber announces the All Things Digital Economic Leadership Initiative for Rome and Floyd County, a collaboration of several entities to broaden our scope in identifying specific business sectors under a collaborative brand. Meeting consumer demand in an industry that travels at warp speed requires us to have people and a plan in place. All Things Digital works to pinpoint the key drivers for technology and innovation and is able to provide a skilled labor force and the infrastructure demands needed to recruit and grow more jobs.

All Things Digital focus group results already have proven beneficial through Tech Square Table, Confluence and Geek Week programs. This unified effort documents people's thought processes and combines people and entities bringing them together out of their silos. With new high-tech businesses adding to the already strong economy along with healthcare related Information Systems, unique film opportunities and the strong college presence, the chamber has positioned Rome and Floyd County to create even more high-paying jobs. This will in turn attract millennials and startups to our region.

"All Things Digital is an outgrowth of our Rome-Floyd 20/20 economic development blueprint," says John Quinlivan, Chairman of the Rome Floyd Chamber and CEO of Redmond Regional Medical Center. "It highlights the many high-tech industries, IT and automation capabilities in our region and the opportunities for growth in these areas."

There has been an increasing demand in the digital markets for skilled labor. All Things Digital helps bring together industries, educators and policy makers to promote cooperation and partnerships with digital education and recruitment. It analyzes the current and future needs of industries in Rome and Floyd County. Technology and Digital industries were identified as a targeted Sector in the Rome/Floyd 20/20 Part III unified development plan. All Things Digital further follows the Rome/Floyd 20/20 Part III plan through "the expansion of the entrepreneurial culture in Rome and Floyd County" by promoting research, innovation, and technology.

"Rome and Floyd County strives to diversify the economy," said Rhonda Wallace, Chair of the Floyd County Commission and Vice President of Synovus Bank. "The All Things Digital initiative works to promote a diverse workforce and economy in this digital age."

"Trends are well under way for more startups and existing businesses," said Jamie

Doss, Mayor of Rome "and our community is positioned to accelerate these positive trends."

Each year, the chamber schedules an InterCity Leadership visit to another community to research best practices. This year, the chamber will visit Chattanooga in November to look at, among other priorities, the innovation district and to research technology and innovation centers in Chattanooga.

"High-tech jobs are important for Rome and Floyd County," said Chris Kerr, Vice Chair of the Rome Floyd Chamber's Economic Development Division, and Agent with Hardy Realty. "There is a growing need in industry, retail and businesses in general for software and computer development."

Use of robots in Rome industries is soaring

Provided by Rome News-Tribune

While Rome is not necessarily viewed as a hotbed for advanced manufacturing, a new report done by Brookings, shows that Rome manufacturers have more robots per 1,000 employees than any other metropolitan area in Georgia except Warner Robins. The report covers a time span from 2010-2015, and shows Rome with 4.6 industrial robots per 1,000 employees. The Gainesville MSA also reported a 4.6 RPT rate.

The 4.6 robot count per 1,000 employees in Rome is significantly higher than either Atlanta, at 0.9, or Chattanooga, which was at 2.8.

Both the Athens and Dalton MSAs reported a RPT rate of 1.2. All of the metro areas south of the Gnat Line registered an RPT rate of less than one, ranging from 0.9 in Valdosta to 0.7 in Savannah, 0.5 in Macon and 0.4 in Brunswick, the lowest in the state.

The report provided data which showed that in 2010, industries reported 61 robots in use in Rome and Floyd County. In 2015, that number had grown to 163, an annualized growth rate of 22 percent. If growth continued at 22 percent, that would mean there would be something in the neighborhood of 240 robots in use in 2017.

Bruce Critchlow, manager of the F&P Georgia plant in the Floyd County Industrial Park off U.S. 27 South, couldn't help but smile when the Rome News-Tribune provided the numbers to him. "We have 302," Critchlow said. The numbers in the Brookings report are obviously significantly under-reported.

Pirelli, Suzuki, Neaton, Stemco, Profile - all are among major users of robots in their manufacturing process.

Most of the robots at F&P - 268 - are MIG weld robots; the rest are material handlers. The robotic welding helps F&P ensure continuous accuracy and quality of its products. A variety of welding techniques are used across the footprint of the plant.

Critchlow explained production at F&P is done in what are called cells. "Our standard cell is a jig and four robots," Critchlow said. "The operator will load parts into it, press the buttons, the robots come in and do the welding. Once it's finished the

robot will take it from that station and move it to another station." He said one employee may man three stations and is constantly loading parts at the next station.

Ken Wright, director of business and existing industry services at the Rome Floyd Chamber, said companies may have as many as two people in the workforce to support the function of the robot. "Either it needs someone to load fixtures that robot is going to weld, or it needs somebody to pull the final part off of the fixture," Wright said. "If it's running an injection molding machine, you've got somebody that is loading resin into the machine or actually removing the end product. Every process requires human intervention as well."

While F&P uses more than 300 robots, the plant has 560 and plans to add more associated before the end of the year because Honda is seeking to virtually triple the amount of product it receives from F&P Georgia.

Wright said robots used for welding are the most prevalent type of robot in plants across Rome and Floyd County.

The Pirelli tire manufacturing plant in Rome was constructed with the company's revolutionary Modular Integrated Robotized System in mind. The technology was introduced in 1999, just a few years before the Rome plants were built.

According to the Pirelli website, the work of the MIRS production line covers the tire manufacturing process from start to finish without interruptions, without movement or storage of semi-finished components, without waste of energy. MIRS is capable of producing a tire every three minutes.

In March of 2016, F&P Georgia donated three robots to Georgia Northwestern Technical College for the purpose of providing students with experience on equipment that is used in real-world manufacturing applications.

Critchlow said every production technician on the welding line at F&P has either graduated from GNTC or is enrolled in the automation production training program at the technical college.

The three industrial robotic arms have an estimated value of \$50,000.

Bill Scoggin, assistant dean of industrial technologies at GNTC, said there is a lot of job demand in the field right now. Greg Smith, the robotics instructor at the Floyd County College and Career Academy, said his program has been focused for the last several years on motor controls and robotics. "They're able to complete two certificates from GNTC before they graduate from high school. Then they can go across to GNTC and, in one calendar year, complete their associate's degree," Smith said.

The high school program now has 52 students in the dual-enrollment program. The two certificates the students can get are Basic Mechatronics Specialist and Programmable Controls Technician.

Smith said the College and Career Academy has had several kids who left from high school and got jobs related to robotics, several of whom got jobs and are going on to GNTC. "We've had companies that will pay students who come back to school, so we're trying to meet the needs in robotics," Smith said.

Thank you to the community leaders for making Rome-Floyd 20/20 Part III possible and bringing it to fruition. A special thank you to City and County officials, Floyd County College and Career Academy, SPLOST voters, and Rome-Floyd County Development Authority, Development Authority of Floyd County, and Partners in Prosperity, . Without the help of everyone involved, advancements from traditional textile to advanced manufacturing would not be possible.

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