

## State's Maryland of Opportunity Ad Campaign Educates, Inspires Business Community

*More than 100 business owners, executives interviewed for independent research report*

Baltimore, MD (January 20, 2011) – ***MaryLand of Opportunity***, the State's business advertising campaign launched in January 2010, is educating, inspiring and helping build confidence within Maryland's business community, an [independent research report](#) released today shows. *illumine* communications, which produced the report for the [Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development](#), surveyed more than 100 Maryland business owners and executives on the effectiveness and credibility of the campaign and captured feedback on the ads overall appeal. Among the findings, survey respondents were drawn to the unique facts about Maryland and the creative delivery, and expressed pride and encouragement when reading about the achievements of fellow Marylanders. Designed by Baltimore-based TBC, ***MaryLand of Opportunity*** features notable Marylanders and audacious headlines coupled with unique facts about the State's leadership in a variety of industries.

"Marking the one year anniversary of this innovative campaign, we felt it was important to gather objective evaluation from our target audience – Maryland's business community – to determine if our messages are resonating," said Andrea M. Vernot, DBED's Assistant Secretary of Marketing and Communication. "We are very pleased with the positive feedback and constructive comments, which helps ensure the campaign's continued effectiveness in 2011."

"'MaryLand of Opportunity' is right on," said Paul Reed Smith, Managing General Partner of Paul Reed Smith Guitars. "PRS's home is Maryland, we work in Maryland, we thrive in Maryland, and we are supported by Maryland. For us Maryland is opportunity."

"It has been a tremendous honor to participate in the MaryLand of Opportunity campaign over the past year," said Mei Xu, Creator & CEO of Chesapeake Bay Candle and Blissliving Home. "For the past 17 years, Maryland has allowed us to live the American Dream - and this year we will open our first domestic manufacturing facility in Maryland. It has been a great pleasure to help raise awareness for our beautiful state and the outstanding opportunities it has to offer."

***MaryLand of Opportunity*** was designed to promote the advantages of doing business in Maryland by showcasing some of Maryland's industry sectors leaders, including famed guitar manufacturer Paul Reed Smith, top chef Brian Voltaggio and renowned scientist Dr. Claire Fraser-Liggett. The ads also boast the State's unique assets, including a highly-educated workforce, world-class education system, strategic location, outstanding hub of science and research and excellent quality of life. In 2010, the campaign was featured on radio and in print and internet ads, with the suite of ads appearing at Penn Station and at BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport. From March through June 2011, the campaign, with four additional industry leader profiles, will run on radio, print and in several transit venues in the Baltimore and Washington areas.

"The MaryLand of Opportunity campaign did an excellent job of raising awareness about the importance of biotechnology research to Maryland's economic growth," said Dr. Claire Fraser-Liggett, Director of the Institute for Genome Sciences. "I hope that my participation encourages the young women in our state to explore careers in science. I am proud to be part of the campaign."

"We are thrilled that illumine's research validates the strategy that we used in creating the "MaryLand of Opportunity" campaign," said Allan Charles, Chairman and Creative Director at TBC. "This campaign calls out the countless ways in which Maryland is unique and business focused, and it's clear that the target audience is identifying with this strategy."

In 2010, ***MaryLand of Opportunity***, along with the Department's new suite of branded collateral materials, was recognized by the Northeast Economic Development Association (NEDA) with the President's Trophy Award. The award is one of four earned last year by DBED's Division of Marketing and Communications, which was formed in June 2009 by bringing together the research, creative services, public relations, marketing and interactive teams. The Division's other awards included a New Media Institute Award and a Center for Digital Government for DBED's progressive and innovative website, [www.choosemaryland.org](http://www.choosemaryland.org); and the 2010 Excellence in Community & Economic Development Research Award from the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) for the Department's ***CyberMaryland*** report.

#### ABOUT DBED:

The Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development's mission is to attract new businesses, stimulate private investment and create jobs, encourage the expansion and retention of existing companies and provide businesses in Maryland with workforce training and financial assistance. The department promotes the State's many economic advantages and markets local products and services at home and abroad to spur economic development, international trade and tourism. As a major economic generator, the department also supports the arts, film production, sports and other special events. For more information, visit [www.choosemaryland.org](http://www.choosemaryland.org).