

SMASH THE SILOS

Panel encourages collaboration and taking advantage of state, community resources for growth. **By Eric Smith**

The silos that exist throughout snow sports – hardgoods and softgoods, skiing and snowboarding, manufacturing and retail – are stunting industry growth, according to panelists at Wednesday’s Industry + Intelligence “Grow Your Business” session.

Breaking down these silos means the industry must do a better job of fostering collaboration, and companies must seek new solutions if they hope to gain market share.

Tom Adams, director for the Utah Governor’s Office of Economic Development, moderated the panel that featured Luis Benitez, division director for the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office; Jinjoo Lee, commercial specialist for the U.S. Embassy in Korea; and Chuck Sullivan, president of Something Independent.

“We have to understand what our collective voice and power looks like. That comes from looking at things a little bit differently,” Benitez said.

For example, Lee said her office can advise U.S. companies about exporting to South Korea and other Asian nations. Sullivan’s organization, Something Independent, helps Colorado businesses find market opportunities. And both Benitez and Adams said their respective state governments offer incentives for companies looking for capital to expand or move operations. Help can also be found through non-financial resources, such as trade association forums, regional coalitions and industry summits.

Eschewing the idea that a rising tide lifts all boats – because, hey, this is a trade show for snow sports, not water sports – Adams prefers the phrase: “Many rocks make up the mountain.” “If collectively we get out of our own way and get out of the silos and start to think about this as a collective voice and a collective vision,” Benitez said, “the future will look a whole heck of a lot brighter.”



▲ FROM LEFT, CHUCK SULLIVAN, LUIS BENITEZ AND JINJOO LEE SPEAK ABOUT BUSINESS RESOURCES.