



Innovation Center Advisory Panel

Innovation Center, 1221 Innovation Drive,
Conference Room 115, Whitewater, WI 53190 *In
Person and Virtual

Tuesday, January 13, 2026 - 8:30 AM

**Citizens are welcome (and encouraged) to join our webinar via computer, smart phone, or telephone.
Citizen participation is welcome during topic discussion periods.**

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_YzdiM2NkZTYtNGNjYy00NDA3LTljMzQtOTk5ZmYyMTBIYmY4%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22d015a1a7-4cf9-4719-99d9-1d1ae1176df0%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22f5acfe74-3d75-4308-82ab-7f3bcc83e42a%22%7d

Dial in by phone:

+1 929-229-5663,,742150304# United States, New York City

Find a local number

Phone conference ID: 742 150 304#

Please note that although every effort will be made to provide for virtual participation, unforeseen technical difficulties may prevent this, in which case the meeting may still proceed as long as there is a quorum. Should you wish to make a comment in this situation, you are welcome to call this number: (262) 473-0108.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A committee member can choose to remove an item from the agenda or rearrange its order; however, introducing new items to the agenda is not allowed. Any proposed changes require a motion, a second, and approval from the Committee to be implemented. The agenda shall be approved at each meeting even if no changes are being made at that meeting.

MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the Consent Agenda will be approved together unless any committee member requests that an item be removed for individual consideration.

HEARING OF CITIZEN COMMENTS

No formal Committee action will be taken during this meeting although issues raised may become a part of a future agenda. Participants are allotted a three minute speaking period. Specific items listed on the

agenda may not be discussed at this time; however, citizens are invited to speak to those specific issues at the time the Committee discusses that particular item.

To make a comment during this period, or during any agenda item: On a computer or handheld device, locate the controls on your computer to raise your hand. You may need to move your mouse to see these controls. On a traditional telephone, dial *6 to unmute your phone and dial *9 to raise your hand.

CONSIDERATIONS / DISCUSSIONS / REPORTS

- [1.](#) UW Whitewater Update (Thelen)
- [2.](#) City of Whitewater Update (Becker)
3. Community Development Authority Update (Coburn)
- [4.](#) 2025 Marketing Report (Kristina Czarnecki)

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

NEXT MEETING DATE:

ADJOURNMENT

A quorum of the Common Council may be present. This notice is given to inform the public that no formal action will be taken at this meeting.

Anyone requiring special arrangements is asked to call the Office of the City Manager / City Clerk (262-473-0102) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Innovation Advisory Panel – UWW Report: January 13, 2026

Item 1.

Elizabeth Thelen
Executive Director, Innovation Services
Community Engagement Center
Network Navigator

Powered by the spirit of innovation!



Innovation Advisory Panel – January 2026

UWW – Innovation & Business Services

Agenda items:

- Student connections
- Resources
- Events / Meetings / Programs
- Marketing Report
- Funding
- Community Impact
- What else?
- Next meeting – Q2



Innovation Advisory Panel – January 2026

- Student connections
 - Handshake tool/Direct assist
 - Events to sponsor
- Resources
 - SBDC: New part-time consultant
 - Assistance any time of day: email thelene@uww.edu
 - Referrals 24x7: email, text, call
 - Executive in Residence – Strategy, AI and 3rd TBD
- Programs / Events / Meetings
 - WEDA: attended, promo table, sponsor
 - Impact: representing
 - Quarterly Meet-ups at WUIC
 - Q1 = AI with Chamber
 - Q2 = Book: Missionary or Mercenary
 - Q3 = Design Thinking
 - Q4 = TBD
 - Memberships: WTC, WEDA, BF, WMC, TWC, MMAC, chambers, etc.
 - Food Hub discussion



- Events continued:
 - January: Gov's Business Conference
 - February: Women in Business 2/17 @ 3:30pm
 - Monthly: Wisconsin Tech Council meetings
 - March: Wisconsin Tourism
 - Other UWW activities
- Marketing Report (Kristina)
 - Membership
 - Social Media
 - Digital Board
 - Coordination with UWW
- Funding:
 - WEDC: Wisconsin Fusion Energy Coalition
 - NSF: Commercialization
 - Other discussion, ideas – WEDC for talent
- Community Impact
 - Connections
 - Brand
- What else?



UWW – the spirit of innovation is alive!

Item 1.



Innovation Center Advisory Panel

January 13, 2026

Innovation Center Lease Update

- 87.5% occupancy, 12.5% vacancy (approx.), representing about a 2.5% uptick since last quarter
- Vacant suites:
 - 115, 122, 124, 223
- Signed new lease for Room 203 with Iron Forge
 - Had previously been renting a cubicle space
- Did receive one rental inquiry in Nov. '25 and gave facility tour, but business decided not to move forward
- US Forest Service departed with lease ending Dec. '25
- Blue Line recently vacated Room 124...gave notice, and appreciated being at Innovation Center over the years

Innovation Center Rental Update

- Rental inquiries somewhat tapered off in later Q4 2025. Likely due to holidays/seasonality
- Generally charging \$25.00/hr for rentals

Innovation Center Miscellaneous Work

- We have been trying to proactively address any facility complaints, such as dumpsters not being emptied, or snow clearing not being done in timely fashion
 - Parks & Rec has been very responsive when these issues have come up
- Working to onboard new Economic Development Coordinator, Ashwini Rao, on facility policies/procedures
- Future use considerations:
 - Presentation to Common Council in December was well received
 - Formal letter was sent to the EDA office in Chicago 12/23/25



2025 Annual **Marketing Report**

Created for the Whitewater University
Technology Park & Innovation Center

Updated: January 7, 2026

2025 Annual Marketing Report

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

Innovation Center Key Performance Indicators

The digital marketing efforts of the Whitewater University Innovation Center aim to raise awareness, build a following and relationship, foster loyalty, and generate leads.

<i>Channel</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Evaluation</i>
Website	Create Awareness	20% of traffic came through organic search
	Build Following	5.7K new users
	Foster Loyalty	280 returning visitors
	Generate Leads	27 contact & 0 application submissions
Newsletter	Build Following	202 new subscribers
	Foster Loyalty	38% average open rate & 3% average click rate
Facebook	Create Awareness	6.9K views
	Build Following	49 new followers
	Foster Loyalty	63 content interactions
LinkedIn	Create Awareness	12,245 impressions
	Build Following	33 new followers
	Foster Loyalty	4 reposts & 442 reactions

Technology Park Key Performance Indicators

The digital marketing efforts of the Whitewater University Technology Park aim to raise awareness, build a following, generate leads, and foster loyalty.

<i>Channel</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Evaluation</i>
Website	↑ Brand Awareness	16% of traffic came through organic search
	↑ Following	2.1K new visitors
	↑ Leads	30 contact form submissions
	↑ Loyalty	65 returning visitors
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	↑ Following	17 new followers & 232 reactions
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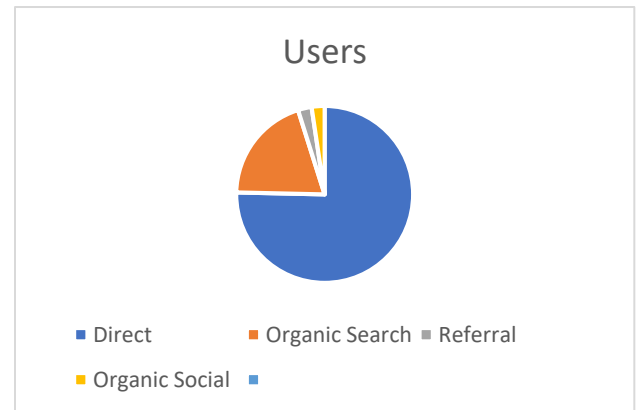
Website

Reporting: January 1st, 2025 – December 31st, 2025

Comparison Period: January 1st, 2024 – December 31st, 2024

Innovation Center

Retention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.7K New Users ↑ 22% Δ 280 Returning ↓ 7% Δ
User acquisition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4,382 Direct ↑ 80% Δ 1,150 Organic Search ↓ 28% Δ 145 Referral ↓ 75% Δ 138 Organic Social ↓ 15% Δ
Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 seconds ↓ 34% Δ 8,420 page views ↑ 11% Δ 38 file downloads ↑ 280% Δ 27 contact form submissions ↓ 6% Δ



Innovation Center Top Pages & Posts	
Home	3,280
Incubation Program	721
About	436
Client Application	419
Room Rentals	347
The Incubator	292
Clients	208
Contact	202
Resources	150
Cesa 2 Member Spotlight	127

Organic search has been declining in recent years. Refreshing the website will help add new & relevant content. Room Rentals was one of the more recent pages and has continued to bring in more traffic. The drop in referral traffic was due to leadsgo.io (not quality traffic). It artificially inflated traffic in 2024 and was not present in 2025. Organic social media has slightly decreased.

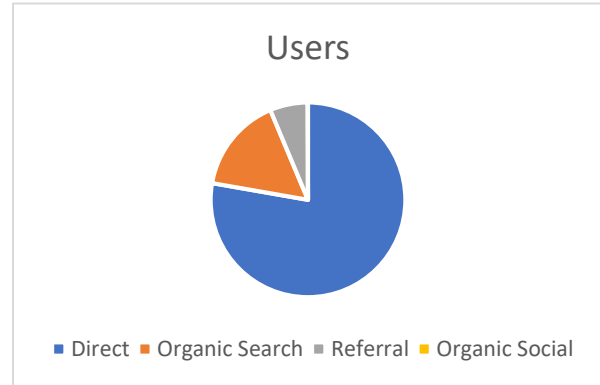
Website

Reporting: January 1st, 2025 – December 31st, 2025

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Technology Park

Retention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1K New Users ↓8%Δ 65 Returning ↓11%Δ
User acquisition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,660 Direct ↑70%Δ 340 Organic Search ↑89%Δ 134 Referral ↓87%Δ 1 Organic Social ↓66%Δ
Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1m34s seconds ↓56% Δ 12,556 page views ↓54% Δ 30 form submissions ↑25%Δ



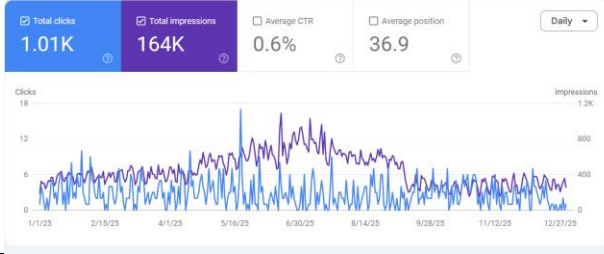
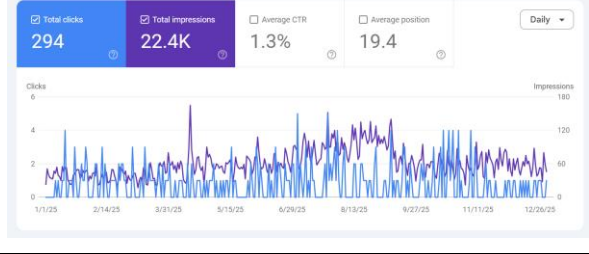
Technology Park Top Pages & Posts	
Home	10,921
About	272
Contact	173
Advisory Panel	130
Elizabeth Thelen	116
Site Selection	102

Direct and organic search has increased, while referral and organic social decreased. The large drop in referral traffic was due to leadsgo.io (not quality traffic). It artificially inflated traffic in 2024 and was not present 2025

Google Search Console

Reporting: January 1st, 2025 – December 31st, 2025

Comparison Period: January 1st, 2024 – December 31st, 2024

Innovation Center	Technology Park
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 164K Impressions $\uparrow 137\% \Delta$ 1.01K Clicks $\downarrow 30\% \Delta$ 0.6% Average CTR $\downarrow 50\% \Delta$ 36.9 average position $\downarrow 64\% \Delta$ <p>Most clicked queries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whitewater Innovation Center Whitewater university innovation center Innovation center Elizabeth thelen Ibuttonlink 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22.4K Impressions $\uparrow 49\% \Delta$ 294 Clicks $\uparrow 75\% \Delta$ 1.3% Average CTR $\uparrow 160\% \Delta$ 19.4 average position $\uparrow 11\% \Delta$ <p>Most clicked queries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taylor zeinert Elizabeth thelen University technology park Mason becker watertown wi

Google Business

Reporting: January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

Measure	2025
Number of people that viewed your Business Profile on Google Search using Mobile	2103
Number of people that viewed your Business Profile on Google Search using Desktop	1400
Number of people that viewed your Business Profile on Google Maps using Mobile	714
Number of people that viewed your Business Profile on Google Maps using Desktop	528
Number of interactions with the call button from your Business Profile	12
Number of requests for directions made from your Business Profile	762
Number of interactions with the website button from your Business Profile	116

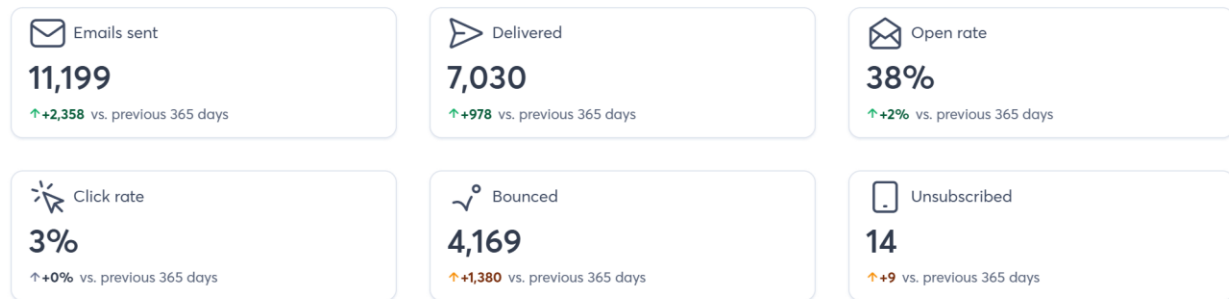
Email Marketing

Reporting: January 1st, 2025 – December 31st, 2025

Comparison Period: January 1st, 2024 – December 31st, 2024

Overall Account Performance

In 2025, our email subscriber list grew, our open rate increased, and click rate remained constant.



Whitewater University Innovation Center

Website visitors continue to opt-in to the Whitewater University Innovation Report. The Whitewater Innovation Report features client anniversaries, news & updates, events, and Startup Success blog articles. Interested parties can subscribe through the website. The newsletter is sent the second Tuesday of every month at 11:00 am.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
# New Subscribers	27	23	29	38	56	24	202
# of Subscribers	793	793	816	830	727	746	934
Unsubscribe	10	8	11	12	12	5	14
Deleted Contacts	0	0	0	144	0	0	0
Sends	9,455	9,591	9,697	9,983	8,946	8,841	11,199
Opens	1,929	1,888	1,642	2,245	2,472	2,166	2,686
Clicks	299	273	229	260	221	180	211
Overall open rate	28%	27%	25%	35%	38%	36%	38%
Overall click rate	16%	15%	14%	12%	9%	3%	3%

**Towards the end of 2022, the University deactivated all Warhawk for life emails.

Social Media Marketing

Reporting: January 1st, 2025 – December 31st, 2025

Comparison Period: January 1st, 2024 – December 31st, 2024

LinkedIn

As a professional network, LinkedIn is the most valuable and is prioritized. Year over year, the following and engagement continues to improve.

Innovation Center	Technology Park
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 276 followers ↑ 14%Δ 33 new followers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 57 followers ↑42%Δ 17 new followers ↑143%Δ
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12,245 impressions ↑24%Δ 442 reactions ↑11%Δ 28 comments ↑55%Δ 4 reposts --- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5,005 impressions ↑211%Δ 232 reactions ↑307%Δ 1 comments ↓50% Δ 0 shares ---

Facebook

As a relational social platform, the audience consists of clients, affiliates, and others in the Whitewater community. Client news and accomplishments resonate well.

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Page Likes	374	446	----	----
Followers	428	477	491	540
Reach	2,771	2,141	2,971	----
Views				6.9K
Content Interactions	178	190	142	63
Link Clicks	57	43	----	26
Visits	----	----	397	639

Twitter

As a micro-blogging platform, the audience is broader and reaches others in our entrepreneurial ecosystem as well as clients and affiliates. Resources, competitions and awards, funding opportunities, and client shout-outs resonate well. Twitter has been de-emphasized as it was primarily used for events.

2025 Semi-Annual Digital Marketing Report

CREATED FOR THE WHITEWATER UNIVERSITY INNOVATION CENTER & TECHNOLOGY PARK

**Purpose:**

Designed and built to meet business expansion and relocation needs, the Technology Park features over 130-acres, with 35-acres of shovel-ready "Certified in Wisconsin" sites.

Audience:

- Site selectors
- Developers

Unique Benefits:

- Below-average cost for utilities
- One of the lowest tax rates in WI

**Commonalities:**

- Leadership
- Visual Identity

Shared Benefits:

- Geographic advantages
- Economic resources
- University relationships
- Highly educated workforce
- Quality of life
- Below-average cost for labor



WHITEWATER UNIVERSITY
INNOVATION CENTER

Purpose:

The Whitewater University Innovation Center is a mixed-use incubator and serves as a community for entrepreneurs.

Audience:

- Entrepreneurs & startups
- Resource seekers

Unique Benefits

- Entrepreneurial assistance
- Entrepreneurial network & referrals
- Preparation to raise capital

MARKETING EFFORTS



- [Website: https://whitwatertechpark.org/](https://whitwatertechpark.org/)
- Blog
- LinkedIn Page
- Graphic Design of Flyers & Promo Materials



- <https://whitewateruniversityinnovationcenter.org/>
- App Space Channel
- LinkedIn Page
- Meetup Group
- Graphic Design of Flyers & Promo Materials
- Startup Success Blog
- Facebook Page
- Twitter Page

Innovation Center Annual Review

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

OBJECTIVES

- Raise awareness
- Build a following
- Foster loyalty
- Generate leads.

Channel	Objective	Evaluation
Website	Create Awareness	20% of traffic came through organic search
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Technology Park Annual Review

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

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Website Engagement & Retention

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025



Technology Park Top Pages & Posts

Home	10,921
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Retention

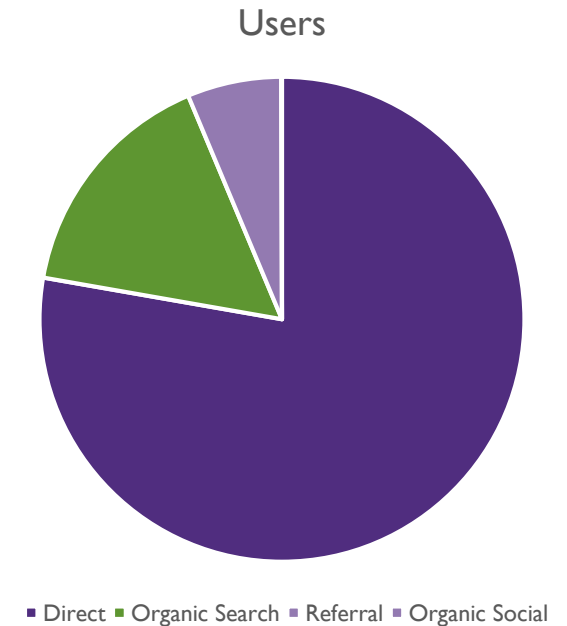
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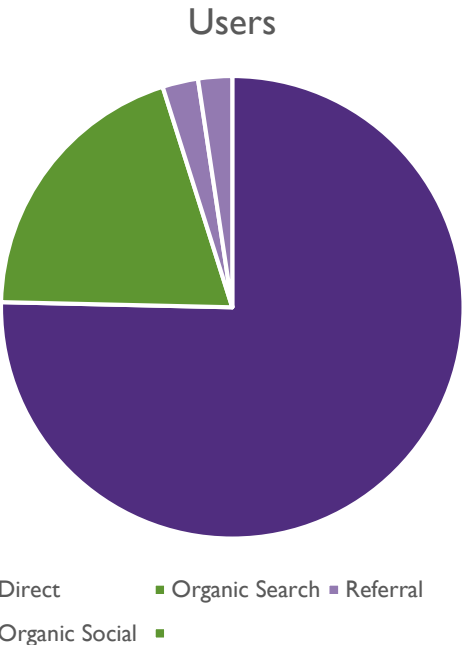
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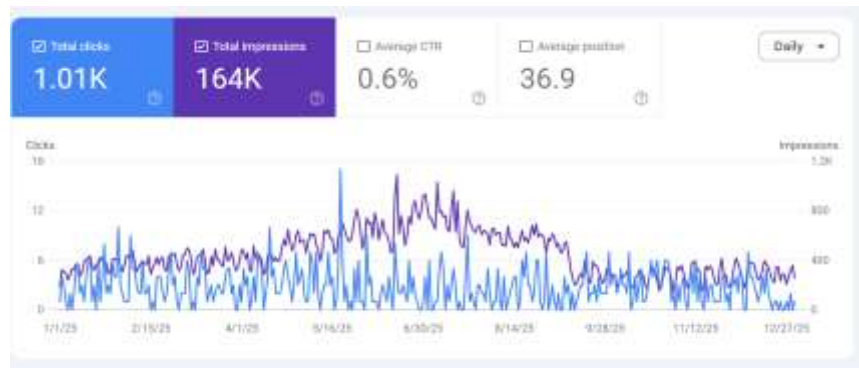
Engagement

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- 27 contact form submissions $\downarrow 6\% \Delta$



Search Engine Optimization

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

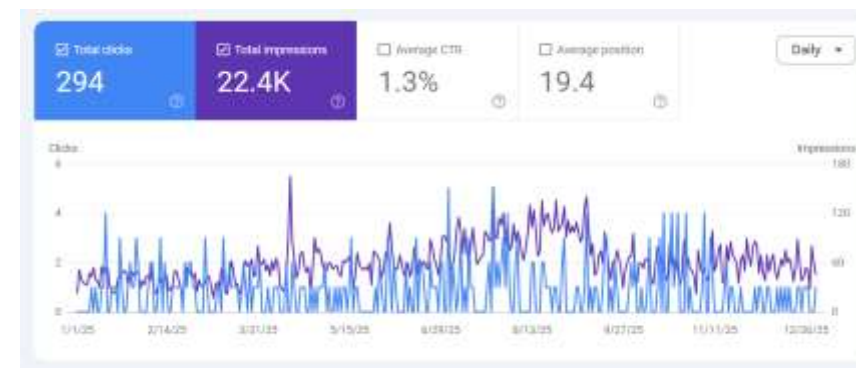


Innovation Center

- 164K Impressions $\uparrow 137\% \Delta$
- 1.01K Clicks $\downarrow 30\% \Delta$

Most clicked queries

- Whitewater Innovation Center
- Whitewater university innovation center
- iButtonlink
- Elizabeth Thelen
- Sources of income in business



Technology Park

- 22.4K Impressions $\uparrow 49\% \Delta$
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Social Media

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

Facebook

Innovation Center
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 540 followers• 6.9K Reach
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 63 content interactions• 26 link clicks

LinkedIn

Innovation Center	Technology Park
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QUESTIONS?