

For Immediate Release  
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**ABOUT MTEC SMARTZONE**

The mission of MTEC SmartZone is to provide technology-based facilities, resources and programs to high-growth entrepreneurs and companies that increase employment, income, wealth and recognition in the U.P. communities where we serve. Our vision is having integrated economic development of the region that includes a vibrant technology sector, driving Michigan's technological leadership and economic growth with sustainable opportunities for companies and their employees to prosper. More information is available at [www.mttecz.com](http://www.mttecz.com)

**ABOUT THE MEDC**

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) is the State of Michigan's one-stop resource for businesses seeking to grow in Michigan. Whether it's an expansion, a relocation, or even a concern with another agency of state government, the MEDC can help. From site location assistance to job training grants, from help with permits to tax abatements, we're the state's economic development corporation. More information is available at [www.themedc.org](http://www.themedc.org).

*SmartZone is a service mark of Michigan Economic Development Corporation.*

## MTEC SmartZone Entrepreneur Success Story

### Talon Research Creates Jobs, Develops New Technology

Hancock, MI – Twenty-four entrepreneurs have entered MTEC SmartZone Business Accelerator. Of those companies, eight have graduated and the rest continue to grow. Talon Research is one incredible example of MTEC SmartZone's entrepreneurial successes that is happening right now.

Talon Research specializes in computer-aided design (CAD) for clients in the medical, security, military, industrial, construction and environmental sectors along with developing their own line of infrared "BridgeGuard" products. Talon works closely with clients to design, prototype, research and develop new products to help streamline engineering and manufacturing operations. Using sound design and engineering principals, they help find and solve design flaws in early phases of product development. This ensures that the final product does what it is designed to do and it can be manufactured cost effectively.

What began in a small home office 23 years ago has grown into a successful high-tech small business with national and international contracts and one patent pending. In 2008, Talon expanded operations into MTEC SmartZone with a full-time staff of three people. The decision to relocate to MTEC SmartZone was an easy choice. "Rent was affordable, they offered high-tech business support services and our offices have a great panoramic view of the Portage Canal!" Talon President Jay Ruohonen exclaims. Jay credits MTEC SmartZone Program Director, Jonathan Leinonen, with making their business transition a smooth process. "Whenever we ran into challenges or needed something, Jonathan was there with solutions," comments Jay.

Talon Research has grown into a staff of eleven full time employees, many of whom are Michigan Technological University graduates. Jay and his business partner and CEO wife, Dorothy, both Michigan Tech alums, saw the opportunity to hire bright, innovative engineering students to support systems and work on entry level design projects. Dorothy claims, "The students are great to work with! They bring a fresh perspective on things and are excited to gain this experience."



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This same business model of hiring students to perform entry level tasks is also working for companies like Ford and GE Aviation. In addition to cost savings and increased quality, these companies are able to identify talent and use it as a feeder system for future positions.

In the near future, Talon plans to hire additional staff and students to meet CAD requirements and help implement their BridgeGuard infrared bridge inspection system. BridgeGuard products are either vehicle mounted or portable infrared systems used for inspection of various concrete bridge elements. The system records and transmits infrared images to a proprietary software program that compiles the data for review by bridge maintenance personnel. Clients for BridgeGuard include state transportation departments, municipalities, engineering companies and branches of the military and federal government. With business support from MTEC SmartZone and marketing expertise from Matt Monte, president of Monte Consulting Company, Talon is pursuing new avenues for their BridgeGuard systems and infrared technology. "We fully expect that with the present introduction of our BridgeGuard products we will be adding additional employees to our staff before the end of the year," says Jay.

For Talon Research, the combination of Michigan Tech student staff and MTEC SmartZone resources and facilities enables solid business growth that meets the demands of their high-tech client base. Jay states, "As a SmartZone tenant, Talon Research has been able to utilize a multitude of resources for business development as well as having a fully functional professional office space that could only be affordable through such an organization. Our growth from 3 people only a few years ago to the 11 full time employees we have today is a direct result of having the resources, support and networking that MTEC SmartZone provides." For additional information on Talon's BridgeGuard line of products visit [www.bridgeguard.net](http://www.bridgeguard.net).

For more information about growing your business with MTEC SmartZone, contact Jonathan Leinonen at [jleinonen@mtecsz.com](mailto:jleinonen@mtecsz.com) or (906) 487-7004.

