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## **Alpine Access to bring home-based jobs to Denison**

By Jonathan Cannon

DENISON -- Coming on the heels of the announcement of Vox Packaging bringing jobs to Denison this past month, the Denison Development Alliance brought more good news to area job seekers on Tuesday.

The Alliance has entered into an incentive agreement with Alpine Access for up to 75 jobs for residents in the Denison zip code. The company is a "100 percent virtual customer care outsource company. What that means is we directly hire ... people to handle inbound customer care calls for our clients," said Alpine's Executive Director David Russell.

While DDA President Tony Kaai said the latest addition to the list of Denison employers doesn't come with a capital investment, it still means jobs.

"We don't do ginsu knives; we don't stuff envelopes; we don't sell CD's," Russell said. "Most of our clients are either financial services, travel, retail, telecommunications, companies like that."

Alpine employees, whose salaries range from \$9 to \$12 per hour and include benefits, will work on an Internet connection and a land-line telephone with a singular corporate client, providing customer service to inbound callers, according to a press release. Alpine's clients include companies such as, Sprint, IBM, Office Depot and the Internal Revenue Service, said DDA Chairman Harry Kirshman. Russell said Alpine will provide all the training to employees via its Web site -- where residents can also apply. Employees will be scheduled to work and be paid an hourly wage, whether they take one call or 25 during that hour.

Alpine Access could add as many as 200 jobs to the area over the next two years. Russell said they will be hiring all over the state, but the \$1,500 per job in the Denison zip code from the DDA will give them extra encouragement to recruit heavily in the area.

While this is the first time DDA has offered an incentive to a company with this business model, Kaai said it's a growing trend among development organizations as capital investments have dropped over the past few years and the home-based model becomes more popular.

"By adding new jobs in our community ... we are helping our residents and our local businesses have a stronger future," Kirshman said in a press release.

Russell said potential employees need a quiet workspace, a land-line phone and need to be "Internet athletes" for the jobs coming to the area.

"We're very excited to be here, very excited to be partnering with everybody and look forward to hiring as many (people) as we can," Russell said.