



GraphIQ <> YBI

Rebuilding the Rust Belt

“GraphIQ gives us everything we need in one place. It’s like having an unfair advantage. We save time, reduce cost, and help our companies go to market faster.”

— *Rory Kale, YBI*

How Youngstown Business Incubator Uses GraphIQ to Fuel a Data-Driven Comeback

In the shadow of Ohio’s long-shuttered steel mills, a quiet transformation is underway. Once devastated by industrial decline, the city of Youngstown is proving that economic revival doesn’t require a return to the past—it just needs a smarter way forward.

At the heart of this reinvention is the YBI. A nonprofit, bespoke, tech incubator that helps startups on a local, regional, national, and international scale, YBI helps hardware and advanced manufacturing startups scale with grants, mentorship, and access to world-class facilities. In a region long challenged by brain drain and plant closures, YBI has become a lifeline for high-tech entrepreneurship.

Meet Rory Kale

Rory Kale is a Program Manager, Evolve Technology Program at the YBI, where he helps startups scale through data-driven strategy and grant support. He played a key role in integrating GraphIQ to streamline research within the organization, which in turn helped to secure \$28M+ in funding, and attract global innovators to Northeast Ohio. With a background in marketing and a passion for regional growth, Rory supports YBI's mission to turn Youngstown into a thriving hub for smart manufacturing and tech innovation.



Rory Kale

Program Manager, Evolve Technology Program,
YBI

"We had great companies. What we didn't have was an easy way to find their markets."

Challenge

For YBI to compete for funding, win national grants, and support growing companies, they needed intelligence—fast, flexible, and fact-checked. That changed with GraphIQ.ai.

Solution

GraphIQ gave YBI instant access to the world's largest business knowledge graph—trillions of facts, updated in real-time, all mapped into connected dossiers. Now, YBI could:

- Search 280M+ organizations, with revenue, capabilities, suppliers, and tech stacks
- Explore 940M+ professionals, with accurate contacts and employment history
- Monitor 740M+ news articles, linked to the companies and people involved
- Use Lookalike Search to find companies like their best customers
- Export data and contacts—unlimited and on demand

YBI integrated GraphIQ into its advisory workflow. It powered market validation, grant proposals, strategic recruiting, and member prospecting—replacing expensive consultants and weeks of manual research.

The Innovation Hub: Where Data Became Dollars

In 2024, YBI applied for federal designation as a Defense Innovation Hub—a competitive \$28 million grant focused on scaling aerospace and defense manufacturing. At the center of the bid was the Vindicator 2 building, a 110,000 sq. ft. facility being redeveloped for large-format additive manufacturing and advanced R&D.

To win, YBI had to prove the region had the industrial DNA—but lacked the capacity to scale. They had to show national relevance, local commitment, and high-potential return on investment.

They used GraphIQ to do it.

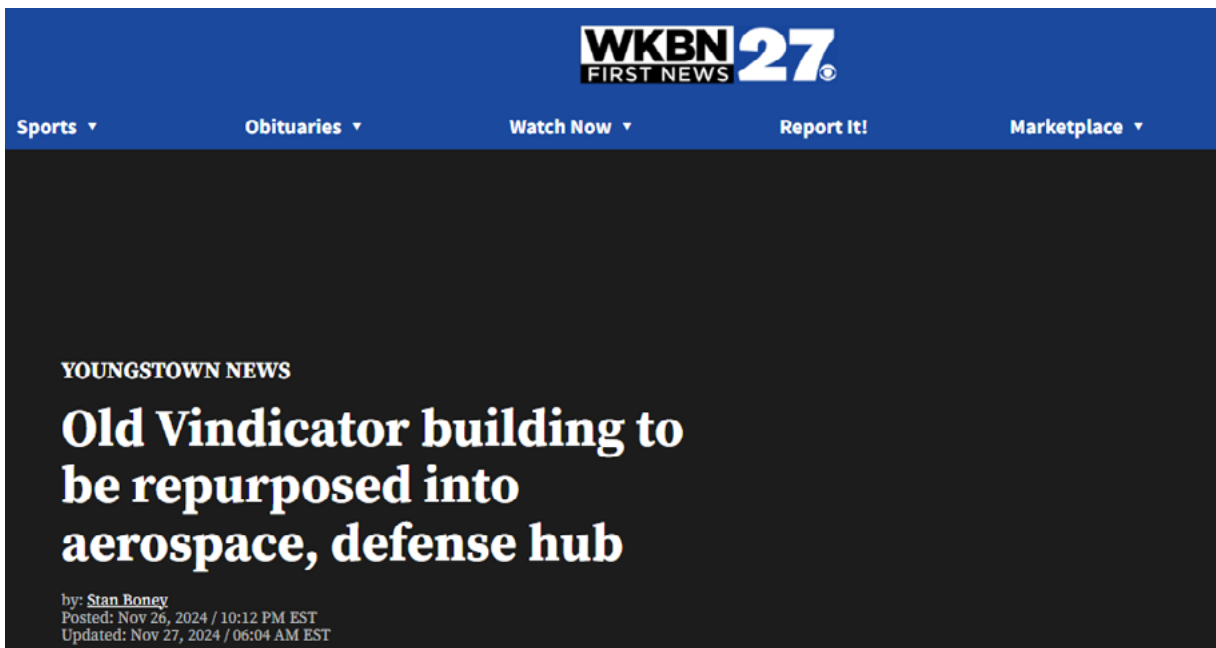
GraphIQ let them map every major defense and aerospace manufacturer in the region—filtering by NAICS code, certifications, and location. They visualized workforce gaps, outlined supplier relationships, and documented unmet infrastructure needs.

“We used GraphIQ to prove there was demand we couldn’t meet. We validated the problem—and made a national case for funding.”

— Barb Ewing, CEO, YBI

The Result:

Funding secured. Vindicator 2 is now under construction, and projected to create 200+ new jobs, deliver \$80M+ in economic impact, and become the anchor for YBI’s growing innovation ecosystem.



The image is a screenshot of a news article from WKBN 27. The top of the page features the station's logo, "WKBN 27 FIRST NEWS", and a navigation bar with links for "Sports", "Obituaries", "Watch Now", "Report It!", and "Marketplace". The main content area has a dark background with the text "YOUNGSTOWN NEWS" in white. Below this, the headline reads "Old Vindicator building to be repurposed into aerospace, defense hub" in a large, bold, white font. At the bottom left, there is a byline: "by: Stan Boney", followed by "Posted: Nov 26, 2024 / 10:12 PM EST" and "Updated: Nov 27, 2024 / 06:04 AM EST".

Impact That Ripples

Today, GraphIQ powers research for 30+ companies in YBI's portfolio, plus partner organizations across Ohio. It's become a key part of YBI's unique model: blending grassroots startup support with top-tier business intelligence.

That impact now extends far beyond city limits.

Through YBI's International YBI (IYBI) program, startups from Israel, Slovenia, and other countries have landed in Youngstown—drawn by low costs, strong infrastructure, and data-backed support. For these companies, entering the U.S. market used to require months of scouting and strategy. Now, with GraphIQ, YBI helps them identify target customers, scout competitors, and validate U.S. demand before ever arriving.

"We're helping companies grow and stay in the region. GraphIQ helps us prove our value every day."

— Rory Kale, YBI

A Model for Smart Economic Development

GraphIQ is helping support Youngstown's transformation from a legacy steel town into a forward-facing center for smart manufacturing—and made sure data, not just hope, drives that future.

It's not just about saving time or streamlining research. It's about building a durable economic engine that attracts capital, retains talent, and welcomes global opportunity. And that's exactly what YBI—and GraphIQ—are doing, together.

Technology Stack Highlights

280M

Companies

980M

People

700M

News Articles

About GraphIQ:

GraphIQ is a real-time business intelligence platform built on a dynamic, AI-powered knowledge graph that connects millions of companies, people, news articles, and events. Enterprises, public sector agencies, and analysts rely on GraphIQ to power their decision-making with context-rich data.

Learn more at: <https://graphiq.ai>