



SHARING EFFORTS, SPREADING RESULTS: Coordinating North Carolina's Economic Development Marketing Activities

North Carolina's success in job creation and industrial recruitment has been fueled by a coordinated system of regional and statewide marketing activities and programs. The state's unique economic development architecture ensures the quality, flexibility and efficiency needed to showcase the state's eclectic array of urban and rural communities from the Eastern coastal plains through the Piedmont heartland and into the Western North Carolina mountains. The system also is ideal for custom tailoring economic development outreach to the diverse variety of lucrative industrial targets that exist in today's economy—from modern agribusiness, marine trades, defense-related industries and value-added tourism to biopharmaceuticals, advanced textiles, automotive components, financial services and distribution centers. Marketing activities overseen by the North Carolina Department of Commerce (NCDOC) and the state's seven regional economic development commissions and partnerships ensure that smaller, less wealthy rural communities can be visible in the arena of global business.

Moving North Carolina's marketing message in front of the corporate decision-makers, site consultants and industrial real estate professionals requires a mix of public and private resources. NCDOC leverages state personnel and funds, while raising private financial contributions and tapping existing business leadership through its Friends of North Carolina adjunct, a 501(c)(6) organization. The seven regional development partnerships enjoy financial assistance from the North Carolina General Assembly, and also harness other funding sources such as the federal government, philanthropic organizations, county government, corporate foundations and private allies. Local economic development agencies, community colleges, and public and private universities also collaborate in promoting North Carolina as a destination for corporate investment, lending additional intellectual resources, experience and leadership to the process.

Providing cohesion, continuity and synergy to North Carolina's myriad marketing efforts is the state's Marketing Council, which consists of chief marketing officers from the NC DOC and the seven regional partnerships. Bi-monthly meetings of the Marketing Council surface opportunities for tactical collaboration and coordination of regional and statewide promotional and outreach efforts. At the strategic level, the Secretary of Commerce and other DOC executives meet with regional partnership chairmen and presidents at quarterly meetings of the North Carolina Partnership for Economic Development (NCPED). Monthly meetings between regional partnership presidents and Commerce Business & Industry staff provide additional strategic and tactical coordination.



Outside of NCPED, state and regional economic development leaders, along with counterparts at the county and allied level, share ideas and information through a variety of other institutional venues. Most participate in professional organizations such as the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), the Southern Economic Development Council (SEDC), the North Carolina Economic Developers Association (NCEDA) and the N.C. Chamber, all of which offer conferences, seminars and networking events. Regular meetings of the N.C. Economic Development Board (which includes Advantage West President Dale Carroll, RTRP President Charles Hayes and Commerce Secretary Jim Fain) also offer opportunities for formal and informal exchanges regarding marketing strategies and tactics.

Through a coordinated menu of programs and activities, North Carolina reaches out to industry leaders, site-selection consultants and corporate real estate professionals in an assertive effort to highlight the state's readiness for modern industry. Meeting regularly, the state's Marketing Council, comprised of marketing directors of the N.C. Department of Commerce and the seven regional economic development partnerships and commissions, ensures the state's global business recruitment operates with maximum efficiency, effectiveness and focus.

Participation at national and international industry trade shows is a central feature of North Carolina's business outreach. State and regional marketing officials, joined by county-level developers, private allies and academic partners (e.g., utilities, banks, university extension) travel to key business gatherings in order to engage high-level decision-makers about how North Carolina fits into corporate expansion plans. Complementing an eclectic array of unilateral activities are overlapping opportunities for Marketing Council members to take part in collaborative efforts.

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Helping the World Find North Carolina: Economic Development Marketing Activities, 2007-08

These entities, activities and programs ensure every North Carolina community is able to showcase its assets and amenities in today's global marketplace. In the current fiscal year, economic development agencies in the state engaged in the following activities, among many others:

- In July, a delegation of local, regional and allied economic developers from North Carolina's Southeast Region staffed a booth at the Association of Woodworking & Furnishings Suppliers (AWFS) three-day trade show in Las Vegas as part of the Southeast Commission's strategic focus on the region's building-products cluster.
- In October, officials of North Carolina's Northeast Commission traveled to Atlanta to attend the annual conference of the National Business Aviation Association in order to highlight the Northeast Region's excellent aviation facilities and related industry assets.
- With marine trades accounting for considerable jobs and business growth across the state, a number of marketing agencies sent representatives to the International Boatbuilding Expo (IBEX) in October 2007. The Miami trade show is the industry's premier annual event. Present were county, regional, state and allied developers attending on behalf of North Carolina's Southeast; North Carolina's Industrial Crescent, a multi-county marketing venture sponsored by Advantage West; and "NCWaterways," an SBTDC-organized partnership comprised of the Department of Commerce, Duke Energy, Progress Energy, ElectriCities and the state's Electric Membership Cooperatives. North Carolina's Northeast Commission attended the Fort Lauderdale Boat Show also held during October.
- Close industrial, financial and commercial ties between North Carolina and Japan have spurred active participation by economic development leaders in the Japan-U.S. Southeast Association ("SEUS"), a 27-year-old transnational organization linking business and economic policy officials in Japan with counterparts in North Carolina and other southeastern U.S. states. In October, Commerce Secretary Jim Fain led a delegation to SEUS 2007 in Tokyo that included marketing representatives from Commerce, Charlotte Regional Partnership, Piedmont Triad Partnership, North Carolina's Eastern Region and Research Triangle Regional



Partnership. The Marketing Council is participating in planning and coordination of SEUS 2008, which will be hosted by the state in Raleigh next October.

- Commerce and partnership representatives regularly collaborate in outreach missions outside the U.S. In the current fiscal year, state and regional marketing personnel are meeting—either jointly or individually—with investors, consultants, public officials and business leaders in China, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Poland, Canada, Denmark and the Netherlands.
- Site selection consultants are increasingly central to corporate relocation and expansion decisions. State and regional economic developers make individual and coordinated appearances to the consulting community. In August, representatives from Commerce and three regional partnerships made presentations before an annual gathering in Atlanta sponsored by Site Selection magazine. Similar events take place periodically in New York City, Chicago, Dallas, Greenville-Spartanburg and elsewhere.
- Regional and state marketing personnel maintain close contact with top industrial and commercial real estate brokerages. North Carolina’s Southeast Commission organizes regular promotional events with leading brokers in the state. The Charlotte Regional Partnership actively participates in events at CORENET Global, the world’s largest association of business real estate professionals.
- Several regional partnerships, along with their utility, banking and legal allies, participate in Friends of North Carolina and its promotional events.
- In June 2008, 31 sponsoring organizations from across North Carolina—including Research Triangle Regional Partnership, North Carolina’s Eastern Region, the Piedmont Triad Partnership and North Carolina’s Northeast Commission—will join the N.C. Department of Commerce in representing the state at the BIO International Convention (“BIO2008”) in San Diego, Cal. Included in the three-day event, the biotechnology industry’s largest global gathering, will be a North Carolina “CEO Reception” for 300 biotech executives from around the world. Also representing the state at its newly redesigned 1,600-sq.-ft. Pavilion will be the North Carolina Biotechnology Center, the University of North Carolina System and the new Biofuels Center of North Carolina, among other organizations and biotech companies.