

Attracting Site Selectors

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WHAT MAKE-OR-BREAK QUALITIES SHOULD YOU BE FOCUSED ON IN ORDER TO MAKE YOUR COMMUNITY AS APPEALING AS POSSIBLE TO YOUR TARGET INDUSTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS?

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this issue:

Understanding the Site Selector Process

Your Messaging

Clarity and Accuracy in Messaging

Attracting Site Selectors: A Guide for Economic Development Organizations

As an economic development organization, your ultimate goal is to attract organizations and industries to your region. You strive to foster growth and economic strength within the area. In order to do that, you must convince site selectors that your area is the best possible location for their business. How do you go about doing that?

Numerous factors play into attracting site selectors and then convincing them that your community is the right place for their business to call home. However, the single most important step is to create a robust, modern website (read as: interactive, responsive design) filled with accurate, easily-accessible information in a user-friendly, intuitive layout. Your website must do more than just look great, or provide minimal access to necessary information. Visitors must be able to access the information they're interested in within three clicks of the mouse. Otherwise, they're going to click out in short order.

Understanding the Site Selector Process

Site selectors have their work cut out for them. Many different areas are trying to attract their notice, but selectors are bound by time, resources, and similar factors. This means that they must follow a process

of elimination when choosing between different communities.

To truly understand the process, you need to know a bit more about how site selectors usually work. In most instances, the selector is a consultant hired by a client company in order to help them find a new location. Selectors are not given free rein, nor is the situation a blank slate. A client business provides the selector they hire with a checklist of requirements and nice-to-have items that will drive the consultant's selection decisions.

How your community measures up to the items on that checklist determine how far into the site selection process you make it. In many cases, you never even know that your community was in the running – particularly if you don't make it far enough down the list for a site selector to actually pay an in-person visit.

What factors do site selectors take into consideration when vetting communities? What make-or-break qualities should you be focused on in order to make your community as appealing as

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Flor Group is a team of seasoned experts focused on one thing:
Building & Growing Profitable Businesses & Organizations.



What types of businesses and industries are ideally suited for your region?

We ensure that you're providing site selectors and business decision makers with the information they require.

possible to your target industries and organizations? Actually, there is no single answer here. The reason for that is different industries and even different organizations within the same industry, can have dramatically different requirements. However, there are some commonalities that can be found. Addressing these can help ensure that you make it farther into the site selection process and that you present as appealing a picture as possible to site selectors. Some of the most critical factors include:

- Available skilled labor
- Labor costs
- Worker qualifications
- Quality of life in the region
- Existing and planned infrastructure
- Technology available (including telecommunications)
- Transportation systems
- Related industries in the region
- Infrastructure
- Regional resources (natural and artificial)

However, in order to really entice site selectors to visit your region, you need to ensure that your messaging is on point. Your website plays a central role here.

"You need to ensure that your messaging is on point."

Your Messaging

Perhaps the single most important thing to understand in regard to attracting site selectors is that you need to stand out. You cannot afford to sound like every other economic development organization out there. Make your messaging clear and unambiguous – come right out and tell site selectors and business decision makers what it is that makes your community unique and perfectly suited to their requirements and desires.

An essential part of clear messaging is having a firm understanding of what types of businesses and industries are ideally suited for your region. No area is a good fit for all and sundry – define your region's

advantages and strengths and then determine what industries would benefit. Expand your study to related verticals – industries that thrive in the presence of your core target, and include them, as well.

The point is this – if your messaging is generic, there is nothing to set you apart from the countless other communities vying for site selectors' attention. You can't afford to be generic and forgettable.

Clarity and Accuracy in Messaging: Telling Site Selectors What They Need to Know

In order to ensure that you're providing site selectors and business decision makers with the information they require, you'll need to ensure that your messaging is clear and accurate. How do you do that? There are several things you should do.

First, conduct a website audit to determine where problem areas lie. All websites have strong areas and weaknesses, and it's important that you have an accurate idea of how

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your website ranks. An audit will show you what areas are rock solid, and which areas need some work in order to better attract your target audience. Initially, you'll receive a detailed report that discusses what your website is doing right, and what it's doing wrong, as well as what is yet not known. After the audit, a consultation provides you with vital information and direction on what to improve and how to do it.

Second, you need to make sure that your website clearly highlights your area's unique selling proposition, or USP. This is actually essential to fixing your website, and you cannot take any steps toward rectifying the problems until you know what your USP is. What does this mean, though?

Simply put, your USP defines how you fit in the marketplace, and how you stand out from other municipalities and regions trying to attract site selectors. It's what makes your community unique, and why your region is the best home for the

for the industries and organizations you're targeting. It means going beyond the clichéd "great place to live and work" and drilling down into what attributes, resources, and qualities really attract your target audience.

Come right out and explain to your audience why your community is the best fit for them. Let them know the specifics. Go beyond "you'll love it here".

Finally, be human. Your website cannot afford to be cold, clinical, or detached. It must connect with your audience on an intrinsic level. It's about more than just serving up information. You're not a machine. Your region isn't built on pure data. It is vital that you find a way to make your audience see themselves within your community. Site selectors and business decision makers need to look at your website and say, "Hey, this area is a great location because they've got X, Y, and Z. Those are our most crucial requirements!" Determining

what businesses do well in your environment will help you dig into this and maximize the human impact of your messaging.

In Conclusion

Ultimately, attracting site selectors is all about building the right website, ensuring that it is information rich, and making certain that your messaging is on point. You must stand out from the crowd and break away from generalness. Specificity in your language and audience targeting is essential.

As a parting thought, make sure that your audience knows you are with them for the long term. Highlight local programs that deliver ongoing support and benefits that go well beyond the norm. Show how your economic development office will support businesses and organizations over time, and you'll create a win-win for everyone involved.

EYES ON YOUR WEBSITE

FLOR Group will show you what areas of your website are rock solid, and which areas need some work in order to better attract your target audience.

YOUR USP DEFINES HOW
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OTHER MUNICIPALITIES
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ATTRACT SITE
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We work with you to gain a solid understanding of your organization's goals and determine how your website can be developed to help you achieve those goals.

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