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December 2007

## Economic Development Newsletter

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#### As I See It

*An Important New Partnership: The Shift in the Role of Economic Development Professionals*

By Bob Ady



There are a number of site selection trends that will have an impact on the way your community attracts and retains business in 2008, but the one I see as most important is the evolving relationship between the economic development professional and the site seeker. It is not one that typically shows up in a strategic plan or one that is part of an employee profile. But it will be

critical.

Traditionally the relationship between the site seeker and the community economic development professional has been one of mutual necessity. Site seekers brought qualified prospects, repeat business, and minimal marketing expense. The E.D. professional brought community information, contacts, and continuity to the equation. Although this is still critical to the relationship, a new dimension will be added to both sides of the equation - that of partner.

What has changed in recent years is that the role of E.D. professionals as a primary source of site location data has been supplanted by that of the web. Recent surveys show that virtually all consultant site searches start with gathering information on the web. This includes both published data sources as well as the community web site. Sure, there are still questionnaires, but these are used during the later stages of the screening process.

This change doesn't diminish the role of the E.D. professional

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but rather shifts it to a different level. The new level creates a more personal relationship between the two groups - best characterized as a partnership. Instead of simply a data gatherer, the E.D. professional is becoming a teammate and trusted confidant.

Driving this new relationship of mutual interdependence is a number of factors. Key is the increased professionalism of both parties to the site location process. Data from both sides can be trusted and jointly utilized, communications can flow freely during a project, and consensus can be achieved on delicate issues. This is critical because of shrinking project time frames and the corporate need for risk minimization. Both parties must work ever more closely together to accommodate these corporate mandates. To do otherwise will result in the community being eliminated and the consultant missing the time line.

As this new partnership evolves, personal relationships between the economic development professional and the consultant will become ever more important. Such words as trust, cooperation, communication, and dedication will be the watchwords on both sides. This new relationship will become a major trend in 2008 and beyond. Recognizing this important shift will give you an advantage going into the New Year.

## **Ady International Webinars**

### **Webinar: Trends in Site Selection - 2008**

Thursday, January 17, 10:00am CST

Learn what site selection trends will have the biggest impact on the way your community attracts and retains businesses in 2008. Based on an informal consultant's survey, get answers to the following questions:

- What will be the level of new facility location activity?
- What sectors will be hot? Which sectors will not?
- What new trends will have a major impact on your operation?

Learn what steps your community can take to not only survive, but to thrive in the evolving world of economic development.

Bob Ady, President of Ady International Company has located more facilities in the U.S. than any other individual, and brings years of site selection expertise to the table.

Don't miss this lively session led by an expert in his field as

we explore the trends for 2008 in site selection.

This 60 minute webinar will include a presentation, question and answer session and a copy of the presentation content downloadable in a PDF format after completing a brief anonymous post webinar survey.

Price: \$150.00

**[Register now, seats are limited.](#)**



## 2008 Webinar Schedule

**The Site Selection Process** *February 26, 10:00 CST* The site selection process is one of elimination - a very simple premise, but one fraught with potential missteps all along the way. Let Bob Ady guide you through the process from a site selector's point of view. For each step in the process, Bob will cover its implications for the E.D. professional. This session will enlighten even the most experienced E.D. professional.

**Incentives: Their Use and Misuse** *April 15, 10:00 CST* With incentives expected to continue to play a key role in business attraction and retention, it is critical for all economic development professionals to have a complete understanding of the incentive negotiation process from the viewpoint of "the other side of the table". This presentation will include a discussion of which incentives are currently "hot" and which ones are not, the role of clawbacks, and how to evaluate the impact of incentives on the community balance sheet - both their financial and psychological effects.

**Website Audit** *June 17, 10:00 CST* The first portal to your community is your web site. It must contain relevant information for site seekers and be simple and easy to use. Find out how to best structure your web site to ensure that your community is not eliminated during the first screen. Discussion will provide practical advice on content, navigation and design. You don't have to be a website guru to learn from this discussion.

**Marketing to Site Selectors** *August 12, 10:00 CST* Site selection consultants lead the majority of site selection projects today. How can a community best communicate to and build relationships with these expert intermediaries? Bob Ady, the individual who has located more facilities in the US than any other individual, will share with you the inside story of how a site selector thinks, what they care about, and how to reach them. Don't miss this unique opportunity to hear Bob tell it like it is - so you can make the most effective use of your marketing budget.

Price: \$150

[Register now, seats are limited.](#)

Ady International Company is the authority on site selection. Our principal, Robert M. Ady, has conducted more corporate relocations in the United States than any other individual. He brings a wealth of experience to your site selection project, as well as longstanding relationships with economic development organizations nationwide.

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