

FORWARD CHARLESTON



Targeted Economic Development and Marketing Strategy

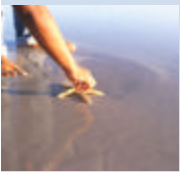
Report 2: Economic Development Strategy

Chapter 2: 5-Year Marketing Plan

April 2005

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5-Year Marketing Plan

Economic development is ultimately a marketing activity that has two functions, to improve and to promote a community. To be complete, an economic development plan should include community development recommendations as well as those for marketing to an external audience. Great economic development initiatives involve the entire community working together to improve the local “product” while the economic development organization works to improve awareness and perception of the community in the outside world.

Charleston’s marketing plan is organized around three topics: priority product improvement, internal marketing, and external marketing recommendations. The first section, product improvement, highlights five priority areas that, if improved, will greatly improve Charleston’s effectiveness in marketing. Priority product improvement recommendations include: improving K-12 education, expanding roadway infrastructure, supporting the Port, building a wet lab incubator and bioscience research park, and building stronger entrepreneurial networks. The second section, internal marketing, discusses ways to improve communication within the region and to organize a team to implement this plan. The final section, external marketing, offers strategies for promoting Charleston to its target audiences.

1. Priority Product Improvement Recommendations

5 internal improvements that will boost Charleston’s ability to market

2. Internal Marketing Recommendations

Improves regional collaboration through shared goals and messages

3. External Marketing Recommendations

Increases awareness and improves the perception of Charleston

What does Economic Development mean for Charleston?

The ultimate goal of an economic development plan is to help a community achieve long-term economic health. How economic development takes place is unique to each community. For many years, most places focused almost entirely on recruiting new employers. Recently, the focus of economic development has shifted, placing a stronger emphasis on community development activities that help local companies grow. The exact mix of emphasis on business recruitment, product improvement, local company retention, and entrepreneurship will differ among regions.

For Charleston, economic development activities should build on the region’s deep roots while offering an opportunity to progress. The industries Charleston seeks to recruit should be ones that will be attracted to the area’s core assets such as the Port, lifestyle amenities, history, colleges, and the strong mix of current employers. The region should concentrate on growing the economy while managing the physical growth of the region. Community development activities should make it easier to conduct business while preserving Charleston’s unique personality. Entrepreneurship should be emphasized more now than it ever has been.

Growth that is rooted from within could not only significantly contribute to the local economy, but also help preserve the values that are important to the region.

Economic development should also be viewed as an avenue for making it easier for Charlestonians to afford to live and work in the region. Charleston suffers from a widening gap between local wages and cost of living. A strong economic development and marketing initiative has been laid out in this plan. It focuses on strengthening Charleston's employment base through new business recruitment, expanding local companies, and supporting entrepreneurship. It contains tools that the CRDA, local chambers, and a wide range of regional organizations can use to increase the depth of job opportunities available. With a greater diversity of employment options and higher wage jobs comes the opportunity for residents to improve their skills and advance in their careers, generating new wealth for every resident of the region.

What are Charleston's marketing strengths?

Residents are extremely positive about the region's lifestyle amenities and believe that features such as the Port and area universities and colleges are strong selling points to draw companies to the area. The *Economic Scan* gives an in-depth review of Charleston's strengths and challenges. In the target industry chapter, we provide details about the region's strongest selling points for each industry. In summary:

Workforce and Education

- Higher than average concentration of young professionals
- Higher education levels, strong local universities and colleges
- Fast growing population base

Business Climate

- Low unionization rate
- Pro-business environment
- Low corporate income tax rates
- Growing R&D capabilities and increasing R&D funding

Sites and Infrastructure

- Port of Charleston
- Strong distribution and logistics cluster
- Low utility costs and high capacity
- Good broadband access

Quality of Life

- Coastal environment and pleasant climate
- World class restaurants and shopping
- Excellent health care
- Historic preservation

What is Charleston's marketing challenge?

More than 750 people participated in developing this plan. When asked to name the primary obstacle that would stand in the way of its implementation, respondents stated "inertia" more than any other variable. Many wondered if the region's history of slow, methodical change would hinder its ability to quickly implement this plan or respond to opportunity as aggressively as its competitors. Others noted that economic development has a negative connotation among some community groups, being associated with uncontrolled growth rather than with increasing opportunity for the region's residents.

Internal marketing, therefore, may be the most significant challenge standing in the way of economic development. To address the issue of inertia, Charleston's leaders will need to launch a campaign to inform the community about this plan and how they can become a part of its implementation. The CRDA should organize an implementation team structured to support this plan long-term, even if the team's structure varies from the current system. Most importantly, local leaders should regularly communicate the progress of the plan so that residents are encouraged to participate and view economic development as vital and dynamic.

What is Charleston's economic development vision?

A vision statement describes "who" Charleston will be in five years. It is the vision that should be adopted by the CRDA and other organizations related to the economic development initiative:

Charleston is a top business destination in the Southeast. It offers companies of all sizes a competitive business climate an attractive environment in which they can retain highly skilled workers. The region's approach to sustaining a vibrant economy is creative and proactive, with the entire community working together toward common goals.

This vision statement recognizes several of the region's top priorities. First, Charleston is a *destination* for targeted and high impact businesses. The CRDA's external marketing efforts will have achieved success when the region is considered by relocating and expanding companies as a highly desired business location.

Second, Charleston must focus on growing companies of *all sizes*. While recruiting large companies may provide an immediate boost to the economy, sustained expansion of small to medium-sized firms may result in a greater impact long-term. The region's highly attractive quality of life will make it easy for companies to recruit and retain talented workers, a selling point that helps Charleston stand out from many of its competitors.

Finally, in the future, Charleston's economic development efforts need to be *proactive*, aggressively moving away from the "inertia" described during the public input process. The effort must also be *creative*, not only to be competitive, but also to be reflective of the creative image of the region. The region must take the next step in organizing its economic development initiative and *adopt a system in which the CRDA assumes a strong leadership role in coordinating support from the rest of the community.*

What do you want this plan to do for the region?

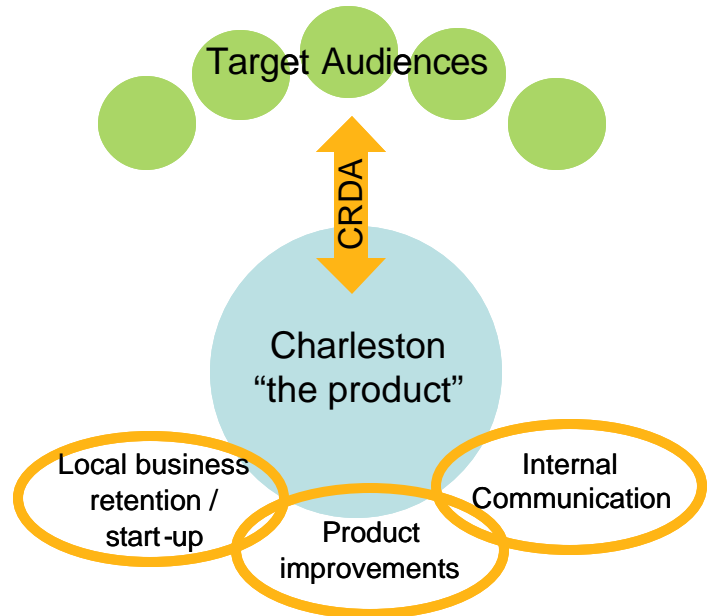
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Articulate a vision. | Lead to action. |
| Lead to greater collaboration. | Provide specific direction. |
| Tell us how to monitor our success. | Clearly define our brand. |

Source: Economic development professionals focus group

What are Charleston's economic development goals?

Goals are the milestones around which an economic development plan is crafted. We have identified the following goals for Charleston:

- **Charleston will be home to a competitive educational and workforce development system** that teaches target industry skills and offers all residents the opportunity to succeed.
- Charleston will **offer a business climate that is cost competitive for targeted industries** and supports entrepreneurship.
- **The region will plan for and manage the physical development of the region while encouraging economic growth.** Site and infrastructure improvements should make it easier to live and conduct business in the region while preserving Charleston's unique personality.
- **The community will rally around economic development and work together** to make the region an ideal destination for its target industries.
- **The CRDA will be proactive and creative in promoting Charleston** to its target industries, resulting in an increase in investment by those businesses within the region.



The priority product improvement and marketing sections of this plan contain recommendations designed to help the CRDA and other Charleston leaders in attaining these goals. All recommendations offered in this report are designed to be both (1) sustainable (creating consistent long-term economic growth in a non-damaging way) and (2) strategic (tailored and coordinated for meeting the region's long-term objectives).

1. Priority Product Improvement Recommendations

Although the CRDA is not charged with community development activities, as the region's economic development leader it should continue to be involved in setting the direction for local improvements that are made. This involvement will assure that the region is in the best condition possible to compete for target industries, talented workers, and entrepreneurs.

What words will describe Charleston 10 years from now?

Progressive	Dynamic	Growing
Cutting edge	Exciting	Innovative
International	Diverse	Beautiful
Sustainable	Well-planned	Prosperous

Source: Forward Charleston survey

Priorities

There are five priority recommendations that are key to the region's ability to succeed in economic development:

1. Charleston's **K-12 educational system** must attain higher performance to prepare its future workforce and attract knowledge-based companies to the area.
2. Charleston and State leaders must take steps to guarantee the **region's highway system has the capacity to support a growing population** and business community.
3. Charleston's leaders must take active steps to **keep the Port cost competitive**.
4. Stronger **entrepreneurial and venture capital networks** must emerge.
5. Charleston must create **wet lab incubator space** and a bioscience research park to accommodate bioscience companies.

The region needs the CRDA to take a strong leadership position. The **CRDA's most significant contribution to product improvement is to become a leading advocate of change in these five priority areas**. We strongly recommend that the CRDA become a vocal supporter of initiatives that help the region accomplish these priorities. The CRDA's board of directors and members should also leverage their influence to see that these priority projects are aggressively pursued. **These priority projects must be accomplished if Charleston is to be successful in the targeted economic development envisioned in this plan.**

Priority Product Improvement Recommendation 1: Charleston’s K-12 educational system must attain higher performance to prepare its future workforce and attract knowledge-based companies to the area.

GOAL: Charleston will be home to a competitive educational and workforce development system that teaches target industry skills and offers all residents the opportunity to succeed.

Workforce development and education should be the cornerstone for any economic development initiative. A strong pool of workers is critical to business expansion and recruitment to the region, industrial diversification, and growing the population of young professionals. Basic education should be considered the foundation of successful economic development. Those regions across the U.S. that have invested in basic education are also the most successful in growing high tech, high wage employers. **A strong educational system leads to business recruitment. The two go hand-in-hand.**

Businesses in Charleston’s target industries require the best possible K-12 educational system, workforce training, and college programs to be in place. This ensures that they will be able to retain and recruit skilled workers and executives who demand that their children receive an excellent education. It also shows them that the community is willing to invest in itself, its future, and, therefore, will support them into the future.

For Charleston to experience the greatest possible benefit, education and workforce development activities must be viewed as an integrated continuum that spans from infant care to adult education. We encourage the CRDA to communicate the workforce skill needs of the targeted business sectors to all educators. Tell them which occupations are in greatest demand by the target industries, and encourage schools to start teaching those skills early in a child’s education. Talk to students and help them visualize the types of companies that will be hiring when they graduate. Show them what skills are needed and the salaries associated with those skills.

Commit to long-term improvement in the region’s K-12 educational system.

The region’s public school system, on the whole, is under-performing. This was the top complaint about the region from people participating in our public input process. Several employers said that the school system impacts their ability to recruit people and their willingness to expand in the region. Although the K-12 situation has been addressed in past economic development strategies for the region, this plan would be remiss if it did not also address the problem. The recommendations offered here are not designed to fix the problem entirely, but are aimed at steering reform in the right direction.

- **Action: Involve public schools in economic development activities.** Make presentations to school leaders about the important role they play in the economy of the region. Give them copies of this plan and welcome questions from them.
- **Action: Engage Charleston’s business community in local schools.** The top complaint of employers and workforce developers is that graduates of local schools are not equipped with basic job skills. A primary reason behind dropouts is students’ disconnect between what they are learning in school and real world job opportunities. The business community can help by getting involved.
 - Involve businesses in **mentoring programs**, such as Junior Achievement. Expand the mentoring program using websites like www.icouldbe.com,

- sponsored by Goldman Sachs and E-Trade, which give students access to career planning tools and mentors across the country.
- **Ramp up internship programs** The region needs a single internship network that is available to both high school and college students. (See workforce development and education recommendation 4 for more information.)
 - **Educate students about career options in early grades.** Talk to them about the jobs that will be available when they graduate, the skills required, and the salary expectations.
- **Action: The region’s economic developers must become active advocates of education reform at the State level.** The performance of public schools is an issue that directly affects the ability of the State to recruit and retain companies.
 - **Action: Launch an internal marketing campaign that informs residents of the strong tie between economic development and quality education.** As a popular destination for second homeowners and empty nesters, many residents may not feel connected to the K-12 system and may not realize the importance of supporting school improvements. Start a campaign that points out how their quality of life and career opportunities connect to K-12 performance. This will increase the likelihood of passing future school bond referendums and getting the community involved in mentor and internship programs.
 - Create a PowerPoint presentation that explains the link between K-12 and the economy. A team from the CRDA, the Chamber, and the CEO Council should give the presentation to local social and service organizations.
 - The internal marketing recommendations section of this report provides examples of how this initiative can be organized.

Priority Product Improvement Recommendation 2: Charleston and State leaders must take steps to guarantee the region's highway system has the capacity to support a growing population and business community.

GOAL: The region will plan for and manage the physical development of the region while encouraging economic growth. Site and infrastructure improvements should make it easier to live and conduct business in the region while preserving Charleston's unique personality.

When companies are asked to rank the factors that most affect which region they select to locate in, workforce and education considerations are the most important, followed by access to customers and suppliers and the cost of doing business.

Transportation access, depending on the industry, is often top on the list of site selection factors. Not only does it directly impact a company's access to customers and suppliers, but it also affects a region's quality of life, and ultimately a company's ability to retain skilled workers.

Though local water and power utilities are ample and low cost, Charleston's transportation and land use issues have reached a critical point. Without improvement to the region's highway infrastructure, the value of Port will be overshadowed by the difficulty to move goods within the region. Similarly, without a regional land use plan, the value of Charleston's quality of life could be overshadowed by sprawled growth and traffic congestion.

Develop regional transportation and land use plans. All three counties must work together and adopt the plans.

A land use plan will reassure the region that future growth is directed and a high quality of life continues for all residents. Each county has a natural role to play in the region's development. Dorchester County, for example, is ideal for office buildings and to provide a place for small to medium sized businesses to flourish. Charleston County, with its historic core, is suited for service businesses, research, and entrepreneurial enterprises. Berkeley County, with its ample utility capacity and sites, can serve the region's industrial and manufacturing operations. Together, the three counties offer sites that can appeal to a wide range of businesses.

A land use plan will shape future growth patterns so that the region as a whole offers a healthy mix of business and residential sites. A transportation plan should then be developed to facilitate the land use vision.

- **Action: Ensure that the region's roadways align with its land use plan. Expand highways to facilitate the flow of forecasted commercial and residential traffic.** Expand the CHAT group within the Council of Governments to include leaders from the private sector and local interest groups. The expanded group should be charged with the responsibility of forming a regional vision for land use. Each county should buy into the regional land use plan. As the plan is being developed, also begin to study the current transportation problem. Once the land use plan is complete, agree to a transportation plan that supports smart land use decisions. **Let the land use plan determine the expansion and creation of roadways.**
- **Action: Improve the region's mass transit system to service areas with high growth. Integrate mass transit into the regional land and transportation plan.** In 2004, the region passed a ½ cent sales tax to help pay for transportation improvements.

Over the next 25 years, the sales tax will generate an estimated \$1.3 billion to be spent in major part on improvements to local roads and bridges. A small portion of this will be used to fund public transportation, such as a park and ride service and smaller buses to service residential areas. Ensure that expenditures for improvements and public transportation are connected with the goals set forth in the regional land and transportation plan.



Priority Product Improvement Recommendation 3: Charleston’s leaders must take active steps to keep the Port cost competitive.

GOAL: The region will plan for and manage the physical development of the region while encouraging economic growth. Site and infrastructure improvements should make it easier to live and conduct business in the region while preserving Charleston’s unique personality.

In September 2004, the Port Authority announced a 13% growth in the amount of cargo moved through the Port over the past year. In the past five years, \$150 million has been invested in Port improvements, including the widening and deepening of the harbor and new equipment that allows for higher stacking of cargo containers. Last year, BMW renewed a 10-year contract to use the Port’s facilities.

The Port is cited as Charleston’s number one business asset. During industry focus groups conducted for this strategy, every industry, including bioscience and software, gave compelling reasons about how the Port has impacted their decision to operate in Charleston. Although only around 20% of distribution jobs pay above average wages, the resulting jobs created because of the Port’s presence often pay much higher salaries. Therefore, **while warehousing and distribution may not be a primary industry recommended for the CRDA’s external marketing efforts, it is a local business function that must be kept competitive.**

- **Action: Become an advocate for the Port bill.** Currently being reviewed by the legislature, the proposed incentive would provide tax credits to companies that increase their cargo volume through the state’s ports by 5 percent or higher in one year. The legislation will improve Charleston’s competitiveness against Savannah, strengthen the Port, and lead to greater business activity in the region.
- **Action: Continue to work with Port officials to educate the local population of the Port’s connection to the region’s economic success.** There is some debate about whether warehousing and distribution should be one of the CRDA’s target industries. Consider warehousing and distribution as a business function rather than a stand-alone industry. The ability of the region to accommodate these operations is critical to its ability to recruit the target industries recommended in this strategy, especially aircraft, automotive, and advanced security. Make infrastructure and business climate improvements that support the Port, while marketing to those businesses that will view these investments as a competitive advantage of locating in Charleston.



Priority Product Improvement Recommendation 4: Stronger entrepreneurial and venture capital networks must emerge.

GOAL: Charleston will offer a business climate that is cost competitive for targeted industries and supports entrepreneurship.

South Carolina's overall tax burden and tax collections per capita are among the lowest in the U.S. In fact, South Carolina's state and local taxes are just 9% of personal income on average, the 43rd lowest in the U.S. Residents get to take home a larger percentage of their pay, while employers can pass along their tax savings in the form of more competitive prices, or increased wages to their workers. Despite the low overall tax burden, the state has high personal income tax rates, which may adversely impact the ability of entrepreneurs to launch new businesses that are largely initially funded by personal income.

Since 2000, nearly 300 new businesses have moved into the region, ranging in size from one to over 500 employees. And existing businesses continue to thrive. When asked in the survey about their future plans over the next two years, 40% of the 173 businesses responding expect to expand employment and nearly 60% project that they will increase real estate holdings.

Even though the region has experienced numerous economic development wins in recent years, a glance at Charleston's industry mix shows that the region is not much stronger than the national average in any one cluster (see the *Target Industry* report for Charleston's cluster chart and discussion). This may account for the region's lower than average wages. Though a selling point that could attract companies looking for a low cost environment, the region risks losing valuable workers to other regions that offer higher wage levels. Targeting specific clusters to create industry sectors that are as deep as they are diverse will generate the competition within industries that drive up wages and narrow the rising cost of living gap.


Economic development also includes not only business recruitment, but local retention and entrepreneurship as well. Capital networks are currently weak, limiting the capacity for local entrepreneurs, universities, and R&D institutions to transition business ideas into thriving small companies. Even though the CRDA is not charged with retention or entrepreneurship, it should be a strong supporter of initiatives that are, particularly those that work for retaining and supporting start-up companies within the CRDA's target industries.

Create a business climate that helps entrepreneurs launch successful new companies.

Charleston is already a great environment for freelancers and is a draw for entrepreneurial-minded people. The region, however, lacks important infrastructure for helping small businesses thrive. Charleston does not have a well-supported, established capital network. The most prominent group in town, the Charleston Angel Partners (CHAP), is well organized but, with only 30 members, only a small percentage of accredited investors in the region are participating. Also, organizations dedicated to educating entrepreneurs are not well supported.

- **Action: Inform the region about the importance of entrepreneurship.** Before start-up businesses can flourish, the community must embrace entrepreneurship's essential role in economic development. The CRDA, local chambers, and Digital Corridor need to strengthen an internal marketing effort aimed at educating the community about entrepreneurship.

- **Action: Grow and create capital networks within the region.** The region's chambers of commerce should inform members about angel networks and encourage members to participate. Host informational sessions that instruct members about the requirements to be an accredited investor, how to invest, and how to get involved with regional organizations such as CHAP.
- **Action: Boost support of organizations dedicated to educating entrepreneurs.** A top complaint of prospective investors in the region is that local start-ups lack the business plans or managerial knowledge to compete for capital. The College of Charleston's Tate Center, the FastTrac program, and the Business Accelerator (ThinkTEC) are good programs that can be expanded. Local executives can volunteer to teach FastTrac classes and become advisors in the Business Accelerator.
- **Action: The region needs a one-stop-shop for entrepreneurs.** Long-term, Charleston should have a one-stop-shop that provides a single point of contact for issues related to starting a company. Participating organizations could either co-locate in an office / incubator space or the one-stop-shop could take the form of a website. Larger companies in the region could utilize the one-stop-shop to locate start-ups from which to purchase goods and services.
- **Action: Encourage small business growth in the African American community.** Involve CDCs and local faith based organizations in hosting educational events. Morris Brown Church, for example, currently offers education programs, youth mentoring, and seniors programs. Morris Brown and other local churches could partner with CDCs to provide entrepreneurship classes.



Priority Product Improvement Recommendation 5: Charleston must create wet lab incubator space and a bioscience research park to accommodate bioscience companies.

GOAL: *Charleston will offer a business climate that is cost competitive for targeted industries and supports entrepreneurship.*

GOAL: *The region will plan for and manage the physical development of the region while encouraging economic growth. Site and infrastructure improvements should make it easier to live and conduct business in the region while preserving Charleston's unique personality.*

As a region traditionally focused on growing manufacturing and industrial companies, Charleston currently lacks some critical infrastructure that is required for R&D and entrepreneurial businesses. As a target for economic development, the bioscience industry cannot expand in Charleston without key infrastructure in place, namely, capital networks and a wet lab incubator.

Invest in sites and infrastructure that meet the needs of Charleston's target industries.

- **Action: The region needs a bioscience research park so that a cluster of high tech activity can emerge.** A research park is more than a group of office buildings. The most successful parks in the U.S. also incorporate incubator space, a shared wet lab, educational resources, and entrepreneurial assistance.
- **Action: Construct a wet lab incubator to support bioscience companies.** The incubator should become the core of a larger bioscience / high tech research park for the region. Possible locations for the park include the current SCRA campus, MUSC, or the newly renovated Baker Hospital complex.
- **Action: Amend and promote the Life Sciences Act.** This legislation is a good signal that the State of South Carolina is active in its pursuit of the biosciences industry. Unfortunately, the investment and job creation targets associated with the Act are far too aggressive for the types of biosciences companies that the State should be targeting. Even some of the largest bio-manufacturing facilities do not reach the \$100 million, 200-job creation level. More appropriately targeted incentives would include: **R&D tax incentives, escalated depreciation schedule on lab equipment, and subsidizations on wet lab lease costs.** MUSC and Charleston's economic development leaders should advocate for the State to amend and pass this legislation.
- **Action: Establish a new bioscience industry group dedicated to promoting the industry in the region.** For the biosciences to grow in Charleston, there must be a concerted effort that utilizes all of the dispersed bioscience-related assets in the region. This includes academic and federal labs, emerging private companies, and institutions of higher learning. To bring these groups together requires a visible and highly regarded leadership institution. MUSC should be that leader in Charleston. MUSC should drive the formation of the **biosciences industry group** in the region, similar to successful programs like BIOCOM in Southern California. It should also play a vocal advocacy role both at the local and state level in support of growing the biosciences cluster.

2. Internal Marketing Recommendations

GOAL: *The community will rally around economic development and work together to make the region an ideal destination for its target industries.*

Internal marketing informs citizens and business leaders of the economic development vision, persuades the region to adopt the target industries, and trains individuals to promote the region using a cohesive marketing message. Internal marketing builds local awareness and buy-in so that the entire community is a promoter of economic development. The resulting internal support considerably increases the chance of successful business recruitment.

Sharing a Regional Message

Charleston is home to numerous organizations whose own marketing influences the region's external image. Local chambers, cities, counties, convention and visitors' bureaus, sports teams, and many other organizations all have logos, tag lines, and sales messages that convey something about the community. Part of an internal marketing effort aims to coordinate the look of the region among these organizations so that a common marketing message can be reinforced.

Charleston's Many Looks:



Charleston can look to the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce’s marketing campaign as a good example of co-branding among organizations located in the same region. All collateral coming out of the 10-county Nashville economic market includes the “Nashville Music City USA” logo. Counties within the region use collateral that is identically formatted, using the message “Look to ____ County. Middle Tennessee Means Business,” but containing sales points that are unique to the county. This approach gives each county the benefit of sharing the Nashville umbrella, while touting their unique strengths. Combined, it builds strong brand recognition and shows cohesion within the region.

Internal Organization

Internal marketing begins by establishing a team to oversee the implementation of the economic development plan. **The CRDA should be the region’s leading voice of economic development, but many more local organizations will be required to make the marketing plan a success.** Within this plan, we suggest a structure for organizing a business recruitment effort that is led by the CRDA.

We also recommend a structure for conducting business retention, acting on product improvement recommendations, and launching a stronger entrepreneurship initiative.

The organizations named as leaders on these teams are the CRDA’s primary internal audience. Once the implementation teams are in place, a public campaign can begin.

Who is CRDA’s internal audience for marketing?

<u>Primary: Implementation Team</u>	<u>Secondary: Community Support</u>
Chambers of commerce	Port of Charleston
City / County economic developers	Local businesses
CEO Council	Colleges and universities
Utility company economic developers	Public school officials
Digital Corridor	Workforce developers
Young professionals	Local businesses
Target industry executives	Charleston Business Journal
	Post and Courier
	State officials
	R&D organizations
	Council of Governments
	Non-profit and service organizations

Involving Employers

The internal marketing effort places heavy emphasis on employer involvement, a need repeated throughout focus groups and interviews in the region. We recommend that the CEO Council be heavily involved in the product development aspect of marketing, working with the Chambers on business retention issues. In addition, we recommend that the CRDA establish a target industry task force for each target industry. Each task force will be comprised of ten executives from the industry. They will act as the CRDA’s sounding board, regularly meeting with the CRDA to discuss prospects, industry trends, and their retention needs.

Internal Marketing Recommendations

1. Use the roll out of this plan as a way to open communication between the CRDA and the community.

The community overwhelmingly requested that the CRDA take a more visible leadership position in internal marketing. Although other organizations may be responsible for managing the ongoing implementation of internal marketing recommendations, the CRDA should be the group to set the plan in motion, by meeting with various community groups and sharing with them the results of this plan and how they can become involved in its implementation.

- Alert all of the individuals who participated in the public input process when the plan is posted on the ForwardCharleston website.
- Set up meetings with the editorial boards of the *Post and Courier* and the *Charleston Business Journal*. During the meetings, review highlights and present them with copies of the plan.
- In the months following the completion of the plan, the CRDA should schedule presentations in all three counties with social and service organizations, business groups, and educators. CRDA presenters can use the roll out event PowerPoint presentation to highlight the findings of the plan.
- Involve the CRDA's past board chairs and current board members in presenting the plan across the community. Establish a CRDA "speakers bureau" of volunteers willing to keep the community informed on a regular basis about Alliance activities.

2. Improve communication between local organizations.

Internal marketing involves opening the lines of communication among organizations in the region that impact economic development. This process ensures that the region is well coordinated and can respond quickly to the needs of a prospect or expanding company. We recommend that Charleston's leaders focus on improving communication between three core groups: (1) the CRDA and the business community, (2) workforce developers/educators and employers, and (3) entrepreneurial networks and the general population.

- **Inform the public, particularly local employers, about the mission of the CRDA and its history of accomplishments.**
 - As discovered in project focus groups, Charleston's business community is unsure of the CRDA's role in economic development and how it differs from chambers of commerce and other organizations.
 - Local employers expressed a true desire to become more involved in economic development, but were not sure how to do it.
 - The target industry task forces recommended in this plan are designed to open communication between employers and the CRDA.
 - The CRDA has already taken an important step in accomplishing this recommendation by hiring a public relations director.
- **Systematize regular, ongoing communication between local workforce developers / educators and the business community.**
 - As recommended in the Product Improvement section of this plan, the region needs a single source, such as a website, that links high school and college students with internship opportunities.

- The internship website could be expanded to serve as the online source for information about workforce development and education in the region. (e.g. www.CharlestonWorks.com)
 - ~ Public education pages could give information about school accomplishments, and ways for local businesses to get involved in mentoring or scholarship programs.
 - ~ Workforce development pages could include information about and links to state job incentives, local providers, and customized training programs.
 - ~ Include links to local job match services and online resources.
 - ~ Post an online survey every six months to one year that asks employers to identify the job skills in greatest need.
 - ~ Widely promote the site, particularly to the region's small businesses, which currently seem to have the greatest trouble accessing the workforce development system.
 - Initiate an annual Charleston Works summit that brings workforce developers, educators, and companies together to identify workforce priorities for the upcoming year.
- **Involve workforce developers and educators in economic development.**
 - The industry task forces established by the CRDA to assist in the implementation of this plan should include one or two representatives of local educational institutions. These individuals should be experts in the industry and willing to provide market research.
 - After the release of this report, the CRDA should meet with workforce development and education leaders to present the plan and let them know how they can become involved in implementation.
 - ~ Talk to them about the skill sets demanded by target industries.
 - ~ A detailed list of occupations within each target industry is provided in the Target Industries chapter of this report.
 - ~ Inform them of employer needs that emerged during focus groups and interviews. Employers talked about several skill sets that are in high demand in the region, such as: **nurses, master-degreed engineers, welders, certified teachers, chemists, high level logistics, software engineers, people with math skills, maintenance technicians, and CNC machinists.**
 - **Launch a campaign that informs the general public about the benefits of entrepreneurship and the region's resources available to small companies, potential investors, and entrepreneurs.**
 - Charleston is, as described throughout the public input process, a community that takes change gradually. It has traditionally focused on business recruitment as its means for economic development, so the region is relatively unknowledgeable about the value of entrepreneurship.
 - Organizations such as the Digital Corridor and ThinkTEC, CHAP, SCRA, SBAs, MUSC, and the College of Charleston all have important roles to play in developing the region's entrepreneurial culture. Work to better connect these groups to form a one-stop-shop for entrepreneurs. This could be, as described in the Product Improvement section, a physical building or a website.

- Organizations such as local chambers should inform provide their members with information about becoming an accredited investor and local angel investment groups.

3. Work toward adopting a region-wide brand and marketing message.

Multiple economic development brands and messages will confuse the target audiences. One strong brand should be selected and adopted by all private and public organizations promoting the community to businesses. As discussed in the introduction to this section, the region has numerous logos and marketing messages. Although each organization in the community has invested in developing its logo, for economic development purposes, it is important that these images eventually converge into a single regional identity.

Eventually, non-economic development organizations within the community should adopt a common theme as well. Charleston's natural environment and tourist attractions are extraordinary assets. Economic development and tourism promotion, for example, should be viewed as complementary efforts that should have complementary marketing messages.

- The CRDA should enhance its own image by adopting a new logo and sharpening the colors it uses in its print and online collateral.
- Berkeley, Dorchester, and Charleston County's individual economic development efforts should adopt the logo and look of the Alliance.
- The three local chambers should also consider adapting their image to match the Alliance's.
- The external marketing recommendations offer ideas related to the development of a new logo and a marketing theme that could serve as an umbrella for the rest of the region.

4. Each quarter, identify one "hot topic" to be addressed through internal marketing.

- The CRDA and local chambers can act as a strong voice of opinion on issues that impact the region's business climate. Each quarter, the CRDA and the chambers should identify one issue to research and address through writing opinion – editorial pieces, distributing an electronic newsletter, or giving speeches on the topic to local organizations.
- Several "hot topics" emerged during the public input process for this project, including:
 - Competition from Savannah - the facts on what has occurred in the past and the business community's opinion on the situation.
 - Improving the Internal Image of the Port
 - BRAC Threat – what is likely to stay, and go, from Charleston
 - Targeting Tech – the impact of high tech activities on an economy
 - Small Business Growth – benefits of targeting entrepreneurship and resources currently available in the region for start-up companies
 - K-12 Education -- its role in economic development
 - Charleston Brags – how to become better promoters of Charleston's many economic development successes

- The Economic Development Crisis – why the community should feel an urgent need to get aggressive with economic development

5. Restructure the support structure for economic development in a way that maximizes community involvement.

Situation

July 2005 will mark the CRDA's 10-year anniversary as an organization. The timing is ideal to unveil a new approach to economic development that embraces the nature of this plan and involves the community to an unprecedented degree.

Economic development within a community includes business recruitment, retention, entrepreneurship, and product improvements. Although the CRDA is charged with only one of those activities, it needs to play the leading role in coordinating the other three. This will ultimately make the selling of Charleston much more effective. Here, we offer a structure for organization of the holistic effort.

“The CRDA should be leading the charge, the one voice of the that brings together the business community, the public sector, and educators.”
- ForwardCharleston participant

The CRDA should continue to be the organization primarily responsible for business recruitment and marketing.

The structure of the CRDA's marketing team should revolve around its target industries.

- The CRDA, counties, cities, and local power utilities all employ professional economic developers.
- The CRDA's economic development effort should revolve around its five target industries. Internally at the CRDA, project managers should be assigned to manage one or two target industries each.
- Invite other community leaders to serve on target industry teams. These teams will be charged with building the region's core of knowledge about the target industry. Participation in one target industry team does not exclude a participant from working with other target industries. This is simply a format for focusing the CRDA's marketing efforts and ensuring that the region has a group that is educated about each industry.

<i>ED Role:</i>	Business Recruitment
<i>Primary responsibility:</i>	CRDA
<i>Primary mission:</i>	External marketing
<i>Target audience:</i>	5 target industries
<i>Organization:</i>	<p>5 target industry teams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 CRDA rep 1 County rep / county 1 Chamber rep 1 Utility rep <p style="text-align: center;">PLUS</p> <p>Target Industry Task Force 8-10 execs from local target industry companies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify leads direct sales activities inform about trends </p>

- One CRDA representative may lead more than one target industry team.
- The Metro Orlando EDC's organization is a good example of how the target industry team structure can be highly effective.

Each marketing team should be assisted by a target industry task force.

- Target industry task forces will involve the business community in economic development. During industry focus groups conducted for this project, many participants expressed interest in continuing their involvement in economic development. The task force concept is one that was suggested by local industry executives.
- One target industry task force should be organized for each target industry.
- Task forces should be comprised of 8-10 executives from local target industry companies.
- Task forces may also include 1-2 academics that are subject matter experts and can support the group with research.
- Task forces should be responsible for developing action plans for implementing the target industry recommendations (see Chapter 1: Target Industries):
 - ~ Industry trends and opportunities for the region
 - ~ Information about niche sectors
 - ~ Leads on possible company expansions
 - ~ Contacts with industry leaders outside of Charleston
 - ~ Advice on how the community can better serve local businesses

The recruitment team should limit the size and scope of projects that it assists.

- Set guideposts for determining when a project is more appropriate for the entrepreneurship team or the retention team.
- Forward very small projects along to the region's entrepreneurship leaders for assistance.
- Local companies approaching the recruitment team / CRDA for information to help them expand in Charleston should be forwarded to the region's business retention team.

Local business retention should be managed by the chambers of commerce and county economic developers.

<i>ED Role:</i>	Business Retention
<i>Primary responsibility:</i>	Chamber / County ED
<i>Primary mission:</i>	Increasing local company expansion
<i>Target audience:</i>	All local companies
<i>Organization:</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">Retention team</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 Chamber rep 1 County rep / county</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PLUS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CEO Council and Low Country Manufacturers Council Regularly inform the CEO Council and LCMC about retention efforts</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PLUS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CRDA Inform local companies about CRDA's role; Involve CRDA on issues related to the 5 priority projects</p>

- The Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, the largest regional chamber with 2,700 members, should invite the Greater Summerville and Berkeley chambers and economic development representatives from each county to formulate a plan for business retention.
- All three chambers need to be actively involved in implementing the internal marketing recommendations offered in this plan. Improved internal communication will be a forceful tool for encouraging companies to expand in the region.
 - In addition to internal marketing, **all three chambers and counties must set unified goals for meeting individually with local businesses.** For example, as a group, the six organizations could commit to conducting one-to-one meetings with 500 companies per year.
 - These meetings should focus on (1) learning more about the company and its future plans, (2) determining what the company needs from local economic developers, (3) informing the company of what the community can offer them, from workforce development training to expansion incentives.
 - The business retention plan should include a formalized process for following up with the companies with whom the chambers have met.
 - This process will make business retention efforts more efficient and help the region reach out to more local companies than ever before.
- **Assign the CEO Council with the task of coordinating the implementation of product improvement recommendations.**

- The CEO Council program, developed by the chambers of commerce in each of the three counties, brings CEOs together regularly to discuss issues connected to their businesses and the community.
- Although the state, county, and municipal governments may often be the hands on implementers of product improvement recommendations, **the CEO Council should be the voice that initiates the action.**
- The Charleston Metro Chamber's Developers' Council is a good example of involving the business community in product improvement issues. The Council represents real estate developers and works with municipalities to streamline the development and permitting process. **The CEO Council can look at this initiative as a model.**

<i>ED Role:</i>	Product Improvement
<i>Primary responsibility:</i>	CEO Council
<i>Primary mission:</i>	Improve Charleston's competitive offering
<i>Target audience:</i>	WFD, Biz Climate, Sites and infrastructure, QoL
<i>Organization:</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">Product improvement team</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #c00000;">CEO Council Chambers Counties</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PLUS</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #c00000;">Young professionals</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Form a young professionals shadow board and assign the volunteers with product improvement activities</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PLUS</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #c00000;">CRDA</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Advocate for product improvement / priority recommendations that impact ability of the region to support target industries</p>

- **Utilize young professionals to implement product improvement recommendations.**

- During the public input process, we heard from many young professionals that they do not feel engaged in economic development, but would like to have a way to get involved. The more involved they are, the higher the chances of retaining them in the region.
 - The CRDA should **organize a young professionals “shadow board of directors.”** Each CRDA board member would mentor one young professional. In turn, the young professionals board can serve as the volunteer team that works directly on many of the product improvement recommendations.
- **The CRDA should play a stronger advocacy role in product improvement issues.**
 - Product improvement activities will be further enhanced through the CRDA’s involvement as a vocal advocate for change, particularly in the five priority projects discussed in the product improvement section of this plan.

Organize a single team to be responsible for overseeing the advancement of entrepreneurship in the region.

- Charleston currently has several organizations related to entrepreneurship and small business support.
- In the upcoming years, **it is important that the region have a more formalized system for cultivating new, homegrown companies.**
- The initial entrepreneurship team should consist of the Digital Corridor, ThinkTEC, the Metro Chamber, local venture capitalists, the SBA, and educational organizations such as the College of Charleston’s Tate Center for Entrepreneurship, MUSC, The Citadel, and Charleston Southern University.
- The entrepreneurship team should develop a plan for creating an entrepreneurship one-stop-shop for the region (see product improvement recommendations).
- The team should also be responsible for growing the region’s network of angel investors and formalizing an association that connects entrepreneurs with each other, small business resources, and capital.

<i>ED Role:</i>	Entrepreneurship
<i>Primary responsibility:</i>	???
<i>Primary mission:</i>	Build start up infrastructure
<i>Target audience:</i>	Entrepreneurs and financiers
<i>Organization:</i>	<p>Entrepreneurship team</p> <p>Digital Corridor ThinkTEC Chamber</p> <p>PLUS</p> <p>Local VCs Help CHAP grow its membership by informing Chamber members</p> <p>PLUS</p> <p>College of Charleston Involve the CC’s entrepreneurship program in community education</p> <p>PLUS</p> <p>Tate Center, SBA, SCRA, MUSC, The Citadel, Charleston Southern Univ.</p> <p>The region needs to understand the value of entrepreneurship and the education/incubators/funding needed for support</p>

3. External Marketing Recommendations

GOAL: The CRDA will be proactive and creative in promoting Charleston to its target industries, resulting in an increase in investment by those businesses within the region.

In this fierce time of corporate and economic development competition, winning marketers create a strong brand, communicate a cohesive message, and commit to marketing activities that focus on select target industries.

Once a community succeeds with internal marketing efforts, it should incorporate external marketing activities aimed at recruiting targeted businesses outside of the region. The targeted external marketing campaign, for most communities, should begin after internal marketing efforts are underway and key milestones are reached. For Charleston, these milestones include:

On a scale of 1 to 10, how does the region perform in economic development?

“7 relative to our previous efforts and 3 relative to our competition.”

- ForwardCharleston focus group

- The CRDA and its board of directors have adopted this plan and budgeted for its implementation.
- CRDA project managers are assigned to target industries and target industry task forces are established.
- The plan has been widely presented throughout the region.
- Work on the five priority product improvement recommendations has begun.
- Work on the target industry specific recommendations has begun.
- Economic development-related organizations are committed to sharing a single marketing message and image for the region.

Internal marketing should not end once external recruitment efforts begin. As Charleston's business recruitment efforts heat up, it is more important than ever to have an open dialogue between economic developers, the business community, and educators. Prospects considering Charleston will be interested in seeing if the community is able to work together to address business needs. They will also require that critical community improvements, such as those related to roadway infrastructure and K-12 education, are either planned or currently in progress.

This section begins with an overview of the CRDA's current marketing activities. Next, it offers recommendations for future business recruitment activities that are aimed at the region's target industries. Recommendations include changes to Charleston's marketing message and image that will both lead to a more consistent regional identity and appeal to the target industries. Finally, the report offers metrics to use in monitoring the outcome of the CRDA's external marketing initiative.

Review of the CRDA's Current Marketing Activities

The region's name recognition and positive perception by outsiders is high, resulting from smart marketing campaigns by the CACVB, the CRDA, the Metro Chamber, and other local organizations. The Charleston brand is nationally known and the region is considered to be not only a tourist destination but now also a location for business. The region's economic development accomplishments in 2004 are evidence of Charleston's solid national presence.

The goal of the next phase of marketing activities should be to build the external perception of the region as a destination for its target industries. The more this perception is enhanced through marketing, the more likely it will be that Charleston comes to the top of the mind for target industry companies when they decide to relocate or expand.

To accomplish this will require the use of marketing activities geared at specific markets and companies. Charleston should shift from a broad national campaign to one that is aggressively aimed at its competitor regions and target industries.

Charleston's Current Marketing Mix

The CRDA's primary marketing tool is its website (www.charleston-for-business.com), which recently won an honorable mention for best economic development website from the International Economic Development Council. The site stands apart from those of other communities because it contains pages that are customized to specific industries.

Other marketing tools and activities that the CRDA has invested in include:

- Hiring a national public relations consultant to launch a national PR campaign
- Launching a PR campaign that focused on trade journals and business magazines
- Launching a direct mail campaign
- Keeping the website updated
- Creating a PowerPoint sales presentation
- Taking marketing trips
- Developing an online GIS database together with the Council of Governments, Charleston Trident Association of Realtors, and a local website developer (currently underway)

External Marketing Objectives for Charleston

<u>Charleston</u>	<u>Objective</u>
✓	Regional name recognition
✓	National name recognition
✓	National, positive name recognition
✓	External perception as a business destination
(-)	External perception as a target industry destination
(-)	Top of mind awareness as a target industry destination

2004 Economic Development Highlights

- Vought Aircraft / Alenia Aeronautica announce the location of a \$560 million 7E7 parts manufacturing facility.
- Plans were approved to build a 20,000 sq.ft. World Trade Center.
- The Verizon call center opened in October, employing 800 people.
- Blackbaud Inc. became Charleston's first homegrown company to make an IPO.
- Charleston now has 44 high tech companies employing 2,080 people.
- The American College of the Building Arts became the only licensed college in the U.S. to offer a four-year degree in building arts.
- Planning and construction got underway for Trident Technical College's expansion of its North Charleston campus.

Source: *Charleston Regional Business Journal*, January 2005

- Creating two print advertisements using the slogan “The rules of business have changed, so has the address” and featuring successful-looking business people in casual settings
- Crafting four-page regional profiles for each target industry
- Creating and keeping updated downloadable pdfs containing information about the business community, commercial real estate, quality of life, higher education, location, demographics, and taxes
- Developing an in-house printed regional profile (comprised of downloadable pdfs)
- Developing a print brochure / folder (“There’s something happening here”) highlighting R&D, education, high tech, and quality of life assets
- Updating business cards and letterhead to use bright white paper
- Updating logo from serif to sans serif font
- Creating an Annual Report to Investors

Overall, the CRDA has utilized many different avenues to reach out to its audience. The organization has done an excellent job integrating technology in its campaign. It has tailored information for its target industries, which is a strength of the campaign relative to those of many other communities. All marketing materials are professional in appearance and content.

There are, however, a few issues that should be addressed as the CRDA moves forward with future marketing:

- **Charleston’s collateral does not appear to be within a single congruent package.**
 - It is apparent that collateral was developed over time.
 - While core ideas were adhered to, slight tweaks on each new piece has led to a varied look and message when all collateral is placed side-by-side.
- **Charleston’s marketing slogan varies slightly between collateral pieces.**
- **The number of marketing activities occurring consecutively may be too great for the CRDA’s eight-member staff to handle with enough detail.**
 - The CRDA will need to scale back the number of marketing activities it is involved with so that it concentrates more time in the areas that will result in the highest return.
 - **Internal marketing** activities will add an additional activity onto the CRDA’s already busy agenda.
 - Updating data is time consuming and difficult to keep up with. Limit the amount of data that is embedded within the website. Instead, use pdfs (primarily those from the regional profile).
 - We recommend that in the future, the CRDA concentrate on three core marketing activities:
 - ~ Continuously updating and improving the **website** and the information posted on it so that it is the best in the nation
 - ~ Engaging in **direct selling** activities that put the CRDA in front of executives from the target industries
 - ~ Hiring a world-class **public relations** firm to keep the region positioned in trusted publications

Marketing Budget

The organization is operating on a \$1.2 million annual budget, the same level since 1995. Approximately 45-55% of the CRDA’s budget is dedicated to marketing activities. For fiscal year 2005-2006, the CRDA estimates that it will have \$500,000 to \$600,000 to pay for marketing activities. After a successful fundraising campaign completed this year, it is expected that the CRDA’s overall budget will increase to a \$1.6 - \$1.8 million per year level by 2010.

The approach that we recommend is designed to give Charleston the highest return on its marketing expenditures. It's based what we have seen work, and not work, in other communities. Though the \$600,000 budget is adequate, it would be ideal if the fundraising effort can raise an additional \$150,000 per year for marketing. The additional funds will allow the CRDA to participate in marketing missions and dedicate funds to internal marketing and policy advocacy.

External Marketing Recommendations

Five years ago, the CRDA commissioned a study to determine the external perception of the region. The survey asked 100 executives to provide their top-of-mind description of 13 cities. Among those, only four respondents answered, “I don’t know” when asked about their perceptions of Charleston. The rest of those surveyed all answered with positive descriptors such as “historical,” “beautiful,” “golf,” and “good port.”

Because the awareness of Charleston is very high, and general perception very positive, we recommend Charleston’s external marketing activities concentrate on building Charleston’s identity as a location for its target industries. As discussed in the review of current marketing activities, we recommend that the CRDA concentrate its time and resources on a few marketing activities that will result in the highest level of return for the region:

1. Continue to invest in the CRDA website, and use the website as the region’s primary source of information about economic development. The CRDA’s award-winning website is its best marketing tool. All external marketing activities should drive people to the website.

- **Enhance the website by adding online GIS capability.**
- **Make changes that will improve the searchability of the site.**
 - Keep the following rules in mind as upgrades are made to the site:
 - ~ No information on the site should be more than three clicks away from the homepage.
 - ~ Local business testimonials and positive, recent economic development news should be highlighted on the homepage and throughout the site.
 - Descriptor words in the menu should be simplified.
 - ~ “Business Advantages” could become “Regional Overview.”
 - ~ “Diverse Economy” could become “Target Industries.”
 - Move the “Data Center” menu tab to the left of the “Lifestyle” tab.
 - Data is distributed throughout the site, and often overlaps, making it more time consuming to keep the site updated.
 - ~ The Business Advantages section could be eliminated and its information moved into the Data Center.
 - Sales points made within its pages could be condensed and place on the homepage.
 - Information in the Geography section, for example, could be folded into the Maps page.
 - ~ Move as much data as possible onto profile reports that are in pdf format and downloadable from the website. This will help eliminate duplicative information within the site. For example, the site contains embedded workforce information in Data Center / Quick Stats / Workforce Center while the same information is also contained in the Business Advantages / Workforce / Workforce Characteristics pdf profile.
 - Several stylistic changes may also draw users into the site:
 - ~ Use larger font on menu tabs.
 - ~ Use smaller photos.
 - ~ Substitute original photos from the region in place of stock photos.
 - ~ Energize the color scheme to be more reflective of Charleston’s vibrancy and modern edge (e.g., the Metro Chamber’s site).

- **Utilize online advertisements to drive traffic to the site.**
 - Google AdWords is a great way to direct people to the CRDA's site, <https://adwords.google.com/select/>
 - Using AdWords, the CRDA can develop a text advertisement that will appear on the right side of the page when users search for various key words.
 - The CRDA selects the key words that its ad appears on. We recommend that the CRDA select its target industry names as its key words: "advanced security," "automotive," "aviation," "bioscience / biotechnology," and "creative class."
 - The CRDA can also select in which countries the advertisement appears.
 - Upon the development of this plan, no other economic development organizations have advertisements on the search results for these target industry key words.
 - The cost includes a minimal set-up fee. The CRDA only pays when someone clicks through from the advertisement to its website. The cost per click through for the target industry key words are all under \$0.50.
- **Employ the services of a search engine optimization firm to help boost overall search engine results for the CRDA's website.**

2. Launch a strong public relations campaign.

- **Hire a national public relations firm to manage a multi-year national campaign.**
 - The firm should continue the CRDA's focus on target industry specific and major business publications.
- **Organize one media tour to Charleston each year.**
 - Invite journalists from target industry trade publications to Charleston for a tour of the region and introduction to local companies. The public relations firm should help the CRDA organize this event.
- **Take advantage of tourism and arts events at home to present Charleston as a business location.**
 - Continue to host networking receptions for attendees of events such as the Spoleto Festival, Southeastern Wildlife Exposition, and Family Circle tennis tournament. Use the opportunity to share the news that Charleston is not only a fun place to vacation, but also a viable place to live and build a business.
 - Work with the Convention & Visitors Bureau to get information about Charleston as a business location out to people visiting the area.
 - ~ Charleston's marketing audience comes to the region as tourists every year.
 - ~ Place information about economic development in local hotel rooms and other tourist locations.
 - ~ Tourism promotion and economic development marketing should be viewed as complementary, versus competitive, activities.

- **Involve local companies in distributing marketing materials and news about Charleston.**
 - Inform local companies when the CRDA website is updated and ask them to let their employees know that it is a resource for them.
 - Provide local companies with the CRDA's printed collateral materials. Encourage them to give materials to new recruits and business colleagues.

3. Focus on direct selling. Travel outside of the region to meet one-to-one with industry executives. Recruit industry events to Charleston.

- **The CRDA should reevaluate the marketing trips that it takes each year and eliminate those that have not proven, over time, to directly lead to new investments in the region.**
 - Events in which a majority of attendees are other economic developers are not as valuable as those attended by industry executives.
 - Select events that are more targeted and smaller scale, rather than large national conferences.
 - ~ Smaller scale conferences offer an easier chance to network and establish a personal relationship with other event attendees.
 - ~ Unless the CRDA is paying for prominent booth space at a national or international conference, large events are not the best use of marketing dollars because it is too easy to get lost in the "noise."
- **Conduct two major marketing missions per year to benchmark communities.**
 - Marketing missions should involve 20-30 representatives from Charleston.
 - Local businesspeople should comprise the bulk of the marketing mission attendees, rather than local government representatives.
 - Use the Austin Chamber of Commerce's marketing missions as an example for organizing the trip.
 - ~ The Austin Chamber formed an Executive Team made up of managers of local companies. (For Charleston, this could either be the CEO Council or the Target Industry Teams.)
 - ~ The Executive Team met with Chamber officials on a regular basis to share business recruitment ideas.
 - ~ The Chamber scheduled two major marketing missions per year. They took one annual trip to the Silicon Valley and a second trip to another competitor region.
 - ~ Up to 50 volunteers from Austin attended the trip and each person paid their own travel expenses.
 - ~ During the course of three days, the group split into teams and met with more than 100 companies.
 - ~ In 10 years, more than 800 companies moved to Austin.
 - Recommended schedule:
 - ~ July 2005 – Metro Orlando, Florida
Advanced security and creative industries
 - ~ November 2005 – San Diego, California
Bioscience and advanced security industries
 - ~ July 2006 – Tampa, Florida and the I-4 Corridor
Aircraft
 - ~ November 2006 – San Diego, California
Bioscience and advanced security industries

- **In addition to major marketing missions, small groups of between two and five people need to attend key industry events and visit benchmark communities.**

- In the past two years, CRDA representatives have taken marketing trips to New York; Chicago; California; Toronto; St. Louis; Boston; Atlanta; Washington, D.C.; and Europe. The CRDA also attended numerous conferences, including: ISPE, SEDC, SEUS, CoreNet, IEDC, IAMC, and BIO.
- Review the number and quality of leads generated in each conference and marketing trip attended in the past five years. Look at recent corporate investments in Charleston and determine the origin of the lead.
- In the future, only attend those events that have yielded real investment or current economic development prospects.
- Future marketing trips should be scheduled in communities that contain a high concentration of Charleston's target industry companies.
- Concentrate on increasing the quality of the marketing trips that are taken, versus the quantity.
- Always include private sector representatives on marketing trips.
- Involve the new public relations firm in identifying small-scale, target industry conferences for the CRDA to attend and recruit to Charleston. Ask the public relations firm to determine the best approach for the CRDA to promote Charleston at each event.

2005 – 2010 Marketing Trips

➤ Major marketing missions to:

Orlando
San Diego
Tampa / I-4 Corridor

➤ Smaller scale marketing trips to:

Albuquerque, NM
Asheville, NC
Hampton Roads, VA
Jackson, MS
Nashville and Smyrna, TN
Research Triangle, NC
Southern Europe (Italy and Spain)

- **Involve local young professionals in a peer-to-peer marketing campaign.**

- Involve the Young Professionals Shadow Board (see internal marketing recommendations) in developing a program to market Charleston directly to other regions with large concentrations of educated young professionals.
- One to two times per year, board members should organize a trip to regions with major universities and promote Charleston to students. Market to top engineering and science universities, MBA candidates, and colleges with top-notch entrepreneurship programs.
- The first marketing trips should be taken to university towns in the northeastern U.S.

Marketing Message and Image

To support the CRDA's new marketing campaign, we recommend that the CRDA revise its logo and marketing message. Because the region has already had great success in gaining national name recognition, the changes we recommend are subtle and aimed at generating a more consistent regional image.

Critique of the Current Image

There are several problems with the region's marketing image. As discussed in the internal marketing section, there are many different logos coming from Charleston organizations that could make the region appear to outsiders not well coordinated.

The Charleston Regional Development Alliance's name is long, making it difficult to use it creatively within a logo or fit within a website address. Its current logo is non-descript and very different from any other logo in the region. It does not reflect the creativity and energy of the region. In addition, the marketing slogans used on the CRDA's collateral materials vary slightly from piece to piece:

- "There's just something about this place"
 - "Some say it's in the water, others say it's in our history"
 - *Print brochure / folder*
 - *Website homepage*
- "The rules of business have changed. So has the address."
 - *Print ads*
- "The new address for business success"
 - *Title of the regional profile*
- "The new address for business"
 - *PowerPoint sales presentation*
- "A competitive environment for..."
 - 4-page target industry regional profiles



Recommendations: Charleston's Future Image

There are also several good aspects of the region's overall look that can become the seed ideas that are used to revamp the CRDA's image. Intentionally or not, most organizations in the region use blue as the primary color. Several organizations integrate the palm tree and moon shape from the state flag into their logo. A majority of organizations, even those not physically located in the city, use "Charleston" their brand identity. (The Alliance is one of the few organizations that tacks on "South Carolina.")

The recommendations offered below are aimed at sharpening the CRDA's image while providing an identity that will be easy for other organizations in the region to adopt.

1. Use "Charleston" as the region's brand identity.

The region is almost entirely unified in its use of "Charleston" as the name of the region. Even communities not located in the county or city of Charleston will say that they are located in the Charleston region. This is a significant accomplishment. Many of Charleston's competitors struggle with agreeing to a single name.

Although there is concern that outsiders will confuse the region with Charleston, West Virginia, stylistic elements within the logo can help clarify without using the words “South Carolina.”

2. Develop a new logo for the CRDA that depicts a palm tree and the word “Charleston.”

The palm tree will connect Charleston to the state identity and to other organizations in the region that have included the image in their logos. Including it will eliminate the need to add “South Carolina” to the logo, since West Virginia is not identified with palm trees, and will result in a cleaner look.

3. Substitute “Economic Development” in place of the CRDA’s name on the logo.

Externally, the CRDA’s function as the region’s lead economic development agency is much more important than the legal name of the organization. Consider removing the CRDA name from the logo entirely and using instead “economic development.” The logo will, in turn, look cleaner and immediately inform the audience of the organization’s responsibility. An added benefit is that it can result in a logo that other organizations can easily adopt by removing “economic development” and plugging in their own name or regional function.



There are other ways to shorten the Charleston Regional Development Alliance name for the purposes of developing a logo. For example, the acronym could be used, but “CRDA” is not memorable. The name could also be shortened to become “The Alliance” (too general), the “Charleston Development Alliance” (still very long), or “Regional Development Alliance” (does not indicate which region is represented).

4. Use the tag line “The new address for...”

This is a slogan that has been used in the past that offers several advantages. It serves as an umbrella statement that allows the CRDA to create a custom tag line while staying consistent within an overall campaign. It also contains the word “new,” which is one of four marketing theme words we recommend the CRDA integrate into its sales messages.

- The new address for **business**.*
- The new address for **advanced security**.*
- The new address for **automotive**.*
- The new address for **aviation**.*
- The new address for **bioscience**.*
- The new address for the **creative class**.*
- The new address for **entrepreneurs**.*

5. Adopt and be consistent in the use of four main marketing themes.

We recommend that the CRDA consistently include the following four words in its marketing materials, and use the words to inspire the theme of the marketing campaign.

“New”

The word is already being used in the CRDA’s marketing materials and is contained in the recommended tag line. “New” embodies the region’s fresh natural environment and unexplored opportunities. It may surprise the audience, whose idea of Charleston may be of an old, historic city. “New” appeals to entrepreneurs and high tech companies who aim to

create things that no one else has. “New” is a word that will appeal to all of Charleston’s target audiences.

“Happening”

Another word that is prominently used within CRDA’s current marketing campaign. “Happening” implies forward movement. For young professionals, “happening” may also imply that the region is hip, stylish, or cosmopolitan – the place to be and be seen. “Happening” is a word that will appeal to Charleston’s creative, automotive, and aviation targets.

“Magnetic”

A word used in the copy of the CRDA’s marketing materials, but not yet used in the forefront. “Magnetic” is a great description for the region because it draws in people from across the country as tourists and relocating workers, who sometimes move to the region without having a job just to experience the high quality of life. “Magnetic” also infers an energetic location. “Magnetic” is a word that will appeal to Charleston’s creative and bioscience targets, as well as young professionals and tourists.

“Resourceful”

Like “magnetic,” resourceful is used within the CRDA’s current collateral, but not prominently. “Resourceful” reflects not only the region’s rich variety of assets for businesses, but also the natural resources of the coastal plains. It also describes the attitude of the people, who will do what it takes to make the region a great location for its target industries. “Resourceful” is a word that will appeal to Charleston’s advanced security, automotive, and aviation targets, as well as entrepreneurs.

We recommend that the CRDA avoid using the word “something.” Its dictionary definition is “fairly, kind of, moderately, more or less, ratherish, sort of.” None of these words describe Charleston. The region is much more than a “something,” it is a complete community that dramatically stands out relative to its competitors.

Marketing Metrics

The CRDA's prospect activity has decreased since 1995, from 50 qualified prospects per year to approximately 30. The targeted approach offered in this plan is designed to boost prospect activity in the future.

Currently, the CRDA utilizes ACT to manage contacts in addition to weekly meetings in which it discusses prospects with representatives from the three counties. Prospects are assigned within one of three categories: suspect, prospect, and "red hot" prospects.

We recommend that the CRDA begin by evaluating how much of each staff person's time is dedicated to external, proactive marketing versus reactive and internal activities. For each staff person, estimate the percentage of time that should be spent on proactive marketing versus reactive internal work. This ratio will vary depending on the role of the staff person. Purchase an off-the-shelf software program, such as TimeTrax, to make it easier to internally estimate staff time per "project."

Priority Product Improvement Recommendations

1. Charleston's K-12 educational system must attain higher performance to prepare its future workforce and attract knowledge-based companies in the future.

Metrics:

- K-12 educational recommendations are implemented within the timeline set forth in this plan.
- The number of public schools moving up one ranking on the State's education report card increases by 50% in the next five years.
- As a region, the percentage of students graduating from high school increases annually. *Statistic to track: High school graduation rates*
- As a region, the percent of students entering technical training or college after high school increases. *Statistic to track: Post secondary participation rates*

2. Charleston and State leaders must take active steps to guarantee that the region's transportation system has the capacity to support a growing population and business community.

Metrics:

- The area has created and adopted a regional land use plan by December 2005.
- Annual survey of businesses is created to track satisfaction with region's transportation network. Results show continued improvement.

3. Charleston's leaders must take active steps to keep the Port cost competitive.

Metrics:

- The State passes the Port Bill in 2005.
- Each year, the Port Authority achieves a minimum of 10% growth in the amount of cargo moved through the Port over the prior year.

4. Stronger entrepreneurial and venture capital networks emerge.

Metrics:

- By November 2005, a single, entrepreneurship team is established that is responsible for coordinating the region's activities.
- A plan for establishing an entrepreneurship one-stop-shop is developed and implementation underway by June 2006.
- The region experiences an annual increase in the amount of venture capital received by local companies.

5. Charleston must create wet lab incubator space and a bioscience research park to accommodate bioscience companies.

Metrics:

- A regional bioscience industry group is established before July 2005.
- A wet lab incubator is constructed by June 2008.
- Construction of a bioscience research park is underway by June 2009.

Internal Marketing Recommendations

1. Use the roll out as a way to open communication between CRDA and community.

Metric:

- A speaker's bureau is established and has presented this plan to 3-5 community groups per month through August 2005.

2. Improve communication between local organizations.

Metrics:

- A regional internship website is online by January 2006.
- Plans for a State of the Workforce Summit are in place by January 2006 and takes place during the first quarter of the year.
- The State of the Workforce Summit is held on an annual basis.
- A campaign to inform the community about the importance of entrepreneurship to economic development takes place between October 2005 and February 2006.
 - A presentation on this topic is developed and given to five different community organizations.
 - Three newspaper articles are published on the topic.

3. Work toward adopting a region-wide brand and marketing message.

Metrics:

- By September 2005, a graphic designer has created a new logo for CRDA.
- By December 2005, the three counties and chambers have adopted their own versions of the CRDA logo.

4. Identify one "hot topic" to be addressed through internal marketing.

Metrics:

- A schedule of "hot topics" is in place by June 2005.
- The schedule is adhered to.

5. Restructure the support structure for ED that maximizes community involvement.

Metrics:

- Target industry assignments are given to CRDA staff by July 2005.
- Target industry task forces are established by August 2005. Task forces meet with CRDA staff on at least a quarterly basis.
- A Young Professionals Shadow Board of Directors is established and active by November 2005.

External Marketing Recommendations

1. Continue to invest in the CRDA website.

Metrics:

- GIS is functioning and on CRDA's website by January 2006.
- By September 2005, CRDA hires web developer and changes are made to CRDA's site to improve user friendliness.
- Each year, traffic to the CRDA website increases at least 20% over the previous year.

2. Launch a strong public relations campaign.

Metrics:

- CRDA retains a national public relations firm before August 2005.
- CRDA's first media tour to Charleston is planned and takes place by April 2006. The event should be attended by at least five journalists from target industry publications.
- The number of Charleston media mentions in target industry or general business-related contexts increases 20% per year starting from date of contract with public relations firm.
- CRDA hosts networking receptions or sponsors three tourism events taking place in Charleston per year.
- By 2007, at least 25% of hotel rooms in the region contain a publication touting Charleston as a business location.

3. Focus on direct selling.

Metrics:

- The CRDA will conduct two major marketing missions per year, attended by at least 25 business and economic development leaders from the region.
- The CRDA will conduct 4-6 trips to benchmark communities per year, attended by up to 10 business and economic development leaders from the region.

4. Adjust marketing message and image to appeal to target industries.

Metrics:

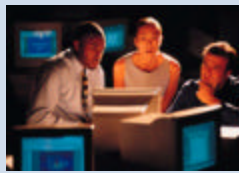
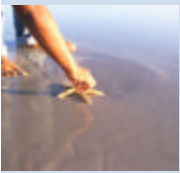
- The CRDA has developed and adopted a new logo by September 2005.
- By December 2005, the three counties and chambers of commerce have been presented with a concept for how their own identities can adjust to appear more as a cohesive region.

5. Increase the number of companies considering Charleston and expanding in Charleston.

Metrics:

- The CRDA's prospect activity increases by at least five per year for the next four years. By 2009, the CRDA's prospect activity exceeds 50 per year.
- The number of companies locating in Charleston increases annually.
- The average wage of new jobs created in Charleston increases by at least \$1,000 per year.

Appendix



Action Plan: Implementation Timeline

Action Plan: Priority Product Improvements

Recommendation	Start date	End date	Primary Responsibility	Support
1. Improve the region's K-12 educational system.				
Present this plan to K-12 leaders.	May-05	August-05	Speaker's bureau	
Engage the business community in local schools.	April-05	Ongoing	Chambers	WFD, Educators
<i>Promote mentoring and internship programs.</i>	April-05	Ongoing	Chambers	WFD, Educators
<i>Create or expand existing internship website.</i>	August-05	January-06	Chambers	Regional Business Journal
Become an active advocate of education reform at the State level.	April-05	Ongoing	CRDA	
Launch a campaign about the tie between K-12 and ED.	September-05	December-05	CRDA	Chambers, Speaker's bureau
<i>Make this the subject of a quarterly "hot topic."</i>	September-05	December-05	CRDA	Chambers, Speaker's bureau
2. Improve the region's transportation system.				
Develop regional land use and transportation plans.	May-05	December-05	COG, Counties	
<i>Align transportation plan within context of land use goals.</i>	May-05	December-05	COG, Counties	
<i>Improve mass transit to service areas with high growth.</i>	January-06	Ongoing	CARTA	COG, Counties
3. Keep the Port cost competitive.				
Become an advocate for the Port bill.	April-05	Ongoing	CRDA	Counties, Chambers
Work with Port to educate region about the tie between the Port and ED.	January-06	April-06	CRDA, Port	Speaker's bureau, Chambers
4. Build stronger entrepreneurial and venture networks.				
Create a business climate that helps entrepreneurs succeed.	April-05	Ongoing	Entre. Team	
Organize a single team responsible for advancing entrepreneurship.	August-05	November-05	Chambers	Digital Corridor, universities, colleges, SBA, VCs
<i>Formalize a regional direction for cultivating homegrown companies.</i>	December-05	May-06	Entre. Team	
<i>Develop a plan for creating an entrepreneurship one-stop-shop.</i>	December-05	June-06	Entre. Team	
<i>Develop a plan for growing the region's network of angel investors.</i>	December-05	June-06	Entre. Team	
Inform Chamber members of available angel networks.	May-05	Ongoing	Entre. Team	Chambers
Boost support of orgs dedicated to educating entrepreneurs.	April-05	Ongoing	Region wide	
Encourage small business growth in the African American community.	June-05	Ongoing	Entre. Team	CDCs
5. Create wet lab incubator space and a bioscience park.				
Invest in sites and infra that meet the needs of the target industries.				
Establish a regional bioscience industry group.	June-05	Monthly mtgs	MUSC	CRDA's bioscience industry team
Create a plan for a wet lab incubator. Seek funding.	January-06	January-07	Bioscience group	
Construct a wet lab incubator.	January-07	June-08	Bioscience group	Design-build contractor
Create a plan for a bioscience research park. Seek funding.	May-06	May-07	Bioscience group	
Construct a bioscience research park.	May-07	June-09	Bioscience group	Design-build contractor
Amend and promote the Life Sciences Act.	August-05	Ongoing	Bioscience group	

Forward Charleston Chapter 2: Economic Development Marketing Plan

Action Plan: Internal Marketing

Recommendation	Start date	End date	Primary Responsibility	Support
1. Use the roll out as a way to open communication btw CRDA and community.				
Alert participants when the plan is posted.	April-05	May-05	CRDA	Chambers, Counties
Meet with editorial boards, present copies of final report.	April-05	May-05	CRDA	
Schedule presentations with community groups.	May-05	August-05	CRDA	Speaker's Bureau
Form a speakers bureau to keep community informed of plan's progress.	May-05	Ongoing	CRDA	
2. Improve communication between local organizations.				
Inform the public about the mission of the CRDA.	June-05	August-05	CRDA	Speaker's Bureau
<i>Establish target industry task forces to involve businesses in ED.</i>	July-05	August-05	CRDA	Target industry execs
<i>Maintain an active internal public relations effort.</i>	April-05	Ongoing	CRDA	
Systematize regular communication between wkfrce developers and businesses.	August-05	Ongoing	Chambers	Educators, WFD, businesses
<i>Create or expand existing internship website.</i>	August-05	January-06	Chambers	Regional Business Journal
<i>Initiate an annual state of the workforce summit.</i>	January-06	Annually	Chambers	Educators, WFD, businesses
Involve workforce developers and educators in ED.	July-05	Ongoing	CRDA	Chambers
<i>Include 1-2 educators on industry task forces.</i>	July-05	Ongoing	CRDA	Educators
<i>Present this plan to K-12, community college, and WFD leaders.</i>	May-05	August-05	CRDA	Speaker's Bureau
Launch campaign to increase community awareness of entrepreneurship.	October-05	February-06	Chambers	Digital Corridor, universities, colleges, SBA, VCs
<i>Create a one-stop-shop for entrepreneurship.</i>	June-06	Ongoing	Entre. team	
3. Work toward adopting a region-wide brand and marketing message.				
The CRDA should adopt a new logo.	June-05	September-05	CRDA	
Encourage the counties to adopt logos that are similar to CRDA's.	September-05	December-05	CRDA	Counties
Encourage the chambers to adopt a similar logo.	September-05	December-05	CRDA	Chambers
4. Identify one "hot topic" to be addressed through internal marketing.				
Identify one issue per quarter to research, write op/ed pieces, speak about.	June-05	Quarterly	CRDA	Speaker's bureau, Chambers
5. Restructure the support structure for ED that maximizes community involvement.				
The CRDA's project managers should be assigned to 1-2 target industries each.	June-05	July-05	CRDA	
The CRDA should organize target industry task forces.	July-05	August-05	CRDA	Target industry execs
Set guideposts to determine when a project is outside of the CRDA's scope.	August-05	September-05	CRDA	Chambers, Entre team
Chambers should continue to work together, setting regional retention goals.	July-05	September-05	Chambers	
The CEO Council should become leading advocates for product improvement recs.	May-05	Ongoing	CEO Council	
Utilize young professionals to help implement this plan.	July-05	Ongoing	CRDA	
<i>Organize a young professionals shadow board of directors.</i>	September-05	November-05	CRDA	CRDA Board
CRDA should play a strong advocacy role in product improvement issues.	April-05	Ongoing	CRDA	CRDA Board
Organize a single team responsible for advancing entrepreneurship.	August-05	November-05	Chambers	Digital Corridor, universities, colleges, SBA, VCs
<i>Formalize a regional direction for cultivating homegrown companies.</i>	December-05	May-06	Entre. Team	
<i>Develop a plan for creating an entrepreneurship one-stop-shop.</i>	December-05	June-06	Entre. Team	
<i>Develop a plan for growing the region's network of angel investors.</i>	December-05	June-06	Entre. Team	

Action Plan: External Marketing

Recommendation	Start date	End date	Primary Responsibility	Support
1. Continue to invest in the CRDA website.				
Enhance the site by adding GIS capability.	Ongoing	January-06	CRDA	
Make changes that will improve the site's user friendliness.	May-05	September-05	CRDA	Web designer
Utilize online advertisements to drive traffic to the site.	June-05	Ongoing	CRDA	Web designer
2. Launch a strong public relations campaign.				
Hire a national PR firm to manage a national campaign.	April-05	Hire by Jul 05	CRDA	
Organize one media tour to Charleston each year.	April-06	Annually	CRDA	PR consultant
Continue hosting networking receptions for local tourism events.	May-05	Ongoing	CRDA	PR consultant
Work with CVB to get ED information out to tourists.	May-05	Ongoing	CRDA	CVB, PR consultant
Involve all local companies in distributing ED info.	July-05	Ongoing	CRDA	PR consultant
3. Focus on direct selling.				
Reevaluate the mktg trips that CRDA participates in.	May-05	July-05	CRDA	
<i>Identify target industry events to attend.</i>	May-05	July-05	CRDA	
Conduct 2 major marketing missions per year.	July, November	Annual	CRDA	All ED / bus. leaders
Conduct 4-6 visits to benchmark communities per year.	August-05	Quarterly	CRDA	Target industry teams
Involve young professionals in peer-to-peer mktg.	January-06	Bi-annually	CRDA	YP Shadow Board
4. Adjust marketing message and image to appeal to target industries.				
The CRDA should adopt a new logo.	June-05	September-05	CRDA	
Encourage the counties to adopt logos that are similar to CRDA's.	September-05	December-05	CRDA	Counties
Encourage the chambers to adopt a similar logo.	September-05	December-05	CRDA	Chambers

Action Plan: Target Industries

Recommendation	Start date	End date	Primary Responsibility	Support
1. Bioscience Specific Recommendations				
Develop a wet lab incubator and bioscience research park.	Jan-06	May-09	Bioscience industry group	
Grow entrepreneurial and capital networks.	Apr-05	Ongoing	Entre. Team	
Amend and promote the Life Sciences Act.	August-05	Ongoing	Bioscience group	
MUSC must be a leader in this initiative.	June-05	Ongoing	MUSC	
<i>Establish a regional bioscience industry group.</i>	June-05	Monthly mtgs	MUSC	CRDA's bioscience industry team
Expand degree offerings at the LCGC.	June-05	Ongoing	LCGC	Bioscience industry group
<i>Adopt a bioengineering master's degree program at LCGC.</i>	January-06	January-10	Bioscience industry group	Universities
2. Aircraft Specific Recommendations				
Develop regional land use and transportation plans.	May-05	December-05	COG, Counties	
<i>Align transportation plan within context of land use goals.</i>	May-05	December-05	COG, Counties	
<i>Improve mass transit to service areas with high growth.</i>	January-06	Ongoing	CARTA	COG, Counties
Keep the Port cost competitive.				
<i>Become an advocate for the Port bill.</i>	April-05	Ongoing	CRDA	Counties, Chambers
<i>Work with Port to educate region about the tie between the Port and ED.</i>	January-06	April-06	CRDA, Port	Speaker's bureau, Chambers
Recruit Clemson's material science degree to LCGC.	September-05	September-05	LCGC	Clemson University
TTC should expand the curriculum for its aircraft technician degree.	January-06	Ongoing	TTC	
Conduct marketing missions to Albuquerque and Savannah.	February, May	2006	CRDA	Aircraft target industry team
Advocate that the State create targeted aircraft incentives.	January-06	Ongoing	CRDA, Chambers	Aircraft target industry team
3. Automotive Specific Recommendations				
Develop regional land use and transportation plans.	May-05	December-05	COG, Counties	
<i>Align transportation plan within context of land use goals.</i>	May-05	December-05	COG, Counties	
<i>Improve mass transit to service areas with high growth.</i>	January-06	Ongoing	CARTA	COG, Counties
Keep the Port cost competitive.				
<i>Become an advocate for the Port bill.</i>	April-05	Ongoing	CRDA	Counties, Chambers
<i>Work with Port to educate region about the tie between the Port and ED.</i>	January-06	April-06	CRDA, Port	Speaker's bureau, Chambers
Target European automakers without a US presence.	Jul-06	Ongoing	CRDA	Auto target industry team
Increase the tech skills available in the region.	May-05	Ongoing	WFD, Educators	
<i>Determine the feasibility of another magnet school.</i>	September-05	May-06	WFD, Educators	State
<i>Enhance support for the College & Career Pathways program.</i>	May-05	Ongoing	K-12 educators	Business community
<i>Develop stronger programs for retaining retired military personnel.</i>	May-06	Ongoing	Chambers	Military installations, Colleges
4. Creative Specific Recommendations				
Increase the number of young professionals who live in the region.				
<i>Utilize young professionals to help implement this plan.</i>	July-05	Ongoing	CRDA	
<i>Organize a young professionals shadow board of directors.</i>	September-05	November-05	CRDA	CRDA Board
<i>Establish a young professionals networking organization.</i>	January-06	Launch Jun-06	YP board of directors	
<i>Create or expand existing internship website.</i>	August-05	January-06	Chambers	Regional Business Journal
<i>Create a quarterly magazine dedicated to career life in the region.</i>	January-08	Quarterly	Chambers, WFD	Young professionals network
<i>Grow entrepreneurial and capital networks.</i>	Apr-05	Ongoing	Entre. Team	
Treat creative industries as a target: retain + recruit.	May-05	Ongoing	CRDA, Chambers	
<i>Inform region that creative individuals and businesses are a target.</i>	April-05	August-05	Speaker's bureau	
Create a business climate that helps entrepreneurs succeed.	April-05	Ongoing	Entre. Team	
<i>Organize a single team responsible for advancing entrepreneurship.</i>	August-05	November-05	Chambers	Digital Corridor, universities, colleges, SBA, VCs
<i>Formalize a regional direction for cultivating homegrown companies.</i>	December-05	May-06	Entre. Team	
<i>Develop a plan for creating an entrepreneurship one-stop-shop.</i>	December-05	June-06	Entre. Team	
<i>Develop a plan for growing the region's network of angel investors.</i>	December-05	June-06	Entre. Team	
<i>Inform Chamber members of available angel networks.</i>	May-05	Ongoing	Entre. Team	Chambers
<i>Boost support of orgs dedicated to educating entrepreneurs.</i>	April-05	Ongoing	Region wide	
<i>Encourage small business growth in the African American community.</i>	June-05	Ongoing	Entre. Team	CDCs
Promote Charleston as the nation's hub for historic preservation.	January-06	Ongoing	CRDA	Historic preservation groups
Take marketing missions to creative industry benchmarks.	October, Mar	2005, 2006	CRDA	Creative industry team
5. Advanced Security Specific Recommendations				
Keep the Port cost competitive.				
<i>Become an advocate for the Port bill.</i>	April-05	Ongoing	CRDA	Counties, Chambers
<i>Work with Port to educate region about the tie between the Port and ED.</i>	January-06	April-06	CRDA, Port	Speaker's bureau, Chambers
Expand degree offerings at the LCGC.	June-05	Ongoing	LCGC	Universities
<i>Adopt a software/comp engineering master's degree program at LCGC.</i>	January-06	January-10	LCGC	Adv. Security industry team
Make last year's homeland security conference an annual event.	December-05	Annually	Charleston Chamber	Adv. Security industry team
Take marketing missions to Orlando and San Diego	July, Jan	2005, 2006	CRDA	Community leaders

Recommended organizational structure for implementation

<i>ED Role:</i>	Business recruitment	Business Retention	Product improvement	Entrepreneurship
<i>Primary responsibility:</i>	CRDA	Chamber / County ED	Chamber/CEO Council	???
<i>Primary mission:</i>	External marketing	Increasing local company expansion	Improve Charleston's competitive offering	Build start up infrastructure
<i>Target audience:</i>	5 target industries	All local companies	WFD, Biz Climate, Sites and infrastructure, QoL	Entrepreneurs and financiers
<i>Organization:</i>	<p>5 target industry teams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 CRDA rep 1 County rep / county 1 Chamber rep 1 Utility rep <p>PLUS</p> <p>Target Industry Task Force 8-10 execs from local target industry companies to: identify leads direct sales activities inform about trends</p>	<p>Retention team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Chamber rep 1 County rep / county <p>PLUS</p> <p>CEO Roundtable and Low Country Manufacturers Council Regularly inform the CEO Roundtable and LCMC about retention efforts</p> <p>PLUS</p> <p>CRDA Inform local companies about CRDA's role; Involve CRDA on issues related to the 5 priority projects</p>	<p>Product improvement team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chamber CEO Council Counties <p>PLUS</p> <p>Young professionals Form a young professionals shadow board and assign the volunteers with product improvement activities</p> <p>PLUS</p> <p>CRDA Advocate for product improvement / priority recommendations that impact ability of the region to support target industries</p>	<p>Entrepreneurship team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Corridor ThinkTEC Chamber <p>PLUS</p> <p>Local VCs Help CHAP grow its membership by informing Chamber members</p> <p>PLUS</p> <p>College of Charleston Involve the CC's entrepreneurship program in community education</p> <p>PLUS</p> <p>Tate Center, SBA, SCRA, MUSC, The Citadel, Charleston Southern Univ.</p> <p>The region needs to understand the value of entrepreneurship and the education/incubators/funding needed for support</p>

Project Participants

More than 750 people participated in the development of this plan by taking the Forward Charleston survey or meeting with the consulting team in focus groups and interviews. Our sincere gratitude goes out to everyone who provided ideas. Their contribution shaped this plan and will shape the future of the Charleston region.

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Bill Youngblood	Ken Roozen	Rob Tykal
Ray Greenberg	William Milo	Dave Holscher
James "Jim" Young	Sue Flessate	Kelvin Brockbank
Joseph Darby	Jim Norris	Steve Young
Eric Lacy	Elizabeth Colbert-Busch	Arthur Perry
Mark Kindy	Ellen Moryl	Angela Washington
Ricki Carruth	John Gallagher	Rich Walker
Steve Blanchard	Robert Pratt	Kimberly Demetriades
Tommy Pruitt	Joe Fordney	Bill McCall
Danny Hyman	Jerry Ong	Gary Crossley
Ellen Jackson	Joe Bryan	Kelly Carpenter
Colby Chisolm	Julia Meisner	James Ward
Tim Washington	Peter Lehman	Dave Madden
Bernard "Bernie" Groseclose	Susan Frampton	John Clarkin
Anthony Russo	James Neilson	Earl Walker
Mary Barrineau	John Powell	Cory Phar
Pearce Fleming	Alan Wutzdorff	Ron Bushey
John Darby	Debbie Meuli	Berlin Myers
Leo "Lee" Higdon	Myles Stempin	Chris Kerrigan
Chauncey Clark	Mary Thornley	Neal Getsinger
Harry Hallman	Richard Fery	Roland Windham
Paul Connerty	Frank Fredericks	George Tupper
Merle Shepard	Charlie Templeton	
	Aubrey "Skipper" Woody	