



Marketing Rural Communities to Attract and Retain Workers in a Changing Economy

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South Dakota
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PROJECT OVERVIEW

Who are the partner communities?

North Dakota

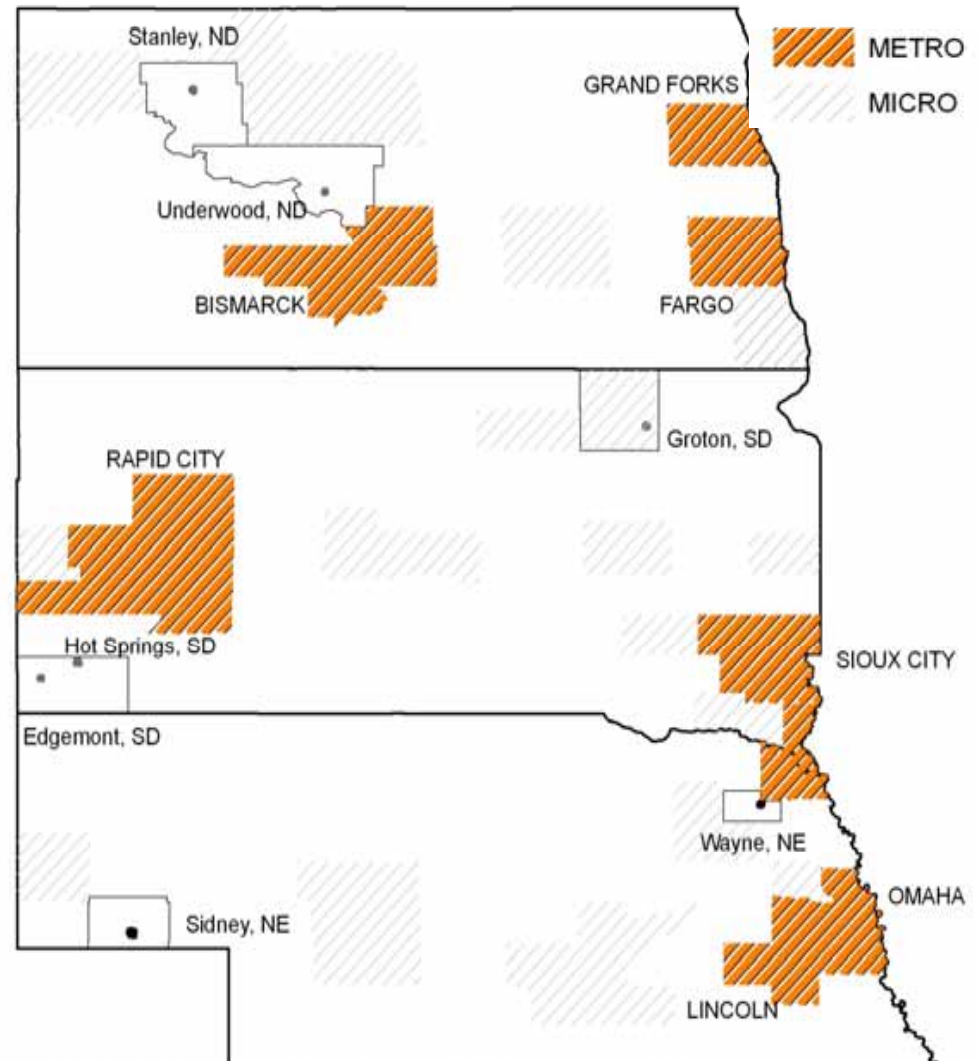
- Stanley
- Underwood

South Dakota

- Edgemont–Hot Springs
- Groton

Nebraska

- Sidney
- Wayne



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Purpose: Apply innovative marketing concepts and methods to attract new residents to rural communities and regions.

Research & Extension Components:

- Household surveys of new residents
- Labor vacancy surveys
- Consumer focus groups
 - ✓ Face to face – existing new residents
 - ✓ Online – potential new residents
- Community application and use

Why do people move to Rural Places?

Simpler pace of life	53%	Safer place to live	36%
Less congested place	50%	Job that better fits skills	35%
Closer to relatives	50%	Community that shares values	34%
Lower cost of housing	48%	Better place for kids	32%
Lower cost of living	45%	Closer to friends	32%
Higher paying job	39%	Lower taxes	22%
Desirable natural environment	37%		

Many don't shop around, but most do...

Locations Considered Before Choosing Current Location

Only this location	45%
Other locations in other states	16%
Other locations in this state	14%
Other locations here and other states	23%
Other	2%

Family & vacation visits are VERY important!



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Survey respondents tell us that they are much more likely to obtain information from the Internet than from either employer or community recruitment efforts.

This raises the next logical question: Can communities use their community Web page as an effective tool in recruitment?

If they do that, will they be able to assist their local employers in filling their labor requirements more quickly and with appropriately qualified workers?

In an effort to answer those questions, we conducted a labor vacancy survey in each of our participating communities.

We also conducted a series of focus groups in which we tried to understand how the imagery of a Web page might influence individual perceptions of a community.



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LABOR VACANCY SURVEY OVERVIEW

Labor Vacancy Survey

- Conducted to determine area workforce requirements
- Self-administered questionnaire mailed in August and September 2009
- Used purchased mailing lists
- Data weighted to reflect the population of employers in the region
 - ✓ Weights derived from secondary data sources, specifically County Business Patterns from US Census.

DATA SYNTHESIS OVERVIEW

Synthesis Process:

- Combined data from Household and Labor Vacancy Surveys
- Identified key themes
 - Example: Firms have difficulty recruiting professional and managerial workers.
- Identified potential strategies to address the issues
 - Examples: Devise better advertisement strategies. Mentoring/contact with professionals who have lived in community for some time.



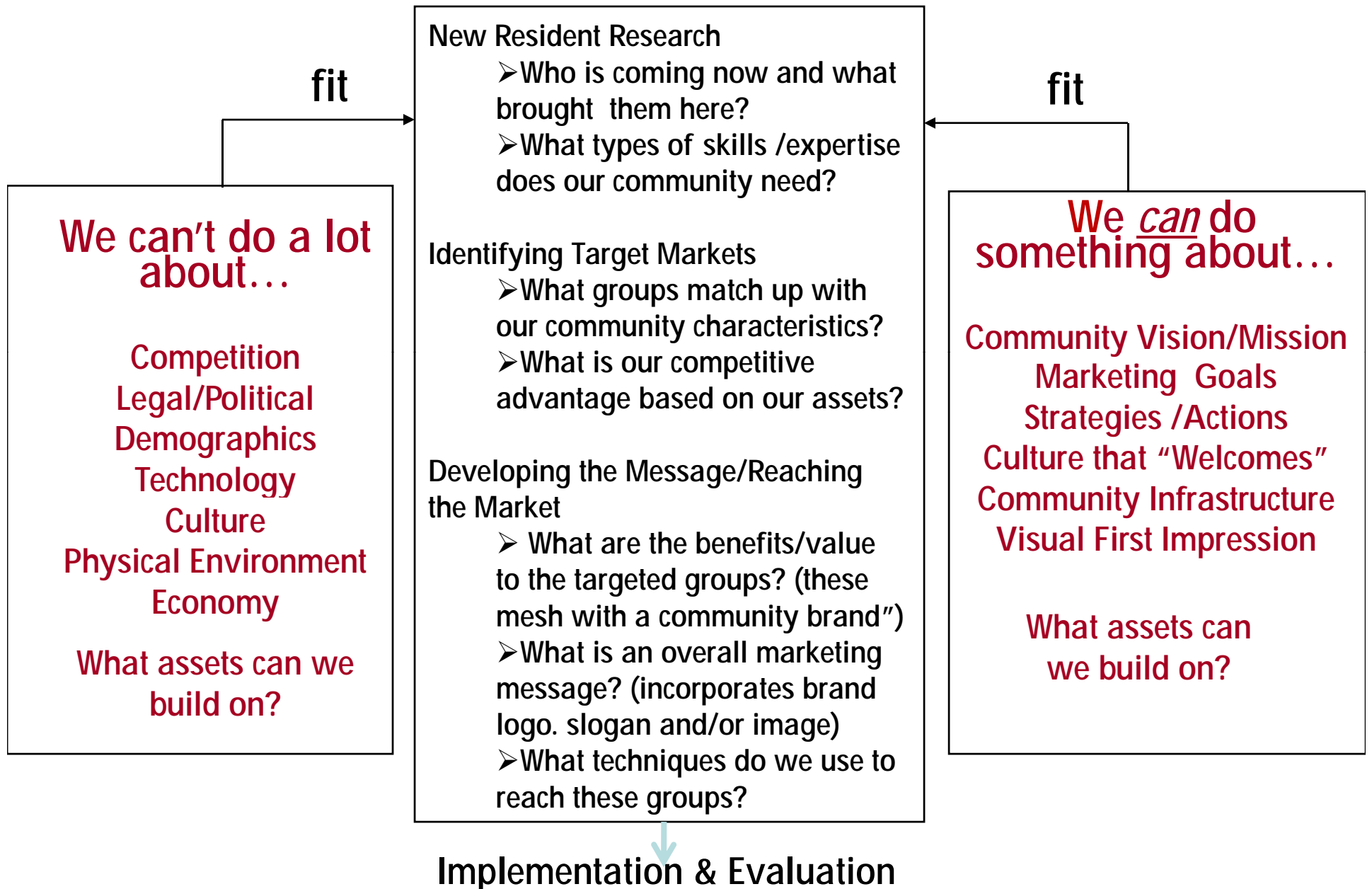
FOCUS GROUP OVERVIEW

Focus Groups

- Two types:
 - Online focus groups
 - Face to face focus groups
- Attempt to better understand how images portray community characteristics

All of this taken together leads to a set of guidelines for the development of a community marketing plan.

Market Planning Process





Marketing for Rural Communities



About Us	Initial New Resident Research	Current Community Research	Marketing Your Rural Community	Publications
Contact Information NIFA	Buffalo Commons Survey Focus Groups Delphi Methodology	Surveys Focus Groups Methodology	Marketing Process Marketing Plan Marketing Strategies	

Welcome to the Great Plains Rural Community Marketing web site!

You will find initial research information, conducted in Nebraska from 2006 to 2008, on new resident recruitment and retention, and a current three-state integrated project on community marketing that was started in 2008 and will be completed in 2012. Both projects were funded by United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Research Initiative (NRI) Rural Development grants.

The projects are closely linked together. Through a household survey and several focus groups in 2007, the researchers learned that new rural residents in Nebraska we not always finding the information they needed to make good relocation decisions. New residents were telling the team that rural communities could do a better job marketing themselves to potential new residents.

NEXT STEPS

For more information...

<http://cari.unl.edu/>



Go to Research



then go to Community Marketing