

Attracting Inward Investment in a Challenging Economic Climate

Client:
South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)

Challenge:

The client had historically relied on inward visits as the main marketing tool to present the region to potential investors. However, as executive travel overseas suddenly decreased due to

- A downturn in the information technology sector,
- Security concerns related to 9/11, and
- An ever increasing exchange rate,

SEEDA asked OSA Strategy to design and implement a plan to continue to attract inward visits to the region.

Solution:

OSA Strategy responded by creating a program with two strategic objectives:

- Communicate the agency's region as a preferred business location for direct investment, and
- Enhance the current strategy by increasing the number of company meetings and broadening the network of industry contacts.

The key to this strategy was installing an internal and external team who traveled to meet with potential investors and business organizations within key economic sectors and industries.

Results:

In a time of market instability and limited executive travel, OSA Strategy's dedicated team continued to build a pipeline of investment leads and increased the visibility of the agency within the key economic markets of the United States and Canada.

- In the contract year of 2000-2001 SEEDA had meetings with 32 corporations with international expansion plans and 13 of those resulted in investment successes.
- In 2001-2002 OSA Strategy increased that number to 81 meetings with corporations, and
- In 2002-2003 the results of those efforts were realized in 17 investment successes.

“OSA Strategy's extensive network of contacts has enabled us to develop relationships at the highest levels in business, government, politics and academia. SEEDA has been able to raise its own profile and influence within specific regions across the U.S. and Canada. More importantly, we have been able to jointly pursue business investment and business retention programs with great success because of the services provided by OSA Strategy.”

Michael Dewick
Head of International Business
SEEDA