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NESA Overview

The North Eastern Strategic Alliance (**NESA**) is a regional economic development organization that serves a nine-county region in the northeast corner of South Carolina.

NESA's primary objective is to significantly enhance the quality of life for residents of the region by creating additional jobs and capital investment within the existing industry base as well as through recruitment of new companies and expansion of tourism related development.

Hold the Date

September 14 @ 10:00 a.m.
Full Developers Meeting
FMU Board Room

October 6 @ 10:00 a.m.
Executive Committee Meeting
Georgetown County

November 9-10, Consultant Event

Visit Us Online

<http://www.scbusinesscorner.com>

Comments from the Chair



Greetings from South Carolina's Business Corner and welcome to the second edition of *NEWS from the CORNER*, the North Eastern Strategic Alliance newsletter. For some, the summer months allow an opportunity to slow down and relax, but that hasn't been the case for our team. The NESA Board, Staff, & Local Developers have been actively engaged in pursuing the initiatives at hand. I would like to personally thank each of the

local developers for their support, commitment, and hard work in pursuit of our NESA regional objectives. Individual committees, representing each of the NESA key initiatives, meet regularly in pursuit of regional progress. These committees are: Interstate 73; Regional International Airport; International Trade and Convention Center; Power Generation Facility; and the recently added Tourism Committee. Progress reports are provided formally during each Board Meeting and informally in candid conversations, as our NESA team continues to build momentum. Strong communication is fundamental to our success and we plan to keep you posted on our regional development efforts. We will provide relevant regional updates and highlights through this newsletter each quarter. And at anytime, please visit us online for the latest "corner" news. If you have thoughts, ideas, or suggestions to improve our communications, please let us know. It is an honor and pleasure to endeavor and serve on behalf of you, your business, and the NESA region. We are letting it be known that this region is indeed "**Open for Business**".

With warm regards,

J. Yancey McGill
Chairman, NESA Executive Committee

Marketing SC's Business Corner

Plop, plop, fizz, fizz . . . can you complete this thought? Oh, what a relief it is! Although ads for Alka-Seltzer have changed over the years, this tag-line continues to define the product. An effective marketing strategy brings a product to life and conveys a message of hope and help for the prospective customer. Marketing is the art of demonstrating to a specific group of people ("target" market) how a product meets their needs and how it will ultimately alleviate their woes, problems, or concerns. (Continued on p. 2)

NESA Board Members

(*Executive Committee)

Senator J. Yancey McGill*

Mr. Billy Alford*

Mr. James Alford

Mr. Wesley Blackwell

Mr. James E. Brogdon

Dr. Fred Carter*

Mr. Loyd Daniel

Mr. Vernie Dove

Mr. Fred DuBard*

Ms. Liz Gilland

Mr. Wayne Gray

Mr. Mike Hagg

Mr. Sel Hemingway

Mr. James "Pat" Howle

Dr. Ronald Ingle*

Representative Doug Jennings*

Mr. Floyd Keels

Senator Hugh Leatherman*

Mr. E. LeRoy "Toy" Nettles, Jr.

Mr. Edwin P. Rogers, Jr.

Mr. K.G. "Rusty" Smith, Jr.

Ms. Mindy Taylor

Mr. Richard Treme

Mr. Doug Wendel*

Mr. Frank Willis*

Representative William Witherspoon*

Mr. Marion Wright, Jr.

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As each of the nine member counties market their piece of the corner, NESA strives to bring synergy to the region by marketing the full area. Together, we are larger and stronger! NESA markets and promotes the availability of both product and opportunity. Recent marketing strategies and "corner activities" are noted herein:

- E-blast (mass email) displaying available industrial sites & buildings sent to over 400 contacts
- Charlotte Developers Luncheon held on August 25; nearly 40 professionals met for a presentation of the NESA region
- National Plastics Expo, Chicago, IL – June 19–22
- Coastal Growth Summit, Myrtle Beach, SC – August 11

Online Marketing - Surf's Up



Surf's Up along the SC Coastline

Within any business, for any specific data-search, everyone is surfing! The internet is the most efficient and accessible means for obtaining information. Understanding this trend, NESA continues to make significant strides in this direction. The "hits", or number of website visits, prove the importance of online marketing for successful business development. In June, the NESA website received over 9,800 hits; in July, though the host logging system was down for 10 days, the site still accumulated over 9,200 hits. In June, the average visitor session was just over 6 minutes & in July the average session was nearly 7.5 minutes. Online visits have originated from over 15 countries. It also stands to note that the website receives not only a good quantity of hits, but also good quality hits as well. For example, after searching available product – what is the next type of information most site selection consultants seek? You guessed it – labor data. The PathFinders regional labor study was downloaded **69** times in July, up from 5 times in June! New data and new online capabilities continue to be added, so be sure to visit often for the latest information. South Carolina's Business Corner. . . Surfs Up!

Traffic Report for [www.SCBusiness Corner.com](http://www.SCBusinessCorner.com)

June 1-30, 2006

- Total hits = 9808
- Avg. visit = 6:06 minutes

July 1 – 31, 2006*

- Total hits = 9229
- Avg. visit = 7:28 minutes

*host logging system
down, 7/10-7/18

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NESA Region

Chesterfield County

Darlington County

Dillon County

Florence County

Georgetown County

Horry County

Marion County

Marlboro County

Williamsburg County

Available Spec Buildings in the NESA Region

- Pee Dee Touchstone Energy
301,541 ft² (2005)
- FOX Spec
133,000 ft² (2001)
- Marlboro Spec
56,000 ft² (2001)
- Florence County Spec
49,300 ft² (2003)
- Chesterfield County Spec
40,000 ft² (2005)
- Loris Spec
25,000 ft² (2001)
- Lynch River Spec
10,000 ft² (2006)

Visit Us Online

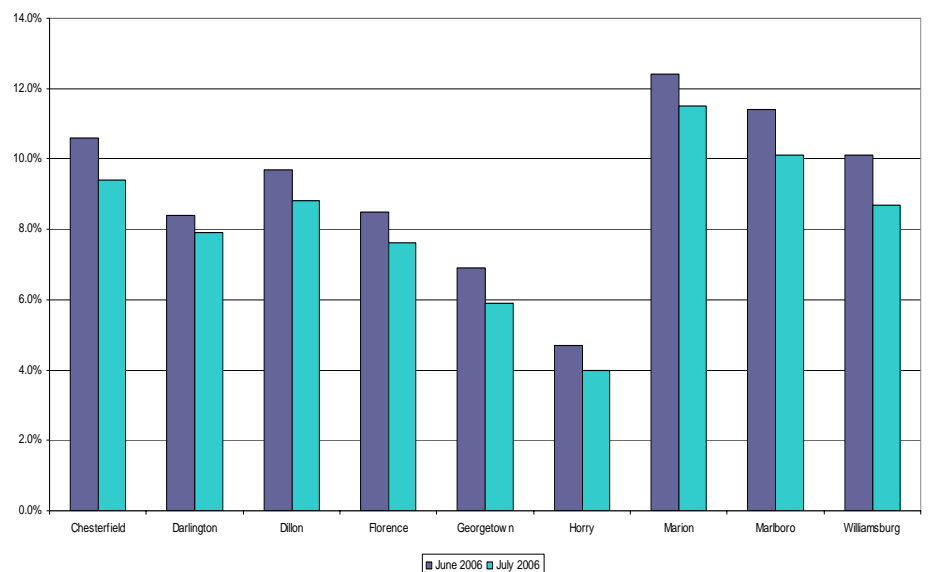
<http://www.scbusinesscorner.com>

Marketing Your Community

At a recent “Meeting of the (Economic Development) Minds,” Tonya Crist with InSite Consulting led a discussion of the latest trends in site selection. In her opening remarks, she reminded the group that in today’s environment Economic Development is being done faster, better, cheaper, and smarter. So, how do communities make sure they are getting noticed? Product. Plain and simple. Having product and having it displayed online is the number one way to make sure your community is getting a good hard look from developers, brokers, and businesses looking to expand. Yes, companies like to see other important factors within the community, but before they come for a visit they are doing research – you guessed it – online! The first filter is that of product. If you don’t have product, your community is less likely to get through the first sieve. In recent months, spec buildings have been very reliable in helping communities gain a prospective client visit. Even if the spec building isn’t the “perfect” match for the client – it gets attention and keeps the community on the “prospective” list. Crist cited the recent example of Levi Strauss in Kentucky. They found a community spec building online. After visiting and working with the local developers, they found it more beneficial to purchase land and build their own facility. Crist cited an interesting quote from an automotive manufacturing executive – “We’re not in the business of building buildings, we’re in the business of building cars!” Bottom line, product is vital. The adjacent sidebar shows a listing of spec-buildings available in the region. For additional information, as well as additional product available, please visit us online, www.scbusinesscorner.com.

Unemployment in the Corner

Recent unemployment figures (from SC ESC) show a positive trend for the NESA Region. The overall unemployment rate for the NESA region in July 2006 was 6.5%, compared to 7.4% in June 2006.



2Q 2006 Business Highlights captured in the NESAs Region

- PolyQuest, Inc. manufacturer of PET (plastic pellets) announced the completion of an additional 40,000 ft² building, doubling the size of operation in Darlington County. Employment is also anticipated to increase.
- Santee Cooper's Board approved construction of a new \$984 million coal-fired generation facility in Florence County, which could introduce as many as 1,400 new jobs during the build-up phase.
- Fed Ex Ground announced the Pee Dee Commerce Center as home to a new 87,000 ft² distribution center. The \$12 million facility expects to generate up to 100 new jobs.
- Georgetown County announced that International Paper could invest as much as \$200 million in new building and equipment over the next 5 years.
- Builders First Source announced its location in Loris Commerce Center, adding \$5 million in investment and 155 new jobs.
- Team Metal Finishing of South Carolina, located in PWG's Aynor plant site, announced \$1.5 million investment and 15 new jobs.
- The Strober Organization, one of the nation's largest providers of building materials to professional contractors, announced plans for a new manufacturing operation in Nichols. \$3 million investment & 160 new jobs are expected over the next 3 yrs.
- Rockwell Automation, located in Marlboro County, expands their current operation by 10 employees.
- Two Weyerhaeuser Plants, located in Marlboro County, purchased by Flakeboard.
- Bennettsville celebrates the opening of a new Visitor Center, a \$720,000 project aimed at promoting growth in the downtown area.

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NESA Travels to Charlotte, NC

Economic Development professionals representing each of the nine counties within the NESAs region gathered in Charlotte, NC on Friday, August 25. The lunch event, held at The Westin in Uptown Charlotte, gave NESAs professionals a chance to network with area brokers and developers. Executive Director, Jeff McKay presented an overview of the NESAs region to the 35+ attendees, highlighting many of the great business opportunities available. The keynote presentation provided regional information on population, labor force, online resources, and samples of available buildings and sites. This event displays NESAs's commitment to marketing the region and letting others know, "We are Open for Business!" Similar events are being planned in other large metro areas, such as Atlanta, GA.



Charlotte Area Developers Luncheon, Friday, August 25



The "NESAs TEAM"

Did You Know?

In 2005, Travel & Tourism provided \$14.6 billion to the SC Economy. The Grand Strand, part of the NESAs region, accounted for 1/3 of this impact.

NEWS from the CORNER is published regularly by North Eastern Strategic Alliance. Articles and data contained herein were adapted from information submitted by counties in the region. To submit content for this newsletter, please contact Marianne Langley at mlangley@scbusinesscorner.com or 843-661-4669. Contents © NESAs, 2006.