

Highlights:

- Google as a site search tool
- Examples to illustrate how our Google site search works
- Marketing plans for 2006
- BRAC 2005 - military base realignment and closures
- FTZ's - Foreign-Trade Zones
- Biotechnology clusters
- Ad Recall and Event Recall
- State EDO directories and profiles of business locations
- Service provider directories and profiles of capabilities
- Comments or suggestions

The website already has over 20,000 links to resources worldwide for corporate development, including professional services for the support of capital investment projects and business location strategies. It is attracting 300,000+ visits in 2005, up from 200,000 in 2004. Our targeted Google ads in response to searches have reached over 2 million "impressions" in the last six months.

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Search engine optimization - using Google as a tool to support business location decisions

Google has developed some interesting new features recently, such as the Google Earth service as a new way to potentially link location-related data and search results to maps and satellite imagery. It is possible to zoom in from a global search perspective to visualize a specific area and link right into more information about it.

While this is certainly a good example of very clever technology, and can yield some impressive presentations, the basic issue in business location selection is still whether the location one is reviewing is a good choice for a specific purpose.

That isn't something which can be readily determined just by looking at databases or clever imagery. It involves consideration of financial and non-financial factors from multiple sources and points of view about what is important. What looks good for tax reasons may not be as good from an HR or logistics perspective, and so forth.

Searching for relevant places

There are complex choices about what is really critical to the business, and for a specific project. The pros and cons of competing locations may not be very easy to discern. Data and images are just tools to support the decision-maker's process.

What appears easy at a superficial level is very complex in reality. Location choices will affect company performance and cash flows for a long time. There are exit costs or other risks to consider if business plans do not develop as expected. Suboptimal choices, project delays, or problems can also provide opportunities for competitors to achieve an unintended advantage.

Our website was developed with search engine optimization in mind. It takes advantage of the power of Google's very flexible and intuitive search technology to make it fast and easy to identify, research, and contact potentially relevant business locations and services in this niche market.

Traditional database screening

The traditional approach to site selection was driven by database analysis, quickly screening out many alternatives to focus research on a "short list" of places which seemed to meet basic selection criteria as the first step in the evaluation process.

This remains a useful approach, but it evolved as a blunt instrument to deal with the complexity of screening out location alternatives in such a large market. Good information was hard to find that would be sufficiently relevant, timely, reliable, and comparable between locations on specific issues of interest for high-value decisions. Data gathered for other purposes was used to superficially compare competing areas.

Searching for, not screening out

The Internet and search engines such as Google make vastly more data and timely local market knowledge and contacts available to support location decisions. This has the potential to improve the site selection process, but it may also change expectations about how much work is involved, and the value of professional assistance. The mere fact that far more and more useful data and local market knowledge is readily available does not reduce the value of professional support. It improves the capability to deliver value.

Make it easier for executives to discover your potential relevance as they search.

Please try the new Google site search feature of our website, recognizing that the large pages were designed for high resolution display settings such as 1024x768 or higher rather than old standards. For best results, use 1280x1024 or higher. Lower settings just involve more scrolling.

The Google site search feature is on the home page and as a button link at the upper right of every page :

<http://www.gdi-solutions.com/search.htm>

Once Google finds a relevant page, a simple “control f” can “find” the specific word or phrase of interest.

Examples - try a search for :

- “design build”
- “tax credits” - or try “incentives”
- BIO - or try “automotive”
- FTZ
- BRAC - or try “base closure”
- Katrina - or try “humanitarian”
- “I-80” or “I-95”
- “Fayetteville ad”
- “red river” or “green river”
- “location consultant”
- “warehouse” or “logistics”
- governors
- CRE - try “CRE NC”
- “law firms”
- projects - try “utah projects”
- any state, county, city, etc.
- any country - try China, Korea, or even Afghanistan, India
- “EU enlargement” or Europe
- service providers by name

The content is continually improving as more relevant resources are found through our research work and client relationships to share local market knowledge and profiles of service capabilities. Executive summaries, directories, and more detailed content become search paths to find whatever visitors are seeking and quickly reach the relevant contact - typically faster than the time to open their websites.

New features in 2005

Any of these new features can be found quickly through navigational links or the Google site search :

- Invest USA - state directories of economic development agencies and professional service firms.
- BRAC 2005 directory of areas affected by military base realignments and closures - both now and in past BRAC rounds
- Directory of FTZ’s - US foreign-trade zones
- The “Event Recall” feature identifies relevant exhibitors at various major trade shows
- The biotech cluster directory highlights areas and services which are targeting this industry
- The new “Ad Recall” feature will make it easier to find recent advertisers - regardless of the media, ad size, or frequency.
- The EU Enlargement directory highlights the new EU regions

2006 Marketing Plans

More new features are planned for 2006. Comments about what would be most helpful, or other suggestions for improvement, are welcome.

The focus of our work is not just to publish website content and links. That is just the response-oriented side of our work to support searches.

We can personally reach and refer executives to professionals with the relevant capabilities to support their projects. By working more actively together, our research and marketing work can reflect your own strategy.

Our 2006 marketing plan to find and refer projects is already in progress. Please contact us to participate in our 2006 referral work and to highlight your area or services.

Target Market

Major new projects > 50 jobs

Projects	Avg. Millions \$	Avg. Jobs	Total Millions \$	Total Jobs
5	\$100	1,000	\$500	5,000
20	\$50	500	\$1,000	10,000
50	\$25	250	\$1,250	12,500
75	\$10	100	\$750	7,500
150	\$5	50	\$750	7,500
Total 300	\$14	140	\$4.25 billion	42,500
NOTE:	See explanation below			
300	\$2	20	\$600	6,000
600	\$1	10	\$600	6,000

This table illustrates a simple set of assumptions about attracting major investment projects to achieve a goal of 40,000 or more new jobs per year.

This is not intended to reflect the actual mix of projects or the goal in a specific period or place. Instead, it illustrates the potential impact of a few major projects relative to many small ones. Small ones add up, but in this simple illustration, the mix of 300 large projects (>50 jobs) dwarfs the total impact of 900 smaller ones.

To achieve such goals, a professional team in regional markets around the USA can independently cultivate working relationships with the top executives at growing companies.

Many locations and service providers search for projects exclusively on their own, but this is very costly and difficult. We develop well-qualified referrals as an outsourced specialty, whether as shared or exclusive work.

What is the “cost per job” to develop a well-qualified project referral, or the total “cost of sales” to win major projects? Talk to us about our latest research and analysis on this topic. Our goal is to drive such costs down.