

resource development group

building organizations that build communities

The Anchor for Success: Why a Solid Investor Relations Framework is Essential for Economic Development Organizations

By RDG Senior Principal Amy Curtis

In today's fast-paced global economy, economic development organizations (EDOs) and chambers create environments where businesses thrive, communities flourish, and new opportunities emerge. From fostering job creation to supporting infrastructure development, these organizations' work is pivotal to the economic health of regions and countries alike.

If your EDO is a public-private partnership, a substantial investor relations (IR) framework is key to its success. Yet, this is one of the most often overlooked pillars. IR is crucial whether you aim to attract foreign direct investment, facilitate public-private partnerships, or cultivate a positive image for the region.



When I began my role at Resource Development Group (RDG), I aimed to provide insights from the consulting perspective. As a former Director of Investor Relations at a chamber/EDO, I witnessed how IR could become "lost in the shuffle" despite good intentions. I often felt stuck in a cycle of addressing urgent issues, handling daily responsibilities, and managing special projects. Before I knew it, it was time to reevaluate our strategy, perform a feasibility study, and initiate fundraising again. "Wait! How did this funding cycle end so quickly? I feel like I was just here!"

So, what can be done, why is it important, and how can RDG help?

At its core, IR work focuses on building and maintaining strong relationships between an organization and its investors, including individual and institutional stakeholders. In the context of economic development, this involves creating transparent, consistent, and mutually beneficial communication and engagement with investors. Most organizations do a great job establishing these relationships, but the difficulty lies in setting aside time and resources to maintain these connections.

An effective IR framework reinforces ROI, clarifies the region's economic landscape, growth potential, and investment opportunities. By managing these relationships well, EDOs can ensure that investors are satisfied and become long-term supporters of the region's economic ambitions. Investors who feel informed, valued, and connected to the region's goals will likely remain engaged, fostering sustained growth. Specific areas of an IR strategy should include:

1. Creating effective communication channels
2. Providing valuable and relevant peer-to-peer engagement (committees, task forces, mission trips, etc.)
3. Fostering long-term partnerships
4. Facilitating collaboration
5. Advocating for (regional) growth
6. Reporting on performance and impact

RDG assists our clients with IR consulting when a little extra help is warranted mid-funding cycle. This engagement allows our team to work alongside EDOs and chambers to continue the efforts started during a feasibility study and/or campaign cycle. Our collaboration helps organizations stay focused on their investors and overarching strategy. RDG's wide range of experience working with organizations of all sizes provides a unique national perspective. Additionally, this role may include coaching new IR hires to ensure continued success.

"The Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership has had a 20+ year history of success with Resource Development Group on planning and fundraising campaigns. When we decided to hire our first-ever Investor Relations Manager, we knew RDG would be our go-to resource to assist with professional development for the position. Amy and the team have done an outstanding job preparing Alexis to be successful quickly in the new role and providing valuable strategic advice on investor relations that is helping our entire staff. They should be the first call for any economic development organization needing this service!"

-Justin Horvath, President and CEO,



The key to creating a successful IR strategy is developing one that your organization **can effectively implement and manage**. When EDOs prioritize IR, they enhance their ability to attract capital and strengthen the foundations for broader regional prosperity. By ensuring investors feel informed, valued, and connected to the region's vision, EDOs can secure the support they need to succeed now and in the future.

If you want to learn more, contact us!

To learn more about Amy Curtis go here. Please go here to visit the RDG Interactive Blog.



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