

SWFL Economic Development Partners Selects Agency for Marketing Campaign

Oct 6, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: October 6, 2008

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SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS SELECTS AGENCY FOR REGIONAL BRANDING AND MARKETING CAMPAIGN

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA, FL., October 6, 2008 – The Southwest Florida Economic Development Partners, a volunteer initiative of the economic development executives working on regional branding and marketing opportunities for Collier, Lee, Charlotte, Sarasota, Glades and Hendry counties, has selected the creative marketing firm of Chisano Marketing Group to develop its new regional branding and marketing campaign.

"We are excited about the many opportunities to regionally brand and market economic diversification in Southwest Florida," said Tammie Nemecek, President of the Economic Development Council of Collier County. "Chisano Marketing Group will be instrumental in our efforts to create an image for Southwest Florida as a place to relocate and/or grow your business, particularly those companies providing high-wage, value-added jobs."

Chisano Marketing Group is a full-service marketing firm with offices in Orlando, Tampa and Dayton, Ohio. The firm was chosen from a pool of agencies reviewed by the Southwest Florida Economic Development Partners to provide a wide scope of services aimed at raising the regional appeal of Southwest Florida as a destination for businesses.

"The hiring of a creative marketing firm is an important first step toward accomplishing our goal of developing a regional identity and brand for Southwest Florida," said Jim Moore, Director for the Lee County Office of Economic Development. "This is truly the first time that such a regional initiative has taken place in this part of the state."

Don Root, Director of the Economic Development Office of Charlotte County, noted the initiative could encourage more businesses to expand here and bring in more grants to spur economic development. "This gives us an opportunity to work collectively and leverage our regional assets and lead the state of Florida into a new era of job creation."

Effective October 6, 2008, Chisano Marketing Group will work to understand the various communities in the region along with the unique assets and infrastructure and coalesce an image that effectively demonstrates the regional ability to attract and grow the targeted business clusters that will produce high-wage jobs and diversify the region's economy.

"The communities throughout our region are quite diverse. But this regional partnership provides us with a valuable opportunity to work together toward the common goal of supporting economic development in Southwest Florida," said Ron Zimmerly, Economic Development Manager for the Hendry County Economic Development Council, Inc.

Tracy Whirls, Executive Director of the Glades County Economic Development Council, commented, "We are very pleased to be part of this new and exciting initiative. The economic development leaders in the six counties of our region are working toward the shared objective of improving the economic environment throughout Southwest Florida."

Chisano Marketing Group will begin by facilitating a meeting with representatives from the various economic development organizations throughout the region and select a group of other stakeholders. Information from the meeting will then be used to create a written communications and marketing plan that will include a timeline and detailed budget to implement at a future date the following items or others as deemed appropriate:

Regional identity and brand development, to include new logo and motto. This will also include incorporating logo-identity into the design of letterhead, envelopes, website and other outreach material.

Creation of initial marketing collateral.

Newsletter, brochure and flyer templates.

Web-ready logo artwork.

Development of a detailed communications plan and budget to inform regional stakeholders and target industry businesses within and outside the region. The plan will include a menu of choices from which the stakeholders can choose.

"Southwest Florida has so many unique assets that businesses desire in choosing exactly where to locate and whether to expand," said Kathy Baylis, President of the Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County. "This initiative will help promote these assets to more businesses and allow them to understand what this region has to offer."

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