



WHERE BUSINESS GROWS.



Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) Volunteer Program





» Job growth

- 80% of new jobs growth will happen from companies already in our community

» Concentrated effort to connect businesses with resources

» Proactive approach to economic development

» Simply asking – “How’s business?”

» Provides a single point of contact for companies

» Building relationships

» Thank them for doing business here

- They hear about all of the attention new attractions receive

Why BRE?

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» Requirements

- Confidentiality
- Training
- Membership

» Role

- Share their expertise
- Be a Chamber advocate
- Be our eyes and ears
- Think like an economic developer

» Our ultimate goal

- Develop their own outreach
- Referrals

Volunteers involvement



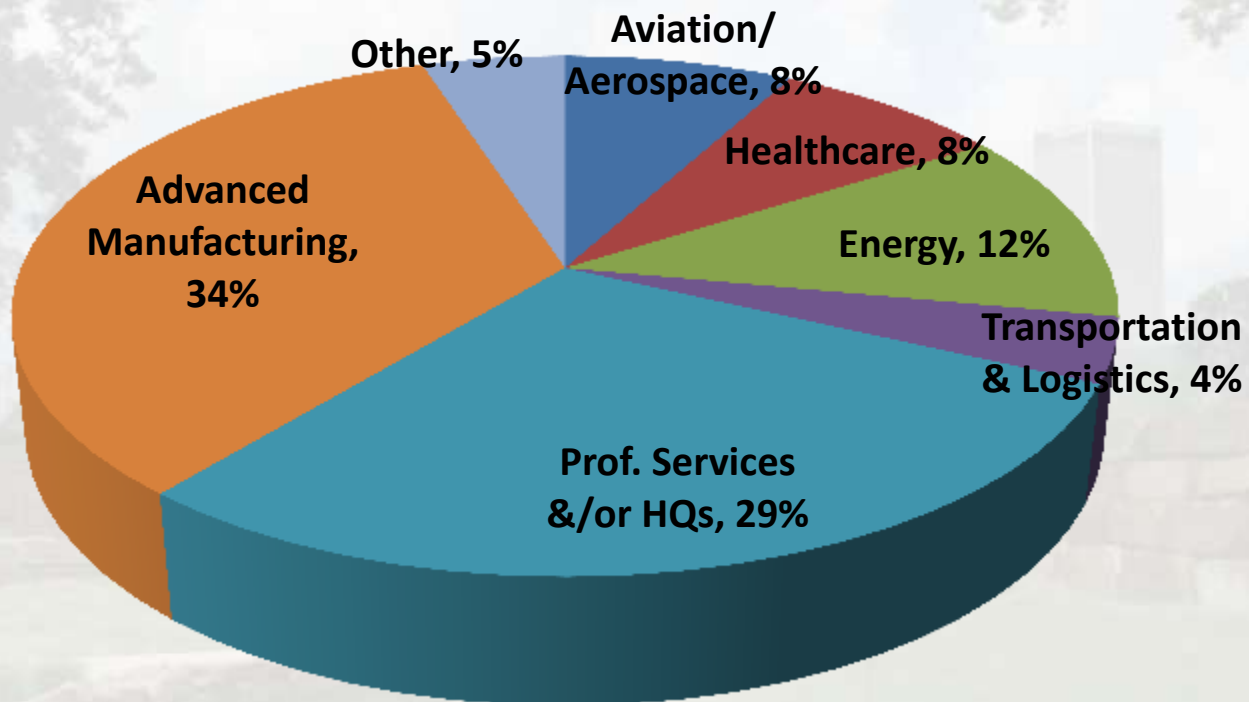
- » Not just calling on member companies
- » All volunteers must be members (member recruitment)
- » Providing value
 - personalizing what we do
- » Friendly call
- » Must deter from talking about membership at the visit
- » Hard to crack companies – use BRE approach



- » Lead investors engaged
- » Launched program in August 2009
- » 400 visits to date in 2010
- » 135 volunteers
- » Target industries:
 - Aviation & Aerospace
 - Healthcare
 - Professional Services & HQs
 - Energy
 - Manufacturing
 - Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics



Industry clusters



» BRE visits for 2010 account for 48,500 employees in the Tulsa area



- » Set appointment
- » Get volunteers
- » Research
- » Visit (30 minutes – 1 hour)
- » Tour if applicable
- » Debrief
- » Follow up and thank you
- » Follow through



» At the visits

- Keep it conversational
- Think relationally
- Ask broad-based questions
- Provide value to the conversation, but don't make false promises
- Demonstrate appreciation
- Understand the company
- Listen, don't talk
- Repeat actions items at the end

» Identity trends and opportunities

- Look at aggregate information
- Think strategically



- » Where is the company headquartered? (research)
- » What are the company's major concerns, issues, or challenges?
- » What are some upcoming opportunities for the company?
- » What is the historical sales trend at the local facility?
- » How many employees do they have nationally or globally?
- » How many employees do they have locally?
- » What is the historical sales trend?
- » Has the company had any issues with employee retention?
- » Has the company had any issues with employee recruitment?



- » What type of workforce training is in place?
 - » Is the company taking advantage of any local tax incentives? (Quality Jobs)
 - » Is company creating new products and/or services (diversifying)?
 - » Does the company plan to establish new operations, consolidate, or expand outside the area?
 - » Does the company have any legislative concerns?
 - » Who are the company's major competitors?
 - » Does the community of Tulsa present any challenges for the company?
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- » Identify your gut feelings



Key outcomes

- » Publicity
- » Expansions
- » Advocacy

“Talk about a valuable resource! Thanks for including us in your busy itinerary. We’re always happy to participate, promote, and pitch-in wherever you might need us! Thanks for the leads, the links, and the referrals.”

Brent Blackmon, Business Development, United Warehouse

Earned Media

- » ***RX for business 'help' plans: Struggling firms can get advice***
Tulsa World, 1/17/10
- » ***Is Tulsa’s Economy Improving?***
News Channel 8, 5/3/10
- » ***Tulsa companies join state Quality Jobs Program***
Tulsa World, 5/11/10



Success

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- » Online database
- » Purchased by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce
- » Open to all economic developers in the state
- » Functions
 - Contact lists
 - Journal entries
 - Visits
 - Referrals
 - Attach documents
 - Reporting (charts, graphs)
- » Creates a unifying tool for partners to enhance collaboration





- » Developing a regional program
- » What does that look like?
- » Business walks
 - Mini BRE visits in every community in a metro area organized by each community but all on the same day
 - Visited businesses are asked three questions: How's business? What do you like about doing business in your area? How can business be made better? (15 min. visits each)
 - Volunteer engagement
 - Help us target who needs immediate attention
 - Media buzz
- » Reports and developing strategy

Looking forward

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