



Digital Marketing Awards 2012

fDi RECOGNISES THE BEST DIGITAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS FROM AGENCIES AROUND THE WORLD. **COURTNEY FINGAR** REPORTS

The business world went digital long ago, but investment promotion agencies (IPAs) in many cases have been slower to fully utilise online platforms to market the locations they represent. But digital marketing is essential to being competitive in the FDI arena, and IPAs are now racing to develop their online presence and embrace social media. At a time of reduced government budgets and pressure to lower expenditure, the clever IPAs are looking to maximise online advantages. But what makes for a successful digital marketing strategy? What innovative approaches by IPAs are bringing results? Which cities, regions and countries are out front in the online marketplace? Which locations are doing the best job at digital marketing?

fDi set out to find out which

locations are the leading performers in this field. A process of information-gathering that first began this summer has culminated in the announcement of the results of **fDi**'s first-ever awards for digital marketing excellence, with IDA Ireland capturing first prize. New York City Economic Development Corporation, Invest Victoria, Scottish Enterprise and CINDE (the Costa Rican Investment Promotion Agency) rounded out the overall top five.

Innovation

IDA Ireland was also cited as the best country-level IPA for digital marketing, as well as the most innovative (of any type of IPA), and its website was rated number one globally. Another Irish organisation, ConnectIreland, a government-led incentivised jobs referral programme that was ▶

TOP OVERALL DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

| RANK | AGENCY | LOCATION TYPE |
|------|--|---------------|
| 1 | IDA Ireland | Country |
| 2 | New York City Economic Development Corporation | City |
| 3 | Invest Victoria | Region |
| 4 | Scottish Enterprise | Country |
| 5 | CINDE (Costa Rica) | Country |
| 6= | Columbus Region | City |
| 6= | Greater Halifax Partnership | City |
| 8= | Calgary Economic Development | City |
| 8= | Invest Hong Kong | City |
| 10= | Nova Scotia Business | Region |
| 10= | World Business Chicago | City |

TOP WEBSITES

| RANK | AGENCY AND WEBSITE | LOCATION TYPE |
|------|---|---------------|
| 1 | IDA Ireland www.idaireland.com | Country |
| 2 | Columbus Region www.columbusregion.com | City |
| 3 | Scottish Enterprise www.sdi.co.uk/invest | Country |
| 4 | Calgary Economic Development www.calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com | City |
| 5= | Invest Hong Kong www.investhk.gov.hk | City |
| 5= | New York City Economic Development Corporation www.nycedc.com | City |
| 7 | ConnectIreland www.connectireland.com | Country |
| 8 | Nova Scotia Business www.novascotiabusiness.com | Region |
| 9 | Invest Victoria www.investvictoria.com | Region |
| 10 | World Business Chicago www.worldbusinesschicago.com | City |
| 11 | Liverpool Vision www.liverpoolvision.com | City |
| 12= | Ohio Aerospace Hub www.ohioaerospacehub.com | EZ |
| 12= | Ras Al Khaimah Free Trade Zone www.rakftz.com | EZ |
| 14= | CINDE (Costa Rica) www.cinde.org | Country |
| 14= | Vasterbotten Investment Agency www.viavasterbotten.se | Region |
| 16 | Richardson Economic Development Partnership www.telecomcorridor.com/international | City |
| 17 | Greater Halifax Partnership www.greaterhalifax.com | City |
| 18 | Proexport Colombia www.proexport.com.co | Country |
| 19= | Berlin Partner www.businesslocationcenter.de | City |
| 19= | London Economic Development Corporation www.ledc.com | City |

BEST USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

| RANK | AGENCY | LOCATION TYPE |
|------|--|---------------|
| 1 | New York City Economic Development Corporation | City |
| 2 | Proexport Colombia | Country |
| 3 | Greater Halifax Partnership | City |
| 4 | London Economic Development Corporation | City |
| 5 | Liverpool Vision | City |
| 6 | City of Hamilton | City |
| 7= | IDA Ireland | Country |
| 7= | Invest Victoria | Region |
| 9 | Calgary Economic Development | City |
| 10 | WestHolland Foreign Investment Agency | Region |



IDA Ireland's top website for digital marketing

appointed by IDA in an effort to attract investment through the use of the global diaspora, placed among the top 10 websites and came third for most innovative.

New York City's economic development agency also performed well, not only coming second overall but also coming top for its use of social media, placing fourth for most innovative and ranking first among cities.

Australia's Invest Victoria was rated the best region as well as third overall, while its website placed in the top 10.

Ras Al Khaimah Free Trade Zone Authority triumphed in the category for special economic zones, with Daegu Gyeongbuk Free Economic Zone Authority coming second, Ohio Aerospace Hub third, Lodz Special Economic Zone fourth and Klaipeda Free Economic Zone fifth. Ohio Aerospace Hub and RAK FTZ both had websites rated in the top 20.

Invest Hong Kong was another strong performer, coming third among cities, joint eighth overall, joint fifth for best website and joint 10th for most innovative.

Canadian triumphs

Canadian organisations were well represented at both the city and provincial level in the awards. The Greater Halifax Partnership came sixth overall followed by Calgary Economic Development at joint eighth and Nova Scotia Business at joint 10th. The London Economic Development Corporation, from Ontario, ranked fourth for its use of social media and its fellow Ontarian city Hamilton was sixth in the same category.

And, proving that size is no barrier to a successful showing in the online arena, Richardson,

TOP CITY DIGITAL MARKETING

| RANK | AGENCY | COUNTRY |
|------|--|----------|
| 1 | New York City Economic Development Corporation | US |
| 2 | Calgary Economic Development | Canada |
| 3= | Invest Hong Kong | China |
| 3= | World Business Chicago | US |
| 3= | Greater Halifax Partnership | Canada |
| 6 | London Economic Development Corporation | Canada |
| 7 | Columbus Region | US |
| 8 | Liverpool Vision | UK |
| 9 | Berlin Partner | Germany |
| 10 | Invest in Bogota | Colombia |

TOP REGIONAL DIGITAL MARKETING

| RANK | AGENCY | COUNTRY |
|------|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Invest Victoria | Australia |
| 2 | Nova Scotia Business | Canada |
| 3 | Vojvodina Investment Promotion | Serbia |
| 4 | Vasterbotten Investment Agency | Sweden |
| 5 | WestHolland Foreign Investment Agency | Netherlands |

TOP COUNTRY DIGITAL MARKETING

| RANK | AGENCY | COUNTRY |
|------|---|------------|
| 1 | IDA Ireland | Ireland |
| 2 | CINDE | Costa Rica |
| 3 | Scottish Enterprise | UK |
| 4 | Proexport Colombia | Colombia |
| 5 | Agence Marocaine de Développement des Investissements Morocco | |

TOP ECONOMIC ZONE DIGITAL MARKETING

| RANK | AGENCY | COUNTRY |
|------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Ras Al Khaimah Free Trade Zone | UAE |
| 2 | Daegu Gyeongbuk Free Economic Zone | South Korea |
| 3 | Ohio Aerospace Hub | US |
| 4 | Lodz Special Economic Zone | Poland |
| 5 | Klaipeda Free Economic Zone | Lithuania |

Texas, with a population of roughly 100,000, appeared among the top 20 websites.

Some of the independent judges who helped score the competition weighed in on what they discovered during the assessment process.

“In our analysis of the digital marketing strategies, we have observed that the most successful IPAs are very active in the key criteria for successful digital marketing: visitor tracking, innovation, effective use of social media, and a modern and professional website

[which is marketed] through search engine optimisation and with clear information and ease of contact.

Those that are most active in these criteria have scored highly, notably IDA Ireland which we ranked top of the Overall Best Digital Marketing award,” economic development consultancy IBT Partners stated in a summary of its findings from the judging exercise.

“We have observed that the quality and originality of the IPAs’ marketing strategies determine whether they are able to transform

website visitors into potential leads for investment. We have also noted that there exists great disparity between the participating IPAs, indicating how recent the realisation of the immense importance of the online world has been and the varying extents to which individual IPAs have been able to react to this realisation.”

Engaging online

However, IBT Partners predicts this disparity will lessen as more and more agencies realise the effectiveness and importance of a successful digital marketing strategy.

Anatalio Ubalde, CEO of GIS Planning, a provider of online economic development solutions, felt that cities put in the best efforts with their websites. “The websites for cities were a distinct cut above those for any of the other entrant categories, mostly in terms of design aesthetics, but also often in terms of the content presented,” he said. He singled out Invest Hong Kong’s website for particular attention, saying it was his top choice for its “top-notch” design, “informative and stylish” videos, varied information and logical layout.

He was also impressed by Invest in Bogota’s “simple and effective website design”. He said: “It was very clear about what it wanted to communicate. There were other websites that may have had more content, but that did a poor job of prioritising what the location wanted to present first and foremost about itself.”

He considered ConnectIreland to be the most innovative because of the intriguing idea behind its incentive-based ambassador programme. “The video explaining how this programme works was particularly well done,” he added.

He also offered some advice to organisations in need of a digital marketing upgrade. “Many websites used slideshows on their homepages to effectively communicate key points as to why a location is a good place to invest. This is a best practice that some of the lower ranking locations should really consider,” he said. “Several of the websites that had an English version had linkable pages that were not in English, which was very frustrating. Several also had links that [didn’t work], which reflects very poorly on a location’s professionalism.”

MOST INNOVATIVE DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

| RANK | AGENCY | LOCATION TYPE |
|------|--|---------------|
| 1 | IDA Ireland | Country |
| 2 | Nova Scotia Business | Region |
| 3 | ConnectIreland | Country |
| 4 | New York City Economic Development Corporation | City |
| 5= | Proexport Colombia | Country |
| 5= | Ventspils City Council | City |
| 7 | World Business Chicago | City |
| 8 | Invest Victoria | Region |
| 9 | CINDE (Costa Rica) | Country |
| 10= | Greater Halifax Partnership | City |
| 10= | Invest Hong Kong | City |



Ireland's investment promotion agency has topped fDi's Digital Marketing Awards

Methodology

fDi Magazine invited representatives of investment promotion agencies, economic development organisations and others charged with attracting FDI to complete a 15 question survey on their digital marketing strategy and initiatives. We received over 50 entries from all regions of the world; and from organisations representing locations at all levels (city, region, country and special economic zone). A panel of internal and external judges independently reviewed and ranked the entries across eight categories.

Each judge submitted lists of their chosen top 10 overall digital marketing strategies (including investment promotion agencies of all geographies and location type); top websites; top social media strategies; most innovative strategies; as well as their preferences for best among cities, regions, countries and economic zones.

The fDi Benchmark research team devised a scoring system based on a scale of 0 (lowest ranking location) to 100 (highest ranking location) and applied this to the judges' ranking of the respondents to give the final results.

The ranking was based purely on the survey the entrants submitted. The judges then came to their own findings by assessing that information, and by visiting any relevant organisation websites and social media profiles provided. ■

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