

# Brand YOU

## Personal Branding for Effectiveness and Success

A Presentation to the Georgia Tech  
Basic Economic Development Course  
March 10, 2015



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# Why SEDC?



- ▶ **Top Economic Development Professionals in the Country**

- ▶ **Affordable Professional Development Programs**

Annual conference for 2015 will be held in Savannah, GA at the Hyatt Regency Hotel with a theme of *“Bridges to Success, Trade, Talent and Technology Driving Job Creation.”*

2015 Meet the Consultants- Chicago, March 31- April 1<sup>st</sup>

- ▶ **Site Location Consultants**

2015- Chicago, March 31- April 1<sup>st</sup>

Annual Conference, August 2015, Savannah, GA

## Want to customize your relationship management system with site location consultants/advisors?

*The SEDC has an online database of over 50 of the country's top consultants with information related to the best ways to communicate with them. The following example is online and also available in Excel. This information alone is worth the price of membership!*

Mark M. Sweeney, Sr. Principal  
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Greenville, SC, 29601  
(864) 672-1600 (864) 672-1600  
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- 1. Will you take meetings in your office from economic development professionals? Yes**
- 2. If yes, what are your preferred days/ times or other conditions (like length of meeting), if any? Any day. Arrive here at 11:30 am, chat in house, then stroll out for lunch, depart about 1:00 pm.**
- 3. Are you open to invitations for Familiarization Tours in communities/regions or events where you spend time getting to know economic developers? Yes**
- 4. If yes, what works best for you? Conditions? Weekends, weekdays, times of year, etc.? Totally dependent on circumstances at the time - sometimes weekdays are better, sometimes, weekends, sometimes a combination. Any season.**

5. Do you wish to receive email updates from economic development professionals? **No**
6. Do you wish to receive unsolicited "snail mail"? **Yes**
7. If yes, how frequently is appropriate for "snail mail"? **Quarterly**
8. Do you have a geographic area in which you focus your practice? **No**
9. In which areas do you focus your primary business? Please select all that apply. **Office, Headquarters, Manufacturing, Distribution, Alternative Energy**
10. In what year did you start practicing as a Site Selection Consultant? **1989**
11. In what year did you start at your current firm? **2000**
12. Please estimate how much of your annual client work is relevant to communities in the 17-State SEDC region. **70%**

## Ways to Build your Brand



# Ways to Build Your Brand

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**Let's discuss these ways to brand yourself.**

- 1. Be an Expert in Your Field**
- 2. Make Yourself an Asset**
- 3. Be a “Reliable Source”**
- 4. Networking**
- 5. Build Trust and Recognition**
- 6. Make Yourself Easy to Find**



# Ways to Build Your Brand

- **Be an Expert in Your Field**
  - Start to think about what you are truly expert at and how it underlies your “personal brand.”
  - Create a “Portfolio” – news clips of deals, any mentions of you in the media, articles or papers you may have written, photos of groundbreakings, etc.
  - Develop ways to showcase your expertise and successes.

# Ways to Build Your Brand

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- **Make Yourself an Asset**
  - By branding yourself, you become *the asset* and the product you market is your set of skills and services.
  - When you're the asset, your business revolves around you and therefore you're irreplaceable!
  - Remember, this is the value proposition you offer the customer—You can deliver better than anyone else.

# Ways to Build Your Brand

- **Be a “Reliable Source”**
  - **Master the information regarding any particular transaction or set of circumstances**
    - Accuracy is key
    - Understand the nuances others might miss
  - **When and where feasible, make yourself available to reporters and bloggers**
    - They will return to you if you provide good intelligence
  - **Create information – “News You Can Use”—for interested parties**
  - **Write articles for industry-related publications—in print or online**

# Ways to Build Your Brand

- **Networking**
- **The “Four Rules”**
  - **Mutualism**
  - **Giving**
  - **Targeting**
  - **Reconnecting**
- **Attending Meetings and Conferences still crucial**
- **You can expand beyond through social networks and industry-related online communications**
- **Volunteer for committees related to your area of expertise and to make presentations**

# Ways to Build Your Brand

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- **Build Trust and Recognition**
  - **Deliver what you say you will—Every Time**  
**“JDWYSYWD”**
  - **Go out of your way to make things right if something goes wrong**
  - **Make sure your image reinforces what you offer**

# Ways to Build Your Brand

- **Make Yourself Easy to Find—and Remember!**
  - **Packaging or “Brand Real Estate”**
    - **The Basics:**
      - Business Card—with picture, brand statement and contact info
      - [mydropcard.com](http://mydropcard.com) or [rmbirme.com](http://rmbirme.com) for distributing your business card
      - LinkedIn profile, Facebook, Twitter
    - **Advanced:**
      - Blog / Website
      - Portfolio—CD, Web or Print
      - Wardrobe

# Branding and Economic Development

# Branding and Economic Development

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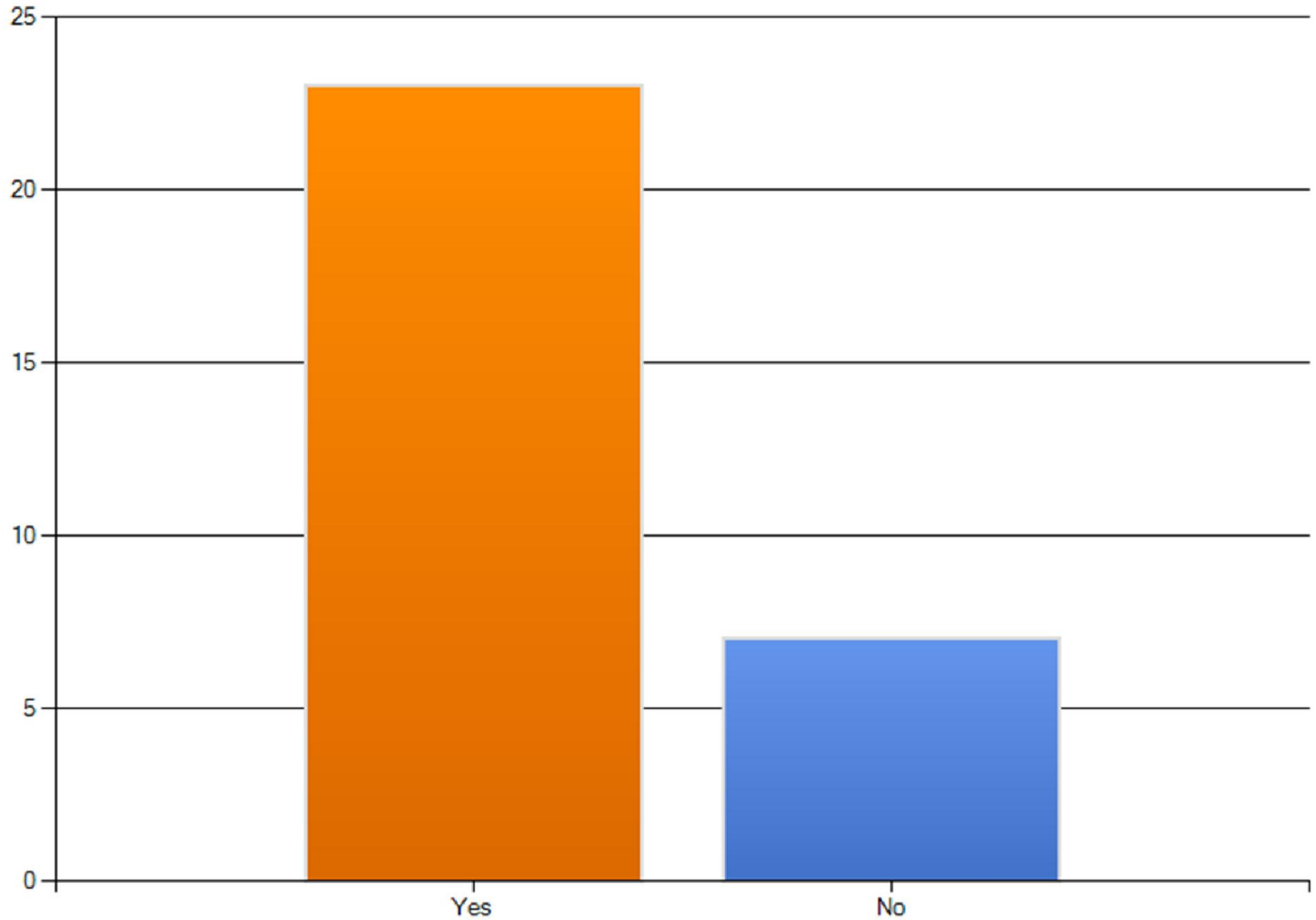
**What do Site Selection Consultants think about personal branding for economic development professionals?**

**SEDC conducted a brief survey and asked their opinions. The following responses are from 32 national consultants/advisors.**



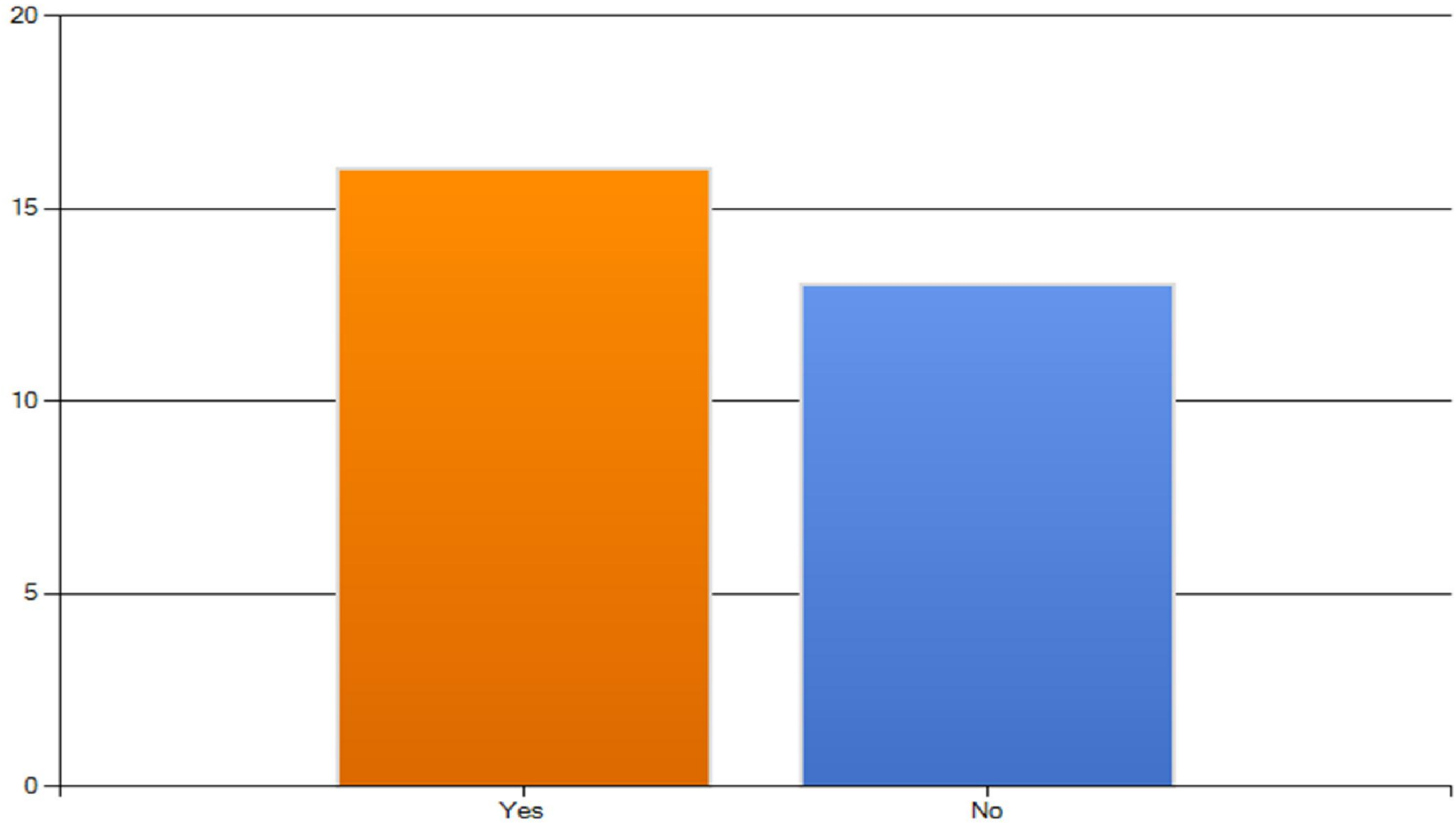
# Survey Results

In general, are personal brands important for economic development professionals?



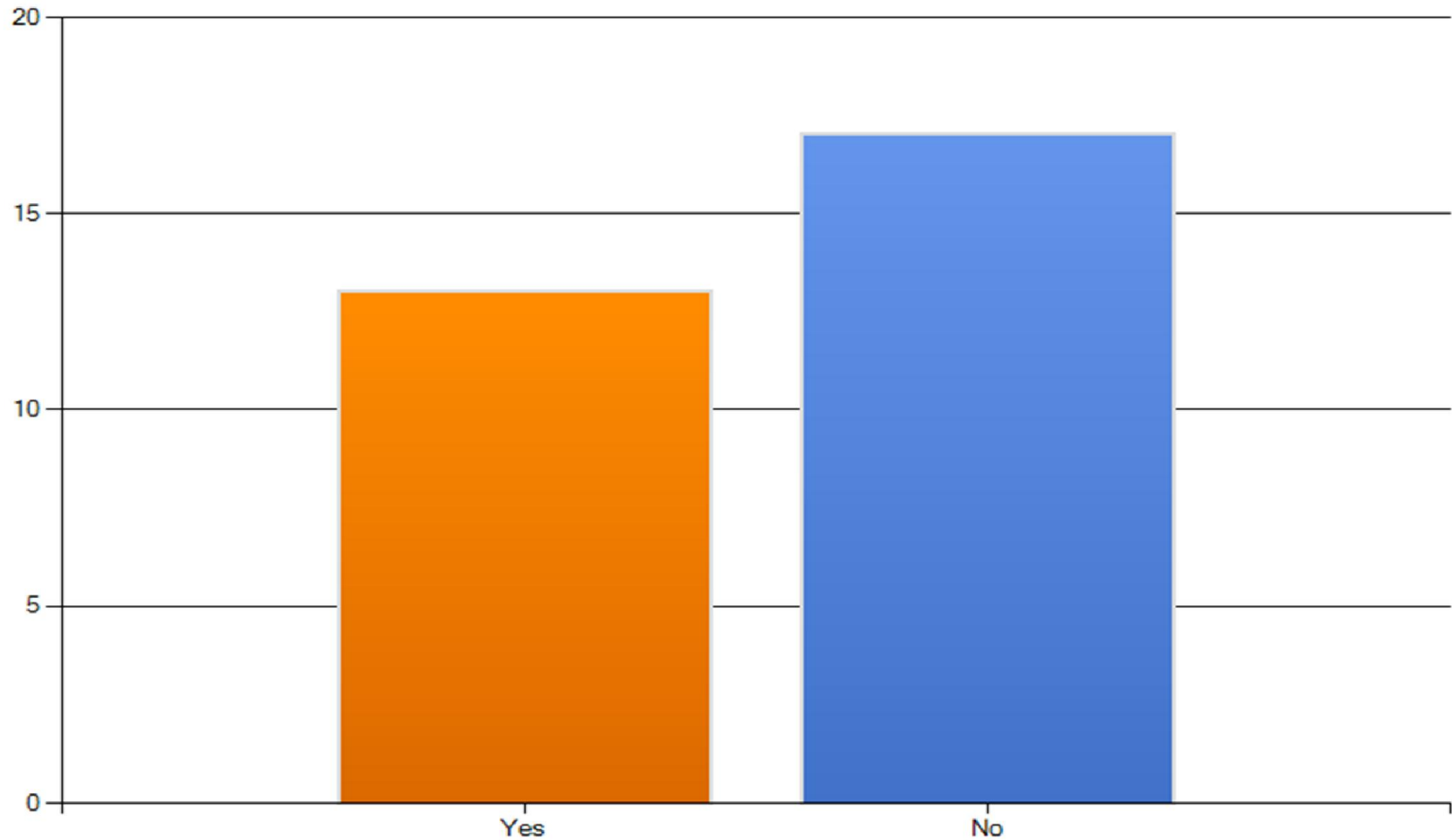
# Survey Results

Has the particular "brand" of an economic developer ever influenced your decision TO SEND them an RFI?



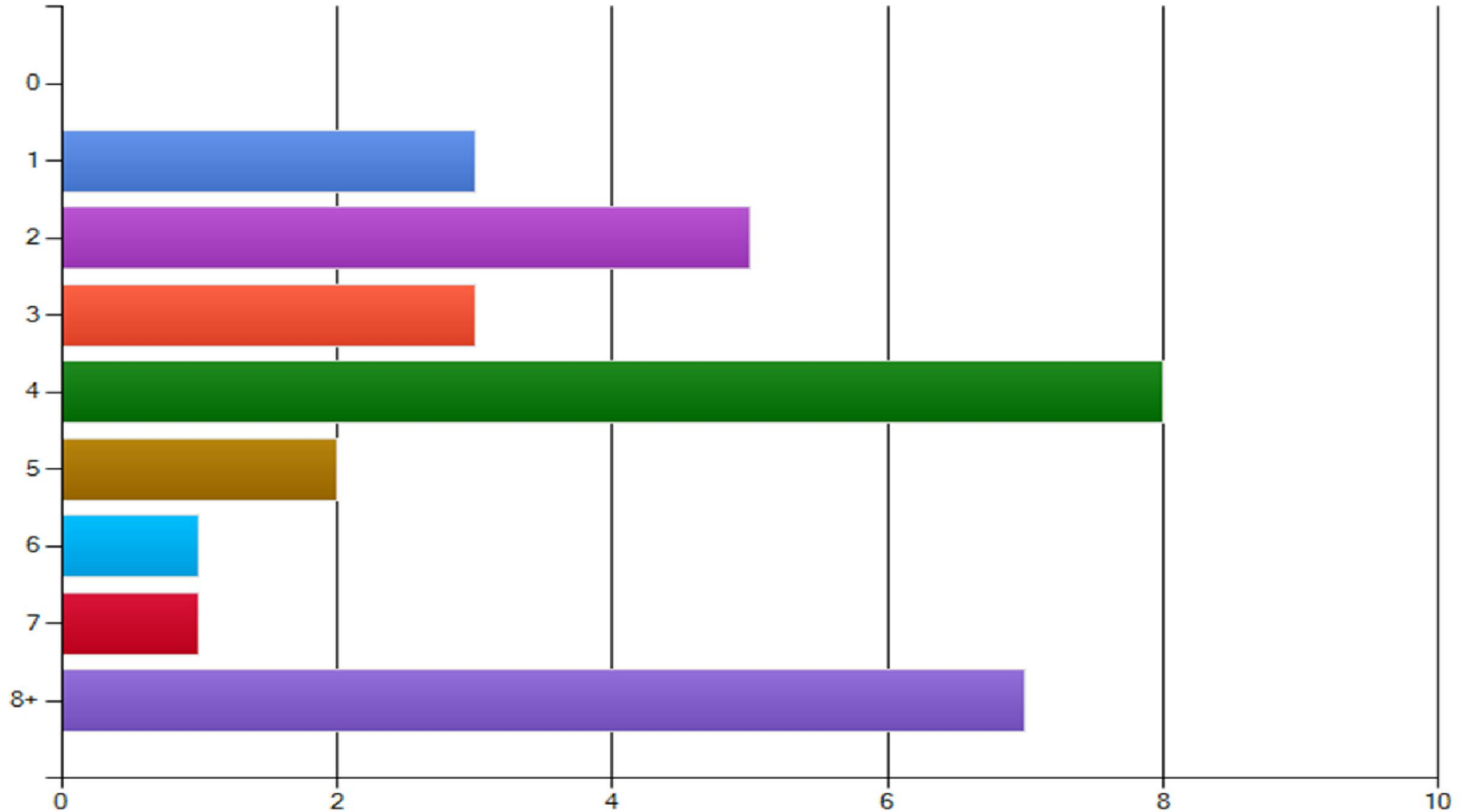
# Survey Results

**Individual brands can be negative too. Has the negative "brand" of an economic developer ever influenced your decision NOT TO send them an RFI?**



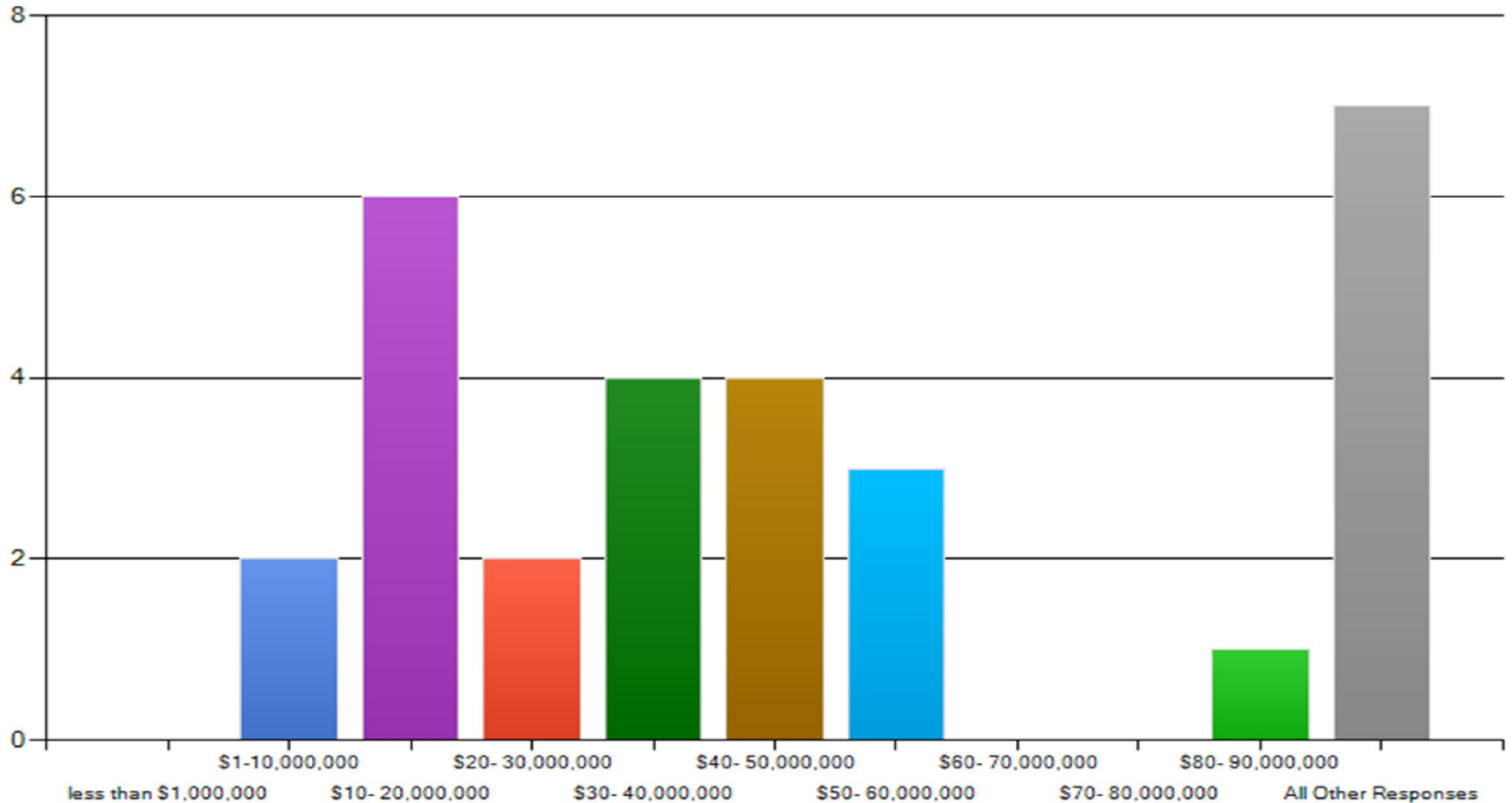
# Survey Results

Approximately how many site location projects did you work on last year?



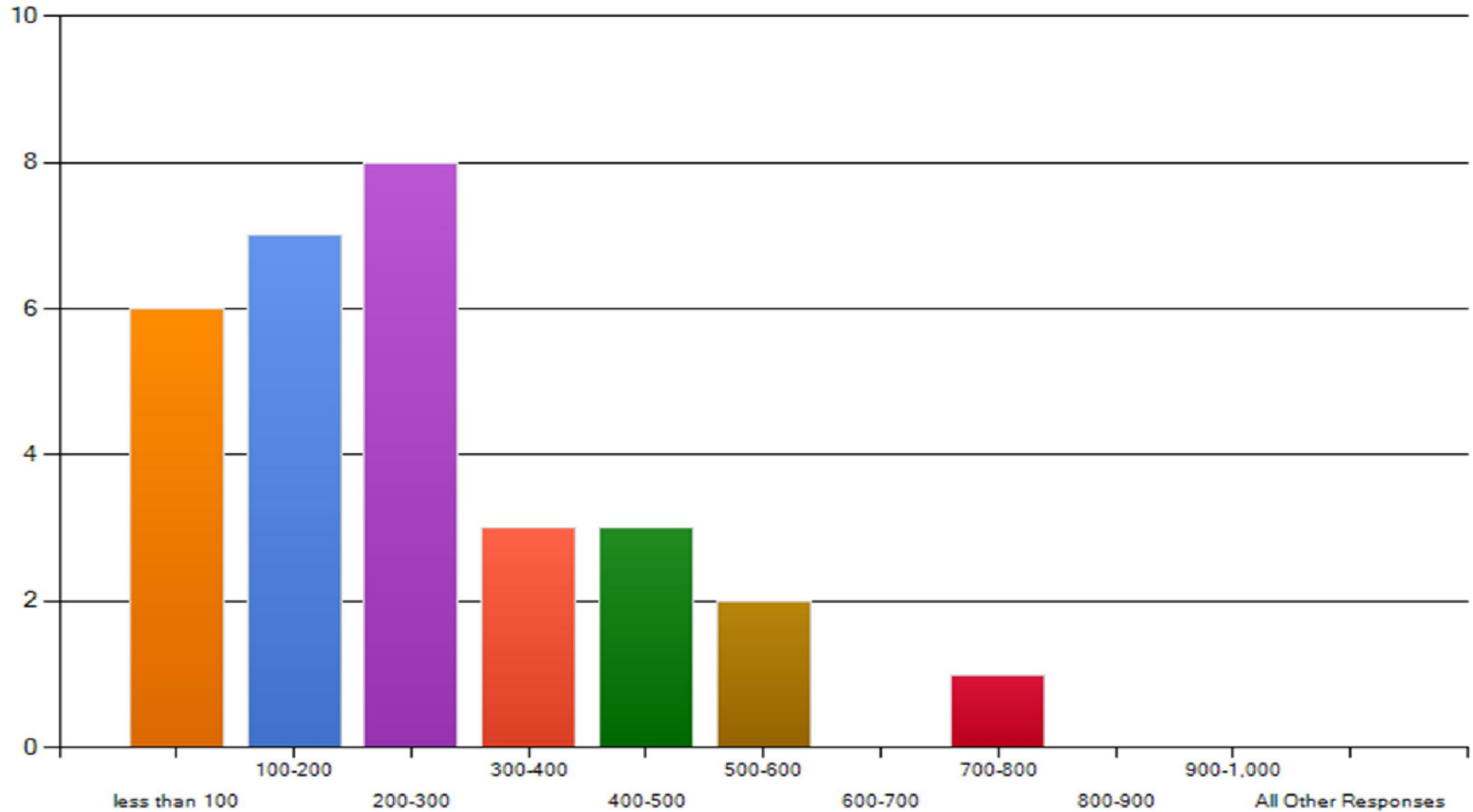
# Survey Results

What has been the average investment of the projects you worked on within the last year?



# Survey Results

What has been the average number of jobs announced with the projects you worked on within the last year?



- **Question: What would you consider to be strong brands for an economic developer to cultivate?**

**(For example, knowledgeable in a particular industry, good negotiator, strong finance background, excellent communicator, deal closer, etc.)**

# Survey Results—Verbatims

What would you consider to be strong brands for an economic developer to cultivate?

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- **Listener, focused, positive energy, advocate**
- **Responsive, knowledgeable, reputable**
- **Responsiveness to customer, understand the customer**
- **Possessing the ability and wherewithal to put a deal together in a timely manner.**
- **Knowledgeable about a particular industry; good resource in general for information gathering (i.e. you know you can call them and even if they don't know the answer, they know where to find it); good problem solver**
- **Subject matter expert with strong client relation skills including effective network of resources**



# Survey Results—Verbatims

What would you consider to be strong brands for an economic developer to cultivate?

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- **Knowledge, leadership, personable & reputation**
- **Communication; knowledge; proven ability to deliver**
- **Knowledge about the area in general with the ability to get specific information if requested. Also able to expedite through different levels of bureaucracy.**
- **Experience in dealing with a variety of different uses**
- **CANDOR, WHICH BUILDS TRUST**
- **Empowered by a community/region to speak for that region. Client-focused. Excellent communicator. Apolitical.**

# Survey Results—Verbatims

What would you consider to be strong brands for an economic developer to cultivate? \_\_\_\_\_

- **Thrives on work; empowered to commit for the "community," knows the power structure and key decision makers; trusted by government officials; ability to craft creative solutions**
- **Knowledgeable. Manager. Politically astute. Successful in closing deals. Excellent manager of client relationships**
- **Personal integrity and being a leader**
- **Knowledge of industry - distribution/warehousing/manufacturing. Knowledge of all of the incentives truly available. How to get "governor's deal money" into the deals**
- **Reliable, industrious, smart, good listener and good learner, curious, timely, analytical, verbal, loyal, professional**

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**Survey results for “*strong brands for economic developers*” were broken down by category.**

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# **Knowledge/Technical Ability Related Brand suggestions**

**22 words/phrases, or 47% of responses**

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- **Knowledge** (9 responses for 19% of total)
    - **Knowledge (4 responses)**
    - **Knowledge about the area in general with the ability to get specific information if requested.**
    - **Knowledge of industry - distribution/warehousing/manufacturing.**
    - **Knowledge of all of the incentives truly available.**
    - **Knowledgeable about a particular industry; good resource in general for information gathering (i.e. you know you can call them and even if they don't know the answer, they know where to find it); good problem solver**
    - **Subject matter expert**

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- **Doing the Deal** (8 responses for 17% of total)
    - **Apolitical**
    - **Empowered by a community/region to speak for that region.**
    - **Proven ability to deliver**
    - **Politically astute.**
    - **Successful in closing deals.**
    - **Empowered to commit for the "community," knows the power structure and key decision makers; trusted by government officials;**
    - **Ability to craft creative solutions**
    - **Possessing the ability and wherewithal to put a deal together in a timely manner.**

- 
- **Other** (5 responses for 11% of the total)
    - Also able to expedite through different levels of bureaucracy.
    - Experience in dealing with a variety of different uses
    - How to get "governor's deal money" into the deals
    - Manager.
    - Smart

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# **Personal Traits/Attributes Brand Suggestions**

## **25 responses, 53% of total responses**



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## **Client Relations (7 responses, 15% of total)**

- **Excellent manager of client relationships**
- **Responsiveness to customer, understand the customer**
- **strong client relation skills including effective network of resources**
- **Focused**
- **Responsive**
- **timely**
- **Client-focused**

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## **Communications** (5 responses, 11% of total)

- **Communication**
- **Excellent communicator**
- **Listener**
- **Verbal**
- **Good listener**

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## **Reputation** (5 responses, 11% of total)

- **Personable & reputation**
- **Loyal**
- **Reputable**
- **Personal integrity and being a leader**
- **Candor, which builds trust**

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## **Work Ethic** (4 responses, 9% of total)

- **Thrives on work**
- **Reliable**
- **Industrious**
- **Professional**

## **Other** (5 responses, 11% of total)

- **good learner**
- **curious**
- **analytical**
- **positive energy**
- **advocate**

# Summary of Consultants Survey Results

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## Top Three Brand Types

Knowledge- 19%

Doing the Deal- 17%

Client Relations- 15%

# Survey Results—Verbatims

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- **Question: Please feel free to offer any comments related to the importance of branding for economic development professionals.**

# Survey Results—Verbatims

Offer any comments related to the importance of branding for economic development professionals. \_\_\_\_\_

- **Delivering on what you say you can do or what you market yourself to be, is the most important way to create a true brand in the marketplace. Reputation goes a long way in branding, especially in Economic Development.**
- **The brand equates to credibility, accountability, reputation and results.**
- **Branding creates its own story and carries forward in the economic development community**
- **I believe developers may not understand the lasting negative impact of their unwillingness/ inability to dedicate themselves to performing actual project WORK, and focusing on project completion. Too many are branded as high-level power brokers and/or personal "achievers". We avoid them.**

# Survey Results--Verbatims

Offer any comments related to the importance of branding for economic development professionals. \_\_\_\_\_

- **The foundation upon which a reputation is built constitutes the "brand"...you create it over time.**
- **More important than an individual brand is being associated with an EDO that has built a recognizable national brand.**
- **Good ED professionals who demonstrate the best the profession has to offer will receive top consideration in presentation of opportunities.**



## Developing “Brand You” Consists of:

- Self reflection to examine beliefs, traits and skills
- If you don’t set your brand, others will.
- Social media is a big help.
- Personal traits and attributes (honesty, trust, reliability) are just as important as knowledge of the profession.

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**Thank you for you time and attention  
today!**

**And, please consider membership  
with SEDDC!**