



DIGITAL TOOLS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

October 2023



TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- Inward investment trends
- Why is social media important?
- Options of social and digital tools to use
- Opportunities offered by the rise of remote work and digital nomads

GOALS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development is **programs, policies or activities** that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community.

‘A vibrant economy is the result of deliberate choices and actions.

All communities need a person or an organization that wakes up every day charged with improving the health of the local economy. That’s what economic developers and economic development organizations do.’

International Economic Development Council



DEFINING FDI

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is a category of cross-border investment in which an investor resident in one economy establishes a lasting interest in and a significant degree of influence over an enterprise resident in another economy (SOURCE OECD).

TYPES OF FDI:

Greenfield

When a foreign investor builds operations in another country from the ground up. This also includes when existing operations are expanded.

Mergers & Acquisitions (M&A)

When a foreign investor gains a non-passive equity stake by investing in an existing company.

GLOBAL FDI TRENDS

FDI IN FIGURES

APRIL 2023

Global FDI flows reached USD 1286 bn in 2022 but overall dropped 24%*



Outlook for greenfield projects remained positive in 2022



Cross-border M&A in 2022

-14%
overall drop in value

-7%
fewer deals concluded

bit.ly/fdi-in-figures



UNCTAD's World Investment Report 2023 shows that, after a strong rebound in 2021, global foreign direct investment (FDI) fell by 12% in 2022 to \$1.3 trillion.

Preliminary estimates in Q1 2023 show global FDI flows tripled from very low levels recorded in Q4 2022, reaching USD 440 billion. However, on a year-on-year basis, global FDI flows remained 25% below the level recorded in Q1 2022.

Source OECD



COMPETITION IS FIERCE

There are almost 10,000 Economic Development Organisations in the United States (Cause IQ)

There are more than 16,000 Investment Promotion Agencies globally (Site Selection Magazine/Conway Data, Inc)

An ever increasing number of agencies are working to attract an event shrinking pool of investment.

SITE SELECTION HAS CHANGED

THE 90s

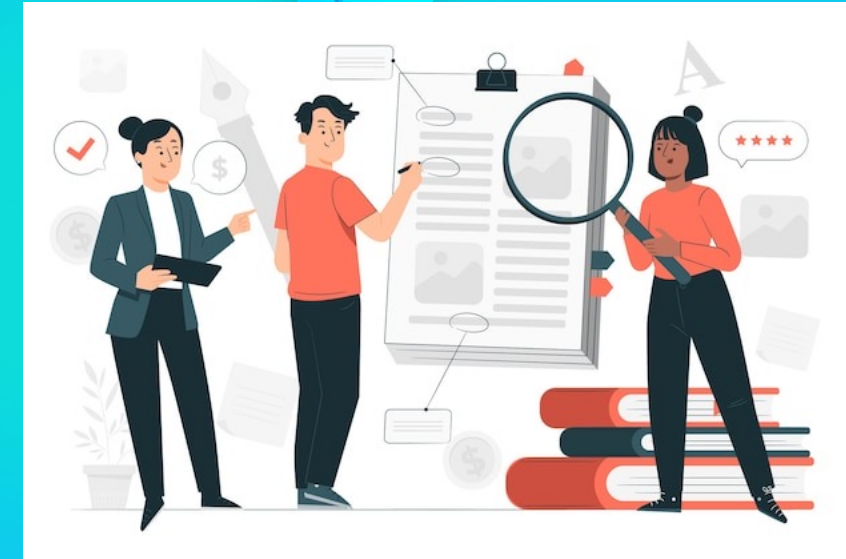
A long, arduous research process requiring long listed regions to be contacted with RFIs almost immediately.

VS

NOW

85% of research is done by Site Selectors before a location even knows they are in consideration for a project!!

(Source – Site Selection Magazine Site Selectors Survey)



IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- There are 4.9 billion social media users globally, meaning 60.49% of the global population use Social media. The global social media users are forecasted to reach 5.85 billion by 2027.
- As consumers spend more time on social media, the channel offers unparalleled access for brands/communities to influence site decisions at every stage, from discovery to advocacy.
- 94% of business leaders agree that social data and insights have a positive impact on building brand reputation and loyalty. (Sprout Social).
- Revisiting the statistic that 85% of site selection research is done online prior to a community knowing they are in the running for a project. You can't afford to not be on social media!

LINKEDIN

TWO OPTIONS FOR USE OF LINKEDIN FOR INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

CREATING BRAND AWARENESS

Through use of a company page.

- Informs on opportunities, success stories and builds trust through a digital presence.

REACHING DECISION MAKERS DIRECTLY

Through use of filtered searches and Sales Navigator.

- 930 million LinkedIn Users, 65 million are categorized as decision makers by LinkedIn
- 65% of respondents in a B2B survey were able to positively change their perception of a company as a result of thought leadership.



LINKEDIN

Easy tools to use to reach decision makers on LinkedIn

- Search features

Basic search is available to all LinkedIn members and can be filtered by company, industry, geographies.

Advanced search comes with LinkedIn Sales Navigator

Allows searches for individuals, apply advanced features and Boolean searches to help quickly and easily connect with decision makers and influencers relevant for your community

- InMails - The average email open rate is about 21.6%, while InMail can bring you 57.5% open rates.



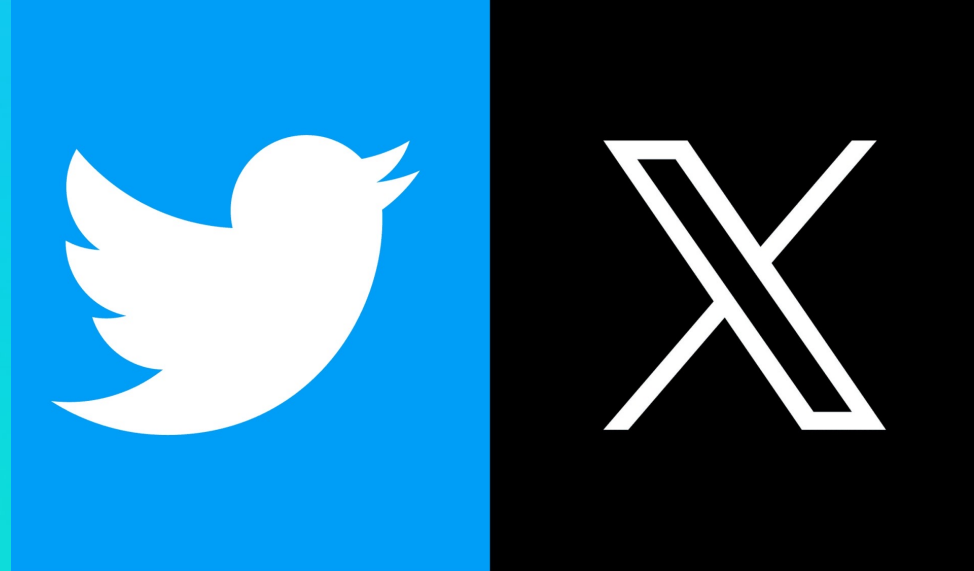
TWITTER/ X

556 million global users.

Despite the ever-changing landscape and controversies around the platform it still remains relevant for business development today.

The platform is particularly effective for building awareness of your community among tech focused businesses and key decision makers in the tech space.

Millennials/ Gen Z use the platform as a news source. Imperative for PR and Comms campaigns targeting this demographic of decision maker.



FACEBOOK

Facebook still remains the most popular social media app with 2.9 billion users.

71% of the US Population are Facebook users.

93% of social media marketers use Facebook adverts.

The focus is firmly towards the personal but the platforms remains an excellent way to communicate with your local community and stakeholders.

A virtual community message board.



INSTAGRAM

2 billion monthly active users and 500 million daily active users.

Focus on travel and lifestyle.

Has been used by a large number of lesser known communities to generate tourism and increase visitors numbers through the use of 'travel influencers.'

Travel and tourism is the fastest-growing sector in the world. Revenues accounts for 10.4 percent of all global economic activity and 319 million jobs worldwide.

Travel and tourism businesses as well as hospitality brands are increasingly looking to Instagram influencers to help promote their business interests. Yearly, over 2 billion dollars is spent on advertising with Instagrammers, and a significant portion of this money is dedicated to inspiring audiences worldwide to travel to new locations.

(Source Alux)



OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA

- Facebook (69%), YouTube (57%), Instagram (45%), TikTok (33%), and Twitter (30%) are the most popular social media apps.
- BeReal (313%), Twitch (29%), LinkedIn (20%), and TikTok (16%) saw the most growth since last May.
- Reddit (-11%), Pinterest (-9%), and YouTube (-4%) are the only platforms that saw a decline in usage.
- Different social media platforms are better options for communicating with different prospects, eg. Whatsapp for Middle East and Africa, We Chat for China etc, TikTok for Gen Z...



WEBSITE

Your first and most important digital platform to communicate online about your community.

A few points to consider

- Page navigation
- Ease of use
- Ease of finding information
- Readily available data for Site Selectors
- Graphics
- Videos
- Contact information
- Search Engine Optimization
- Gathering information on page visitors



REMOTE WORK CHANGING ECONOMIES



Attracting Talent – Remote work offers a solution to the global battle for talent.

A Washington Post-Schar School poll found that nearly one-third of U.S. workers under 40 considered changing careers during the pandemic, and one in five has considered a professional shift.

“Additionally, since the pandemic began, 28% of U.S. adults say they have seriously considered moving to a new community,” the Post reported, “and 17% say they had already moved, either temporarily or permanently.”



REMOTE WORK CHANGING ECONOMIES



The Value of Remote Workforce has been realised

Remote worker incentive programs are coming out of a large number of communities among them West Virginia (whose program is tied in with free outdoor recreation opportunities); Connecticut; Louisiana; Oklahoma; Vermont; Virginia; Wichita Falls, Texas; Savannah, Georgia; and Sacramento, California, where the Greater Sacramento Economic Council's #NextOutWest campaign sought to attract Bay Area tech talent in particular to make the move.

The website MakeMyMove, created in order to track offers such as these, lists more than 40 places offering cash for relocation, including Topeka, Kansas; the Shoals area of northwest Alabama; and northwest Arkansas.

(Source article Site Selection Magazine)



INTERNATIONAL DIGITAL NOMADS

Global communities are capitalising on the flexibility of remote work and offering specific programmes to attract 'digital nomads' as a great option to stimulate their local economies.

Some examples include;

Estonia

On Aug. 1, 2020, Estonia launched an official Digital Nomad Visa for remote workers to remain in the country for up to one year. Applicants need proof of a minimum of €3,504 in income and pay a state fee of €80 or €100 for a Type C (short stay) or Type D (long stay) visa, respectively.

Malta

The Nomad Residence Permit allows digital nomads to work remotely within the archipelago for one year. It can be renewed but is available only to residents of countries outside of the EU

Mexico

Mexico's Temporary Resident Visa is unique in that it is targeted toward—but not restricted to—Canadians. Digital nomads can work remotely within Mexico for 180 days to four years.

Seychelles

The Seychelles Workcation program enables digital nomads to work remotely from any of the 115 islands that comprise the archipelago for as little as one month or as much as one year.

IN CONCLUSION

The digital age offers huge opportunities for economic developers particularly those operating in rural communities.

Social media offers the means to communicate with decision makers globally and many impressive tools to market your region and build the location's brand.

Remote work and digital nomad programs offer a new economic development tool to help bolster a local talent pool by offering attractive quality of life options for workers looking for a change of pace.

THANK YOU!



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