



**ROANOKE REGIONAL
PARTNERSHIP**

2010 ANNUAL REPORT

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BOUNCES BACK

Traditional business recruitment woke up after a sleepy 2009 and exceeded its pre-recession levels overall. The Roanoke Regional Partnership was involved in seven expansion and location announcements. From manufacturing to R&D to services and retail, business development activity rebounded. Meanwhile, the Partnership also continued to develop new initiatives for job creation.

Overall business recruitment activity increased more than 130 percent in 2010 due to an aggressive marketing program. The third year of the “gatekeeper” strategy showed activity from consultants increased 45 percent in 2010. This strategy focuses on those who control multiple projects such as site location consultants and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.

Existing Business Development

All seven local governments joined in a common software platform provided by the Roanoke Regional Partnership to help make the important work of nurturing existing businesses more productive. Now, local economic developers collect secure information in a format to more easily quantify job creation and investment. Information in each locality’s system remains proprietary but by using

the same software program, common opportunities and challenges can be identified and addressed region-wide to enhance the business climate and spur creation of jobs and investment.



Entrepreneur Portal

Always looking for new ways to create jobs and opportunity, the Roanoke Regional Partnership began building an on-line portal for entrepreneurs. The website, to launch in 2011, will bring together resources for potential and existing small businesses. The result will be one-stop convenience for entrepreneurs looking for advice, financing, education, and other services available in the Roanoke Region.



IMAGE BUILDING

How can we hope to attract people and jobs if no one knows about the Roanoke Region? That's why it is so important to tell the stories about what makes the region stand out from the competition.

The Roanoke Regional Partnership touts the region in three of its own e-publications – **Horizon**, **Investor Insider**, and **Get Outside**. The Partnership continues to be a leader in social media on **Facebook**, **LinkedIn** and **Twitter**, with thousands of connections, fans, and followers.

Roanokeoutside.com launched in 2010 and Roanoke.org received a facelift. Combined, these sites attract about 130,000 visitors annually.



MARKETING ACTIVITIES

February

NY/NJ Consultants

March

Data Center World

VEDP Logistics Forum

April

Industrial Asset

Management Council

May

International Council of

Shopping Centers

June

7x24 Exchange

VEDP Research Tour

August

Outdoor Retailer

Summer Market

September

International Council of

Shopping Centers-Virginia

October

Industrial Asset

Management Council

Outdoor Industry Association

NJ/NY Consultants

Mid Atlantic Bio

November

SC/NC Consultants

Atlanta Consultants

LOCATIONS

Maxx Performance

City of Roanoke

Aerotek

City of Roanoke

Solution Matrix

Franklin County

Vitamin Store

City of Roanoke

EXPANSIONS

Altec

Botetourt County

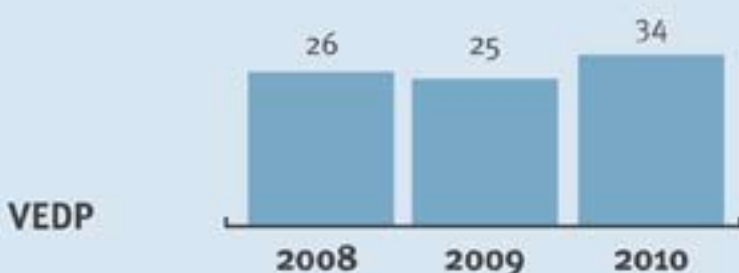
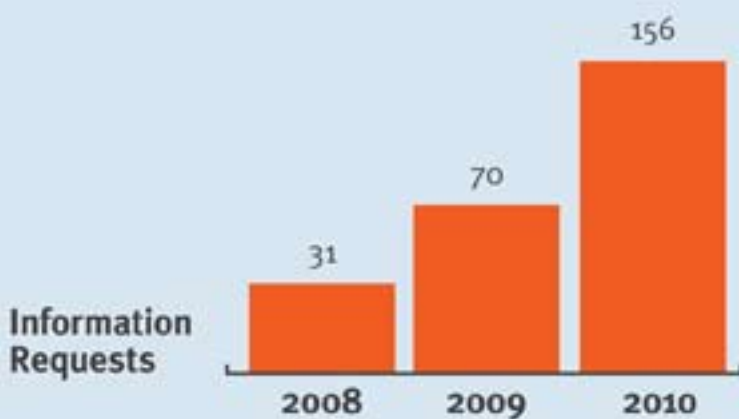
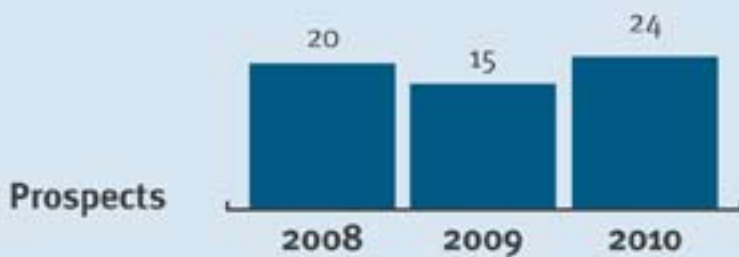
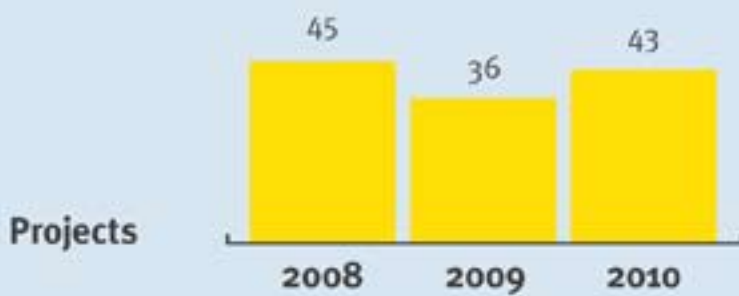
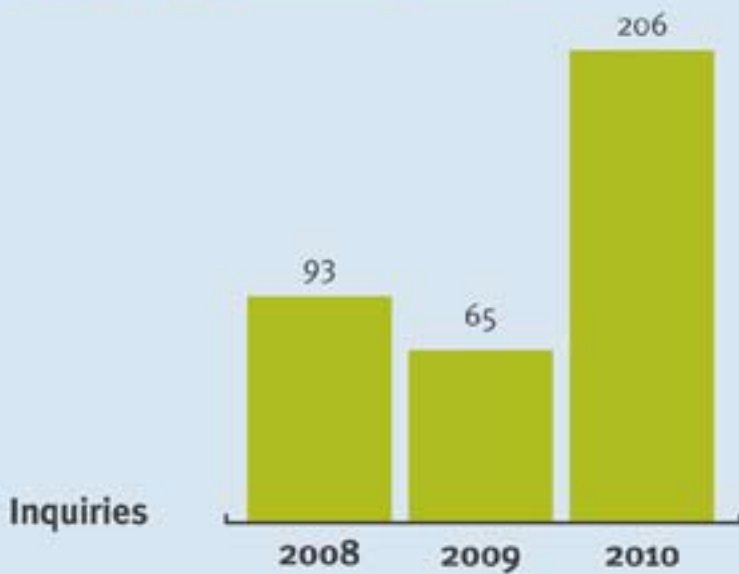
Trinity Packaging

Franklin County

Wachovia/Wells Fargo

Roanoke County

QUICK LOOK AT ACTIVITY



ROANOKE REGION MAKES THE LIST

Best Urban Park	Blue Ridge Outdoors
Best Outdoor Festival	Blue Ridge Outdoors
Favorite Section of the Appalachian Trail	Blue Ridge Outdoors
Favorite Section of the Blue Ridge Parkway	Blue Ridge Outdoors
Best Cities for Business & Careers	Forbes.com
Best Jobs	Outside
Best Cities	Kiplinger's
Best Places to Open a Restaurant	Restaurant Business
Top Digital Counties	Nat. Association of Counties
Best Wine Regions	Away.com
Best Performing Metros	Milken Institute
Best Hikes Near You	Backpacker
Top 5 Ways Cities are Using Social Media	Mashable.com

ROANOKE REGION IN THE NEWS

Washington Post	Backpacker
Outdoor Business	USA Today
Southern Living	Outside Television
Great American Outdoor Trails Radio Show	OR Daily
Where to Retire Magazine	Bicycle Retailer
	Virginia Business

The Washington Post

Southern Living WHERE to RETIRE

BACKPACKER

USA TODAY



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ASSET DEVELOPMENT

OUTDOOR BRANDING STARTS SHOWING RESULTS

In 2009, the Roanoke Regional Partnership began building an outdoor economy. First step: catalog outdoor assets and get the people who live here believing in the new image for their hometown. Next was starting to spread the word to attract people, money, and ideas that want to be associated with the outdoors.

It's starting to work because on land and water more people are enjoying the outdoors and making it a career in the Roanoke Region. While recent national data indicate the popularity of outdoor recreation is increasing, the Roanoke Region is ahead of the curve at the state and national levels, suggesting that the region's mix of amenities and assets is more competitive than many other communities. The outdoor branding initiative of the Roanoke Regional Partnership is having an effect.

- Visitors to the Virginia State Parks in the Roanoke Region were up 12 percent in 2009 from the previous calendar year, nearly four times the statewide increase of 3.9 percent. (Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation)
- Roanoke River Greenway trail counts increased 29.1 percent over 2009 usage. (Roanoke Valley - Alleghany Regional Commission)
- Boat registrations are up 2.9 percent in the region from 2006 to 2009, compared to a slight decline statewide of 0.3 percent. (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries)
- The industry group that includes outfitters, guides, and other sporting and recreational employers grew by 8.3 percent in the region (3rd quarter 2008 to 3rd quarter 2009), compared to declines of 1.4 percent at the state level and 2 percent at the national level.





BUSINESS WORKSHOP A SUCCESS

It is clear that opportunity is knocking here, with the Appalachian Trail, Blue Ridge Parkway, 600 miles of trails, and hundreds of miles of waterways. Ready to answer were more than 65 people who attended October's workshop organized by the Roanoke Regional Partnership.

Outdoor recreation contributes approximately \$730 billion annually to the U.S. economy and in Virginia it's \$18.8 billion and more than 200,000 jobs. The workshop was designed to answer questions and share resources with anyone interested in starting an outdoor business.

More than half of the attendees indicated they were thinking about starting or expanding an outdoor-related business. Many of whom said they hope to do so in the next two years.

ROANOKE REGION MAKES THE NEWS

The Roanoke Region's natural beauty isn't news to those of us who call the region home. But the region was news at the Outdoor Retailer Summer Market in Salt Lake City.

The Roanoke Regional Partnership worked the huge trade show to connect with retailers and manufacturers. We clearly caught their attention; we were featured in the Market's OR Daily, which is distributed to approximately 1,200 exhibitors and attendees.

TREASURE HUNT PUTS US ON THE MAP

The big winner of the Gear Junkie Roanoke Treasure Hunt was the Roanoke Region itself. The event attracted more than 300 entrants from 15 states who navigated through Explore Park in search of flags, points and, ultimately, prizes.

The July event helped spread the word about how great our outdoors is and to get on the radar screen of the outdoor industry. Participants came from as far away as Hawaii, Maine, and Minnesota – just for the event!



MARATHON REACHES NEW HEIGHTS

The inaugural Blue Ridge Marathon drew nearly 1,000 runners for the marathon and half-marathon and pumped \$354,202 in direct and indirect value into the local economy. The event was conceived as a way to show off the region's natural amenities and become a cornerstone of the Roanoke Regional Partnership's outdoor branding efforts. Mission accomplished.

The run, spearheaded by the Roanoke Regional Partnership and an army of volunteers, is touted as one of the most difficult on-road marathons in America. The course was designed to connect the Parkway with downtown Roanoke, while showcasing some of the Roanoke Region's key attractions, including the greenway system. Plans for the second annual race on April 16, 2011, include more mileage on the greenway and another significant hill to give it bragging rights as the toughest road race in the United States.



FILMS DRAW OUTDOORS IN

The Banff Radical Reels Film Festival rolled into Roanoke in September. The second year for the festival in Roanoke – the only stop in Virginia – was enthusiastically received by more than 300 outdoor enthusiasts and couch potatoes alike. And the 25 exhibitors just reinforced what the Roanoke Regional Partnership has been saying all along – the Roanoke Region is one of the best places to enjoy the outdoors.