

**Entry Title:** Wildcatters Direct Mail Program: GPS Direct Mail Gift

**Entrant's Name:** Jill Harrison

**Division/Category:** F43, 3D materials

**Need / Opportunity:**

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber's Wildcatters direct mail program was instituted in order to increase and improve awareness of our metro area's location advantages among a small, select group of site selection professionals. Prior to the program, this target audience frequently had no (or a negative) image of contemporary Oklahoma City, based on blind perception studies.

In 2007, a web-based, invitation-only perception audit conducted among identified site selection professionals revealed a negative image of Oklahoma City in the majority of those polled. At that time, only 46 percent of respondents rated Oklahoma City as an 8, 9, or 10 (on a scale of 1-10) as a potential relocation site for a client.

Despite enjoying an incredible amount of recent private / public investment, and an unprecedented, ongoing 21<sup>st</sup>-century renaissance, frequently professional site consultants and corporate real estate executives would simply not think of or consider Oklahoma City as a location for new or expanding businesses. These site selectors based their decisions on a pre-existing negative perception, or even simply a lack of any perception whatsoever. The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber needed to raise awareness of the wealth of advantages available to firms who locate operations here.

As a result, we created an ongoing direct mail program, targeted at these site selectors, who we deemed our "Wildcatters". The goal is to change their perception of Oklahoma City as a location for a new or expanding business.

Our Wildcatters receive a series of direct mail pieces, electronic media and/or gifts, which relate Oklahoma City's historical identity as an "Oil Boom" capital to the plethora of advantages of locating business operations in Oklahoma City today. The program is still ongoing today, and our Wildcatters receive gifts quarterly. For the latest Wildcatter gift, a modern-day GPS device was given.

**Goals/Objectives:**

*Goal:* To inform target site selectors (our "Wildcatters") of Oklahoma City's advantages and robust business climate.

*Objective:*

1. To increase the percentage of site selectors who rate Oklahoma City as an 8, 9, or 10 as a potential relocation site for a client to more than 60 percent.
2. To track project leads brought to us by our targeted Wildcatters.

**Audience:**

The Target Audience is a select group of professional site selection consultants. In order to fit into our group, the person had to fit the criteria of: being capable of bringing Oklahoma City a prospect- regional, national or global; or be involved in a key discussion position with a company that had the capability of expanding or relocating to Oklahoma City.

**Solution Overview**

The target audience is small enough that even high quality, personalized gifts are possible to send. Additionally, due to the small audience size, each letter / note can be personally signed by our Executive Vice President of Economic Development.

For the latest Wildcatter gift, a modern-day GPS device was given. This gift was selected to help modern-day Wildcatters navigate their way to success in Oklahoma City in much the same way that a historical Wildcatter

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might use a map, compass and spyglass to find his way. All pieces contain letters on specially-designed Wildcatters stationary relating the gift / theme of the mailing to location advantages in Oklahoma City.

### **Details of Implementation**

The Wildcatter program was launched in March 2008. For the GPS project specifically, the total length of the project to complete implementation took seven months. Initial conception and planning began in October and November of 2009. The copy and art portion of the project was executed by Ackerman-McQueen, with oversight from the Greater Oklahoma City's marketing division, and was completed in February of 2010. The GPS Wildcatter gift hit mailboxes in April of 2010.

### **Budget**

A total of \$16,785 was spent on this Wildcatter gift. A total of \$8,000 was spent on purchasing 100 Garmin eTrex H Handheld GPS Navigators. Another \$3,785 was used for printing costs, assembly and shipping. The final part of the budget included \$5,000 for project management costs.

### **Measurement/Evaluation**

The program as a whole has undoubtedly helped improve the image of Oklahoma City in the mind of our targeted site selectors.

In the 2010 perception audit (with the same survey design as in 2007), 74 percent of respondents in this same site selectors group (n=53) rated Oklahoma City as an 8, 9 or 10 as a potential relocation site. This is a statistically significant difference and shows that the program is "moving the needle" positively.

Additionally, the program has helped us foster invaluable relationships with our "Wildcatters." In 2007, prior to the launch of the program, only three known Wildcatters funneled projects to us. Since then, at least 20 projects have been brought to us by our Wildcatters. The numbers clearly, quantitatively reflect that the image / relationship goals are undoubtedly being reached, and that the Chamber's goal of being able to attract businesses via our site selector audience is being better reached through the use of the Wildcatters program.