



Regional Economic Development Partnership

Elizabethtown, NC **(The Fayetteville-Wilmington region)**

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BACKGROUND

North Carolina's Southeast (NCSE) is a regional public-private partnership that markets 18 counties in the southeast North Carolina region nationally and globally to encourage new economic growth. Business and government leadership work together in this partnership to promote the region and its assets through The Southeastern Partnership, a 501c6 organization.

In 2012, RDG was retained to by NCSE to conduct a feasibility study. The all publicly funded organization was in danger of losing significant operating revenue due to the North Carolina Department of Economic Development being revamped by North Carolina legislators. NCSE needed to pivot quickly to a public-private funding model in order to survive.

RDG's ROLE AND RESULTS

The feasibility study identified that NCSE had neither the correct organizational structure to attract significant private sector revenue nor name recognition in the region to be able to launch immediately into a funding campaign. An aggressive eight-month timeline was developed to provide opportunity to address both issues before a campaign launch. RDG identified new organizational structure options and developed a plan to place NCSE front and center with regional decision makers. RDG facilitated an organizational restructure, resulting in a more private sector friendly governance model, and designed an internal infrastructure to manage on-going resourcing.

LEGACY

The state cut funding entirely in 2014, which would have resulted in a 90% reduction in operating revenue but for the restructure. A successful funding campaign positioned NCSE to thrive during a period when many of North Carolina's other regional marketing organizations struggled to stay afloat. NCSE continues to thrive today under North Carolina's more recent state restructure that created the North Carolina Partnership for Economic Development. NCSE's governance model remains intact, and funding stable and secure as we move to yet another economic transformation due to COVID-19

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