



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP OF ALABAMA

The Economic Development Partnership of Alabama is a totally private, non-profit organization supported by 70 of Alabama's leading companies and institutions that are committed to quality growth. EDPA's mission is to provide private sector leadership for economic development in Alabama.

The Partnership was created in 1990 by a group of Alabama business leaders who shared a vision for a more dynamic economy in the state and a commitment to support the state's economic development efforts. Since its inception, EDPA has worked to accomplish several core objectives, which include: Raising Alabama's profile as an outstanding business location, attracting new industry, encouraging expansion of existing industry, growing jobs within the state and creating a better climate for growth.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP OF ALABAMA

500 Beacon Parkway West
Birmingham, AL 35209
800-252-5453
205-943-4700
205-943-4703 (fax)
www.edpa.org

Executive Editor STEVE SEWELL
Managing Editor RAY MARTIN
Editorial Assistant WENDY WALLACE



Partners is produced in conjunction with Martin Communications
641 Camden Ridge
Birmingham, AL 35226
205-942-3258
remartin@bellsouth.net

VantagePoint

Effective Advertising

One morning a few months ago, we opened the pages of both the Wall Street Journal and USA TODAY to find a full-page ad featuring a photo of hundreds of fellow Alabamians beaming with pride. The ad's headline read: "There were countless good reasons for investing in Lincoln, Alabama. Here are just a few."

If not for the bright red Honda logo at the bottom of the page, we might have thought we were looking at an economic development ad promoting Alabama as a business location. Instead, American Honda Motor Co. was saluting its first Honda Manufacturing of Alabama associates, calling them, "a very special group of people," and proclaiming, "Alabama is a very good investment, indeed."

The impact of such exposure is obviously far greater than any advertising we could place on our behalf. When great companies known worldwide for high standards of excellence choose to highlight your state's work force in their advertising, it carries some weight.

This reminded us of how far we have come in a short period of time. Just 10 years ago we were trying to get the attention of business executives by running an advertising campaign designed to contradict misperceptions about Alabama. Our state had considerable advantages,

but it was not always easy to get decision makers to put aside stereotypes long enough to take a close look at what Alabama offered.

That's largely changed, thanks to the leading companies that located here, achieved success and shared the news with other businesses.

While not everyone runs full-page ads in national publications, all of the great companies that have located in Alabama have been eager to offer testimonials of their experience.

The glowing ad was not the only unexpected good

news to come recently from Honda. On July 9, the company announced a \$425 million expansion that will double production and add 2,000 workers at its Lincoln site (page 8). Coming only months following the start of production at the plant, the announcement was another major boost to Alabama's growing reputation as a top business location and the automotive center of the Southeast.

Honda's ad was certainly a pleasant surprise and a nice boost for Alabama, but we much prefer the recognition the company gave the state and its work force by choosing to expand here. That endorsement definitely falls into the category of advertising you can't buy.

Steve Sewell
Executive Editor

