

## **NEDA Plan of Action for January, 2012 through June, 2012**

As our profession evolves and our roles as economic developers change, it is imperative that NEDA examines and defines the value we offer to our customer – our members. Our organization is challenged by not only financial considerations, but also the battle for our members and directors most precious resource – time.

The Board of Directors voted at its December meeting to approve a Plan of Action for the organization. This Plan of Action challenges the Board of Directors and the organization's Executive Director to take bold, proactive steps to ensure that NEDA is positioned for long-term sustainability. Although this Plan of Action demands engaged and active involvement of all Directors, this Plan of Action challenges the Executive Director to take a heightened leadership role to ensure successful execution of the various actions embodied in this plan. The Board expects the Executive Director to lead in the implementation of the plan beginning mid-December. The Executive Director will provide the Executive Committee monthly progress reports. The Executive Director will present to the Board at the June, 2012 meeting a summation of accomplishments to date, at which that time the Board will determine next steps.

### **PLAN OF ACTION**

#### **EDUCATION/SEMINARS**

Among the most important value-added services of NEDA are its educational programs. Designing and executing quality seminars on timely topics is fundamental to NEDA's value to its members as a provider of professional development resources. In addition to offering quality seminars, this Plan of Action highlights the importance of educational programs in generating revenues for NEDA, as well as attracting new members to the organization. Although historically NEDA's educational programs have not been revenue generators, their capacity to generate revenues in the future should be a goal, and is a reflection of their value to existing and prospective members.

The Education Committee Chair has outlined a schedule for 2012. The goals for the first six months of 2012 are:

- Program in February in Albany (in conjunction with IEDC). Executive Director attends and recruits/sells NEDA – 3 new members from event.
- Program in March in PA/NJ (accessible for both states).

- Program in April in MA in conjunction with MASS EDC. Recruitment of at least 5 new NEDA members from event.
- Program in May in Albany (in conjunction with IEDC). Executive Director attends and recruits/sells NEDA – 3 new members from event.
- Program in June in Portland in conjunction with EDCM. Recruitment of at least 5 new NEDA members from event
- Program in New Hampshire in first half of 2012. Recruitment of at least 5 new members.

While not every program must generate net income, there must be a balance between programs building partnership and membership, and individual revenue generators.

Next step is to tell the Directors to step-up.

### **STATE ASSOCIATIONS/ED DEPARTMENTS**

It is understood that NEDA's strength is directly correlated with the quality of its relationships with the various State Associations, and State Economic Development Departments. Establishing and reinforcing these relationships require active engagement and assistance by various Directors and members, with ongoing support and leadership by the Executive Director.

The Executive Director will identify and engage appropriate Directors and members, and reach out to all existing State Associations with the objective of developing a plan for increasing membership and methods of cross-selling memberships and programming.

The Executive Director will identify and engage appropriate Directors and members, and reach out to all member State Economic Development Departments and determine if a state membership is appropriate.

### **MEMBERSHIP IN PROBLEM STATES/AREAS**

The Executive Director must lead in building momentum in new member development, especially in those states that have been identified as high-risk for membership loss. Although leadership from the Executive Director is necessary and expected, it is understood that Directors must also take an active role in the retention and attraction of members. The Executive Director must consistently communicate with Directors and members, to request assistance in membership development activities.

The Executive Director will meet with officials in at-risk States and develop and implement a plan to increase membership in each.

## **DEVELOPMENT**

The Executive Director will solidify three long-term (three year) sponsorship agreements with traditional partner organizations (e.g. utilities, trade publications, etc.) We are targeting \$10,000 per year among the three organizations. The Executive Director will also solidify funding/sponsorship from one non-traditional partner (foundation, engineering company) for at least \$2,500. It is understood that success in solidifying sponsorships requires NEDA to effectively present the value of these sponsorships to prospective sponsors. The Executive Director will devise strategies for the promotion of sponsors through on-line and print marketing channels.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

A well thought out and executed communication strategy is fundamental to building and reinforcing a NEDA brand. Ongoing and transparent communication is also fundamental to building value and trust between the NEDA organization, and its members. The following actions are critical to elevating NEDA's communications.

The electronic newsletter will come out bi-weekly, preferably at a specific, consistent time (e.g. Friday morning, etc.)

The Executive Director will become proficient in social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter) and utilize them as necessary for marketing. A social media strategy must be devised and executed to reinforce the NEDA brand, and provide value-added content to the organization's members.

The Executive Director will develop s strategy to enhance the depth of online information content. This strategy will focus on designing an information portal that will offer high-quality national, regional, and state economic development information. Such information can include business investment announcements; economic development incentives, programs, and strategies; and job announcements. It is envisioned that a regional network of interested members with local and regional knowledge would maintain the information portal. It is also envisioned that the information portal will be integrated into NEDA's social media strategy.

The Executive Director will develop relationships with appropriate educational programs as a means to identify and utilize students/interns to assist in the communications strategy.

ACTION PLAN PRIORITIES & SCHEDULE

Priority	Action	Jan. '12	Feb. '12	March '12	April '12	May '12	June '12
	State Associations & ED Departments						
	Identify Directors/Members for Outreach		X				
	Develop Outreach Strategy		X				
	Execute Outreach Strategy			X			
	Membership in Problem States/Areas						
	Identify Key Directors/Members for Support		X				
	Develop Membership Development Strategies		X				
	Execute Membership Development Strategies			X			
	Development						
	Develop Value-Statement & Strategy for Sponsors				X		
	Secure First Long-Term Sponsorship						X
	Communications						
	Electronic Newsletter	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Develop Social Media Strategy & Budget			X			
	Develop Inform Portal Strategy & Budget			X			
	Identify & Development Internship/Student Sources					X	
	Administration						
	Develop Job Executive Director Description	X					
	Distribution of Finance Reports to Exec Cmte.	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Posting of Board Materials			X			X
	Annual Conference Administrative Support	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Education Seminars						
	Revisit Strategies to Increase Attendance Levels	X	X				
	Seminar Coordination and Administrative Support	X	X	X	X	X	X