



DUNDALK TECHNOLOGY CITY INITIATIVE

Summary

In 1998 Dundalk Chamber of Commerce published an Economic Development Plan and identified the designation of Dundalk as a High Technology area as a key step in improving Dundalk's image as prime industrial location for high tech indigenous and inward investment companies.

This new high technology identity would also assist in enhancing the attractiveness of Dundalk as a location for overseas technology based companies, as a new location for indigenous technology based SME's and as a focus for Research and Development activity and advisory support and information services.

A Steering Committee was formed comprising representatives from the agencies and organisations identified as partners in this project.

The project became known as "Dundalk Technology City Initiative".

A Project Board was also appointed and in November 1999 ICL were commissioned to work as partners with Dundalk Chamber of Commerce to produce a **Strategy & Sales and Marketing Plan** for the new initiative.

As part of this, the Vision and Mission for the Dundalk Technology City Initiative were developed as follows:

VISION STATEMENT

Dundalk Technology City is the pre-eminent location for High Technology & Knowledge-Based enterprise in Ireland

(10 Year Vision within Ireland)

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is to provide the infrastructure which enables existing and new High Technology and Knowledge-Based enterprises to grow and develop by providing:

- Education & Training***
- Utilities & infrastructure***
- Planning (housing etc)***
- Telecoms***
- Human Resources***
- Amenities***
- PR***
- Finance and Incentives***

Strategy

The Outline Strategy for Dundalk Technology City has been developed by Sub-Groups from the Chamber of Commerce working in the following focus areas:

- *Education & Training & Human Resources*
- *Utilities Infrastructure (includes Transport)*
- *Planning (includes Housing & Amenities)*
- *Telecoms*
- *Chamber PR Committee*
- *Funding & Financial Incentives*

For each of the above, the current status was examined and the needs for the future identified. As a result, a number of specific gaps were defined and a set of actions required to allow the Vision to be realised was drawn up for each of the above areas.

Sales & Marketing plan

The Sales & Marketing Plan for Dundalk Technology City covers the following main areas, as defined and agreed by the Dundalk Chamber of Commerce Project Board:

- The key messages that must be communicated as part of the overall Sales & Marketing strategy
- Education, Training and Human Resources
- Finance and Incentives
- Public Relations
- Planning & Infrastructure (including Telecoms)
- Amenities and Retail
- Information Society/Information Age Town

The primary objective of the sales & marketing plan is to provide Dundalk Chamber of Commerce with a basis for action in the promotion of the area as well as informing the key influencers who will assist the chamber in addressing the actions that have been identified from the outline strategy.

Key Messages

The following are the key message areas and enhanced descriptions derived by the Dundalk Technology City Project Board:

1. Pre Eminent Location

- Physical/Geographical location in Ireland
- Access to airports; trains; roads
- Access to ports
- Don't have to be in Dublin
- Access to 2 largest markets in Ireland (Dublin & Belfast)

2. High-Tech & Knowledge-Based

- Existing local & multi-national businesses
- Diversity of industry in High-Tech & Knowledge-Based enterprise in Dundalk
- People/Skills availability
- Institute of Technology
- 6 Universities within 60 miles of Dundalk (technology focused)

3. Infrastructure

- Power; Telecoms
- Transport (to-from Dundalk)
- Land mass available for development
- Complete pan-European distribution network in place
- Capacity for 10+ years ahead growth in area

4. Enable Growth & Development

- Funding/Incentives
- Low Housing & land costs
- College (R&D focus/availability)
- Chamber – input, strategy and effectiveness in Dundalk

5. Turnkey

- Ability to have premises available
- Fast/rapid start-up for companies
- Scalable approach for start-ups

6. Track Record

- Industrial history & background of area
- Work ethic/culture of people
- Multi-organisation location (International)
- Capacity & willingness for change

7. Existing Assets

- Amenities in place
- Environment – work, live & play
- Quality of life assets
- Retail
- Carlingford

8. ‘City’ Branding

- Size of area/location
- Political support for area and Technology City Initiative
- Perception

9. Location

- Cross-border co-operation (bodies & action)
- Gateway – regional growth centres
- Earmarked for development
- Belfast-Dublin economic corridor
- Hub location for Ireland
- Digital corridor

10. Strong Support (Organisational)

- Chamber focus & strength
- Council planning & support
- Political Support
- IDA etc.
- Dundalk Inc. as business cultural focus

11. Objective 1 Incentives

- IDA etc. support
- Continued infrastructure development
- Incentives for industry etc.

12. Political Support/Interest

Public Relations

- A marketable brand needs to be developed and used in all messaging, communications and promotion of the initiative.
- This needs to be vibrant and focused and needs to convey the technology focus of the city.
- This could be explored with other interested parties e.g. local councils, to undertake a joint approach at developing a Dundalk Brand with a high-tech focus.
- Need for professional stratified, targeted & strategic campaign
- Lack of Finance – major constraint. To provide a professional campaign will require a significant amount of finance.
- People resources - Identify resources to drive the initiative short, medium and long term
- Professional advice – It may be advisable to seek professional input from a PR Agency to provide direction to the campaign.

Current Status

Actions to address the specific gaps in areas such as Utilities, Telecoms, Planning etc. - which could prevent the Dundalk Technology City Vision being achieved by 2010 - are being taken forward by the Dundalk Chamber of Commerce and the respective sub-groups.

The actions identified in the Sales & Marketing Plan must be progressed by the Chamber of Commerce as a matter of urgency.

However considerable funding will be required to enable this to happen.
