Industrial Park Marketing Trends

Finding New Concepts to Win Over Companies and Investors

New Innovations - The environment for industrial parks and infrastructure service providers is still difficult and has worsened during the financial and economic crisis. Nevertheless, continued optimism is needed; this article deals with the prospects of location marketing through the recognition and implementation of important trends. Which concepts will win new settling companies and investors? Which marketing strategies promise the highest success for chemical and industrial parks?

Trends and Unique Selling Points

There are many fundamental trends that are important for industrial parks and, e.g., can be assigned to the areas markets/technologies, business models and frameworks (fig. 1). For instance, the transition to a bio-based economy will make a lasting change to production structures, as new supply chains, based on a changed raw material base, make other demands to infrastructures. Further important trends are related to business models, such as outsourcing trends and the importance of alliances and partnerships as well as frameworks - environmental legislation and the discussion on climate change.

The relevant trends important to a certain industrial park should be individually recognized and evaluated in the scope of the strategy development process. Naturally, no "standard recipe" can be given for this.

The change to a bio-based economy and the development of new technologies with the example of biofuels will be looked at here in more detail. First, there are many established and new technologies for the production of fuels (fig. 2). When developing a settlement strategy, it has to be decided as to which technologies based on which raw materials will prevail long term and be attractive to a location. Thus a competent opinion has to be acquired as to whether a chemical thermal process or a biological process will dominate in the area of biofuels and with which raw material basis and conversion technology the biofuels industry will further develop.
Based on a fundamental understanding of the trends, the evaluation of these should result in the identification of attractive technologies and/or markets.

A sensible linking with own strengths together with the necessary resources to realize the developed strategy supplies the unique selling point, in order to achieve "first choice" status with new settling companies. It has been shown that without clear unique selling points the competition for new settling companies is toilsome and does not usually promise success. There are various types of unique selling points, which can be defined on the basis of different strengths, such as composite structures (production, product, infrastructure), the specialization on certain companies and value chains or the positioning through the geographical location.

**Implementing The Marketing Strategy**

The marketing strategy should centre on these unique selling points. Therefore, untargeted advertising methods should be avoided and the financial means be used for focused actions in the chosen areas. Focus can be difficult, but is a critical factor for success.

When implementing a settlement strategy, it is important to pay attention to sound financing at company level. Not every new settlement can be assessed as positive, as a long term lucrative partnership for both sides should be aimed for. The sometimes negative experiences with biodiesel producers shows that here a thorough evaluation and careful choice is of vital importance.

Should trends be recognized in time and the necessary actions systematically implemented, the optimism mentioned at the beginning of this article is justifiable. In order to be attractive to new settling companies a competitive cost basis is, however, absolutely necessary. This aspect has been described often in the past and will therefore not be gone into further here. It has to be said that when implementing the described strategy, patience is necessary and positive effects cannot be expected short term.

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