

South Florida Avenue Coalition

Diversity/HR PR

ASSESS

Ryder, Royal Caribbean Cruises Limited, Office Depot, Inc., NCCI Holdings Inc., and Florida Power & Light Co., wanted to position themselves as the diversity employers of choice in South Florida. They faced perceived and actual barriers to the recruitment and retention of minority candidates, and were all working with a limited budget. Their goals were to both attract a diverse staff to the area and retain those employees in a cost-effective manner.

STRATEGIZE

We formed a Florida corporate recruitment alliance, "The South Florida Avenue Coalition." This alliance was conceived with the idea that such a unification would prove more effective for exhibition at national professional association meetings, conventions, and career fairs – specifically at those sponsored by Hispanic and African-American associations. The coalition would also maximize exposure of Florida-based corporations, while achieving cost benefits resulting from economies of scale. We needed to create an interest in the cultural activities and family-oriented environment found in the area, propelling individuals to consider relocation and career opportunities in Florida.

IMPLEMENT

We coordinated the participation, design elements, public relations, and advertising for all events. The coalition attended and marketed their unified image at the 2000 and 2001 National Black MBA Association and National Society of Hispanic MBAs. We promoted the South Florida Avenue Coalition to conference attendees using special advertising and public relations activities, and branded the companies as employers committed to building diversity. (Editorial coverage included Equal Opportunity magazine, IN FOCUS interactive magazine, South Florida Sun-Sentinel, BlackVoices.com, Miami Herald, Palm Beach Post, and Miami Times.) These events featured a section of the exhibition hall that was converted into "South Florida Avenue." The booth space, advertising, and public relations initiatives displayed a consistent message, branding the coalition and their commitment to diversity.

MEASURE

The South Florida Avenue Coalition established strong relationships between the candidates, NMBAA, NSHMBA, and the coalition companies. They also made eight hires by the first quarter of 2002, and at a much lower cost than if they had used executive search firms. Even more notable, was their ability to expand the reach of individual recruiters by sharing résumés collected at the conferences. Public relations tactics generated an estimated 2.1 million impressions and contributed to the overall diversity image of the member companies. The recruitment effort grew from five companies in 2000, to 10 companies in 2001. Those new members included Burger King Corp., Citrix Systems Inc., JM Family Enterprises, Inc., and The Sports Authority Inc.

