



Best Practices to Nurture Metro Positivity Effect: San Antonio Case Study

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**greater:
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REGIONAL ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP



San Antonio Is Ready for Its Moment

A city transforming its future.

San Antonio has quietly become an economic and population powerhouse. With a population of over 2.6 million, it's one of the largest and fastest growing metros in the country. In fact, from 2021-22 more people moved to San Antonio than anywhere in the country. The metro population is predicted to reach 3.8 million by 2040 -- bigger than San Diego.

And it's not just the population that's booming. The San Antonio economy is strengthening and diversifying beyond its traditional base, attracting startups and

established firms looking for a home where they can grow, succeed and be a part of a positive, welcoming metro. The longtime economic mainstays of military, tourism and service have now been joined by aerospace, bioscience, cybersecurity and advanced manufacturing.

We don't like to brag. It's not the San Antonio way.

For a community that is more than 300 years old, San Antonio finds itself well positioned to be the city of the future. The metro population is 56% Hispanic, one of the highest percentages in the country. Forty-two percent of the population is bilingual. Experts

predict the rest of the United States will soon look like San Antonio, as it becomes majority minority by 2045. San Antonio can serve as a model for the rest of the country in how to blend cultures into something greater than the sum of its parts. Vibrant, accepting and surprising in its complexity, the region is made stronger and more adaptable through its diversity.

Of course, growth of the type San Antonio has seen doesn't happen by accident and it doesn't sustain itself. It takes businesses and leaders who are open to innovation and willing to take new approaches to address common problems.

300
YEARS
OLD

2.6
MILLION
PEOPLE

3.8
MILLION
BY 2040

56%
HISPANIC
POPULATION

42%
BILINGUAL
SPEAKING

**Model of
U.S. Population:
MAJORITY MINORITY
BY 2045**



A Leader in Metro Positivity

When people like where they live, they're happier at work. And San Antonians like where they live. In fact, the region was ranked as having the third most positive impact on employee satisfaction in North America.

A 2023 survey by a corporate consulting firm compared job satisfaction among employees in San Antonio with that of their colleagues working for the same companies, but in different metro areas. This has been dubbed the "Metro Positivity Effect." It used data from Glassdoor, a global employer review site. The study analyzed Glassdoor corporate culture and values reviews of 575 large employers that were posted from 2018-2023 in the 41 largest metro areas in the United States and Canada.

Based on the reviews and screening out variables that could affect the employee rankings, the consulting firm was able to assign Metro Positivity scores for each metro,

signifying how the quality of life in Greater San Antonio contributes to employee satisfaction, engagement, retention and other outcomes.

Finishing third of 41 metros means San Antonio ranked higher than such well-known lifestyle meccas as Denver, Toronto, Seattle and New York.

Culture matters. According to a 2019 Glassdoor study of 5,113 employees and jobseekers, 56% of employees rank culture as more important than salary; 65% of employees say culture is one of the main reasons they stay at a job; and 71% of employees voice that if culture deteriorated, they would look for a new job.

Plus, 80% of CEOs and CFOs rank culture as a top five driver of company valuation.

The third-party researchers interpret that locating in a metro area with a noticeable positive impact on culture is a low-cost way of maximizing employee satisfaction,

engagement, retention, and other positive outcomes.

Happy employees produce good work and strong communities. San Antonio's leading Metro Positivity ranking is also reflected in the Net Promoter Scores (NPS) of some of the region's largest employers. NPS reflects how likely customers of a particular brand are to recommend it to someone else. Scores range from -100 to +100, with anything above +20 indicating a very favorable brand.

San Antonio is home to beloved consumer brands and many rank well above 0, which signifies "good," 20, which delineates "favorable" and above 50, which is "excellent." We are proud of H-E-B's NPS score of 68 with other brands like Frost Bank, Valero and USAA ranking well above the 20 mark.

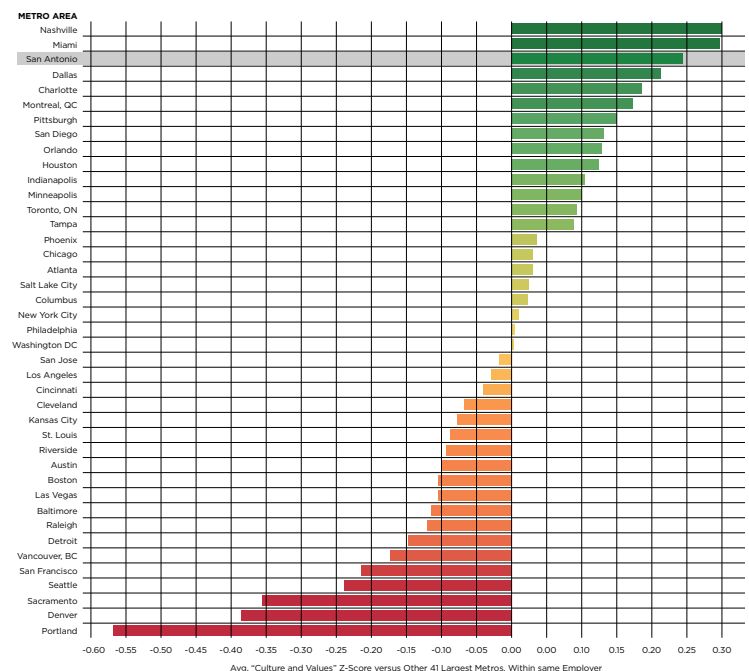
Customers like these companies because their products and employees are superior. More evidence that Life Works GreaterSM San Antonio.

San Antonio Sets National Standard for City Services In Resident Survey

A 2024 Community Survey polled randomly selected residents across San Antonio to measure quality and customer service for City services, among other metrics.

- Overall quality of city services delivered an 87% satisfaction rate vs. the 41% national average.
- Satisfaction with customer service registered an 88% satisfaction rate vs the 32% national average.
- San Antonio is 112-175% higher compared to the national norms for these two key metrics.
- San Antonio ranks 1st in most City services categories surveyed compared to other major Texas cities.

[Learn more here.](#)



Four Best Practices to Drive Metro Positivity Effect

Together, we wanted to cite four best practices we believe are core to San Antonio's moment.

1 Foster a collaborative spirit

In order to thrive, a regional economy should be more than a collection of individual businesses and industries, each with its own agenda and priorities. The metro and its residents must have a sense of community, a shared responsibility for helping each other succeed, and a commitment to working for the greater good.

Greater San Antonio lives that ethos. Like every metro region, ours was also affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Companies shut down, workers stayed home and jobs disappeared. The economic pulse slowed.

During a crisis when executives could have adopted an "everyone for themselves" approach, San Antonio leaders instead came together and formed a roundtable that sought to address the needs of our community, align resources to provide wraparound support services, and communicate resources to business owners.

CEOs from the largest local businesses and government

leaders met regularly to ensure that San Antonians had the latest information and access to resources to combat the global pandemic as one community. Working alongside them were the region's largest financial institutions, led by Frost Bank, who helped local micro-businesses understand and apply for PPP loans.

In the end, these efforts saved jobs and businesses. In fact, the San Antonio region ranked fourth in the nation for job retention during the pandemic and has rebounded quickly. According to Philadelphia's Center City District, a nonprofit organization, San Antonio ranks No. 1 in the recovery rate among nonresident workers in its downtown - registering current city center activity at 85% of pre-COVID levels. We attribute this success in large part to our collaborative spirit.

That same collaborative spirit is on display in the campaign to secure direct flights to European cities, specifically London and Frankfurt. Because they know it will benefit the regional economy,

greater:SATX led the development of a private fund, supported by Visit San Antonio and regional corporate funders, to support further incentivizing attracting new nonstop air service.

Listen to Coach

The San Antonio way of doing business can be summed up by San Antonio Spurs Coach Gregg Popovich, whose no-nonsense style and work ethic have netted the team five NBA championships. Here's what he had to say about teamwork: **"To play the right way means play unselfishly, respect each other's achievements, play hard, fulfill your role."**





2

Conduct decision-making with a dual lens: business + community

Greater San Antonio wants companies and professionals to not only move here, but to fully integrate themselves into the community and, in turn, invest in making it better for all.

That’s been taken to heart by Victory Capital, a global investment management firm, which moved its corporate headquarters from Cleveland to San Antonio in January 2020 in pursuit of a home that would allow it to grow. And it has — in 2022 it was named to the Fortune 100 Fastest-Growing Companies list for the second consecutive year.

David Brown, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer for Victory Capital, said the firm relocated for access to talent, a dynamism which helps

Victory’s own expansion, along with the low cost of living and, of course, sunshine.

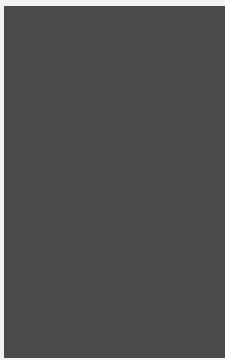


Since relocating to San Antonio in 2020, the company has continued to grow, landing on Fortune’s 100 Fastest-Growing Companies list in 2022.

“We believe that San Antonio offers our employees the opportunity to live in an innovative and culturally rich city with an exceptional climate and competitive cost of living,” Brown said.

In fact, the firm is so integrated into its new hometown that it is attaching its name to the Victory Capital Performance Center, the new 134,000-square-foot home to basketball operations for the San Antonio Spurs featuring some of the most advanced innovations in sports technology and performance.

Toyota, another firm that has found its home here in the region, in 2019 announced a \$391 million investment in its San Antonio truck assembly plant. It came with a commitment from Toyota Texas to continue funding local workforce development through AlamoPROMISE, which covers tuition and fees for graduating high school students enrolling in one of the five Alamo Colleges. Toyota also partnered with Bexar County to develop TXFAME, a program to develop advanced manufacturing technicians.





3

Deploy the Talent Pipeline Management® Framework

Like many Economic Development Organizations (EDOs), a top challenge we face is educational attainment and fueling the talent pipeline to meet the needs of our current and future businesses across multiple sectors.

San Antonio needs skilled workers to fill positions in high-growth industries. While some of them will be transplants, it's vital that the region develop its own talented and sustainable workforce.

The city showed its support for workforce development when voters in 2020 approved a \$200 million investment in Ready to Work, a training, education and employment program deployed through a tax reallocation by the City of San Antonio.

To fuel our regional workforce development needs, our greater:SATX workforce development team has deployed the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

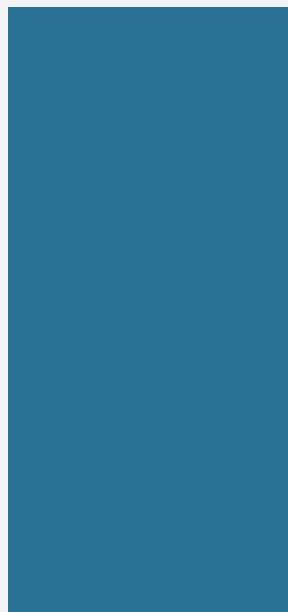
Foundation's Talent Pipeline Management (TPM)® framework, which was first shared with EDOs and local workforce strategy teams across the nation in 2014. The framework is designed to help align local employer workforce needs with the local talent pipeline with a data-driven approach.

Our workforce development team was the first to successfully partner across our ecosystem to implement and rapidly scale the multiple-industry TPM model to develop a long-term strategy that's critical to the growth and sustainability of the San Antonio region. Our workforce team was able to support all five of our industry sectors representing thousands of jobs in high-growth industries including: technology/cybersecurity, manufacturing, healthcare/bioscience, financial services, and construction and skilled trades. greater:SATX is the first team to scale an implementation of the TPM framework in the first year to support five industries, operating industry-focused "collaboratives" with nearly 100 regional employers and trade associations.

Our workforce experts continue to share best practices at the TPM National Learning Network's Summit and other forums, and are also actively involved in guiding the continual expansion of the model as TPM Academy Fellows.

San Antonio is a living model of what future U.S. demographics will look like. The community is 56% Hispanic and growing across all minority demographics. We want to be a living model for high educational attainment. We are making great progress. Our higher education institutions graduate large numbers of first-generation college students, creating new opportunities for those without generations of college-educated earners in their family.

In fact, San Antonio is #1 in first-generation college graduates. These are new earners, with high-demand skills and diverse perspectives. Our aim is to be known as the "new-talent capital of the U.S." and the TPM framework is helping us achieve this position.





4

EDOs should think and act like a consumer brand

Companies and workers relocate for a number of reasons, and they choose their new city home on a variety of criteria. They don't move to places they don't know much about or that don't appeal to them.

Greater San Antonio competes for talent and business with a lot of other metros, many of which also have sunshine and a low cost of living and may be better known.

Just like any other consumer purchase decision today, people and businesses shop for new cities, comparing their features and costs, checking online reviews and resources. And recognizable, positive brands sell things, whether it's sneakers or metros.

San Antonio didn't have a formalized brand. We needed a brand that showcased its differentiation while appealing to a range of audiences from business decision makers and professionals to tourists and conventioners. While tremendous assets, we needed a brand that communicated our metro region is so much more than the Spurs, the River Walk and the Alamo.

So greater:SATX took the unprecedented step among EDOs of adopting a consumer brand

approach for San Antonio. We think of the region as a "product" — evolving and bettering it as you would any consumer item.

We took the steps to capture the essence of our region creating brand promise and brand essence statements that articulated the core DNA. And we went to work, leveraging consumer branding best practices and business-to-business and business-to-consumer marketing targeting 25- to 50-year-old professionals across a range of desired industries.

We hired and tapped consumer branding experts among local companies and those represented on our executive committee. As any data-driven consumer brand today would do, we polled, we researched, we concepted, we tested and we measured.

We engaged with The Harris Poll to survey consumer sentiment and gauge the city's image compared to competing cities and among the younger early-career and mid-level professionals we wanted to attract. We were the first metro in the country to leverage consumer polling to lay the foundation and guide our marketing efforts.

We created a new positioning statement and tagline — Life Works GreaterSM in San Antonio — which has become a full-blown campaign.

We mocked up ads and promotional materials and put them in front of the companies and people we wanted to reach. After seeing the campaign material, the audience consideration of the region as a likely place to live and work increased by 26 percentage points.

The Life Works GreaterSM in San Antonio campaign rolled out in late 2022 and continued throughout 2023. It includes digital advertising including display and retargeting ads, programmatic video, SEO and paid social media on LinkedIn and Facebook, as well as traditional outdoor and airport digital billboards. In its first six months the campaign performed above industry benchmarks on every digital channel and resulted in an increase in inquiries about corporate relocation, along with talented workforce moving here.

San Antonio is growing, but the unique mix of factors that make it so attractive — the heritage of military service, the majority Hispanic population, the rich blend of cultures, the feel of a small town in a big city, the welcoming vibe — will not change, regardless of how many people and businesses move here.

Maintaining that core DNA as we evolve and develop the "product" is focal to our evolving economic development and branding efforts.

