



For immediate release
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State launches \$1 million marketing campaign aimed at young professionals in Chicago

First-of-its-kind campaign to utilize Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, mobile phone apps to highlight key reasons why millennials should consider relocating to Wisconsin

MADISON, WI. Jan. 10, 2018 – The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) has launched a \$1 million marketing campaign to encourage young professionals in the Chicago area to consider living and working in Wisconsin.

The campaign, which places an emphasis on reaching millennials via popular social media platforms they use every day, began this week and runs through June 30. It includes ads on social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Pandora, and popular mobile phone apps.

The unprecedented campaign is part of the state's comprehensive efforts to attract and retain talented workers in Wisconsin to meet the workforce demands of today and tomorrow. It marks the first time the state has embarked on a paid media strategy aimed at talent attraction.

“Wisconsin’s strong economy has resulted in the lowest unemployment levels in decades and a record labor participation rate, which means it’s more important than ever to attract and retain a strong talent pool,” said Governor Scott Walker. “WEDC’s strategic investment delivers the message to Chicago millennials that Wisconsin offers unlimited opportunities for personal, professional and business success.”

Key elements of the digital campaign include:

- paid social media posts aimed at users ages 21 to 35 within a 25-mile radius of downtown Chicago
- Facebook ads using the new “Canvas” platform and video-enabled Instagram Stories
- audio and video ads for the same targeted audience streaming on Pandora and YouTube
- geotargeted mobile ads on popular websites and apps
- application ads that dynamically calculate commute times and cost-of-living comparisons; and
- paid search advertising on Google and Bing search engines.

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The campaign conveys the central idea that Wisconsin is “more you.” Here you can be more, mean more, create more impact and have more, making Wisconsin a better fit for you. To drive this point home, specific ads contrast life in Wisconsin with that in Chicago, highlighting the state’s shorter commute times, lower cost of living, lower taxes and numerous recreational, social and cultural opportunities.

The campaign also includes national social media ads launching in February that will encourage out-of-state alumni from Wisconsin colleges and universities to consider returning to the state.

“This non-traditional marketing campaign has been strategically designed to reach these individuals on the platforms and devices they use every day,” said Tricia Braun, deputy secretary and COO of WEDC. “Whether they’re checking Instagram, watching videos on YouTube, listening to their playlist on Pandora or waiting for their train, young professionals in Chicago will become more aware of all our state has to offer them, and may see that Wisconsin is a better choice for their career and lifestyle.”

Braun said the campaign targets those who wanted the urban experience but have since become disillusioned with the daily challenges of a large metropolitan area such as Chicago and may not know much about Wisconsin.

“We recognize that it is common for millennials to seek opportunities in urban areas such as Chicago, but after a period of time many of them want to move away from the hassles of big-city living,” she said. “However, our research has shown that individuals living outside of Wisconsin have a very limited perception of the opportunities – both career and lifestyle – that are available in our state.”

The campaign also includes:

- ads on the interior and exterior of Chicago Transit Authority “L” trains;
- posters at selected health clubs in downtown Chicago;
- ads on drink coasters at downtown bars and restaurants; and
- sponsored posts on Facebook and LinkedIn encouraging out-of-state alumni of Wisconsin colleges and universities to consider returning to the state.

WEDC also has redesigned its InWisconsin.com website to better demonstrate Wisconsin’s many business and lifestyle attributes to business leaders and people looking for the best place to pursue their passions.

The new site employs the latest online design and user experience standards, including stunning videos, beautiful photography, compelling data and powerful testimonials that underscore how good life is in Wisconsin. Each region of the state has its own information-rich page built in collaboration with local and regional economic development partners. The site is built to convert “shoppers” into “buyers,” with home search options and job search functionality powered by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development’s Job Center of Wisconsin.

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Business and young professional leaders throughout the state are applauding the initiative as a way to help address Wisconsin's workforce challenges.

"The time is now to be proactive - instead of reactive - about our state's talent needs," said Angela Damiani, CEO of NEWaukee, a social architecture firm and organizer of the annual YPWeek series of events for young professionals. "This is an exciting and progressive approach to attracting those just across the state's border and perhaps looking for an ideal lifestyle. The campaign speaks to the value propositions the next generation of talent seeks."

"To ensure continued growth in Wisconsin's economy, we must work together to fill the talent pipeline and develop innovative ways to make young professionals outside our state aware of the personal and professional opportunities that exist here," said Wilson Jones, president and CEO of Oshkosh Corp. "This new initiative will help ensure that message reaches this key audience in the Chicago area."

The WEDC marketing campaign is a component of Governor Walker's [Workforce Agenda](#), which focuses on enhancing Wisconsin's workforce, removing barriers to work, and meeting the state's current and future workforce needs.

As part of the Workforce Agenda, Governor Walker is asking the state legislature to pass legislation that would provide \$6.8 million for a targeted, multiagency campaign to attract talent to Wisconsin. That proposal would leverage the resources and mission of WEDC, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and Travel Wisconsin.

The additional funding would allow WEDC to expand its millennial and alumni attraction efforts to other markets. In addition, WEDC would work with other agencies to develop a targeted campaign to encourage out-of-state veterans and those soon retiring from the military to live and work in Wisconsin.

WEDC's talent and attraction efforts embody Think-Make-Happen In Wisconsin, a new unifying message that celebrates Wisconsin as a premier destination for business, career and personal fulfillment.

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About the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) leads economic development efforts for the state by advancing and maximizing opportunities in Wisconsin for businesses, communities and people to thrive in a globally competitive environment. Working with more than 600 regional and local partners, WEDC develops and delivers solutions representative of a highly responsive and coordinated economic development network. Visit www.wedc.org or follow WEDC on Twitter [@WEDCNews](#) to learn more.

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BACKGROUNDER ON STATE OF WISCONSIN AD CAMPAIGN

- **With more people employed in Wisconsin than ever before, it is increasingly important to attract and retain highly skilled workers.** WEDC is devoting \$1 million of its fiscal year 2018 budget to promote Wisconsin's career and lifestyle advantages to millennials living and working in the Chicago area as well as to alumni of Wisconsin colleges and universities residing outside our state. Chicago's large concentration of young people, who tend to be more mobile than other demographic groups, and its consistent out-migration patterns makes this a primary market for Wisconsin's talent attraction efforts.



RUSH HOUR  HAPPY HOUR?



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- **WEDC's advertising strategy delivers compelling messages about Wisconsin's many economic, social, cultural and recreational assets through highly targeted media.** WEDC's paid media investment is designed to overcome overly limited perceptions of Wisconsin among young people in Chicago through geo-targeted social media channels, streaming services and online advertising as well as creative out-of-home installations, including placements in and on Chicago Transit Authority "L" trains and station platforms within the Loop and in Chicago-area health clubs, bars and restaurants.

- **All WEDC talent retention and attraction marketing will drive target audience members to an information-rich, one-stop online resource designed to further educate prospects of Wisconsin's strong career and lifestyle assets.** The new InWisconsin.com allows visitors to explore the state's key industries, rich natural resources, plentiful cultural and recreational options, and inviting communities. Regional quality of life data is provided along with career profiles, employment postings and real estate listings, allowing visitors to begin their search for their ideal Wisconsin job and/or residence.

IN MILWAUKEE
RENT IS
42% LESS
THAN IN CHICAGO

Wisconsin. It's more **you.**
InWisconsin.com

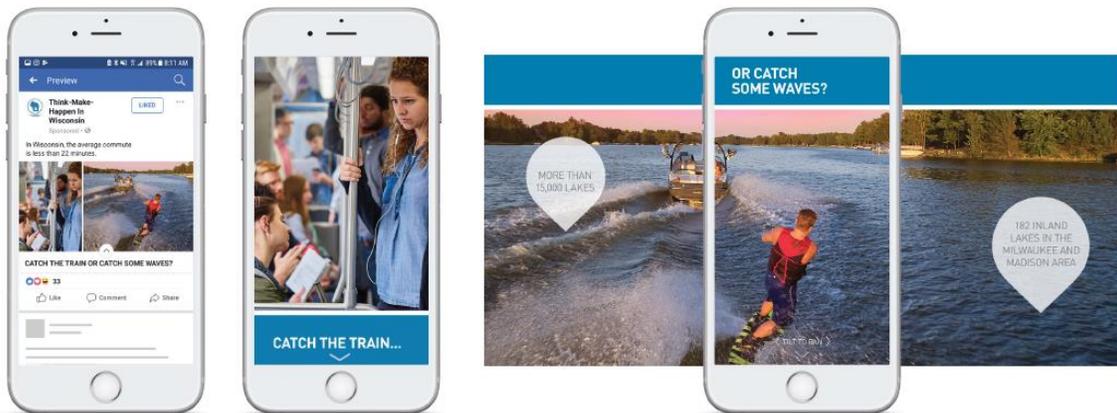
THINK-MAKE-HAPPEN
in WISCONSIN

- **WEDC's messaging and paid media strategy was formulated with input from a wide range of economic development stakeholders.** Since WEDC launched the Think-Make-

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Happen In Wisconsin brand platform at the Future Wisconsin Summit in 2016 after numerous listening sessions throughout the state, many organizations and communities across Wisconsin have embraced this unified message to market their unique community assets in order to develop, retain and attract talent.

- **WEDC’s national testing of various concepts to motivate the target audience to consider Wisconsin as a career and lifestyle destination showed that our state’s exceptional quality of life and low cost of living are our best selling points, particularly among those who may have become disillusioned with the daily challenges of a large metropolitan area such as Chicago.** WEDC’s talent attraction messaging conveys the central idea that Wisconsin is “more you.” You can be more here, mean more, create more impact, and have more, making Wisconsin a better fit for you.
- **Enthusiasm for WEDC’s FY18 talent attraction marketing initiative has prompted calls for increased coordination among government agencies to expand the campaign’s reach.** Collaboration between WEDC, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs and the Wisconsin Department of Tourism has yielded a proposed 18-month plan that calls for the continuation of the Chicago paid media strategy beyond its June 30 end date; expansion of the campaign to additional areas in the Midwest; increased outreach to Wisconsin alumni; and aggressive targeting of transitioning veterans and their families nationwide. Governor Walker has proposed a \$6.8 million state investment to deploy this cross-agency talent retention/attraction initiative.



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WHAT WISCONSIN LEADERS ARE SAYING ABOUT CAMPAIGN

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

"The time is NOW to be proactive, instead of reactive, about our state's talent needs. This is an exciting and progressive approach to attracting those just across the state's border and perhaps looking for an ideal lifestyle. The campaign speaks to the value propositions the next generation of talent seeks."

- **Angela Damiani, CEO, NEWaukee**

"As a young leader in Wisconsin, you can make a major impact in the direction the state is going. Our growing tech and startup community have hundreds of available job opportunities for talent looking to make an impact on their organizations, and this new initiative will heighten awareness of those opportunities."

- **Matthew J. Cordio, Co-founder and President, Wisconsin Startup Week**

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY LEADERS

"To ensure continued growth in Wisconsin's economy, we must work together to fill the talent pipeline and develop innovative ways to make young professionals outside of our state aware of the personal and professional opportunities that exist here. This new initiative will help ensure that message reaches this key audience in the Chicago area."

- **Wilson Jones, President and CEO, Oshkosh Corporation**

"Eighty percent of Wisconsin's business leaders say they are having trouble finding workers, according to the latest WMC economic survey. Attracting more workers of all skill levels to Wisconsin is the right solution, which is why the WMC survey shows that 81 percent of business leaders support Governor Walker's plan. Wisconsin is the best kept secret in the Midwest. Walker's plan will help get the secret out and bring talent to Wisconsin."

- **Kurt Bauer, President and CEO, Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce**

"On top of the great career opportunities that exist in Wisconsin, our state offers a quality of life that is difficult to find elsewhere. From great schools to fine arts to fantastic sports teams to an abundance of outdoor activities, Wisconsin has it all. Generac is grateful that WEDC is spearheading this effort to make talented young people aware of all Wisconsin has to offer them, and we look forward to talking to applicants from the Chicago area who are interested in helping us with everything from engineering to operations to finance at more than half a dozen facilities statewide."

- **Aaron Jagdfeld, President and CEO, Generac**

"Wisconsin is a great place to live and work! I discovered that myself when I moved here after graduating from college, and I support new initiatives to bring talent to Wisconsin."

- **Blake Moret, Chairman and CEO, Rockwell Automation**

"When it comes to tech careers, Wisconsin has it all. From biotech to software, from health IT to Internet of Things, and from virtual reality to AI, the opportunities here for tech-savvy millennials are endless. Kudos to WEDC for launching a campaign that will help increase awareness of all Wisconsin has to offer young professionals."

- **Tom Still, President, Wisconsin Technology Council**

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION LEADERS

“With global companies like Foxconn and Haribo soon establishing operations in the Milwaukee region, and with many existing metro Milwaukee businesses expanding, there is a growing need for talented workers to fill the jobs of today and tomorrow. Addressing this challenge requires a multifaceted and coordinated effort to ensure we deliver a unified message promoting Wisconsin as a premier professional and lifestyle destination.”

- Pat O’Brien, Executive Director, Milwaukee 7

“Businesses across the state need employees who work collaboratively and possess critical problem-solving skills needed to succeed in today’s workplace. While about 85 percent of UW System graduates remain in Wisconsin, the governor’s talent marketing outreach initiative aligns directly with our goal of continuing to connect UW students, alumni and young professionals with career opportunities in Wisconsin. We look forward to seeing UW alumni throughout the U.S. come home and support our rapidly expanding workforce needs.”

-Ray Cross, President, University of Wisconsin System

“Wisconsin has a diverse and dynamic economy that offers incredible career and business opportunities. When the work day is over, this is a phenomenal place to live with world-class education institutions, countless recreational opportunities, and great access to urban city centers and more natural environments. It is also a place that puts a high value on community engagement and one where people can make a real difference in the communities they call home. Wisconsin is very well positioned to win the competition for talent. We support the state’s new talent marketing initiative and are excited to be part of it.”

-Todd Battle, President, Kenosha Area Business Alliance

“The Madison region as well as the entire state offer young professionals numerous opportunities not only for career advancement, but also for fulfilling and affordable social, recreational and cultural pursuits. Promoting our state’s many positive attributes to young professionals in Chicago and beyond will help fuel Wisconsin’s continued strong economic performance while maintaining the exceptional quality of life our citizens enjoy.”

- Paul Jadin, President, Madison Region Economic Partnership

“Today’s business development environment is increasingly driven by workforce development considerations, which is why a strategic and targeted talent recruitment campaign makes perfect sense. As a Stateline community, the Janesville-Beloit region welcomes the opportunity to leverage WEDC’s Chicagoland outreach as a platform to enhance our messaging within that marketplace.”

- James Otterstein, Economic Development Manager, Rock County

“Supporting our existing companies and recruiting new development to Racine County has been RCEDC’s mission for nearly 35 years and our future efforts will benefit from a solution-driven talent recruitment program. With the variety of small to large firms in multiple industries in Racine County, along with the natural beauty that Wisconsin boasts, it is the perfect time to celebrate our assets to attract talent to the State.”

-- Jenny Trick, Racine County Economic Development Corporation (RCEDC)

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“We have a lot to offer those relatively new to the workforce, both in the New North and across the state. We applaud the WEDC for this proactive campaign, which complements the talent attraction efforts we have undertaken in northeast Wisconsin. There is an abundance of professional opportunities here, both in legacy industries and in areas of innovation. Beyond work, come here and you can live the affordable lifestyle you desire while also making a difference in the community.”

- Jerry Murphy, Executive Director, New North

“Wisconsin offers young professionals unlimited opportunities in cutting-edge careers, including biotech, med-tech, advanced manufacturing, engineering and software. Pick your region, pick your lifestyle, Wisconsin has ‘it’. St. Croix EDC supports WEDC’s proactive outreach campaign to attract and grow Wisconsin’s workforce.”

-Bill Rubin, St. Croix Economic Development Corporation

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