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- Annual Corporate & Consultants Survey Results
- Economic Developers Directory
- Leading Locations 2012
- Top Site Selection Factors
- Top States for Doing Business

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- Automotive
- Biotech
- Food Processing
- High Tech/Nano/Electronics
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- Other Industries
- Plastics

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- Location Canada
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## 2012 Top States for Doing Business Survey Results

For the third consecutive year, Area Development magazine's editors have conducted a survey of a select group of highly respected location consultants who work with a nationwide client base. We asked the consultants to name their top-5 state choices in 14 site selection categories.

Area Development Magazine Special Presentation (Fall 2012)



States were ranked in each of the 14 categories based on the number of times they were named as a "top-5" choice by the responding consultants. According to the results, the top-10 states for doing business are Texas, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, Louisiana, Tennessee, Indiana, Mississippi, and Oklahoma, in that order. Texas, which was cited more than 200 times overall, significantly led all other states as the consultants' #1 choice for doing business. The top-five states were each mentioned in at least 8 of 14 categories.

**OVERALL RANKINGS**

2012

1. Texas
2. South Carolina
3. Georgia
4. Alabama
5. North Carolina
6. Louisiana
7. Tennessee
8. Indiana
9. Mississippi
10. Oklahoma

**BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT**

**VERALL BUSINES ENVIRONMENT**

1. Texas

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**Alexion Pharmaceuticals' \$150 Million Investment At Smithfield, Rhode Island Plant, Qualifies For State Job Creation Tax Credits**  
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**Domtar Corporation Invests \$30 Million To Re-purpose Bennettsville, South Carolina Mill**  
10/26/2012

**Don's Cold Storage Plans \$14 Million Temperature-controlled Warehouse in Joplin, Missouri**  
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**WEIGHTPACK, Inc. Invests \$2.6 million To Relocate headquarters from Italy to Powhatan Virginia**  
10/25/2012

**Nutritional Supplement Manufacturer, NBTY, Invests \$20 Million In Expanded Amityville, New York Production Facility**  
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**Peco Foods Invests \$13.8 Million To Expand in Newark And Batesville, Arkansas, Adding 300 Jobs**  
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states that were named by at least 25 percent of the respondents were listed as "Next Best." However, in some categories, only four slots were filled because no other states had enough mentions to be listed.

**An examination of the top-10 states' site selection attributes** — as well as some noted business location and expansion projects — offers insight and confirms the rankings. Let's examine these individual states and find out what

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Primary Industry

**SUBMIT**

2. South Carolina
3. Alabama
4. Louisiana
5. North Carolina

NEXT BEST  
Indiana, Mississippi, Georgia, Tennessee, Oklahoma

... their government and business leaders have to say about why they were singled out by the consultants as the 2012 "Top States for Doing Business."



**Texas is Named the Top State for Doing Business for the Second Year in a Row by Location Consultants**

Every one knows it's tough to topple Texas – the Lone Star State ranked first last year in this survey and, with more than 200 mentions, is again the Top State for Doing Business. Texas has a diverse economy, skilled work force, no corporate or personal income taxes, and a state government that is committed to tort reform and economic development. More...

**LABOR CLIMATE**

**OVERALL LABOR CLIMATE**

1. Georgia
- 2T. North Carolina  
South Carolina
3. Alabama
4. Texas
5. Louisiana

NEXT BEST  
Michigan, Mississippi, Florida, Oklahoma, California, Indiana, Arizona



**Strong Business and Labor Climate Propels South Carolina to Number Two Overall**

South Carolina is on a roll – the Palmetto State brought in a total investment of \$3.37 billion from new and expanding businesses in 2011. Manufacturing is also on the mend, with total exports up by 21 percent last year. These are just some of the reasons South Carolina was ranked second by the consultants among the Top States for Doing Business, up from fourth place in 2011. More...

**INFRASTRUCTURE & GLOBAL ACCESS**

**OVERALL INFRASTRUCTURE & GLOBAL ACCESS**

1. Tennessee
2. Georgia
3. South Carolina
- 4T. Indiana  
Texas
5. Illinois

NEXT BEST  
North Carolina, Ohio, Alabama, Kentucky, California



**Georgia's Leading Workforce Training Program Lands the State in Third Overall**

Georgia ranked third among the Top States for Doing Business. Its consistent, high-level performance is the result of a pro-business government and diverse economy, including aerospace, agribusiness, IT, advanced manufacturing, and logistics and distribution. The life sciences industry continues to show strong gains in the state, generating about \$23 billion annually toward the GDP and employing more than 100,000 workers. More...

**LEADING IN THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

1. Texas
2. Louisiana
- 3T. Indiana  
North Carolina
- 4T. Georgia  
Michigan
- 5T. Florida  
Ohio



**Alabama: Ranked First for its Competitive Labor Costs and Fourth Overall**

For the third consecutive year, Alabama was among the top five states for doing business. Alabama was also first for competitive labor costs and near the top of the list for its work force development programs. More...

**Fifth Ranked North**

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3. **Regional Report: Pacific Region Focuses on Renewable Energy**
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5. **Strong Business and Labor Climate Propels South Carolina to Number Two Overall**
7. **Texas is Named the Top State for Doing Business for the Second Year in a Row by Location Consultants**

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- California
- Oklahoma
- South Carolina
- Virginia

NEXT BEST  
California, Tennessee

**CONSULTANTS COMMENTARY**



**Winning States Offer Low Taxes, Generous**

**Incentives, and Fewer Regulations**

Eric Stavriotis, Senior Vice President, Strategic Consulting, Jones Lang LaSalle

**States With Deep Pools of Skilled Workers Come Out on Top**



Scott Redabaugh, Managing Director, Jones Lang LaSalle



**Survey of Location Consultants Fails to Capture**

**Progress Made by Many States**

Dan Levine, Principal, MetroCompare LLC

**Low Costs, Favorable Business Climates, and Right-to-Work Environments Propel Top States**



Kathy Mussio, Managing Partner, Atlas Insight



**Carolina Boasts a Recently Updated Certified Sites Program and Outstanding Labor**

**Climate**

North Carolina took fifth place among the Top States for Doing Business, up from seventh place in 2011 and eighth in 2010. The state ranked second (tied) for its overall labor climate because of its availability of skilled labor, competitive labor costs, and leading work force development programs. More...



**Government Cooperation with Business Helps Louisiana Lead in the Economic Recovery and Rank Sixth Overall**

Louisiana has taken a very aggressive, targeted approach to improve its business climate over the past five years, and those efforts are clearly paying off. Louisiana ranked sixth overall among the Top States for Doing Business — the same spot that the state held in the 2011 survey. Louisiana also ranked in the top five in several key categories. Most notably, the state ranked first for its cooperative state government and second for both its incentives programs and as a state that is leading in the economic recovery. More...



**Seventh Ranked Tennessee Polls as the Best in the Nation for its Overall Infrastructure and Global Access**

Tennessee ranked seventh overall among the Top States for Doing Business — up one spot compared to 2011 survey results. Tennessee also scored the top ranking for its overall infrastructure and global access, and also beat out its competitors in ranking first for its distribution/logistics hub access. More...



**Indiana, The Nation's Newest Right-to-Work State, Ranked Eighth Among the Top States for Doing Business**

Indiana ranked eighth overall among the Top States for Doing Business. The state tied for a number-one ranking for its rail and highway accessibility. It also scored in the top five in several other categories including tying for third among states that are leading in the economic recovery. More...



**Competitive Utility Rates and Ease of**



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- 2012 Gold & Silver Shovel Awards: Excellence in State Economic Development
- 26th Annual Corporate Survey & 8th Annual Consultants Survey Results

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### Permitting Help Land Mississippi in Ninth Place

Mississippi once again ranked ninth overall among the Top States for Doing Business. Mississippi scored high in several categories, including ranking among the top-five positions for its competitive utility rates, competitive labor costs, speed of permitting, and overall cost of doing business. More...



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### Consultants Rank Oklahoma Tenth Overall, Noting its Incentive and Work Force Development Programs

Oklahoma ranked tenth overall among the Top States for Doing Business. The state also ranked fifth for both its incentives programs and as a leader in work force development programs, and also tied for fifth as one of the states leading in the economic recovery. Those standings are a testament to the fact that Oklahoma has continued to strive to improve its economic development platform and remove impediments that have been standing in the way of business expansion. More...

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