



A Partner for Africa and Other Emerging Markets



An overview of Greater Seattle's industry sectors helping to build the emerging markets of Africa and other developing countries.

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Did You Know...

The University of Washington (UW) ranks first in the nation among universities whose students volunteer in the Peace Corps?

Several Seattle companies have established the Washington International Business Network for enhancing business and trade opportunities in Africa?

A Seattle area United States Congressman introduced the African Growth and Opportunity Act to create trade partnerships for emerging African markets?

Overview

King County and the Greater Seattle metropolitan area offer a wealth of goods and services for Africa and emerging markets. Located in the Northwest corner of the United States, the region serves as an international crossroads and is a valuable market for the distribution of products throughout North America and the world. Our strong economic sectors -- telecommunications, health and medical, environmental, engineering and agriculture -- present many opportunities for African and emerging markets to increase trade and business opportunities.

Two of Seattle's sister cities are Limbe, Cameroon and Mombassa, Kenya. In fact, Seattle and King County have established over 35 sister city and sister-county relationships reflecting our keen interest in and commitment to global ties. King County, the 12th most populous county in the United States, has 55 percent of Washington state's population and accounts for over 71 percent of trade activities in the state.

A region that is home to [Boeing](#) and [Microsoft](#), King County and Greater Seattle offer a wealth of business and trade opportunities for your market. Intent on strengthening long lasting trade relationships, the Seattle area has developed a strong infrastructure of trade services including marketing, law and regulatory affairs, finance and accounting to assist companies in conducting international trade.

Building and Connecting Your Region: Infrastructure Services

The Greater Seattle area has a wealth of infrastructure companies to help build your market and connect it with the latest technology and services from telecommunications to architecture and the environment.

Telecommunications

The Greater Seattle area is known throughout the world for its innovative telecommunications products and services. The region is home to many businesses providing leading edge technology, software and equipment to support the industry.

Telecommunications is one of the greatest infrastructure challenges in Africa and other emerging markets. Many local companies are building strategic alliances with businesses and governments worldwide to reach these markets. [Active Voice Corp.](#) produces computer telephone software that allows small and medium sized businesses to integrate office phone systems with voice mail, automated attendant and fax mail functions.

GS Technologies, a local dealer of Active Voice, is pursuing work in Africa. Other companies supply various high tech goods to Africa. For example, over 95 percent of Swift Tech's semiconductors and integrated circuit business is to Africa. Ibadan Company, a computer analyst consulting firm focusing on educational software, is involved in South Africa.

Architecture and Engineering Services

Seattle is home to a number of architecture and engineering firms which have found success by specializing in areas that are critical to the infrastructure of emerging markets. Greater Seattle firms, like [NBBJ](#), design specialty hospitals around the world for cancer treatment, children's medicine and women's health care. Other firms are at the forefront of bioregional planning and eco-tourism development strategies. [Jones & Jones](#) has developed an international reputation for their work on zoos, aquariums and botanical gardens. Other companies have gained international success as specialty technical firms with expertise in transportation planning and civil and structural engineering. [Gary Struthers Associates](#), a consulting firm, is working in South Africa on hazardous waste and wastewater projects. [Donald King Architects](#), with extensive experience in community development planning, has done design work in Nigeria and Sudan. [Streeter & Associates Architects](#) designs public offices, housing, industrial and transit facilities.

Environmental Services

The Greater Seattle area is an ideal place for Africa and other emerging markets to seek expertise and resources on a wide range of environmental subjects. The region is home to over 500 environmental companies providing services and products dedicated to sustaining and improving environmental conditions both locally and globally.

Since Washington state is home to an incredible ecological diversity including rain forests, deserts, mountains, farmland, an ocean, lakes and a host of rivers, the region has developed an ability to deal with environmental issues of every climate. In 1990, due to the growing number of companies in the region, the Washington Environmental Industry Association (WEIA) was founded to help develop policies and to act as an information resource for the industry.

Several Seattle agencies and organizations have collaborated with colleagues in other countries on key environmental issues.

- [Pacific Northwest National Laboratory](#) operated by Battelle offers technical assistance and staff exchanges and has performed work on 1,900 projects for clients worldwide.
- Metropolitan Services of King County provides training to overseas business leaders and government officials on pollution control, hazardous waste disposal and wastewater treatment.
- [Associates in Cultural Exchange](#) has provided training on a myriad of environmental issues in many countries including land use planning in Ghana.
- The outdoor recreation industry has grown quickly thanks to Washington state's

natural surroundings. Today it encompasses over 35 manufacturers and ranks in the top 30 of Washington state's exports which totaled \$152 million in 1996. Many of these companies manufacture outdoor clothing and gear by importing textiles from overseas. Prominent companies such as [REI](#), [Eddie Bauer](#), and [Nordstrom](#) are headquartered in Seattle.

A region of environmentally conscience inhabitants has led to the success of specialized tourism. REI developed an offshoot of its services with REI Adventures, a travel company for eco-tourists. Other ecological travel companies include Bicycle Africa which offers guided bicycle tours of Africa.

Cascadia Quest & the King County World Conservation Corps (KCWCC)

- Cascadia Quest is a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering global cooperation and environmental responsibility among the young people of the world. Together with KCWCC and international partnerships, the program brings international and local youth together to learn about environmental restoration while working on real problems in the King County region. The Global Service Fellowship Program takes this a step further by providing advanced training in business and management to graduates of the Conservation Corps who plan to start similar youth service projects in their countries. African participants include corps members and fellows who have come with support from partner organizations such as the Forest Action Network in Kenya and the Green Earth Organization in Ghana.

Helping to Feed the World

Opportunities abound for emerging markets interested in sharing the wealth of Washington state's agriculture and food processing industry. The rich, arable lands yield over 230 food, feed and seed crops. The bounty from the waters bordering the state supports a thriving seafood industry. This natural wealth, combined with the state's proximity to world markets, makes Washington a leading exporter of food and agricultural products.

Food Processing

A significant contribution to international exports comes from food processing which is the state's second-largest manufacturing industry, employing over 38,000 workers and generating over \$7.7 billion in annual revenues. This industry is lead by innovative companies such as Penwest Foods, the only U.S. producer of food-grade potato starch, and established industry leaders such as [Lamb-Weston](#), a large fruit and vegetable processor. Washington is also a leading producer of processed dairy products such as powdered milk, butter and cheese. The coffee industry, lead by Seattle's [Starbucks Corporation](#), is supported by companies which manufacture quality roasting equipment and develop first-class facilities.

Seattle and King County

Seattle and King County play a key role in Washington's agriculture industry. The marine and fishing industries are based in Ballard, a historic area of Seattle, which is the site of a variety of companies such as marine equipment manufacturers and boat build-

ers. Carnation is home to the world-famous international dairy company of the same name. East of Seattle is Issaquah, a key distribution center for agriculture products moving from eastern Washington to the Port of Seattle and beyond. Kent, located southeast of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is the wholesale/trade distribution hub for the region and home to many import/export companies such as Hexcel Structures and Fritz Companies.

Support Organizations

The agriculture industry is supported by many state organizations, the largest being the [Washington State Department of Agriculture \(WSDA\)](#). Also important are the 24 state-sanctioned, grower-funded commodity commissions which provide marketing assistance to members and help promote products in domestic and overseas markets. Global marketing of Washington agricultural products has been further expanded through the International Marketing for Agricultural Commodities and Trade (IMPACT) Center run by Washington State University Cooperative Extension. The Cooperative Extension program is exemplary in its effort to promote research and bring expertise and resources to the public on topics such as sustaining agriculture, food safety, environmental stewardship, and product and development niche marketing. King County Cooperative Extension is the largest of the county programs and is a key contact for international agricultural trade development.

Education and Training Opportunities

Education is crucial to our region's effort to remain globally competitive. According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau's statistics, our region is second in the nation in the percentage of adults with college degrees. The region also attracts thousands of international students ready to take advantage of the wide variety of first class educational programs offered throughout Greater Seattle and King County's institutions of higher learning.

Many programs in our area's institutions provide training in sectors critical to Africa and other emerging markets.

- The University of Washington [School of Public Health and Community Medicine](#) offers advanced training in biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental and occupational health, community medicine, and research on health care delivery systems.
- The [Seattle Community College District](#) offers associate degrees in a wide variety of environmental studies including hazardous materials handling and management technology, environmental chemistry and biotechnology.
- The University of Washington Center for Sustainable Communities works with the United Nations, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and others to broadcast Greater Seattle's knowledge of developing healthy, whole communities.
- The Wireless Communications Technology Program, a public/private collaboration of Seattle Central Community College and local wireless companies, combines

classroom and work-based learning to train technicians in telecommunications technology.

- Edmonds and Seattle Community Colleges are among the top ten teaching institutions for English as a Second Language (ESL).

Area institutions recognize the need to develop first class programs in international business, trade and commerce in order to educate global leaders. In an effort to reach beyond local borders, many of Seattle's colleges and universities have collaborated with institutions around the world, including Africa, on a wide range of programs.

- [North Seattle Community College](#) is home to the International Trade Institute (ITT) -- a unique partnership between the college's Business Division, Continuing Education Division, and international trade organizations.
- [Highline Community College](#) is working with institutions in South Africa and Namibia to develop customized training programs for local businesses.
- The [University of Washington](#) maintains an active link with the University of Zimbabwe through exchange programs in subjects ranging from business administration to ethnomusicology. The [UW School of Public Health and Community Medicine](#) administers a federal grant enabling minority students to conduct three-month research projects in Zimbabwe.
- [Green River Community College](#) has active International Education and Training Programs including a Sister College in Kaoshuing, Taiwan and a new Africa and The Middle East cross-cultural program to prepare graduates to enter an international job market.

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