



CARIBOU, MAINE USES ANALYTICS TO RECRUIT 300 JOBS DOWNTOWN

The Challenge

The city of Caribou, Maine, is the most northeastern city the United States, just 15 minutes west and 35 minutes south of the Canadian border. The city's economy was historically fueled by a nearby U.S. Air Force base, but when the base closed as part of a military realignment in 1994, nearly \$83 million in annual payroll left the community.



City leaders began working hard to bring back jobs, with a renewed focus on economic development following the 2012 arrival of City Manager Austin Bleess.

The Opportunity

A local software development company was seeing a lot of success and invested in a building downtown. The company was so good, however, that it was acquired by another firm, who promptly relocated the company to its own corporate headquarters in another state. After trying unsuccessfully to sell the building, the company donated it to the city.

The building was perfect for a software development or other IT-related business, and the city set out to fill the vacant space. Sitel Operating Corporation, one of the world's leading outsourcing providers of call centers, had an existing location in the region and was considering relocating to Caribou. They were evaluating several locations, but Caribou knew that having Sitel downtown would provide a tremendous boost in jobs and economic activity.

LOCATION:

- Northeastern Maine

POPULATION:

- Approximately 8,000

CHALLENGE:

- Fill vacant building downtown and create new jobs

BUXTON CLIENT SINCE:

- 2014

But how could Caribou convince Sitel that the vacant building downtown was the right location for their business?

The Solution

The proof that Caribou needed came from an unexpected source: Buxton's SCOUT platform. In January 2014, Caribou had partnered with Buxton to support retail development initiatives, but the city realized that the demographic and drive-time reports provided by Buxton could also be used to evaluate other types of sites.

"Being able to show the population numbers, the available workforce within the specific drive-time area of the site in our downtown was key."

Austin Bless
City Manager

Caribou ran custom 15 minute and 5 minute drive-time reports to show the population around the downtown site and the other sites that Sitel was considering.

Seeing the data was eye-opening for Sitel. It helped them to understand what a 15 minute drive-time really meant in rural Caribou, as opposed to a metropolitan area, and showed them exactly where their workforce was concentrated.

The Results

Sitel decided to purchase the downtown building from the city of Caribou and on May 1, 2015 brought 300 new jobs to the location, with 200 more jobs expected. The growth in jobs downtown has benefitted other businesses in the area, as retailers and restaurants have seen increases in traffic.

Caribou's economy now has strong momentum and the city looks forward to welcoming more jobs and businesses in the near future.

To learn how Buxton can support your economic development efforts, contact us today.

