



Albuquerque's branding a topic of discussion at AREA luncheon

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Bugs Bunny put Albuquerque on the map for many out-of-towners who had never heard of the Duke City prior to the animated character failing to take a left turn there.

Albuquerque would later resonate with the rest of the country and the world with the successful TV series "Breaking Bad."

The subject of Albuquerque's recognition outside the state was one of the topics discussed during a panel of site selectors at an Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance luncheon last week.

The consensus was that the city lacks "branding."

"I don't know what your brand is," Jay A. Garner, president and founder of Garner Economic, said regarding Albuquerque. "Nashville is Music City, USA. Austin goes off of that and has live music bars, too. They've done their, you know, 'Keep it Weird.'... You've got to focus and protect your brand."

However, the panelist said Albuquerque has plenty to offer when it comes to branding and attracting out-of-state businesses.

"Think about what you can do living in Albuquerque, in skiing, biking, golf, it's recreational amenities, and the choices are amazing," said Matt Szuhaj, vice president of Strategic Development Group. "Where you can live, the type of housing, you could be in a ranchette, you could be in an apartment Downtown. So cultural amenities, recreational amenities, educational amenities. ... All of these other things can contribute to the character of life here. If I was to brand this area, I wouldn't be shy about saying that."

The panel was made up of site selectors from around the country. Garner; Szuhaj; Meghan DiGiacomo, senior consultant at Global Location Strategies; Phil Schneider, president of Schneider Consulting; and Bob Westover, senior vice president at Colliers International, sat on the panel and answered questions asked by moderator Patrick Ethridge, senior vice president and executive editor of the Albuquerque Journal.