

# Real AZ Corridor Wins the Governor's Excellence Award for Innovative Economic Development



Our regional branding project for the **Real AZ Development Council --the Real AZ Corridor** -- was named the winner of the **2010 Governor's Excellence Award for Innovative Economic Development** at last week's Regional Development Conference in Flagstaff. More than a dozen members of the Corridor were on hand to accept the award from Governor Jan Brewer on the final day of that exciting two-day conference.

We do not set out to win awards when we begin a project, but they are certainly good for fueling enthusiasm and momentum and we -- and the communities and organizations that we work with -- are always honored by the recognition. This was a powerful way to introduce the **Real AZ Corridor** brand to an important audience and we are excited and gratified by the response that we have received since last week's conference.



**The Real AZ Corridor is an exceptional example of effective Regional Branding ... and of the productive value and synergy of emphasizing Collaboration versus Competition.**

Earlier this year, we were awarded a competitive contract to develop a regional branding strategy for the Real AZ Development Council (formerly Navajo County Regional Development Council), which includes two Arizona counties (Navajo and Apache) and nine communities (Winslow, Holbrook, Snowflake, Taylor, Show Low, Pinetop-Lakeside, Eagar, Springerville and St. Johns). Lori Martinek held Visioning Workshops, wrote a detailed branding strategy, developed identity elements and led the design and development of a gateway regional website that can be found at [www](http://www.RealAZCorridor.com).

[RealAZCorridor.com](http://www.RealAZCorridor.com)

We also designed a series of 12 Community Landing Pages that strengthen the brand and ease the transition from the **Real AZ Corridor** website to the individual community websites and to **EDAC** (Economic Development of Apache County) ... and designed a banner display for placement on [www](http://www.EcoDevDirectory.com).

[EcoDevDirectory.com](http://www.EcoDevDirectory.com), which is the pre-eminent gateway website for economic development organizations and professionals.

The Real AZ Corridor was also featured in Lori's presentation at the conference, **Regional Branding: Strategies That Really Work**. Lori's work for the AZSBDC (Arizona Small Business Development Center Network) and as part of an **IEDC** (International Economic Development Council) response team in the Gulf Coast were also featured that day.

**Here's the Take-Away If You Are Considering a Regional Branding Effort: Encourage Collaboration versus Competition.** It is THE Game-Changer when it comes to Regionalism. And be sure to consider your branding effort for what it truly is: A long-term investment in the economic vitality of your community or region that effects every local stakeholder and business, both now and in the future. Consider your strategy carefully. We can help.

**Collaboration Beats Competition ... Every Time!** There is no question that this theory is true when it comes to Regionalism, but it is also true of doing business in general. When we as business owners, civic leaders and decision makers choose to Network ... Share ... Promote ... and become Brand Champions for the companies, communities and causes that we believe in, everyone wins.

