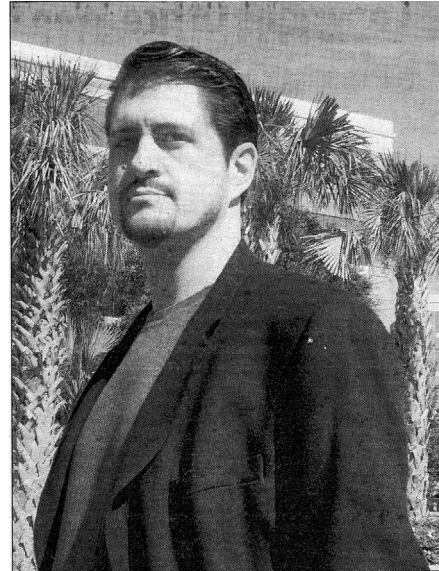


Nov 3, 2003

Fishing For Big Business

Name: Guy Hagen Title: President Company: Innovation Insight Inc. What it does: Provides industry research, focusing on technology sectors. Was hired to research the Florida Financial Services Cluster Initiative, an attempt to lure financial services companies to the state. Employees: 1



What are Tampa Bay's advantages in luring financial services firms?

It has a track record of successful relocations and expansions within this industry. It has strong and motivated higher education institutions that are responsive to the needs of this industry. To a limited degree, the region has a level of identity awareness - branding - within the industry, because of the number of major companies here. This translates into the expectation that there is a sufficient work force and technology base to support financial services companies.

What will be the biggest obstacle?

I think the biggest impediment is reputation and expectations regarding Florida. As always, Florida's reputation in the business and technology sectors is always competing with its reputation for tourism and agriculture.

Regardless of the actual quality of Florida's education, the state also has a dismal reputation regarding its schools, and this can be an important consideration for attracting professional and executive talent.

Michael Sasso

This story can be found at: <http://tampatrib.com/businessnews/MGAARS2UJMD.html>

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