

Attracting 'Creative' Drive: Key Influences on the Calgary Innovation System

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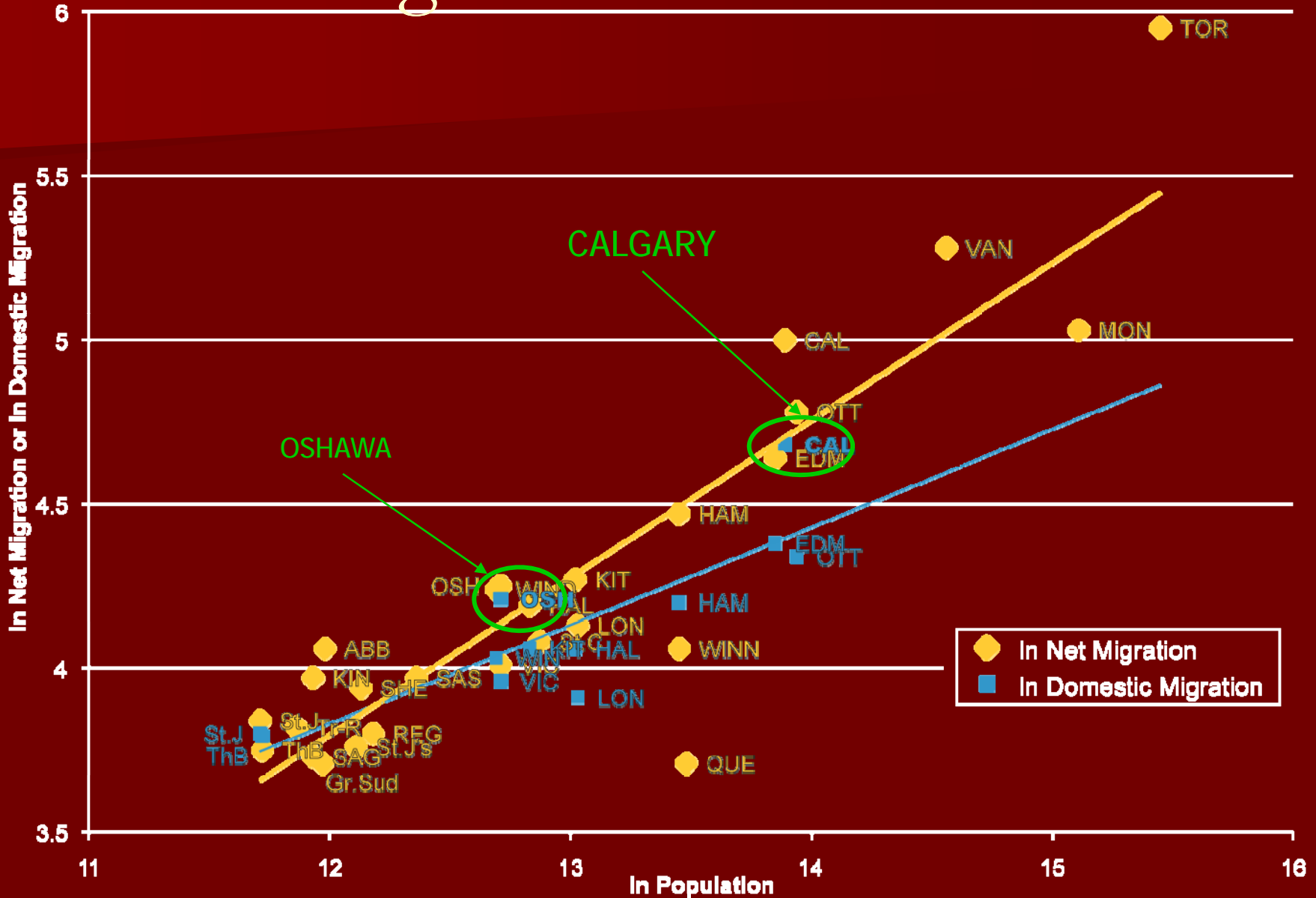
The team (in alphabetical order)

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Introduction

- Hypotheses about attraction of Creatives
- Calgary Context
 - Cross-Country Quantitative Comparison
 - Calgary's Unique Characteristics
- Calgary's Creatives' Perspective
 - Testing the HOs
- Results/Discussion

Migration Power Law



Hypothesizing factors that embed 'Creatives'

- H1: A socio-cultural environment rich in diversity attracts (retains) 'creative' people
- H2: Economic opportunity is a key attractor and growth drives growth
- H3: Specific environmental factors are critical
- H4: Professional networks (w. strong links) are critical
- H5: Personal networks (w. strong links) are critical

The Calgary Context

- Leads (pre-boom) CMAs in rates of increase* of knowledge intensive workers...
 - Business and finance professionals / Chefs and cooks / Construction trades / Natural and applied science professionals
- Population growth
 - 1996-2001 > 10%
 - 2001-2006 = 16%
- 9 statistically# “clustered” sectors
 - 38% of people employed in clusters

*Spencer and Vinodrai, 2007

#Spencer and Vinodrai, 2006

Boom... impacts

■ CED Business Survey

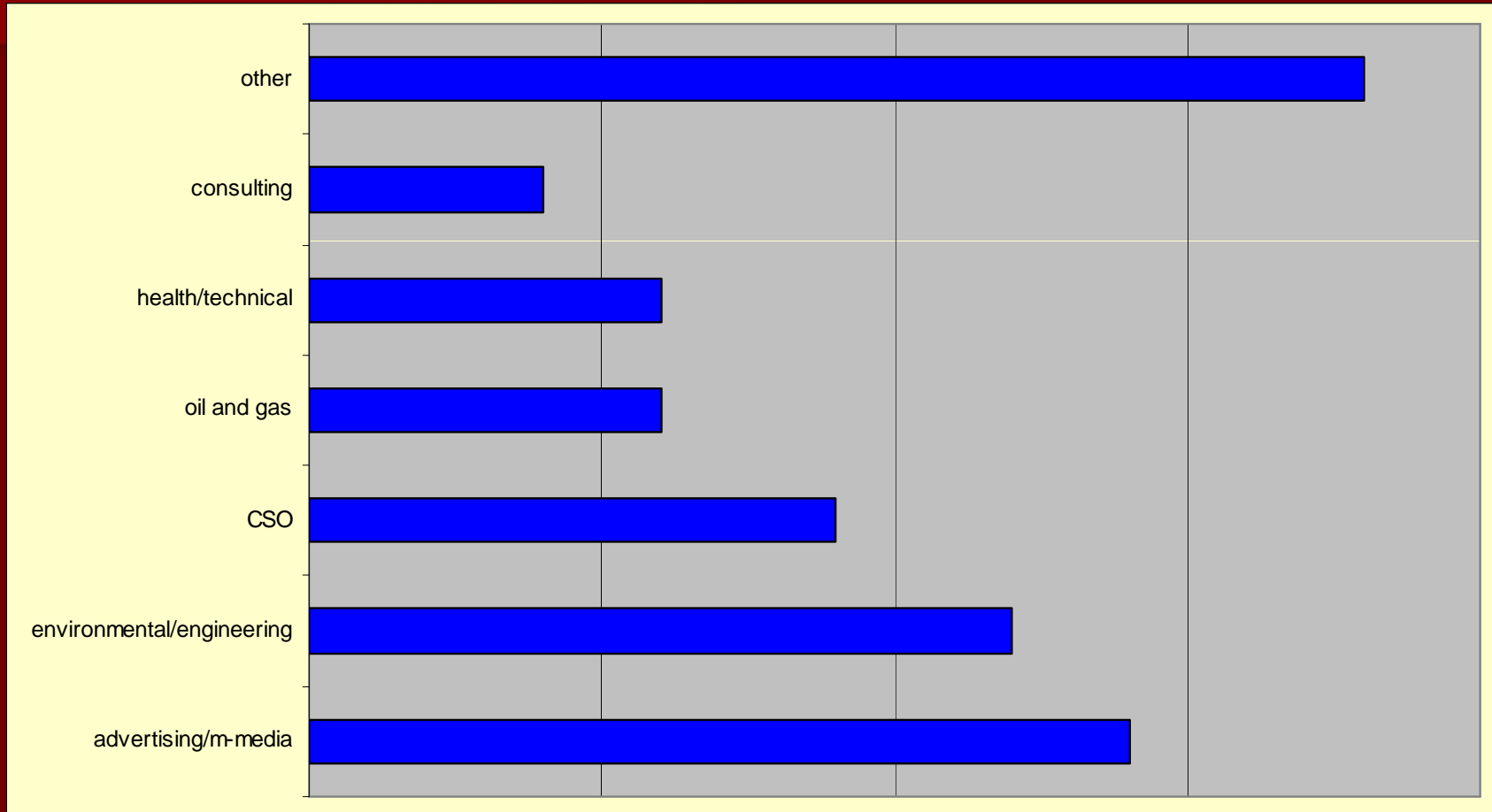
- Analyzed across 6 factors (and several sub-factors):
 - ◆ Business Infrastructure, Quality of Life, Communications and Education, Markets and Capital, Strategic Intelligence and Labour Resources

■ Shift in perceptions...(2004-2007) (negative changes)

- Access to skilled labour
- Transportation and infrastructure
- Balance growth & environment
- (2007) Affordable housing

**Quality of life issues
become business issues!**

Interviews - Progress to Date (n=69)



Other: independents (artists, freelance, etc), architecture, government, retail, construction, media, public relations, data storage/management

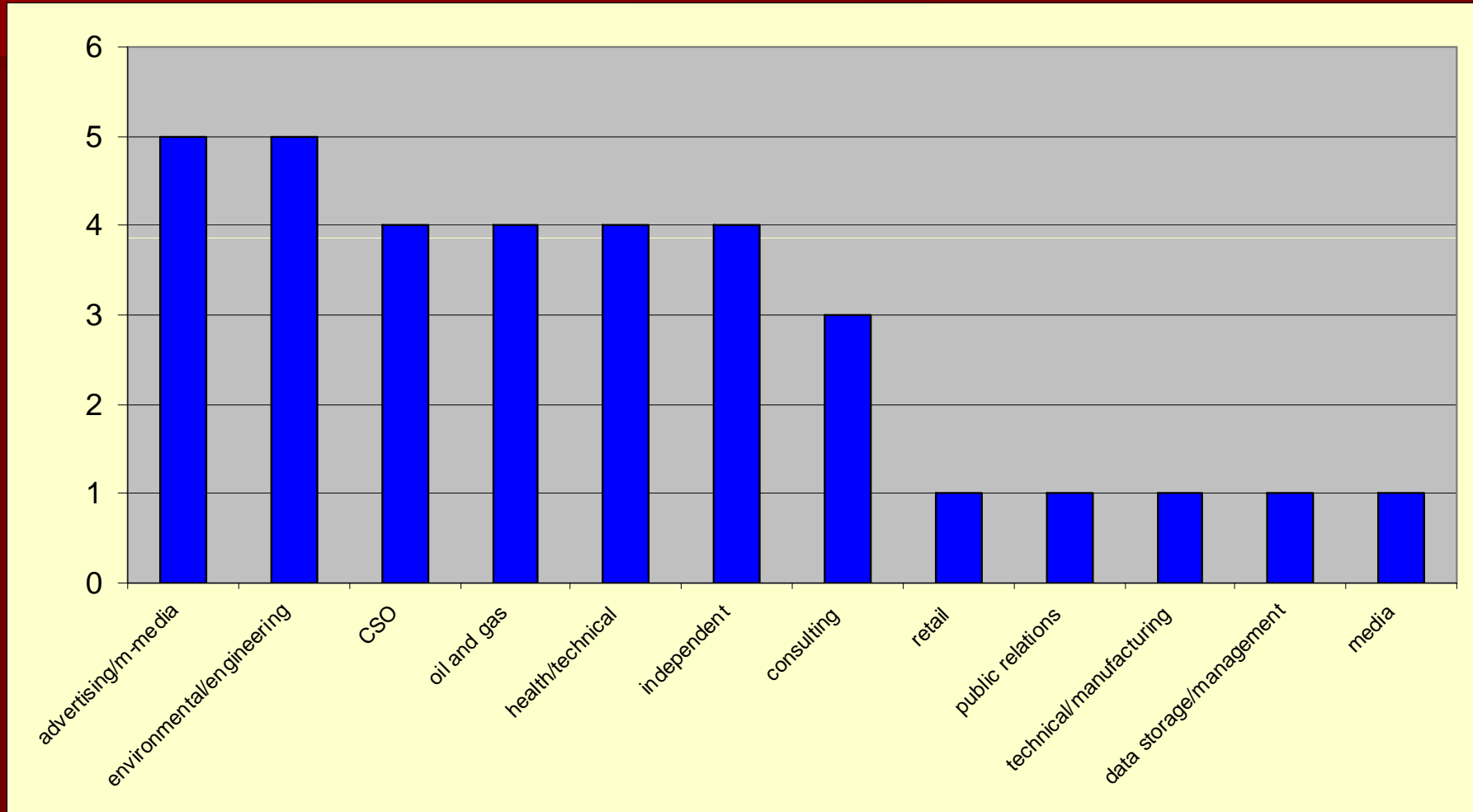
Which specific features “Attract” creatives to Calgary’s innovation system?

- 19 specific features identified:
 - Based upon the responses of creative interviewees in ISRN Theme II Questionnaire
- Test the “Key Attractors” (H1-H5)
 - Perception that a specific feature is positive or negative in terms of its attractiveness to Calgary creatives

Methodology

- Sample set of creatives: $n = 34$
- Attractor Index
 - count mentions and identify ‘tone’ of 5 key attractors (HOs) across coded responses from 34 interviews
 - counts (total mentions, and net-sum of positive, neutral and negative)
 - Aggregate counts / hits = importance of attractor (HO) to creatives
- Qualitative analysis

Sample set of Creatives (n = 34)



Attractors (or Detractors) of the Calgary CMA

<u>Hypotheses</u>		<u>Hits</u>	<u>Aggregated Attractor Index</u>
<u>H3</u>	critical environmental factors	<i>115</i>	<u><i>6.62</i></u>
<u>H2</u>	economic opportunities	<i>101</i>	<u><i>3.94</i></u>
<u>H4</u>	professional networks	<i>38</i>	<u><i>3.51</i></u>
<u>H5</u>	personal networks	<i>30</i>	<u><i>3.50</i></u>
<u>H1</u>	socio-cultural diversity	<i>46</i>	<u><i>1.22</i></u>
	Detractors**	<i>39</i>	<u><i>-1.93</i></u>

Supporting features: (H3) entrepreneurial spirit, social problems, buzz, large/growing city, local customers, density, govt support, political environment, commuting times, (H2) spinoff from O&G, talent pool, economic diversity, local customers, available work niche, (H4) local customers, informal relationships, (H5) personal learning, volunteerism/civic activity, (H1) openness to new ideas, social problems, youth.

**Detractor features: spin off from oil and industry, political environment, social problems

Qualitative signals...

- H3 Specific environmental factors are critical
 - “... ..there’s an entrepreneurial spirit in the city ... an open-for-business attitude amongst the provincial government...”
 - “I’m here because it’s 2 hours to my cottage ... and the mountains are only an hour away.”
- H2 Economic opportunity is a key attractor and growth is auto-catalytic
 - “...it’s simply because many of the companies...have head offices here or substantial [talent pool] here.”
 - “...[opportunities] to launch new creative businesses.”

Qualitative signals...

- H4 Professional networks (w./strong links) are critical
 - “Calgary has to be the most close knit geo-scientific group in the world - It's, I think, because the city is compact...”
 - “The oil and gas industry... we are all linked. There is a network that exists, that is tangible... you experience it when you walk into the Plus 15.”
 - “The science behind the technology is more open and talked about...I love that about Calgary...”
- H5 Personal networks (w./strong links) are critical
 - “...I have a really close network of friends...we travel together...we commute together...”

Qualitative signals...

- H1 A socio-cultural environment rich in diversity attracts ‘creative’ people
 - “...Calgary is more conducive because of the cross-culturalization, the different ways of thinking, ...”
 - “...Calgary is one of the few places where youth is not a [negative] factor, other places want to see a few more grey hairs...”

Implications? Next steps?

- National and local data both point to unique and, perhaps changing, characteristics of Calgary for creatives
- Diversity is mentioned less (lower priority?) compared to other attractors measured
- There is no doubt we need to track the combination of critical environment factors, economics, and professional networks
- We will continue toward a larger 'n'
- The 'Willy Sutton' factor

Questions? / Comments?

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