

Five strengths that sealed the Fortune Forum

Editor's note: As Chengdu prepares to host the 12th Fortune Global Forum from June 6 to 8, Yan Xing, deputy dean of the Chengdu Academy of Social Sciences, outlines the five strengths that enabled the city to become the first in western China to attract the event:

• Engine for development

China is now the second largest economy in the world. The western part of the country, due to the west development strategy, is a most promising region in the world economy.

Chengdu's annual growth rate has topped all 12 provincial capitals in western China since the country launched the strategy in 2000. It is now the most promising nucleus in the region.

Chengdu's GDP accounts for 8 percent of the entire western region.

The State Council approved Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Zone in 2011 and the 12th Five-Year-Plan for West Development in 2012, linking Chengdu and Chongqing together as a key region in the west.

A total of 234 Fortune Global 500 companies have set up offices in Chengdu.

• City of innovation



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The Tianfu software industrial park in Chengdu is among the many high-tech operations.

and over 800,000 technical professionals.

Home to 42 higher education institutions including Sichuan University and the University of Scientific Technology of China, Chengdu has more than 200,000 graduates each year that keep the city innovative.

In 2010, some 31,261 patents were filed in the city and 25,981 were approved, the top among all western and central Chinese cities.

It is also one of the first State-level cities for innovation as approved by the Ministry of Science and Technology in 2010.

• Unique culture and lifestyle

With a long history, profound cultural traditions and a laidback lifestyle, Chengdu has long been a dream destination for men of letters, including famous Chinese poet Li Bai in the Tang Dynasty (618-907).

Their works and relics are not only attractions, but also the cultural and literary fortunes of the city.

In 2007 the US magazine Time published an article titled "Welcome to China's China" to show Chengdu's modernity and lifestyle. The title itself has become



GU DAO / FOR CHINA DAILY

Panda-styled waiter shows his talent at a Chengdu teahouse. The city's culture is one of its major attractions.

UNESCO named Chengdu a City of Gastronomy in 2010, the first Asian city to be awarded such accolade. Popular foods around the world — such as spicy hotpot, Mapo tofu and Kungpao chicken — are all from Chengdu.

• Conferences and exhibitions

Chengdu's rich experience in hosting big international conferences and its quality service team are another key reason why it was selected as the host city by Fortune magazine.

Chengdu has hosted all 13 of the Western China International Fairs since the annual event began in 2000. It has also hosted international auto shows, the EU-China Business & Technology Cooperation Fair and other globally known events.

The city's conventions and exhibitions had their fastest ever growth from 2005-2011, marked by surging economic output, the number and scale of events, and added value to other industries.

As one of the nation's top 10 convention cities, Chengdu aims to become the capital of the sector in China in 2015 and Asia in 2030.

• Efficient local government

With its highly efficient government, Chengdu is now a hub for investment in China's inland.

In 2001, it became the first city in the country to set the target of a normalized, service-style government. The city government since reduced its total number of approval authorities from 179 to 48.

During the 48th foreign investors symposium last year, Chengdu has won wide praise for its effective and quality government services.

Chengdu topped the 2010 Forbes Magazine list of 10 fastest growing cities. An Economist Intelligence Unit report Citi Group published last year ranked it as the seventh most competitive city on the Chinese mainland.



HUANG YIMING / CHINA DAILY

Downtown Chengdu at night: The capital of Sichuan province is now a modern city rich in a range of resources.

Chengdu: Model city for IP creation and protection

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Famed as the home of pandas, Chengdu is also impressing foreigners for its friendly intellectual property climate.

The State Intellectual Property Office named a Chengdu high-tech zone a national intellectual property demonstration park in February, the first of its kind in western China. The honor has also been granted to nine other industrial parks including Beijing's Zhongguancun innovation zone.

The title reflects the successful implementation of Chengdu's IP strategies and affirms the contribution of the high-tech zone in innovation, according to the local government. The title is valid until the end of 2015.

A story in the newspaper alliance European News Agencies said Chengdu has "the lowest investment risks as well as the best IP protection across the country". The writer also called on European companies to seize the opportunity to locate their projects in the city for faster growth.

Chengdu is ready to show the world it has much more than pandas. It is expected to become an economic powerhouse in western China over the next decade.

The city has the most financial institutions and complete services for economic development in the region, according to the city government.

Considerable investment has already been drawn to the city, which is now home to 234 Fortune Global 500 companies.

The same factors also make effective IP management and strong protection necessary in Chengdu.

Mayor Ge Honglin said that the local government insists on intellectual property protection as the core element enhancing the city's competitiveness.

The Chengdu high-tech zone founded in 1988 is a prime example, he said.

High-tech zone

The zone passed a milestone last year by filing more than 10,000 patent applications. Some 4,042 invention patent filings accounted for 33.8 percent of the total.

About 9,700 applications came from



companies, an increase of 48 percent over 2011. Mobile Internet and the Internet of Things are growing in the number of filings, with applications from companies in those fields rising at an annual rate of 50 percent for three consecutive years.

The significant IP achievements have helped the city enhance its capacity for innovation that boosts growth in the local economy.

After more than 20 years, three industries — electronic information, biomedicine and precision machinery manufacturing — have developed into mainstays

of the zone's economy.

The zone had nearly 88 billion yuan (\$14.1 billion) in industrial output value in 2012, an increase of 23 percent over 2011.

Since the zone was named as a national pilot site for IP protection in 2007, its administrative committee has released more than 20 IP promotion policies.

It also set up a 1 million yuan fund to boost the utilization and commercialization of patents in emerging industries.

To date, the fund has supported 50 projects using patented technologies that have

generated nearly 2 billion yuan in industrial output value and contributed 250 million yuan in tax revenues.

Another reason behind rising number of inventions is the zone's strong innovation capacity. It was named a State-level high-tech zone in 1991 and became a pilot in efforts to develop a globally leading science park in 2006.

Honors

With help of the high-tech zone, the city has created many superlatives — the leading city in western China in patent applications and authorization for seven consecutive years, the first demonstration city for IP protection in the nation and the first large Chinese city to establish government patent awards.

The local government's efforts in IP utilization, management and protection also won high praise from senior officials at the State Intellectual Property Office.

"The Chengdu government has made many innovative attempts in IP operation, which play a positive role in IP demonstration across the country," said He Hua, the office's vice-commissioner.

SIPO is likely to approve Chengdu as the site of a patent examination center following existing sites in Beijing, Suzhou and the provinces of Guangdong, Henan and Hubei, according to the city's IP administration.

Local authorities are now scouting locations for the center.

When construction on the facility is complete, it will house some 2,000 professional patent examiners expected to deal with 110,000 patents from all over the country, said local officials.

The center, as part of the IP service chain, will further accelerate development of IP services and improve the system in Chengdu, the officials said.

Other IP services provided in the city include online patent databases and patent-collateral loans.

By the end of 2011, 76 Chengdu companies received loans totaling nearly 660 million yuan by using patents as collateral.

Mayor Ge said Chengdu will continue to do more to protect intellectual property that creates ongoing improvements in conditions for investors from home and abroad.

Rising star: World is watching western hub

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Five Strategies

Improvements to transportation and logistics networks are an important part of the Five Metropolitan Prosperity Strategies that the Chengdu government has adopted in an effort to develop the city into the nucleus of western China's economic growth.

In addition to having more international air and rail connections, Chengdu will prioritize the development of public transportation, accelerate the construction of subway lines and build a diversified, high-volume and seamless multi-layered mass transit system.

It will strengthen its urban high-speed passenger rail as well as the inter-city highway network connecting the city center with Tianfu New Zone, two local eco-

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DENG LING
PROFESSOR ON REGIONAL
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economic growth hubs. The new urban traffic system will traverse the six major regions of the city, and it is expected to lower travel time across the city to half an hour.

Chengdu will also speed up the construction of a high-speed rail line linking Leshan and Mianyang, two other major cities in Sichuan province.

It will launch major projects such as the city's second airport and Chengdu-Lanzhou Railway as soon as possible too.

Chengdu will also quicken its step in the construction of four-hour and eight-hour high-speed railway rings.

Additionally, the strategies also aim to increase the size and value of industries while optimizing the infrastructure of newly-built economic and technological zones and integrating development of the three rings of Chengdu.

Augmenting the size and value of various industries will underpin Chengdu's objective of becoming the heart of western China's economic development.

Chengdu's rise relies on the integrated fostering of the primary, secondary and tertiary industries, and it is powered by the advanced manufacturing sector, which is highly concentrated, correlated and efficient.

'Frontrunner'

When trying to explain the secret behind Chengdu's fast growth in recent years, Deng, the regional economics expert at Sichuan University, stressed the city's role as a frontrunner in China's economic reform.

"Reform has brought Chengdu dynamism," she says.

Deng said urbanization, based on coordinated development, will be "a major engine" for China's economic development in the coming two to three decades.

"Chengdu has accumulated much experience in urbanization through its explorations, but it still has a lot to do in the future. The city will still be a frontrunner in the reform in the future," she said.

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