

Brazilian Firms Pitched on Atlanta at Tech Village

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It's no coincidence that as the **Brazilian** economy stagnates, companies from the country are looking outward for growth.

And **AmCham Brazil** has some anecdotal evidence: Downloads of its digital white paper on [how to invest in the United States](#) have skyrocketed over the last few years as uncertainty has risen in **Latin America's** largest economy.

Atlanta is looking to attract its share of this prospective influx, and economic development agencies here took the time on March 24 to welcome a delegation of 10 Brazilian companies — consultancies, startups, attorneys and others — and share the Georgia capital's story of innovation, connectivity, and of course, low living costs.

There were many assets that might have captivated CEO **Rogério Garrubbo** during their quick stopover in Atlanta, from Georgia Tech's **Advanced Technology Development Center** to the gleaming glass and steel of the **Atlanta Tech Village**, with its open offices and co-working spaces, rooftop views of **Buckhead** and whiteboard-painted walls covered in equations and notes.

But it was the testimonies of the quiet Brazilian giants who have already set up in Georgia that most enraptured Mr. Garrubbo, CEO of **Concept Blindagens**, a **Sao Paulo**-based company which installs bulletproofing systems on the vehicles of wealthy Brazilians.

Having joined the mission to learn about the U.S. market and search for new materials that can be used in his company's next act, he was blown away by presentations from executives at electric-motor maker **WEG** and compressor manufacturer **Embraco**, two large Brazilian corporates that have made their U.S. moves from metro Atlanta bases. Even before hearing any "Why Atlanta" pitches, their stories were enough to make him bookmark the city as a gateway, even over **Miami**.

"It's the first day, and I think it's paid off already," Mr. Garrubbo told Global Atlanta of the trip; the group would later head to **New York** and **Boston**.

MJV, a consultancy that focuses on using technology and innovation to solve tough business problems, was pulled toward Atlanta in a different way by WEG.

Rafael Ribeiro, who joined the delegation, came to Atlanta when his father went to work for WEG. He eventually graduated from Georgia Tech and then went on to earn a master's in design management at **Savannah College of Art & Design** before returning to Brazil to work for MJV.

Another magnet for the firm was **Coca-Cola Co.**, which employed MJV in Brazil to instill the importance of fidelity to Coke's signature logo across its Brazilian operations. One morning,

Coke employees woke up to an office completely redecorated with logos, some right and some wrong. They played games and completed challenges to ensure only the right ones passed. Coke is now rolling out this solution to other markets.

Already with a **London** office engaged in projects across **Europe** and **North Africa**, MJV now has its eyes on the U.S.

"We are committed to open the office this year, even without a client, because we think the U.S. market is so important, we must be here. The challenge, I think, is first of all building enough credibility so that we are really perceived as a global company and not as a Brazilian company," said CEO **Mauricio Vianna**.

Atlanta was already on the list because of Mr. Ribeiro's connections and its multiple nonstop flights to Brazil, but it quickly climbed to the top.

"Quite frankly, after this visit here, listening to the companies that are here and to lawyers and accountants, my perception is that it's important to have at least a corporate side of the company here, even if we do some work or even have an address in **New York** because of the perception," Mr. Vianna said.

The Brazilian firms capped their first day in Atlanta with an informal networking event at the Atlanta Tech Village hosted by [Katapult Group](#), a consultancy that helps foreign companies set up shop in the U.S. One of its partners is **Jan Sauer**, the former trade commissioner of **Denmark**, who set up a successful accelerator program through which many Danish companies landed in Atlanta.

At the event, Brazilian companies heard from service providers, entrepreneurs, business leaders and economic developers about why they felt Atlanta is the top place to locate their company in the U.S.

The full list of Brazilian participants:

-AmCham Brazil (organizer) - The largest American Chamber of Commerce overseas, with more than 5,000 members and 14 branches around Brazil.

-**AutoDoc** - A Brazilian IT company that works in the construction industry

-Concept Blindagens - Provides armoring services for cars: 4,000 of them in the last 12 years.

-**Hermano Advogados Associados** - An international law firm based in the Brazilian state of Goias, located near the capital of Brasilia and known for its agriculture.

-MJV Technology and Innovation - A consultancy with more than 300 employees in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and London that uses creative solutions and technology to solve business problems

-**SLF Transportes (Boomerang)** - A passenger transportation company with five buses in the city of Porto Alegre

-**Technoseg Tecnologia em Servicos** - A private security company based in the state of Goias that provides electronic surveillance and other services

-**VPC Factoring** - A trade finance firm operating in Divinopolis and Nova Serrana

-**ZNA** - A consultancy and law firm that specializes in tax and corporate law, including

mergers and acquisitions

To learn more about the delegation or to obtain contact information, contact **Daniella Leite**, trade promotion coordinator at AmCham Brazil, by email at daniella.leite@amchambrasil.com.br.