



APCO Worldwide in Vietnam

APCO Worldwide is a global consulting firm providing clients with government relations, strategic communication, corporate responsibility and corporate advisory services in Vietnam. We have been serving clients' interests in the market since 1993, when APCO was the first leading international consulting firm to establish an office in Vietnam. Today, our Vietnam team includes professionals from a diverse range of backgrounds, including business, government, journalism, academia and civil society. We are based in well-established offices in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

APCO's team in Vietnam utilizes their broad expertise to help companies meet the interconnected challenges of doing business in the complex Vietnamese environment. We assist clients in designing proactive strategies by providing strategic advice on market entry and growth, corporate positioning, corporate responsibility and governmental relations.

Our professional bilingual staff members have specialist sectoral knowledge and extensive experience working with government, state-owned enterprises, media, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and related decision makers, across industry sectors in Vietnam.

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GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Engaging the government remains an inescapable reality of operating in Vietnam. Despite nearly 20 years of economic reform, the state still has a pervasive presence in the Vietnamese economy. Our clients often find that they have to work with the government in various capacities: as a regulator, competitor, partner, or even customer. Therefore, systematic and effective government relations are both a commercial necessity and a form of strategic investment protection.

APCO's strategies are based on a deep familiarity with the structure and mechanics of the Vietnamese government, both at the central and local level. Our experienced team has built strong relationships with important government agencies as well as key social and political organizations.

INTERPRETING GOVERNMENT

Understanding the workings of government, its structure and the opinions of its officials, both at a central and local level, is critical for business success in Vietnam. APCO maps government agencies and conducts perception audits to provide clients with clear advice.

MANAGING THE REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Vietnam's regulatory environment continues to evolve and develop. APCO helps clients to identify, monitor and understand forthcoming legislation and its ramifications. However, just as important as the written law is the political climate in which it is enforced. We also deliver regulatory analysis that enables clients to minimize risk and capitalize on opportunities.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT ADVOCACY

Government support is vital to the success of any business in Vietnam. APCO works with clients to structure their internal government engagement functions, identify and target government agencies and individuals whose support is crucial, and formulate programs to build government understanding in line with business interests.

ISSUES MANAGEMENT

Legal recourse can exacerbate crises and heighten negative perceptions. Behind-the-scenes mediation with regulators is often the best way to achieve lasting solutions. APCO assists in resolving potentially damaging and costly

disputes – especially with government audiences. These include the violation of intellectual property rights, reputation attacks by consumers, outspoken media criticism, breach of contract and policy discrimination.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Relationship networks are still important in Vietnam; however, the power of these networks has limits and APCO rarely advises clients to rely exclusively on such relationships. Successful government partnerships require regular and ongoing nurturing of institutional relations. APCO assists clients to build their interaction with government by using a variety of tactics, including direct meetings and government partnerships.

RISK ANALYSIS

The changing political, geo-strategic and economic environment can threaten business operations in Vietnam. APCO's consultants use their knowledge, experience and international networks to advise clients on how to minimize their exposure to political and economic risks.

COALITION BUILDING

It is hard to be "the only one" when addressing an important issue in government or the media. Public opinion and government policies affect us all – individuals, companies, nonprofits and government entities. Working together with like-minded groups is critical to ensuring that public attention is directed

toward an issue in a way that can win the day, rather than focusing attention back on a single organization promoting that issue. APCO is experienced in developing and implementing strategies that build credible, authentic and transparent coalitions that bring together groups with common interests and mobilize support around complex issues to resolve and minimize the impact on the business environment.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

APCO enables our clients to be seen, heard and understood. Integrated strategic communication campaigns targeted at government, consumers, media, employees, investors, NGOs and the broader public are often central to delivering results in Vietnam.

CORPORATE AND EXECUTIVE POSITIONING

APCO's programs give clients a competitive edge. Our consultants position clients strategically, whether they are driven by the need to address a particular issue or by a desire for more competitive brand recognition. APCO differentiates its positioning programs by integrating communication tools that speak to clients' target audiences.

MEDIA RELATIONS

APCO's team has expert knowledge of the media environment in Vietnam and maintain close relationships with international and local journalists. APCO also works with clients to structure effective internal media relations functions and build media networks.

MEDIA AND ISSUES MONITORING

APCO tracks and analyzes issues that are important to our clients' success. We monitor print, broadcast



and online media, as well as government and stakeholder opinions, to provide the feedback clients need to modify their strategies.

LITIGATION COMMUNICATION

In cases where clients are already engaged in legal proceedings, we help communicate their messages and relevant issues. Leveraging government and media relations can be key to resolving cases that are political in nature. For other cases, promoting understanding among government and the wider public helps expedite fairer treatment.

CRISIS COMMUNICATION

In Vietnam, a company's ability to respond to a crisis, especially in the critical first few hours or days, greatly affects the company's reputation among the government, employees, partners, customers and the general public. APCO works closely with clients to create, implement and test crisis management plans, to identify potential threats and develop rapid-response mechanisms.

EXECUTIVE COUNSELING AND TRAINING

Organizations operating in Vietnam often feel challenged by the communication landscape. APCO coaches senior executives to optimize interaction with media, government, investors, consumers and NGOs, helping deliver their organization's messages in their own voice. We build our clients' capacity to work with stakeholders through

on-camera role-plays, mock press conferences, question and answer sessions, and crisis simulations.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Companies are increasingly expected to conduct their business in a responsible and sustainable manner. APCO is a recognized market leader in corporate responsibility (CR), assisting companies to engage with key stakeholders, understand and manage CR issues, design and execute programs and partnerships, and communicate effectively. In order to support our clients' business objectives and address genuine community needs, we train our consultants to consider CR challenges and opportunities, while understanding Vietnam's evolving civil society and political environment. CR today means determining how to earn the "license to operate," especially in a world facing increasing natural resources constraints, and major economic and societal challenges.

CORPORATE ADVISORY

Corporate advisory is one of APCO's core services in Vietnam and we have successfully advised many clients in this area since we established our presence in the market. We help clients make significant investments in Vietnam in a wide range of industry sectors, including those that are highly restricted to foreign involvement. This support of Vietnamese policy-makers' economic development goals is a basis for our strong relationships at all levels of the Vietnamese government and underpins our government relations capability.

INWARD INVESTMENT

Investing in the Vietnam market presents multinational corporations with a unique set of opportunities and challenges. Our corporate advisory team has extensive experience formulating and executing market entry, business development and expansion strategies in Vietnam for a variety of industries.

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Thorough research provides the foundation for every successful and sustainable investment. We perform quantitative and qualitative market research and analysis; identify and prioritize potential investment partners and destinations; track industrial policy, tax incentives and regulation; monitor government and non-governmental opinions; and assess the financial viability of investments.

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

A locally sensitive investment and stakeholder relations strategy is critical to the success of investments in Vietnam. APCO employs its corporate advisory experience to evaluate business options, choose

VIETNAM

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potential investment partners and locations, appraise competitor strategies, assess government and stakeholder attitudes, and suggest appropriate business structures.

PARTNER IDENTIFICATION AND INVESTMENT DUE DILIGENCE

Business partnerships are often essential for foreign companies wishing to enter the Vietnam market. We help clients identify, profile and engage with the business partners that best match their requirements. APCO performs detailed analysis of potential partners' operations and financials, and cross-checks their credentials by consulting with third parties and government agencies.

GOVERNMENT AND INVESTMENT APPROVALS

Although the government approval process has become increasingly transparent, it can still cause delays and frustration. APCO provides guidance at every stage of the process, from helping prepare required documents to lobbying ministerial departments on sensitive issues.

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

It is now possible for foreign companies to acquire directly the equity or assets of domestic limited companies. APCO advises clients on target searches, transaction negotiations and the approval process.

OVERSEAS INVESTMENT PROMOTION FROM VIETNAM

The government and Vietnamese companies are increasingly looking to expand into overseas markets. We provide support to help understand Vietnamese outward investment policies, identify local stakeholders which support and facilitate outward investment, design Vietnam-focused investment promotion collateral and identify investment leads. We also provide full support for the trade and investment promotion process for qualified investment leads.

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