



Opening “The Gateway to the Future”

“We knew we needed the best team working behind the scenes to have a chance of winning, and that is exactly what we had. Helios was critical to the success of this effort. We would not have won without their experience and leadership.”

-- Dmitry Chernyshenko, CEO Sochi Olympic Bid Committee

In 2005, Sochi Russia began its quest to become the first-ever city in Russia to host the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. Despite having won over 500 medals in past Winter Games, Russia has yet to have the privilege of being the host country. But the competition was strong: Salzburg, Austria and Pyeongchang, South Korea were heavily favored over Sochi, having both experienced the long and arduous process of bidding before losing out to Vancouver for the 2010 Games.

Sochi, a city of stunning sub-tropical beauty enveloped by the Black Sea to the south and the soaring Caucasus Mountains to the north, represented a new kind of host city for the Olympic movement, in which ice events could take place in a mild coastal climate, just 40 kilometres away from skiing and sliding in the snow covered region of Krasnaya Polyana.

Helios Partners joined the fledgling Sochi Olympic Bid Committee in the summer of 2005 and eventually stepped into the vital role of delivering the all important “bid book” – the primary document that outlines the Games plan for International Olympic Committee evaluation. Helios also provided critical strategic management of the IOC Evaluation Commission visit and coordination of the critical final presentation, in addition to several other key responsibilities throughout the two-year engagement.

A great deal of the success of the bid was a result of positioning Sochi as Russia’s Gateway to the Future. The Russian Federation’s ambitious Federal Target Program will spend up to US\$12 billion in the region to transform Sochi into a major tourist, business and athletic training center that will serve as an economic engine for the nation. Sochi’s final presentation in Guatemala City was described as “perfect,” but as dictated by procedure and tradition, the vote of the IOC would be the ultimate determining factor.

On July 4, 2007, Sochi’s dream came true. Jacques Rogge, President of the IOC, announced the dramatic upset: Sochi had won! A remote city hidden from the world by decades of decline and upheaval will soon be on everyone’s lips as it prepares to host the 2014 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. And Helios helped make it happen.

