



CHAMBER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES INC.

August- September 2007

Attending Professional Development Conferences....Worth It?

I've received a multitude of calls lately from Chamber professionals asking my opinion on the worth of going to state chamber execs conferences, the annual ACCE conference, Institute, etc. There certainly are many opportunities for Chamber employees to enhance their skills and network extensively. So which one or ones are best for you or your staff? My answer is not too remarkable: as many as your budget will allow.

Having recently returned from ACCE 2007 Conference, coincidentally named "The Chamber Meeting of Choice" that had record attendance of over 1000, it dawned on me that although each year I see many of the same faces, this year there seemed to be more young, thirsty for information chamber pros packing the seemingly endless variety of breakout sessions and workshops. The networking venues were alive with animated conversations and idea sharing. Many times I heard absolutely opposite reviews of a session just attended, but that just led to even more input from others about how they handled a situation, a program etc.

So, is it worth it to cut corners in other parts of your budget to go to (or send staff to) conferences? Yes. Start with your state organization sponsored events first, then their "Institute" (a.k.a. Academy, Center for Chamber of Commerce Excellence, etc.) if you can't budget for the multi-year national "Institute for Organizational Management", and schedule to attend one of the regional or national ACCE programs (apply for a scholarship, if necessary).

The networking and problem solving you can accomplish when meeting with so many of your peers can make a big difference to the success of your organization. The contacts with the vendors to the Chamber industry can prove very worthwhile. Also, the information you gather, such as the article below, are of great value.

Those of you who know me well know my middle name is "Cheap", and whether doing so myself, or advising my clients, I also believe in working smart not hard! So, the chamber industry's professional development programs are worth the time and

financial investments and can make us all a lot smarter!

The Real Value of Joining a Local Chamber of Commerce

A Research Study

"Consumers are 63% more likely to buy from chamber members."

A new national study reveals that membership in a local chamber of commerce can significantly boost a business' image among consumers, as well as among other businesses. The study, commissioned by the American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE), IBM, Administaff, Small Business Network, Inc. and Market Street Services, also showed that when respondents were told that a particular small business was a member of its local chamber, they were 44 percent more likely to rate it favorably than study respondents who were not told of the chamber affiliation.

The positive impact of perceived chamber membership is felt by big businesses too. For example, when consumers believed that a restaurant chain was a member of the local chamber of commerce, they were 40 percent more likely to eat at the franchise in the future.

There are lots of interesting facts revealed in the study that makes interesting reading in your newsletter or on your website. Access the report through the ACCE website:

<http://www.acce.org>

The Best of the Best



Oklahoma Chambers really shine!

For the third consecutive year, Chambers from Oklahoma have been recognized by the American Chamber of Commerce Executives as **Chamber of the Year**. Following the previous awards to Oklahoma City and Tulsa, this years' recipient was the Stillwater Chamber

Pictured with me is John Fowler, CCE CEO and Kelle Marsalis, Director of Marketing. John is a real Chamber veteran with a long list of accomplishments and one of my favorites. He personifies a true professional who has been instrumental in his community's prosperity while also being a mentor to many others in the Chamber world. Kelle is a dedicated "up and comer" who is making her mark as well. Congratulations to them and the entire **Chamber of the Year Award** winning community of Stillwater!

By the way, not to brag (ha ha!), another CDS client was the second of three finalists: Midland, MI. Just being nominated as **Chamber of the Year** is quite an accomplishment - watch Sid Allen and the Midland group bring home the award next year!

A Variety of Thought Provoking Quotes

Every issue, I try to insert a few quotes that might have special meaning to we dedicated (crazy??) Chamber folk. Here are a few for this month:

"It is better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have one, than to have an opportunity and not be prepared." from Whitney Young, Jr. in "Chicken Soup for the Soul"

"You have to change to grow. You have to grow to live." anonymous

And one of my favorite: A Woman's Prayer

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my shape to keep.
Please no wrinkles
Please no bags
And please lift my butt before it sags.
Please no age spots
Please no gray
And as for my belly
Please take it away.
Please keep me healthy
Please keep me young
And thank you Dear Lord
For all that you've done.

The Plan - The Tools - The Training

What makes us different? We provide your chamber the plan, the tools, and the training to achieve durable gains in membership. Other companies organize flashy membership drives. We train your volunteers and your staff on key ways to raise community awareness about the benefits of chamber membership. We provide written materials; we conduct educational workshops; and we guide your organization through a membership campaign that employs the skills we teach. We also offer a customized analysis of your chamber's membership base; detailed instructions on how to mentor and retain new members; and a full year of free consultation to help you succeed. That's more than membership. That's real growth and retention. Give me a call and let's talk about your Chamber's growth and retention!

More than membership. Real growth and retention.

Contact us today!

Write: joan@chamberdevelopment.com
Call: (800) 584-0321 or cell (817) 247-9677
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