



Editor's Corner

Member Benefits

What is a jewel to one person is junk to another...so they say. In Chamber benefit programs, what is old hat to one, is innovative to another.

Many years ago I was asked to start this newsletter to share Chamber ideas that I observe in my travels to Chambers of all sizes from all parts of the country. This issue will feature a group of members benefits that hopefully will give each of you an bright idea or two.

In order to continue to be of maximum value to all, new ideas are needed. So take a moment to email, fax or snail mail me your benefit brochure, or description of programs you would like to share with other Chambers. Thanks!

Direct Mail Flyers

One of the most tangible benefits of Chamber membership is the ability of a member to get their ad in the hands of hundreds or thousands of others for an economical cost. After all, one of the reasons someone joins the Chamber of Commerce is to do what they can't do on their own at anywhere near the cost, isn't it?

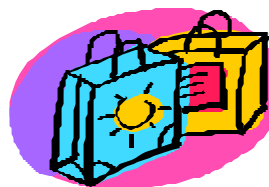
First: means for delivery. Basically there are two: as an insert to the newsletter (great way to offset the cost of the newsletter) just be sure to limit the number of inserts each month or it becomes so cluttered no-one reads it, thus you have defeated your whole purpose; and as a special mailing that some Chambers call mid-month flyer, frequent flyer, or member to member exclusives (when the mailer's wrapper has the calendar of events, it is a great way to publicize news and events in between newsletters).

Like any other benefit, if you do not promote its value, it has none! You would be amazed how often Chamber members I am working with tell me that they spend a fortune on direct mailings and never realized they could be using the Chamber to do most of the work and they make money (yep, the Chamber makes money and the member saves money)...how? Let's look at the math and be sure to teach your members this also...it is the greatest sales tool you have:

Example: : S. Saratoga County, NY (population 33,000 city/94,000 county, with staff of 4.5 and 900 members) offers full page newsletter inserts that they will fold, stuff, stamp, etc. for distribution to its 1350 piece mailing list of top area businesses and contacts. The member pays only \$150, yet saves \$350 in postage alone (how about savings in time and supplies?). It doesn't take a mathematical genius to figure out that if a members' annual dues investment is \$244, they use this one member benefit just once, their membership yields them a PROFIT of \$\$200!

Now, please understand, I do not advocate that someone joins the Chamber to use it as a direct mailing service! But, in a world where all too often, prospects' first question is "WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?!", these benefits answer that question and allow me the opportunity to get a prospects' interest enough to be able to then "sell" them on the total Chamber product.

Goody Bags



Be imaginative, not only in content but in distribution points! Here are some ideas: In a high tourist boating area, one Chamber rewarded everyone docking at their harbor a bag filled of

Chamber member promotionals including menus, freebie certificates, samples, etc. This concept can be applied to convention groups, visitor centers, and as welcome packs for the military.

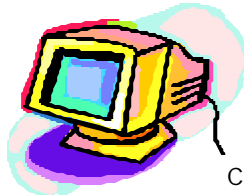
Newsletter Featured Benefit - \$50/year

CHAMBER BUYERS GUIDE

Have Your Business Listed Here In The Chamber Buyers Guide for \$25/Year

Accountants	Awards/Name Badges/Plaques	Builders Exchange
Virginia Christensen, C.P.A. 474-3011	Recognition Specialties, Inc. 476-3166	G.P. Business Serv. & Builders Exc
Dennis M. Doyle, C.P.A. 474-1040	Rogue Valley Engraving 476-0834	Carpet Cleaners
J & J Accounting, Inc. 471-0885	Bagels	Advanced Carpet Maintenance.....
David Raskin, C.P.A. 476-7268	So. Oregon Bagel Co. 479-4191	Carpet Cleaning/Window
Antiques	Balloons	Kleen-Masters.....
Antique Association 479-6491	Out of the Blue 476-9135	Car Wash
A Wrinkle in Time 955-4722	Banks	Shine Time Car Wash.....
Blue Moon 474-6666	Colonial Bank/6th Street 479-1776	Cellular Telephone Serv
Art Galleries/Gifts	Community Bank of Grants Pass 474-7278	Sis-Q Communications.....
Treasured Memories 479-5982	Evergreen Federal 479-3351	U.S. Cellular.....
Assisted Living	Home Valley Bank 476-4663	Chimney Sweeps
Josephine House 471-9543	Liberty Federal Bank 479-8383	Smockey's Sloves 476-4461
Vintage Suites 955-9115	Washington Mutual 476-4461	Churches
Associations	Beads/Gifts	Redwood Christian.....
The Bead Merchant 471-0645	Beauty Aids	St. Lukes Episcopal Church.....
Avon - Agnes Ralston 471-0665	Herbalife - Karen Raskin 476-4210	Cleaning Supplies
Herbalife - Karen Raskin 476-4210	Pro-Clean.....	

What is a jewel to one person is junk to another...so they say. In Chamber benefit programs, what is old hat to **Computer Classes**



Several Tennessee Chambers are opening up technology to their marketplace by offering a variety of programs. In Twin Cities, South Fulton, the Chamber sponsors computer classes in Basic, Microsoft Word, Excel and Internet taught by local school system teachers in their school's computer labs. In Lebanon, a special office has been set up within the Chamber loaded with hardware and software, as has Blount County/Marysville, complete with advanced software and tutorials.

Check Collection Service

Jackson County (Pascagoula), MS (population 120,000 with 5 staff serving 1200 members) offers a value added benefit through a national check collection company, Net30Solutions. It is a free "bounced check" recovery system called Check Collect for all Chamber members. There are no fees involved, no limit on the number of checks, and it will work with any bank in the U.S.

It IS Nice to Fool Mother Nature!

In spite of a tropical storm AND a hurricane hitting them within days of the kickoff to the Jefferson Parish (adjoining New Orleans) LA, Chamber of Commerce Community Awareness Week, this 5 year old organization's volunteers stayed cool and dry while racking up an impressive 30% increase in membership in just a few days. Angelle LaBorde and her staff of only two have some of the most comprehensive programs around. I just can't believe they do so much with such a small staff! It must have something to do with their diligence and the co-operation of a large group of enthusiastic volunteers. They personify an organization that has identified the needs of their community and are meeting them!

Check out our website: www.chamberdevelopment.com



Out-of-town members

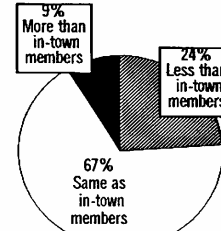
Readers report about their experiences with members who do business in the community, but are based outside the community.

Typical businesses who join chambers as out-of-town members:

- ♦ Accountants
- ♦ Ad agencies
- ♦ Airports
- ♦ Auto dealers
- ♦ Builders
- ♦ Cable TV companies
- ♦ Caterers
- ♦ Cellular phone companies
- ♦ Computer sales & service
- ♦ Concrete suppliers
- ♦ Construction companies
- ♦ Consulting firms
- ♦ Culligan Water
- ♦ Design firms
- ♦ Distributors
- ♦ Golf courses
- ♦ Grocery store chains
- ♦ Health Care providers
- ♦ Insurance companies

How much do out-of-town members pay?

The majority of chambers use identical dues schedules for all members. Those who charge less usually charge a base fee to out-of-town members.



- ♦ Retail chains
- ♦ Temporary employment agencies
- ♦ Trailer sales
- ♦ Travel agencies
- ♦ Utility companies

- ♦ Internet providers
- ♦ Investment firms
- ♦ Law offices
- ♦ Lumber yards
- ♦ Newspapers
- ♦ Office equipment dealers
- ♦ Phone companies
- ♦ Photographer
- ♦ Printers
- ♦ Realtors
- ♦ Recreation facilities
- ♦ Refreshment services
- ♦ Resorts
- ♦ Restaurants

Benefits of chamber membership to out-of-town businesses:

- ✓ Exposure
- ✓ Advertising in chamber newsletter
- ✓ Support the community where they do business
- ✓ Referrals from callers (we only refer to chamber members)
- ✓ Advertising at chamber events
- ✓ Receive all chamber publications
- ✓ Get chamber's business
- ✓ Member to member discounts
- ✓ Access to a new market
- ✓ Networking
- ✓ Increase size of their market
- ✓ Shows people that they support our community
- ✓ Use of chamber's meeting room
- ✓ Gain knowledge about our community and their potential customers
- ✓ Keep up-to-date on our community
- ✓ Attend chamber events
- ✓ Get list of newcomers
- ✓ Receive chamber mailing list

From an excellent monthly publication: Chamber Staff Network, 616-459-9745, CofCemail@aol.com.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL