

Membership Trends

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**MCCE
September 2007**

Membership Trends

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Overview
3. What do you hope to get out of this workshop?
4. Why is membership important?
 % of your budget
5. Trends in Membership:
 - Memberships are more difficult to sell
 - Volunteers are more difficult to recruit
 - Loss of “locally owned” businesses
 - Mergers/acquisitions of member businesses
 - The economy, whether good or bad, is an excuse by businesses
 - The business community does not understand the scope of what a Chamber of Commerce does
 - Technology is having an impact on traditional chamber approaches
 - More focus than ever on “bottom line” benefits
 - Good news – some chambers are becoming more powerful
6. Who is responsible for membership recruitment?
 - Make selling memberships fun so the board, volunteers, and staff want to get involved
 - Recognize volunteers and staff who do recruit new members – President’s Club
 - Always remember that it is benefits that sell memberships – not features!
 - Remember to do the basics!!
7. Membership Advisory Committee/Membership Committee
8. Staff Sales:
 - President/Executive Director
 - Membership Staff
 - All Staff

9. Steps to selling a Chamber Membership:
 - Prospects – who are they?
 - Prospect Form – Database Format
 - Prospect Letter
 - Follow-up phone call – 2-3 days after information mailed
 - Set up appointment – be sure you are meeting with the decision maker!
 - Appointment
 - Follow-up letter and/or call
 - Success!!!

10. Have a variety of “closers” throughout the year:
 - Membership Directory
 - Join by --- and receive ---

11. Volunteer Sales:
 - Board – ongoing recruitment
 - “We Want You” list
 - Leads/sales from members
 - Membership Campaign
 - Purpose
 - Timeline
 - Chair Responsibilities
 - Team Captain Responsibilities
 - Team Player Responsibilities
 - Team Training Session
 - Kick-Off Meeting
 - Prizes
 - Weekly Mailings to Team Members
 - Wrap Up Party
 - Team Captain Survey
 - Team Player Survey
 - Thank You's!!!

This approach can work for all chamber sizes.

This will help the volunteers understand how important membership income is to the growth and stability of the organization. Other approaches include:

- Blitzes
- Telemarketing
- On-going volunteer sales

RECOGNITION!! Is very important for volunteers. Recognize at events and through newsletters all volunteers, top individuals, teams, and all businesses that donated prizes.

12. Retention:

- Member retention is a 365 day-a-year job.
- It begins on the day that new member joins!
- Poor retention is a result of failure to re-sell members on what their investment dollar is buying
- It is easier to keep existing members than recruit new ones
- Member Retention Program

The above indicates the importance of membership retention. The following programs assist in the process:

- Ambassador Committee
- Diplomat Committee
- Buddy System
- Operation "Thank You"
- Membership Surveys
- Billing system
 - First billing letter signed by current Board Chair and mailed with invoice and Business Brief form
 - Second billing letter signed by President
 - Third billing letter signed by Membership Committee Chair
 - 120-days – drop member and send letter
 - Always leave the door open to re-contact them
- Involvement through Committee/Events
 - Involvement is very important. If members do not get involved, they will not see what the Chamber is doing for them and therefore will not renew!
- Recognition of Members
 - Membership Directory
 - Chamber Newsletter
 - Introduction at membership meeting
 - Chamber Membership Plaques/Stickers
- Promotion/Marketing Opportunities:
 - Rack cards
 - Voice-on-hold
 - Newsletter Insert
 - Business Spotlight
 - "Good Morning Minneapolis"
 - Newsletter Sponsor – back page
 - Relocation Lists
 - Membership Directory
- Board – "We Need Your Help" list

13. Upgrading current members:
 - Review your list of members to ensure all are investing according to your current investment guideline
 - Develop a list of those members that need to be upgraded
 - Discuss list with Membership Advisory committee
 - Determine which volunteer would be best to meet with you and the member
 - Develop a list of all the benefits that the member is currently receiving
 - Review the Membership Guidelines with them – what is their current investment is and what it should be according to the schedule
 - Develop a schedule that each year will bring them up to the appropriate level

14. Recruiting retail franchises:
 - Be creative with businesses that have more than one location
 - Discuss the opportunities for them to be involved in their local community while building their business

15. Shrinking corporate membership base:
 - As corporations down-size – so do their membership dues – to maintain the level of dollars coming in but not in the form of dues – look at sponsorship opportunities – same amount of dollars but in different ways

16. Membership Investment – increase each year!!!

17. Summary:
 - The Chamber needs to be member-driven, focusing on the member's needs and utilizing their knowledge and skills to make the Chamber successful.

18. What's Next?
What will I do to increase my Chamber membership base?

19. Review workshop expectations