

Getting More From Your Chamber Membership!

Your business just joined or renewed your chamber membership for the upcoming year. You have now obtained a key to assist you with your businesses growth and prosperity. The question is *how do I use the key to unlock the opportunities I have paid for?* Here is a check list of ten items to do as a member:

1. **Review the website listing for your business:** Make sure all the information is accurate. Including emails and phone numbers and who they go to. As owner of a business do you want everyone contacting you directly or your business? This is important as your information is typically placed in directories and on the web for all to see.
2. **Get Your Employees Connected:** Many times businesses only have a primary contact or two receiving emails and information from the Chamber. To optimize your businesses potential to utilize all the services you have opened yourself to have all your employees sign up to receive chamber notices. This will allow your business the opportunity to take advantage of trainings and leadership development opportunities you may have not thought of for your employees.
3. **Display Membership Plaque Openly:** Studies have been done showing that people view Chamber membership as a sign of credibility for a business. The best way to show you are a member is to put those items in full view.
4. **Attend a Membership Orientation:** Best advice is attending one every year. Chambers are always adding new products and services to assist their members. Find out if there is a product or service that will assist you or your businesses bottom line.
5. **Make the Chamber an Extension of Your Business:** Are you looking for information about new businesses entering the community. Legislation that may affect your business. The Chamber should be the first call you make when you have a question you need help with. The Chamber may be able to answer your question on the spot or refer you to someone that may have the advice you're looking for.
6. **Meet One on One with the Chamber's Event Organizer:** When having this meeting know what your customers demographic is. A good event organizer will be able to provide you with the best events available for exhibiting and sponsorship opportunities that will promote your business.
 - o Best practice is to secure your participation in advance. This will help you plan each event accordingly with time and money.
7. **Attend Monthly Meetings/Events:** Repetition at events creates an atmosphere of trust among members. People like to do business with people they know and see. Also, remember it is not the size of the event but the relationship building opportunity. Some small events have enormous value.

8. **Get to Know the Chamber Staff:** These individuals meet with more business professionals than most people any given day. Knowledge of who you are and what your business provides can make you an easy referral for them.
9. **Get Social:** Your Chamber is on *Facebook*, *Linkedin* and *Twitter*. Find out what best fits you and participate in some of the discussions. Better yet provide information that makes you the expert in your field. These are great places to promote you without making a sales pitch.
10. **Provide Input and Answer Surveys:** Your Chamber sends out surveys throughout the year to find out information on how to best serve their members and the community. Take a moment to complete any survey. Your answers can make a difference!

These ten basic steps will make your membership in the Chamber one that can provide you a strong return on your investment.



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