

## THE ACCE STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-13

# excellence

# awareness

# opportunity

For nearly 100 years, the American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) has been the organization of choice for tens of thousands of members of the chamber of commerce profession. As economies, communities and societies have changed, so too has ACCE. It's time once again to adjust our course to serve your future needs.

The 2010-13 Strategic Plan recognizes rapidly evolving information technologies, as well as the learning styles of a new generation of chamber and regional association leaders. It embodies the wisdom and enthusiasm of a dedicated group of volunteers and staff. ACCE's new direction focuses less on avenues of delivery, which are changing almost too fast to identify, and more on the desired outcomes for you and your chamber.

*As an ACCE member, you are the customer, the product and the owner of this enterprise.* We will be counting on you to fulfill all three roles as we make this plan a reality.

**ACCE VISION** – to be the organization of choice for chamber professionals seeking to strengthen their organizations, lead their communities and advance their careers.

**ACCE MISSION** – to support and develop chamber professionals to lead businesses and their communities.

In order to fulfill ACCE's vision, so that you can fulfill yours, we will focus on **three** strategic directions over the next three years:

**EXCELLENCE • AWARENESS • OPPORTUNITY**

## excellence

PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL  
AND ORGANIZATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

In this plan, you will be encouraged to discover your own aspirational definitions of excellence. ACCE will then help you work toward embodying those ideals.

### Analyzing the Best

In large part, ACCE members and staff are responsible for defining excellence in the profession . . . at all levels. This includes recognizing those who demonstrate the best qualities of chamber professionalism. It will also involve constant refinement and broad acceptance of the comprehensive Body of Knowledge (BOK). We will research

behaviors, skills and traits of successful chamber professionals by developing a screening tool for getting and keeping the right people on the team.

### Best Practice

The creation of ACCE's "Information Office" (IO) will be critical in helping you drive toward excellence under this plan. This new office will build and maintain an accessible portfolio and library of best practices and outside resources. The plan also calls for increasing ACCE's offering of interactive online courses. Ideas include a "Chamber 101" orientation for staffers new to chamber work, as well as high-demand programming in core chamber functions like membership marketing and economic development.

### Networking at its Best

ACCE must increase members' knowledge about each other. We can do that, in part, through more small-group peer interaction and facilitated matchmaking. The annual ACCE convention will thrive as the networking event of the year, but we will also use technology for relationship building and "just-in-time" referrals.

## awareness

SITUATIONAL, INTELLECTUAL,  
ACTIONABLE

The need for up-to-date and reliable information on trends, policy background, human resources, economic development, and demographics will grow as chambers find their way into the next

economy. Making ACCE's Information Office a living, growing information resource is our most important goal for the immediate future.

### Starting the Information Office

ACCE will start FY 2010-11 with a newly appointed information officer who will build an infrastructure for compiling and organizing our ever-expanding information resources. Using multiple knowledge sources from within our membership and outside, the IO will be constantly updated with the information you need to remain fully aware.

### Tapping the Members

You want access to a full range of best practices in your profession. We will not only foster dialogue among our members, but also be there to gather the shared wisdom. However, ACCE can only become the "just-in-time" information source if you invest in the IO. By regularly submitting your valuable lessons learned and success stories, the IO will be a tremendous resource you can tap into.

### Maintaining the Information Office

A web-based "Wiki-style" platform will be developed in 2010-11 to foster member creation of ever-growing idea chains online. We will continue to bolster accessibility of extensive web content: samples, news and information about all chamber disciplines, including economic development. We will also start mining the on-line data available in 990 tax forms (maintaining anonymity) and share benchmark and trend data. We may extend our research with help from a polling firm.

## opportunity

ORGANIZATIONAL AND  
PROFESSIONAL

**B**usiness model adaptations, organizational reconstruction and mission expansion/retraction will be the norm in the future chamber world.

Finding new ways to make, save and invest resources will be critical for your community and members. By increasing the public understanding of the impact of chambers, we can further increase your opportunities.

### Organizational Opportunity Strategies

ACCE wants you to be aware of all the opportunities relevant to your organization's mission, even if ACCE is not offering them directly. During Year One of this plan, ACCE's website will begin featuring searchable information about non-ACCE services and resources deemed relevant to chambers. We will also offer more high-end toolkits and identify alternative vendors for professional counsel.

Some of the best partnering opportunities for organizational advancement are in undeveloped, or under-developed, local resources. We will expand ACCE's collaboration initiatives with local chambers that have successful affinity opportunities and will make them available nationally.

In Year One of the plan, ACCE's Benefits team will seek direct input on how chambers make benefit decisions for their staffs. ACCE's largest and most successful buying-power program will continue to adjust to new realities while maximizing employee benefits for current participants.

### Professional Opportunity Strategies

The changing nature of the profession, politics, economics and organizational management (plus demographic realities) guarantees there will always be a lively pace of turnover in the profession. ACCE will build public awareness, ensuring your chamber board, members and community understand the capacity of chambers to make a difference.

Pride in the chamber movement motivates and validates those who choose it as a profession. Already underway is a testimonial video series on the value of chambers. Also, a history of American chambers of com-

merce, which includes powerful examples of chamber influence over more than two centuries, will further celebrate the impact of chambers big and small.

## MAJOR STRATEGY CHANGES

**F**ive new strategic directions to achieve ACCE's mission and vision:

- 1 Get the information you need from ACCE when you need it. We will provide information and learning opportunities through a wider and more accessible media mix.
- 2 Effective peer groups are essential to grow your personal and organizational networks. ACCE will expand and diversify opportunities for one-on-one connections.
- 3 Your ACCE membership connects you with opportunities. We must examine core investment and program pricing, expand resources and accommodate varying levels of engagement to maximize your membership value.
- 4 The story of your chamber's value and potential needs to be shared outside of chamber circles. ACCE will be in the forefront of telling that story.
- 5 Our collective voice and buying power carries influence. ACCE needs to leverage your critical position in your community through marketing partners and foundation sources.

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