



NHACCE Gazette

The Newsletter of the New Hampshire Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives

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Publication Dates

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Dec. 15, Mar. 15,
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Fall Conference Set For November 4

This year's fall conference is set for Thursday, November 4 from 1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. The format will be a facilitated roundtable discussion focused on "Best Ideas." There will be no presentations from outside "experts." The experts will be all of us—members of NHACCE who are charged with effectively running our chambers every day.

The concept is for each NHACCE member to come to the session armed with your best idea for membership development, membership retention, working with volunteers, board-staff relations, chamber finances, or any other best practice or idea you'd like to share with your colleagues. By sharing what works in your chamber—your best ideas—with one another, each of us will walk away from this meeting much better informed.

Each chamber executive will be allotted five minutes to informally present. We'll work our way around the room until everyone has had a chance to share their best practice or idea. By the time the session ends, we'll each be armed with numerous, fresh ideas from one another—ideas we can put into practice in our own chambers.

The "Best Ideas" session will take place at the BIA, 122 North Main Street in downtown Concord across the street from the State House. There is no charge to participate. Light refreshments will be served. Please RSVP to Katherine Tomlinson at ktomlinson@nhbia.org as a head count will be helpful in planning. Mark your calendar for this informative session with the "experts"...you and your New Hampshire chamber executive peers!

Maintaining the Effectiveness of Your Chamber Website: Don't Be "Anti-Social"

Mark LeClair, President—Lincoln-Woodstock Chamber of Commerce

By now we have all agreed that Facebook and Twitter are replacing those old communication methods like email, telephone and print media. But, have we actually taken that plunge into the social media abyss? Not quite yet.

In our membership, and likely with yours, there are members that have not yet hit that social media curve. I explained to a new member recently how we are moving away from email and print and moving more toward social media. Why? Is it cost? Is it time? Or, have we not figured out a balance with our media?

To me, the evolution of communication is more like a time-continuum, with the newest forms of communication on one end and the oldest on the other. There's no start, and there is certainly no end. As time moves forward, we simply slide the bulk of our communication along with it. And, everyone slides at a different pace. Of course, we are not really holding on to carvings on cave walls anymore, nor are we ready for telepathy. But, somewhere on that communication continuum is where we lie.

Since our websites are likely the most easily accessed point of reference for the world currently, it makes sense that they cover as many forms of communication on that timeline as possible. Of course, we have our address listed if anyone would actually like to write us a letter. We also have our phone number so people can call. And, we have ways for site visitors to email us. But, do we still put up documents that people can print? Do we have our marketing collateral available on our sites in a printable format? I know members that print their emails though and am proud that they have made it to email! Since we are making efforts to reach that side of our continuum, are we making equal strides toward the more modern side?

Integrating our websites so that we can communicate with the broader public is perhaps one of the easiest, yet most important things we can do to make them more effective. Though not everyone has an internet-capable phone yet, many do. Some still print web pages as well. Not everyone is sharing your site content on Facebook, but a lot are. The solution to reach everyone is to diversify how we use our website to reach our audience. Here are a few ideas:

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Nitty Gritty Member Retention: Part Two

Associations that keep their members sweat the small stuff, show genuine care for members and former members, and use all available resources to better understand and serve their members. In this Executive Update feature article, Kristine Metter—director of membership for the Academy of Health Services Research and Health Policy—explores the ins and outs of membership.

Demonstrate Real Value for the Dollar—

With the current economic downturn, association members are carefully evaluating how they spend every dollar, whether it is their own or their employer's. As a result, it is even more important for associations to demonstrate real value for each membership dollar. When recruiting members, tell them what they are going to get for their dues. When they join, we again need to tell them what they are going to get for their dues. And when it's time to renew, we need to tell them yet again what they got for their dues. James Jorkasky, senior vice president for membership and strategic development at the American Association of Homecare, uses current advocacy issues to demonstrate strong value to his members. He keeps them apprised of the association's leadership through daily and weekly alerts, updates, and calls to action. He reduced the amount of "about us" language on his web site and instead dedicated space

for the top four or five issues and activities affecting members. Focusing on what the association does for his members shows real, tangible value and will help his member retention.

Be Flexible with Your Members—

Understanding your members' individual needs and responding to those needs keeps members renewing. Help your members cut through information overload by tailoring what you send them. Send several focused messages that meet the needs subsets of members rather than one message that contains a long list of announcements. Ask members in what format they want their information and then send it that way. Plan large and small meetings to accommodate different professional development goals.

Patience and Persistence—

Many associations send two or three invoices in the mail and then deactivate the members that do not renew. Rick Whelan, president of Marketing General, Inc. says, "We are traditionally too quick to give up. Many members are not telling us 'no' they are just telling us 'not now'." Think about what the response is worth in terms of total revenue to the association. A lapsed member who also attended the annual conference and purchased three publications during the year may be replaced with a new member that only pays dues equaling less overall revenue. "As long as you are covering your expenses and bringing in a comfortable response rate, it is worth it to continue all efforts to renew or reinstate a member."

Farewell from Chris Bolan, Waterville Valley Region Chamber of Commerce

Dear Friends & Colleagues,

They say "Timing is everything" and the timing now is ideal. The Waterville Valley Region Chamber of Commerce is back on solid ground—politically, financially, and strategically. The organization is now poised to, once again, set a new level of Member services. The Chamber has long been the leader in marketing the region and its businesses and can now focus on moving that leadership to a new level.

Now (sometime in October) is the perfect time to introduce a new leader to the organization; someone with fresh energy, a fresh new perspective, someone with the skill set to take advantage of the new, web-based marketing technology...in short, someone to assist the Board of Directors with the challenges, opportunities and growth that lay ahead for the Chamber.

These past 12 years have been the most rewarding, most fulfilling years of my and my family's life, and I thank you for being a part of those years. I hope to take on an active volunteer role with the Chamber as I pursue whatever new interests come my way, and commit to making the Chamber's transition as seamless as possible. It's a cause for excitement for all of us.

Once again, I thank you for the pleasure of working with you all. Here's looking to a bright new future!

*Chris Bolan
Waterville Valley Region Chamber of Commerce
(cbolan54@gmail.com)*

Chamber Website...continued from Page 1

1. Keep a section of your website for documents that visitors can access, download, and print.
2. Keep your phone number in a conspicuous place.
3. Give site visitors multiple ways of subscribing to your email list.
4. Use video wherever possible to communicate your message.
5. Use mini-applications provided by the social media sites to integrate your website with theirs. There are tons of tools on Facebook, Twitter, Foursquare, YouTube, and the rest that allow you to cut and paste some code onto your own site.
6. Create a mobile-friendly version of your website.
7. Allow visitors to register for "text updates" on their cell phones.
8. Share your social media status on your website.
9. Add video-chat as a service on your website.
10. Create an iPhone, Blackberry and Android App. for your chamber.

Whatever methods you choose to employ on your website to communicate with your customers, remember, they are all different. The more options you have, the more ways they can get what they want. Keep the communication pipeline open. Don't be anti-social!

BusinessNH Magazine Accepting Business of the Year Applications

BusinessNH Magazine is introducing a new category into their Business of the Year Awards for 2011. In addition to naming a Business Leader of the Year and honoring businesses in eight industry categories, *BusinessNH Magazine* will also recognize a Business Support Organization of the Year.

The Business Support category will be open to any government agency (at any level within NH), economic development group or non-profit whose purpose and activities are centered around supporting NH businesses.

BusinessNH Magazine and the NH Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives are now accepting applications for the 2011 Business of the Year and Business Leader of the Year competition. The award categories are:

- Business Leader of the Year
- Education/Nonprofit
- Manufacturing/Technology
- Business Services
- Financial Services/Insurance
- Retail/Wholesale
- Business Support Organization
- Construction/Engineering/Real Estate
- Health Care
- Tourism/Hospitality

Any company with operations in NH is eligible to apply, including past winners (except for winners of the 2010 Business of the Decade award. Those companies must wait until 2012 to enter.) Applications are available online at www.businessNHmagazine.com. Just click on the competitions button. Applications are only available online. The deadline to apply is January 14, 2011.

Matt Mowry - Business NH Magazine

Seacoast Six Chamber Alliance Finalized

*Michael Schidlovsky, President
Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce*

The Boards of all of the six New Hampshire Seacoast Chambers have unanimously endorsed a collaborative partnership that will be known as the Seacoast Chamber Alliance. Based on the premise of there being strength in numbers, this unique 2,300 plus member Alliance aims to be a strong voice for small businesses in the Seacoast region and through resource cooperation and information sharing, it will deliver value to its members through special pricing arrangements, affinity programs and events.

The Seacoast Chamber Alliance is a collaborative partnership between the Dover, Exeter, Hampton, Portsmouth, Rochester and Somersworth Chambers of Commerce who work together with the goal to enhance membership value, to promote regional economic development, and to reduce expenses for the independent chambers by realizing economies of scale. The Alliance is responsible for the production of the Seacoast Business Expo, the largest networking event to take place annually on the Seacoast, which this year is on October 21st.

The Gazette in Print!

The Board of Directors of the New Hampshire Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives recently decided to experiment by adding a print version of the quarterly NHACCE Gazette to supplement the email version.

The board feels that printed newsletters are often more useful than email-only newsletters, if for no other reason than printed newsletters are usually more portable and therefore more accessible. As the only regularly scheduled communication of the association, the board hopes the print version of the Gazette will enhance readership. This is the third of four editions in print. We would appreciate any feedback on the printed version. Jim Roche:224-5388, ext. 111 or Beth Maltzie: bmaltzie@gmail.com.

Career Opportunity

The Waterville Valley Region Chamber of Commerce seeks a dynamic individual to lead the organization as Executive Director into the future. The primary objective of the WVRCC Executive Director is to promote our Member Businesses and Market the WVRCC Region in a fiscally responsible manner. Our 200+ members extend from the Lakes Region to throughout the White Mountains, with a primary service area of Campton, Plymouth, Thornton and Waterville Valley.

SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE:

Expected Assets:

- Self-motivated and energetic
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Effective marketing & sales skills
- Knowledge of personal computers applications
- Internet, database management and spreadsheet skills
- project management skills
- Fiscally savvy

EXPERIENCE & EDUCATION:

Desired Qualifications:

- Degree in business, marketing or other related area
- Previous management experience
- Experience in dealing with public and diverse constituencies

Compensation & benefits package is based on salary plus commission and is commensurate with experience and skills. Send cover letter and resume to: WVRCC@NHChamber.com or by mail to WVRCC Search Committee, 12 Vintinner Road, Campton NH 03223. WVRCC is an equal opportunity employer. No phone calls please.

CALENDAR of EVENTS

Oct. 6-8: U.S. Chamber 2010 Regional Government Affairs Conference
 Where: The Fairmont Dallas Hotel, 1717 North Akard Street, Dallas, TX 75201.
 For a draft agenda, visit: uschamber.com/events/congressional/10govconferences

Nov. 4: NHACCE Professional Development Conference
 Where: Business and Industry Association of New Hampshire, 122 Main Street, Concord. Time: 1-4 p.m. Contact: Katherine Tomlinson at ktomlinson@nhbia.org.

Nov. 7-8: NEACCE Fall Conference
 Where: Waypoint Event Center, 185 MacArthur Dr., New Bedford, MA
 Time: 10:30 a.m. Sunday - 3 p.m. Monday. Contact: www.neacce.org to register.

SAVE THE DATE!**American Chamber of Commerce Executives 2011 Conference**

Where: Los Angeles, CA

Mark your calendar and watch for more details!

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