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The Value of Your Chamber Membership

A special study was conducted in 2007 among 2,000 adults nationwide by the Shapiro Group, Inc./Market Street, commissioned by the American Chamber of Commerce to gather impressions of businesses involved in local chambers. There were some very interesting findings.

Overall, the study found that investing in a local chamber of commerce provides credibility for member organizations. These benefits are in addition to the chamber's networking and promotional programs which build contacts and business opportunities for active members.

Study statistics indicate that an active chamber membership is an effective way to convey to consumers that a company uses good business practices, is involved in the community, and cares about customers and is reputable.

Particularly with small businesses, the study confirmed that consumers need to be aware of involvement with local chambers in order for the business benefits to emerge, such as increased consumer favorability, consumer awareness, local reputation and likelihood of future patronage.

For consumers in the Midwest, a chamber-involved businesses favorability increases by **28 percent**, consumer awareness increases by **55 percent**, boost in local reputation increases by **53 percent** and likelihood of future patronage increases by **49 percent**.

Highlights of the study findings:

- **59 percent** of consumers think that a company being involved in the local chamber of commerce is an effective overall business strategy.
- Consumers are **40 percent** more likely to eat at a franchise restaurant in the next few months when they learn the restaurant is a member of the local chamber of commerce.
- Consumers are **43 percent** more likely to consider buying insurance from a company that is a member of the local chamber of commerce.
- For other small businesses that are involved in the local chamber of commerce, consumers are **44 percent** more likely to think favorably about that company, and **63 percent** more likely to purchase goods and services from that company in the future.
- If a company shows that it is highly involved in its local chamber, consumers are **12 percent** more likely to think that its products stack up better against its competition.

In these very tight economic times, reaching customers, looking for economical ways to get your company message out, and building consumer confidence, chamber membership is a very effective tool in a company's strategic arsenal.