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## Chamber Notes: Why should you become a member?

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Local

During a recent meeting with a potential member, I answered the question before it was posed. "Why should I join The Central Vermont **Chamber** of Commerce?" Indeed. Why should businesses join the **Chamber**? What value does the **Chamber** bring to a business? What is the relevancy of the **Chamber** in today's wired world?

The essence of the **Chamber** hasn't changed since the first Chambre de Commerce was organized in Marseilles, France in 1599. The Central Vermont **Chamber** and all Chambers are organized to promote business and commerce within a given area.

The Central Vermont **Chamber** is organized to support free enterprise and the success of private initiative. Our mission is to guide, inspire and promote the best interests of the businesses and professionals of the area, and to enhance the economic, cultural, educational and recreational opportunities of its citizens and visitors.

We undertake the mission and act on behalf of all businesses. We are a membership organization, led by a dedicated board of directors acting on behalf of the membership. Our staff works with various committees and task forces to accomplish the objectives of the organization. Our members invest in the **Chamber** with the expectation of a return on that investment that surpasses the annual dues invested.

So, back to the initial question, "Why should I join?" The answer is a simple one. The investment pays back dividends that you will find in no other place. This of course, begs the question, "What are the dividends paid?"

**Chamber** members benefit from the many networking opportunities we offer. Whether it is meeting business leaders at committee

meetings, social functions or workshops and conferences, member-to-member transactions are always underway.

Member promotion is a way of life for us. Visitors call for information about accommodations daily. Google Analytics tells us that our website gets nearly a million visits a year from those looking to do business with **Chamber** members. We fully expect that number to increase significantly this fall when our soon-to-be-launched new website hits the internet.

We promote the region as the place to live, work and visit. Relocation packages are sent out to families considering moving to Central Vermont. We actively work to entice businesses to relocate to our region, we send out business demographic information and area profile materials and work with other groups to encourage new business development.

The amount of visitor information that the **Chamber** sends out is nothing short of phenomenal. We promote area venues and trails, attractions and accommodations, parks and downtowns. When potential guests are planning their vacations, they do what you do — they contact the **Chamber** for current and reliable information and guides.

The **Chamber** advocates on behalf of the business community at all levels of government. The **Chamber** works tirelessly to create a climate that will allow business to expand and thrive. Issues such as tax reform, labor law reform, regulatory reform and health care reform are critical for a good economy. Transportation issues, permitting, education (and funding) and energy are also key parts of our legislative agenda.

These are the ROIs that businesses get by investing in the Central Vermont **Chamber**. Importantly, we have never missed paying a dividend to our investors. This is the type of investment that pays for itself over and over.

Give me a call at 802-229-5711 or send an email to [Bill@centralvt.com](mailto:Bill@centralvt.com). I'll be happy to visit with you and show you why your decision to invest in membership in the Central Vermont **Chamber** of Commerce is the smart move.

William Moore is the president of the Central Vermont **Chamber** of Commerce.

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