

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

of the

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Overview

The Sidney-Shelby County Chamber of Commerce is a membership-based organization whose mission is to further the interests of its membership and to foster a business climate in Shelby County conducive to stability and growth. The Chamber is a 501(c) 6 not for profit business association incorporated in the State of Ohio in 1945, but has an origin of operation traceable back to 1891.

The Sidney-Shelby County Chamber of Commerce has three primary operating entities: the Chamber, the Downtown Sidney Business Association, and the Sidney Visitors Bureau. The Chamber and Downtown Sidney organization operate under one budget structure while the Sidney Visitors Bureau operates under a budget separate and apart from the Chamber's.

Operating Objectives

The operating objectives of the Chamber are threefold; (1) to improve the visibility of its member organizations thus creating an environment for improved business success through increased sales, (2) to sponsor cost savings programs for the benefit of its members to assist in their reduction of business expense, and (3) to sponsor employee development programs, seminars, workshops, and councils to help members make better business decisions.

(1) Initiatives implemented in 2013 to improve the visibility of its membership include:

- Publication and distribution of *Discover Shelby County Ohio*, the Chamber's membership directory and community image book. 6,000 copies of this 80 page, full color publication were produced and distributed promoting Shelby County as a desirable community to raise a family and grow a business.
- Operate and maintain the **Chamber Web Site**, www.SidneyShelbyChamber.com providing a complete list and profile of all Chamber member organizations to include contact information and links to the member's web site if provided. The site hosted traffic totaling just under 7,000 visits in 2013 of which 63% were new visitors. Nearly 15,700 page views were recorded in the calendar year.
- The Chamber's monthly member newsletter *Perspective* featured stories and advertising blocks spotlighting and promoting member businesses and organizations.
- The **Chamber Mail** direct mail program was utilized quarterly to promote trade among Chamber members. Participating members provided promotional inserts to the Chamber that the Chamber in turn distributed to all member organizations through this unique marriage mail program.
- In 2013 the Chamber organized 11 **Business After Hours** events for the benefit of its membership. At each Business After Hours the host business was featured and celebrated. Attendance averaged in the neighborhood of 65 attendees per event.
- The **Chamber Member Spotlight** of the day program continued on Sidney's WMVR - Hits 105.5 radio station. On Tuesdays and Thursdays each week a member business or organization received a 30 second radio advertisement free of charge. In addition, this same commercial message presented "on air" was posted on the Chamber's Facebook page and through the Hits 105.5 Twitter account. As an added bonus, Hits 105.5 offers Chamber members a 50% discount on all additional radio advertising purchases they made for the entire month in which their Chamber Member Spotlight ad appeared.

- August 2013 brought the return of the Chamber's **Business Expo** to the Sidney Middle School. In total, 86 Chamber members exhibited at this year's tradeshow with approximately 500 attending. In addition the Chamber sponsored two complimentary workshops at Expo for those interested in attending. The first entitled Social Media Marketing Made Simple and a second, The Power of Email Marketing.
- Continued a program initiated in 2010 with the Sidney Daily News to offer new members of the Sidney-Shelby County Chamber of Commerce a **complimentary 2 column x 6" display advertisement** in the newspaper.
- In calendar year 2013 the Chamber sold more than \$122,470 in **Chamber Gift Certificates** to Chamber members and non-members alike. These certificates are redeemable exclusively at more than 100 Chamber member businesses throughout Shelby County thus promoting increased sales opportunities for our membership.
- The Chamber office offered member **Business Referrals** routinely to individuals and organizations looking for specific product and service providers in Shelby County.
- Access to the **Chamber Member Data Base** was provided free of charge to any member in good standing for the purpose of promoting trade among its members. Included within the data based is contact information for each Chamber member to include organization name, point of contact, address, and phone/fax numbers.
- **Events and Activities** were organized in downtown Sidney on the Shelby County court square to bring the public downtown and promote trade in Sidney's central business district. Events in 2013 included the weekly Farmers Market every Saturday morning from May through mid-October, Sidney Civic Band performances, the Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure, Kids Around the Square festival, Applefest, the Kids Fall Festival, and the Winter Wonderland Parade. It is of special note that these activities and events are not only meaningful to the businesses operating in the central business district, but to the community itself as a quality of life enhancement for the residents of Sidney and Shelby County.

(2) [Initiatives implemented in 2013 to help members reduce their operating costs include:](#)

- A group **health insurance** discount program was offered through Medical Mutual of Ohio.
- A **workers compensation group and retrospective rating** programs were offered through CareWorks Consultants Inc. Participating members saved over \$444,200 on their workers compensation premiums though participation in these programs.
- A **property and casualty insurance** discount program was offered through Auto Owners Insurance Company where Chamber members were offered a 12% discount on their liability, commercial auto, and commercial umbrella business insurance premiums.
- A **document management services** discount program was continued with Cintas in 2013. Participating Chamber members saved up to 35% on their document imaging, document storage, and document destruction services in this program.
- A group **dental insurance** premium discount program was offered through Superior Dental Care giving Chamber members a 15% discount on their employer sponsored group dental insurance premiums. Included with this member benefit is a group discount opportunity on **vision care services** with EyeMed.
- Offered as a stand-alone new member benefit in 2013 was a **no premium - vision care discount program** with EyeMed. Chamber members can offer their employees discounted vision care services with local Chamber member providers at no cost to their company. Covered services included eye exams, contact lenses, eye glasses and frames.
- A **high-speed Internet** service discount program was offered in partnership with CenturyLink.

- In 2013 Chamber members received up to a 25% discount **off broadcast email, survey, and event marketing tools** with Constant Contact that helped them better connect with their customers and clients.
- A **payroll services** discount program was offered through Paychex giving Chamber members a 15% discount on their regular payroll and payroll tax processing services.
- A **car rental discount** program with Hertz was continued in 2013 whereby Chamber members and their employees received up to a 20% discount on car rentals with Hertz.
- A member benefit established in 2010 and continued in 2013 was a **discount prescription card** for Chamber member employees through Universal Rx.
- Discounts of 7-16% were offered Chamber members on **shipping services** through FedEx.
- The UPS Store in Sidney offered a discount of 20% to Chamber members on their **packaging services and packaging materials**.
- An **electric discount program** with DPL Energy for the benefit of small to medium sized Chamber member businesses was offered in 2013 along with an additional discount program for the benefit of Chamber member employees.

(3) Professional development programs, seminars, workshops, and councils sponsored in 2013 helped members make better business decisions:

- The **Shelby County Safety Council** comprised of some 128 members in 2013 met monthly to discuss policies and practices critical to maintaining a safe workplace. Topics covered in 2013 included; Ergonomics, Stress at Work, Hearing Conservation, Drugs in the Workplace, OSHA, Global Harmonization, Eye Protection, I2P2, Workplace Violence, Red Cross – Laws & Regulations for Emergency and First Aid, Cold Stress & Winter Driving.
In addition, participating member companies were rewarded for their involvement in the Shelby County Safety County by the Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation who issued premium and performance rebate checks to these members totaling more than \$ 86,000.
- The **Shelby County Human Resources Council** comprised of 70 members met monthly in 2013 to discuss policies and participate in lunch and learn style workshops to include; Tour of S&H Products, HR Update (legal perspective), The Balancing Act in Coaching: Seeking vs. Telling, Updates within Job and Family Services, The Gift of Being Organized, Social Security Updates and Working with Employees Questions Regarding Social Security, The Importance of Documentation Regarding Personnel Matters and How to Properly Document, Tour of Airstream, 2013 Employment Screening the FCRA and EEOC.
- The **Women In Networking** group comprised of 38 members met monthly in 2013 to discuss topics of interest to today's working woman. Presentations offered in 2013 included; Health Care Reform, Fun Affordable Travel, Candy Baskets, Social Media, Gardening Tips, Meet Cheryl McHenry, Family Assistance, Heart Disease, Shelby Public Transit and Sidney Airport, Tour of the Upper Valley Career Center.
- The **Shelby County Lean Enterprise Council** completed its first full year of activity in 2013 with 42 individuals participating. Topics presented included; Tour of Electro Controls, Standard Work Training, Acceptance Tool, Everyday Manufacturing Tour, Quick Changeover, Pull Systems, Lean Audit Systems, Norcold Tour, The Basis of a Better Way Seminar.
- In 2013 the Chamber partnered with the Sidney-Shelby County YMCA and US Bank to offer an **Economic Outlook Luncheon** for the benefit of its membership. Approximately 250 Chamber members and guests attended this event.
- Seven (7) workshops and seminars were offered Chamber members in 2013 covering such topics as 3C Communication, A Passion for Service, Affordable Care Act,

Continuous Sales Improvement, Overview of the Sidney City Schools Levy, Social Media Marketing Made Simple, The Power of Email Marketing. Nearly 570 employees of Chamber member companies participated in these Chamber sponsored employee development workshops and seminars in 2013.

- The **Sidney-Shelby County Chamber Foundation** and **Business Education Partnership Committee** were active in 2013. An annual highlight of the Chamber Foundation is the granting of funds to support educational initiatives in Shelby County classrooms that might not otherwise occur if not for Chamber support. In total 23 grant applications were funded totaling just over \$18,000. *A complete review of grant funding initiatives supported by the Chamber Foundation in 2013 can be obtained as a supplement to this report. Please contact the Chamber for a copy.*
- The **Chamber Leadership** program graduated 25 individuals in 2013. The purpose of Leadership Shelby County is to increase the quality and quantity of men and women capable of accepting leadership roles in various community organizations. The program consists of ten full-day classes held one day each month from September through June. The classes are conducted at locations in Shelby County that best relate to the topic of the month. Topics include: Leadership Development, Economic Development, History of Shelby County, Law Enforcement, Education, Human Services, Media, Health Services, City/County Government, and Agriculture. During each session, participants are introduced to issues by means of panels, lectures, tours, group discussions and simulations.

Closing

The Sidney-Shelby County Chamber of Commerce is proud of its association with the best companies in the world operating here in Shelby County, Ohio. Our membership in 2013 totaled 517 businesses and organizations doing business in Shelby County. 42 new members joined the Chamber in calendar year 2013. Membership retention remained favorable in 2013 with a 93% retention rate compared to a national average of 88% for Chambers our size. In terms of membership size, the Dayton Business Journal ranked the Sidney-Shelby County Chamber of Commerce 6th among Chambers in the Dayton region.

Our member's support for the mission of the Sidney-Shelby County Chamber of Commerce is much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Raible
President
Sidney-Shelby County Chamber of Commerce