

**2011 ANNUAL REPORT**

*of the*

**THE SIDNEY-SHELBY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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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 2011 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. 5,000 copies of this 64 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](http://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 from 11,000 visits in 2011 of which 50% were from unique visitors. 23,100 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.
- **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.
- August 2011 brought the return of the Chamber's **Business Expo** to the Sidney Middle School. In total, 92 Chamber members exhibited at this year's tradeshow with approximately 500 attending. In addition the Chamber partnered with SMS proTECH to host a first ever Microsoft Windows 7 and Outlook 2010 seminar for those interested in attending.

- In 2011 the Chamber organized 8 **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 advertisement on the radio free of charge. 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.
- 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 2011 the Chamber sold more than \$123,000 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. The membership listing page of the Chamber web site is one of the most often visited sections of the site.
- 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 2011 included the weekly Farmers Market every Saturday morning from June through mid October, Sidney Civic Band performances, 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 2011 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** program was offered through CareWorks Consultants Inc. Participating members saved over \$402,000 on their workers compensation premiums through participation in this program.
- 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 2011. 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.
- A **high-speed Internet** service discount program was offered in partnership with CenturyLink.
- A **payroll services** discount program was offered through Paychex giving Chamber members a 15% discount on their regular payroll and payroll tax processing services.
- New in 2010 was the development of a **car rental discount** program with Hertz whereby Chamber members and their employees receive up to a 20% discount on car rentals with Hertz. This program was continued in 2011.
- Also new in 2010 and sustained in 2011 was the Chamber's **discount prescription card** for Chamber member employees through Universal Rx.
- A discount program was continued with the **GreaterDaytonWorks.com** on line recruiting site saving Chamber members significantly on their Internet job postings expense.
- 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**.
- A **no-fee Section 125 Plan and Administrative Services** contract was offered Chamber members by Aflac in exchange for their willingness to offer one Aflac supplemental benefit plan at their business.
- An **electric discount program** for the benefit of small to medium sized business was approved by the Chamber Board for activation in 2012. Chamber members with monthly demand of less than 100 kW qualify for this discount.

(3) [Professional development programs, seminars, workshops, and councils sponsored in 2011 helped members make better business decisions:](#)

- The **Shelby County Safety Council** comprised of some 85 members in 2011 met monthly to discuss policies and practices critical to maintaining a safe workplace. Topics covered in 2011 included; Division of Safety and Hygiene Library Resources, Post Accident Investigation, The Importance of Arc Flash Safety, Are You Getting Enough Sleep – Sleep Apnea, Leading and Managing Workplace Safety Programs, Best Practices of the Cargill Safety Team, Loading Dock and Door Safety, Compressed Gas Cylinders, BWC Updates, and Safe 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 rebate checks to these members totaling \$24,600.
- The **Shelby County Human Resources Council** comprised of 52 members met monthly in 2011 to discuss policies and participate in lunch and learn style workshops to include; Workers Compensation, Volunteerism and Volunteer Opportunities, Edison Community College, How to Properly Document Personnel Matters, Senior Employment Options, Personality Testing, Family and Medical Leave Act, Wilson Memorial Hospital Update, Options For Seniors, Community Foundation of Shelby County, and What's on the Horizon for Human Resources.

- The **Women In Networking** group comprised of 50 members met monthly in 2011 to discuss topics of interest to today's working woman. Presentations offered in 2011 included; Home Fitness For Her, Winning at the Networking Game, Healthy Gardening, Leadership, Mentoring With High School Students, Public Speaking, Social Grace and Technology Etiquette, Women's Health, and Personal Safety & Self Defense.
- The **Shelby County Lean Enterprise Council** completed its first full year of activity in 2011 with 41 individuals participating. Topics presented included; Why Implement Lean, Lean Culture, Employee Accountability, Assessing Your Lean Journey, and the Development of a Lean Library and Web Site. In addition, Lean focused plant tours were conducted at Cargill, Honda of America, and Holloway Sportswear.
- In 2011 the Chamber partnered with the Sidney-Shelby County YMCA and Peoples Federal Savings & Loan Association to offer an **Economic Outlook Luncheon** for the benefit of its membership. A representative from the Federal Reserve Bank briefed Chamber members about local, state, national, and global economic factors and identified key metrics for businesses and investors to monitor in the coming months/years. Approximately 248 Chamber members and guests attended this event.
- The **Business-Education Partnership** hosted Kirby Larson, New York Times bestselling author, as a guest speaker in March. Invited to attend her presentation were all 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in Shelby County schools.
- Thirteen (13) workshops and seminars were offered Chamber members in 2011 covering such topics as **Business Succession Planning, Why Implement LEAN, Not For Profit Best Practices, Selection Interviewing, Technology Infrastructure Summit, Workers Comp Group Rating, Annual Economic Outlook Luncheon, Is Price Pressure Impacting Your Bottom Line, Connecting the Dots With Collaboration, Cisco NOW, Vectren Energy Savings Workshop, Equipment Reliability Seminar, and Green Energy Update**. In total, more than 577 employees of Chamber member companies participated in Chamber sponsored employee development workshops and seminars in 2011.
- The **Sidney-Shelby County Chamber Foundation and Business Education Partnership Committee** were active in 2011. 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 21 grant applications were funded totaling just over \$17,400. *A complete review of grant funding initiatives supported by the Chamber Foundation in 2011 can be obtained as a supplement to this report. Please contact the Chamber for a copy.*
- The **Chamber Leadership** program graduated 19 individuals in 2011. 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 2011 totaled 515 businesses and organizations doing business in Shelby County and employing more than 20,000 individuals. 50 new members joined the Chamber in calendar year 2011. Membership retention remained favorable in 2011 with an 89% 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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