

CHAMBER REPORT

July 2010

THE
CHAMBER
CHAMPION FOR A GREATER CEDAR RAPIDS

100

Inside this issue:

- *Iowa 100 Extension Project Receives Boost*

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Chamber Report

Cedar Rapids Area

Chamber of Commerce

424 First Ave. NE

Cedar Rapids, IA 52401-1196

Chair: Brad Hart

President & CEO: Shannon Meyer

Editor: Kari Stillman

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From the Chairman's Desk:

Leadership



Two months ago I wrote about the significant changes in key leadership positions in our community and encouraged you to welcome these changes. Many of our new leaders are already playing significant roles in reshaping this community, the Corridor, for the better. Now I want to comment not on individual leaders, but leadership itself. Carlos Gutierrez, the former CEO/Chairman of the Board of Kellogg Company and the former Secretary of the US Department of Commerce, recently spoke at a Diversity Focus event. Secretary Gutierrez commented that “participation and inclusion doesn’t take the place of leadership.”

I believe the Cedar Rapids City Council’s recent process and decision to hire Jeff Pomeranz as our new City Manager reflects a strong sense of leadership. There are times when the “normal process” of public comment and reporting does not work well. That “normal process” would likely not have resulted in Jeff Pomeranz coming to Cedar Rapids, as qualified candidates often choose not to apply for such positions due to their existing jobs. Our City Council showed leadership in this hire, and I believe that leadership will pay dividends for all of us for years to come. Jeff is a recognized leader in this State. He will bring with him years of experience, a passion for job creation and a proven track record of success. Jeff understands how to work with and through our state and federal governments to find the most help, financial and otherwise, possible.

Throughout our area, our leaders, some relatively new to their positions, are leading us forward. The Chamber, through Shannon Meyer’s leadership, has made significant improvements in a number of Chamber programs, including the Leadership for Five Seasons programs and ImpactCR. Those programs are supporting the growth and development of community leaders and support and develop programming for young professionals. The Chamber’s renewed focus on providing information and assistance for our members to become engaged in international trade is paying dividends for many businesses increasing or entering into those markets.

We look forward to working with another new community leader, Jeff Pomeranz. The Chamber will continue to be a leader in many areas and is committed to working with everyone who needs to be at the table to accomplish the many exciting projects and initiatives in our future.

Sincerely,

Brad Hart
Chairman, Board of Directors

FEATURED MEMBER OF THE MONTH



People you can bank on.™

Next year will mark the 10th anniversary of Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust. While a decade may seem like a long time, time sure flies by fast when you're having fun.

Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust opened its doors to the public in September 2001 with a mission to build relationships with clients who place a high value on personal relationships and exceptional service. This focus has laid the groundwork for the many successes that we have experienced thus far; it will also continue as our strategy far into the future.

CRBT Highlights at a Glance:

- ❖ Grown from 17 employees to 86 employees.
- ❖ Reported \$559 million in total assets as of March 31, 2010.
- ❖ Celebrated the five year anniversaries for both of our two office locations this year. Our branch office opened at 5400 Council St in June 2005. One month later, we also moved our main headquarters from the GreatAmerica Building into our new Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust Building at 500 1st Avenue NE.
- ❖ Awarded and recognized by the U.S. Small Business Administration as a Top Volume Lender in Iowa.
- ❖ Proud sponsors of community events such as the CRBT Downtown Drive-In Movie Series, Bluesmore, the Downtown Farmers Markets, etc.
- ❖ 100% employee giving to United Way every year.
- ❖ Contribute volunteer leadership and participation in over 120 local organizations, including 36 boards that range from professional development associations to community agency participations.
- ❖ Employees volunteered nearly 5,000 hours of time in 2009 to various organizations including Junior Achievement, Young Parents Network, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and many more!

These achievements reflect the confidence of our customers and the dedication of our knowledgeable and experienced staff to continually focus on relationships. We remain committed to putting clients as our first priority. Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust knows that we are only as strong as the community in which we serve. We proudly boast "Cedar Rapids" in our name.

We invite you to call us at 319.862.2728 or stop by any of our locations and experience Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust, where there are always People you can bank on.®

iMPACTCR

MAKE YOUR MARK

Building a Greater Community Forum Attracts Many

On June 2nd, ImpactCR partnered with the United Way of Eastern Iowa's Young Leaders Society and Gazette Communications/KCRG-TV9 to present "Building a Greater Community" for the Next Generation forum. Hundreds attended the event held at CSPS/Legion Arts to learn about developments happening in our region such as the new event center, year-round city market and many more.

A panel discussion including Shannon Meyer, Chamber President and CEO; Cedar Rapids Mayor Ron Corbett; Linn County Supervisor, Brent Oleson; State Representative Tyler Olson and Chuck Peters, CEO of Gazette Communications.

As part of the "now and next generation" in the Cedar Rapids area, it is our responsibility to stand up and play a role in building a community that will meet the needs of future generations. As we rebuild from one of the largest natural disasters in U.S. history, we have many significant projects on the horizon that will shape the future of our region. Additional information can be found at shapecedarrrapids.com



"You don't expect your bankers to be covered in mud from head to toe.

But mine were. Within hours of being allowed back into our building after the Cedar River flood, five employees from Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust were here to help us with clean-up and later, guide us through some tough financial decisions. Since then, our business has reopened - it's service and friends like this that you never forget."



*Is your bank *this* good?*

- Tom Miller and Sue Warner, Schumacher Carpets



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www.crbt.com

Business Leaders Trip to Brazil – Informational Session

The Cedar Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
is organizing a business mission trip to Brazil
November 4-12, 2010.

The trip encourages participants to explore new business relationships in Brazil by visiting with U.S. embassy officials, learning the region's business climate and culture and conducting meetings with Brazil-based companies such as Embraer. Travelers will spend 4 nights in Rio de Janeiro and 3 nights in Sao Paulo.

Learn more about this exciting
trip at an Informational
Session schedule for:
Thursday, July 22
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Chamber Boardroom

To register for this
free informational session
please contact Jeanne
Brandes at 319.730.1401
or by e-mail at
jbrandes@cedarrapids.org.
Additional details on the trip
can be found on-line at www.cedarrapids.org



12TH ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

2010 Golf Outing

The 2010 Golf Outing looks to be a sold out event once again this year. The 2010 Golf Outing is scheduled for Monday, August 2nd with a shotgun start at noon at Elmcrest Country Club. Space is limited and registrations are going fast. Don't miss out on a Chamber member benefit that also helps you improve your golf game!

Registration forms can be found on-line at www.cedarrapids.org. Individual registration fee is \$150 and a foursome is \$600. All registrations include tax, green fees, cart and dinner.

For additional details on this event please contact Jeff Schamberger, Director of Membership at jschamberger@cedarrapids.org or 319.730.1402.

*The golf outing
is presented by*



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Chamber EXPO – Hitting Business Out of the Park

The Chamber is once again preparing for an EXPO event that is set to be a grand slam. The Chamber's annual one-day business trade show will be held at the Veterans Memorial Stadium in partnership with the Cedar Rapids Kernels.



Schedule of Events:

9:00 am - 5:15 pm - Community Softball Games

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm - Vendor Appreciation and Networking Exchange

2:00 pm - 6:00 pm - EXPO

5:00 pm - 7:00 pm - PM Exchange

Exhibit Space Details:

Basic Booth: Includes 8 x 8 space, 8' skirted table, 2 chairs, wastebasket, 8 x 11 signage, exhibitor name badges, listing in Exhibitor Directory and on Chamber website. *Chamber Members \$485 Future Members \$795*

MVP Booth: Basic Booth details plus bold listing and 2 x 3 ½ inch ad in Exhibitors Directory, 2 tickets to Kernels opening day 2011, prime booth space. Limit 20 booths, given on a first payment received basis. *Available to Chamber members only \$700*

Additional options including electricity and advertising are available.

Registration information can be found on-line or contact Julie Stow, VP of Special Events at jstow@cedarrapids.org or 319.730.1409.

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2010 Fireball Run Stopping in Cedar Rapids

The Fireball Run is "Amazing Race meets Motorsports." The Fireball Run event is one of the largest and most interactive adventure events in the country. **This year's event will be stopping for an overnight stay in Cedar Rapids on Friday, Oct. 1st.**



Cedar Rapids will become a game board as 75 teams solve clues and complete missions that will take them throughout the community. As a leadership-based event, participating teams and media must be comprised of corporate decision makers, community leaders and/or celebrities. **These influential teams will be exposed to and experience first-hand Cedar Rapids' vitality, quality of life and economic opportunities.**

The cause for the organization is to race to uncover America's missing children. Annually, *Fireball Run* distributes nearly 75,000 posters which to date has aided in the recovery of 32 missing children.

Consider supporting this unique one time only opportunity and sponsor what is promises to be an exciting offer to showcase our community to a diverse and influential team of participants. For more information please contact Julie Stow, VP of Special Events and Member Programs at jstow@cedarrapids.org or 319-730-1409.

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Iowa I 00 Extension Near

On June 8th 2010, the Iowa Department of Transportation Commission approved the five-year Transportation Improvement Program. Within the \$2.3 billion five-year plan, the commission added \$4.3 million dollars for right of way acquisition and wetlands mitigation in FY2012 and FY2013.

This is a significant step towards the completion of a vital artery for the Cedar Rapids Metro area which will alleviate I-380 congestion and create an efficient connection to the western and eastern parts of Linn County. The approved land acquisition funding and funds already allocated to the City positions Cedar Rapids to create a shovel-ready road project allowing for greater opportunity to access funding at the federal level for construction completion.

“The traffic on Interstate 380 will use the new Iowa 100 around the west side of Cedar Rapids thus extending the life of Interstate 380”

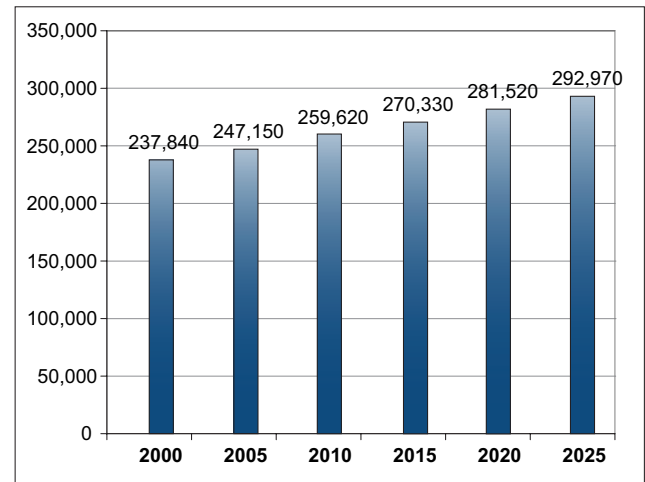
— Allen Witt
Past Chair of The Chamber

The Cedar Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce has been a strong advocate for the project along with the City of Cedar Rapids, Linn County, area Labor Unions and many other Community Leaders. The Chamber led the project by advocating for local representation on the Iowa Department of Transportation Commission, organizing awareness campaigns and lobbying at numerous DOT board meetings. It is one of the top issues among Chamber members.

The Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization passed a resolution to fund project development with \$2.95m slated for local projects and the federal government approved \$1.45m for the project. Linn County supports the dedication of right-of-way that they control and the Linn County Conservation Board passed a resolution to support the project in 2006 not to mention 1,500 businesses and surrounding cities **support the project's completion.**

As Linn County continues to experience strong economic and population our region needs to be prepared for the growth. **A report from the Population and Economic Forecasts Technical Advisory Committee predicted a 10 percent population increase each decade through 2030 and job growth of 14 percent to 21 percent each decade.** It's essential that our community provides the necessary infrastructure to promote and support this type of growth.

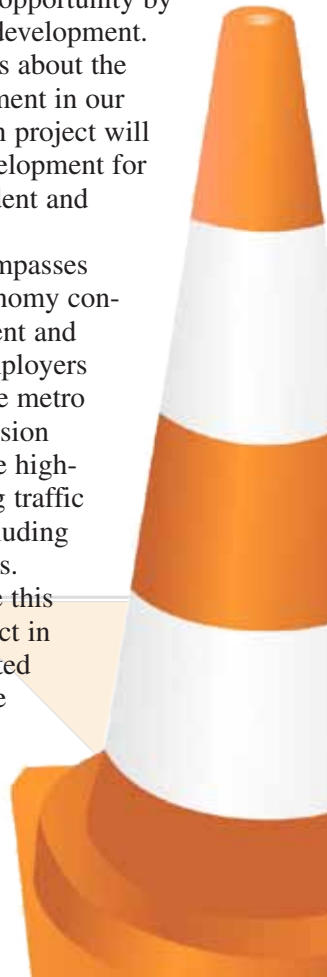
Projected Population Growth - Cedar Rapids MSA



The project also creates expansion opportunity by providing large green space for future development. “The Chamber often receives comments about the lack of new commercial/retail development in our community and the Iowa 100 Extension project will alleviate one of the barriers to new development for the area,” states Shannon Meyer, President and CEO of The Chamber.

The Cedar Rapids labor shed encompasses nearly 20 counties. As the region’s economy continues to grow and workforce recruitment and retention increases in intensity, area employers will need to reach much farther than the metro area. The design of the Iowa 100 Extension will provide limited access points to the highway, limiting congestion and improving traffic flow for a majority of Linn County including Hiawatha, Robins and NE Cedar Rapids.

“I applaud the effort to reinvigorate this important economic development project in support of the community’s future,” noted Dr. Dave Benson, Superintendent of the Cedar Rapids Community School District. “The school district looks forward to the growth opportunity that the Highway 100 extension can provide.”

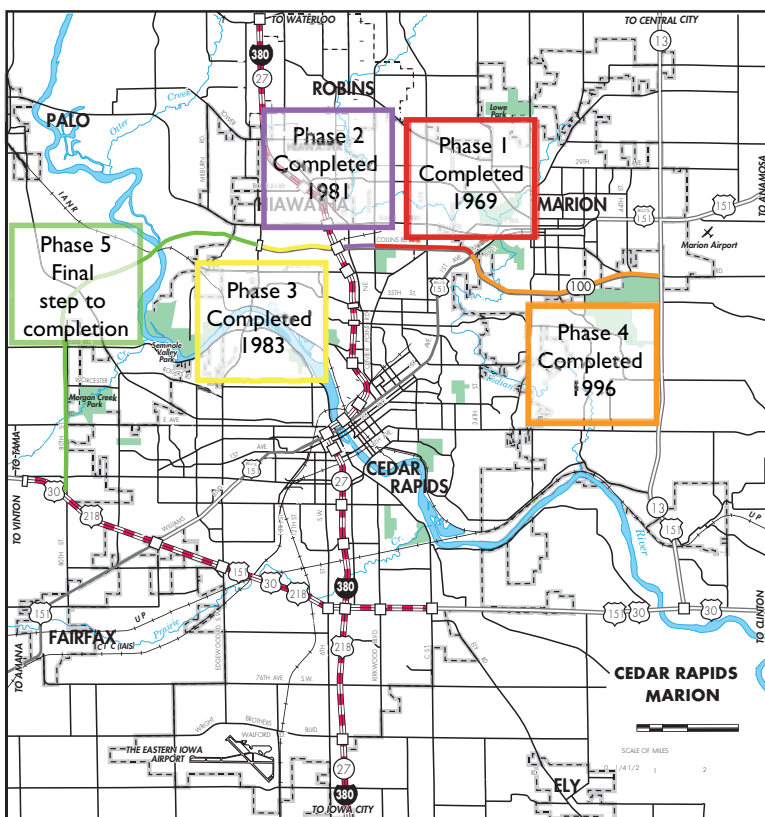


Spring Construction Start





The project received a Record of Decision from the Federal Highway Administration in June 2008. Environmental studies are now completed and with a federal transportation bill looming it was critical for the project to be included in this approved plan. The Cedar Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce would like to thank the Iowa Department of Transportation Commission for their understanding and thoughtfulness by including the Iowa 100 Extension in the states' five-year plan.

“Successfully growing communities plan and provide the essential infrastructure for growth and major roads and highways tend to be the most important factor. Cedar Rapids has not undertaken a new major road project for more than 20 years, as a result most residential, commercial and retail development is occurring outside of Cedar Rapids. The Iowa 100 Extension will adjust the region’s growth patterns allowing for attractive sites for retail, commercial and residential development within Cedar Rapids.”

— Kyle Skogman, President
Skogman Homes
Priority One Chair



The primary transportation benefits of the proposed Iowa 100 Extension include:

-  Reduce congestion and associated problems on the road network in the area adjacent to and beyond the proposed Iowa 100 Extension.
-  Provide an alternate route for through traffic in the event of major traffic stoppages on I-380 in the central part of Cedar Rapids or Edgewood Road or in the event of flooding.
-  Provide an efficient connection between the west side of Cedar Rapids and Linn County, the northeast side of Cedar Rapids and Linn County as well as, the Cities of Robins, Hiawatha and Marion.
-  Provide transportation improvements to accommodate planned growth and associated travel demand increases.

Events Calendar

July

❖ Tuesday, July 13

Chamber Academy: Creating a Productive Work Environment

Chamber Board Room

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

\$35 Members, \$50 Future members

Sponsored by



❖ Thursday, July 15

PM Exchange

Summer Fiesta Block Party

Uptown Marion

5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Member Networking Event

Complimentary

Sponsored by



❖ Thursday, July 22

Brazil Informational Session

Chamber Board Room

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Hear all the details about this exiting offer to travel to Brazil with The Chamber. The informational session will cover trip details including itinerary, costs and more.

Complimentary

❖ Tuesday, July 22

Chamber Academy: Best Practices for Business Computer Networks

Chamber Board Room

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

\$35 members, \$50 future members

Sponsored by:



For updated information
or to register for events
please visit
www.cedarrapids.org

August

❖ Monday, August 2

2010 Golf Outing

Elmcrest Country Club

Noon Shotgun Start

Member Networking Event

❖ Tuesday, August 10

Chamber Academy:

ROI on IT Spending

Chamber Board Room

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

\$35 Members, \$50 Future members

Sponsored by



❖ Thursday, August 19

PM Exchange

Crowne Plaza Five Seasons Hotel

350 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids

5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Member Networking Event

Complimentary

Upcoming Signature Events

October

❖ October 1-2

2010 Fireball Run Adventurally Road Race

Downtown Cedar Rapids

The Fireball Run Adventurally is coming to Cedar Rapids as a destination event in 2010. Learn more on-line at fireballrun.com/crc

Special Event

Sponsorship Opportunities Available

November

❖ November 4-12

Business Leaders Trip to Brazil

Brazil was the top country in upward evolution and competitiveness in 2009 among the BRIC economies. Join The Chamber to experience Brazil and learn of a vast amount of business opportunities in this fast-growing market. Contact Jeanne Brandes, jbrandes@cedarrapids.org, for more information. Registration Now Available!

September

❖ Thursday, September 9

Unlocking Your Chamber Membership

Chamber Board Room

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Designed to give you the keys to getting started, this is our orientation to all of our events, programs and initiatives. Lunch provided.

Complimentary

Sponsored by



❖ Tuesday, September 14

Chamber Annual Meeting

Special Event

❖ Thursday, September 23

Business Expo – Hitting Business Out of the Park

Cedar Rapids Veterans Memorial Stadium

2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. EXPO

Special Event

Sponsorship Opportunities Available

❖ Thursday, September 23

PM Exchange

Cedar Rapids Veterans Memorial Stadium

5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Member Networking Event

Complimentary

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Take advantage of
the many sponsorship
and marketing
opportunities available
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Contact Candy Nanke
for details
319-730-1417 or
cnanke@cedarrapids.org

NEW MEMBERS

Asbury UMC/Asbury Day Care Center/ Asbury House

350 27th Ave SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

Ed Powers, Pastor

Phone: 319-364-3188

Web: http://pastored.typepad.com/asbury_united_methodist_c

Email: AsburyUMC@ImOnMail.com

Asbury UMC is a small regional church in SW Cedar Rapids. Asbury Day Care Center nurtures 50 children, over half of which are DHS. Asbury House is an independent living facility known for its family atmosphere and home cooked lunches.

Cedar Dental

1935 First Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

Phone: 319-364-6529

Dr. Tom Anderson, President

Web: www.cedar-dental.com

Email: office@cedar-dental.com

Cedar Dental has always provided quality care in a family friendly atmosphere. Our experienced staff use state-of-the-art technology for all procedures. To further enhance your dental experience we will soon open our new office.

GaltInsight, L.C.

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The Whetstone Group, Inc. offers simply, yet effective tools to help companies in the business-to-business market position themselves for growth. Our consultants will work with you to develop compelling marketing messages and help you consistently reach your target market with direct mailing, lead generation and business development training services.

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Vice President/Manager, Residential Lending
Cedar Rapids



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Chamber Launches New Web Site

In June, the Cedar Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce launched a completely new Web site yet the address remains www.cedarrapids.org. The Chamber has integrated the design of the new site with its member management software, WebLink International. The comprehensive site allows added features for members including the ability to register and pay on-line for events, manage their member directory and gain exposure through the new Search Engine Optimization Member directory. WebLink International specializes in chambers of commerce and tourism organizations. Their clients generate 92% more business referrals for their members versus other providers.



The site will also integrate information from ImpactCR and Leadership for Five Season. The consolidation of three sites into one will allow easier access to information for our members and community.

The Web site, www.cedarrapids.org receives more than 45,000 visits each month.

Interested in Winning \$10,000?



The Chamber is once again offering someone with the opportunity to win \$10,000*. The Chopper Dropper raffle returns for this year's golf outing on August 2nd.

500 numbered golf balls will be dropped from a helicopter onto the 18th fairway following The Chamber Golf Outing. The first ball in or closest to the cup will win \$10,000.

Ticket price is only \$50 and can be purchased at The Chamber office or at any Chamber event. For more information contact Jeff Schamberger at jschamberger@cedarrapids.org or 319.730.1402.

**Estimated prizes based on all tickets sold. Need not be present to win.*

"We saw a great opportunity to make the purchase at a company level to reward the hard work of some of our top performers. Each manager was able to select one or two individuals and explained to them that their name would be submitted. Of course, after having the \$10,000 winner last year, this has become a popular reward plus we felt obligated to get an additional packet so we could enter even more names. If AEGON has someone win again, I think we'll probably be buying them all next year."

*Rob Frederick, COO
AEGON Companies*

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ENTREPRENEURS' CORNER

High-Value Selling

By Curt Nelson, President & CEO of the Entrepreneurial Development Center



Different sales techniques, based upon the product or service and the prospective “user,” are required to maximize selling success. Selling commodity, easily-purchased products is significantly different than selling expensive, considered-purchase products. But in all cases, sales occur when the benefits received equals or exceeds the price required to obtain it – when “value” is created.

As the investment becomes more expensive, more technical, and more competitive;

- The higher in the organization the decision is likely to be made / approved
- The longer the sales cycle is likely to be
- The greater the value required to cause a purchase
- The larger the number of players involved is likely to be
- The more important it is to build relationships early in the process with the right people

Most high-value Request for Proposals (RFPs), for example, are awarded to the firm that built the relationship ahead of the RFP being generated – wisely ensuring that the RFP itself was written around their offering. Businesses that simply answer RFPs as their first contact with prospective buyers close a very small portion of what could be attained.

If your product or service requires value to be built over time, start early in the process, work at all the right levels, and help prospective users make quality investments. Don't wait for prospects to send you an RFP written around someone else's specifications. Don't make the assumption that the person that contacted you is the decision maker. Don't mistake continued communications as a sign that you are likely to get the sale. And don't assume that “presenting” your offering is “selling.”

Successful high-value sales people spend their professional life learning to build great relationships with the right people and the right value – at the right time – to win the greatest percent of deals. They know how to employ valued company resources and how to choreograph the use of those resources at the right times. If you need to build a great value to maximize sales, you need to build high-value selling teams – not just presentation teams.



For more information, contact the Entrepreneurial Development Center at 319-369-4955 or visit us at www.edcinc.org.

Hiring for the Holidays?

If your business is planning to hire additional seasonal employees, we can help make the transition easy. From drug screenings and vaccinations, to pre-employment physicals, we'll provide the services you need to get your new workforce started quickly and safely.

Walk-in services are available. Appointments are welcome, or we can bring the Work Well Clinic to your company.

To learn more, call 319/369-8762.



Work Well Solutions



CHAMPIONS AT WORK

Ambassador of the Quarter



Mary Daugherty

The Cedar Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce is proud to recognize Mary Daugherty as the Ambassador of the Quarter. Mary's commitment to The Chamber's Ambassador Program and dedication at events is greatly appreciated.

Shive-Hattery Wins Top Engineering Excellence Award

Shive-Hattery won the top building and systems design prize, the Grand Place Award, for engineering excellence from the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) of Iowa, along with three additional awards for sustainable design, energy production and transportation improvements.

Diamond V CEO John Bloomhall wins entrepreneur of the year award

Diamond V CEO John Bloomhall received the Ernst Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2010 Award in the Central Midwest region. According to Ernst & Young LLP, the award recognizes outstanding entrepreneurs who are building and leading dynamic, growing businesses.

"I am honored and humbled to accept this prestigious award and recognition," Mr. Bloomhall said. "I would be remiss if I did not thank the Diamond V and Embria employees around the world who do the great things every day for which I receive this recognition"

As a central Midwest award winner, Mr. Bloomhall now is eligible for consideration for the Ernst & Young LLP Entrepreneur of the Year 2010 National Program.

City Looks Celebrates 20 Years

City Looks, located in Lindale and Westdale Mall are celebrating 20 years by having an open house July 8-10th. The company will celebrate its long-lasting success in the community by offering numerous offers and promotions to its customers. More information can be found on-line at www.crcitylooks.com

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June PM Exchange Recap

Nearly 150 people attended Securian Advisors MidAmerica's PM Exchange, June 17th. Attendees enjoyed the outdoor event and opportunity to be entertained by Herky and the University of Iowa cheerleaders.



PM EXCHANGE



Block Party

It's our Annual South of the Border
PM Exchange

Thursday, July 15
5 to 7 p.m.

700th Block, 11th Street, Marion

Sponsored by:



- Carlos O'Kelly's Buffet & Beverages
- Salsa Music
- Door Prizes

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