



## Five reasons to join local Chamber of Commerce and Industry Tomsk Polytechnic University

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### Abstract

The article describes five useful things that Chamber of Commerce and Industry membership may give to business owners after joining it. These things are the reasons to become a part of business community formed by Chambers of Commerce that may be considered by those business owner who are deciding whether to join Chamber of Commerce or not. Mentioned reasons are given with examples related to Tomsk Chamber of Commerce and Industry and are relevant to any Chamber of Commerce located in Russian Federation and for most of those that are located in other Western world countries. The article will be useful for those business owners who doubt about joining local Chamber of Commerce.

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### 1. Introduction

A chamber of commerce and industry is a form of business network, e.g., a local organization of businesses whose goal is to further the interests of businesses. Business owners in towns and cities form these local societies to advocate on behalf of the business community [4]. Local businesses are members, and they elect a board of directors or executive council to set policy for the chamber. The board or council then hires a President, CEO or Executive Director, plus staffing appropriate to size, to run the organization.

Chambers of Commerce have long history – the first chamber of commerce was founded in 1599 in Marseille, France and the world's oldest English-speaking chamber of commerce is that of New York City, which was established in 1768 [2]. Today almost every developed or developing country has its own federal and chain of regionals Chambers of Commerce operating with one purpose – building a network of trusted businesses and contribute to their growth and prosperity.

However, practice shows that significant number of business owners, including current Chamber of Commerce members, do not know how this membership can benefit them or what specific advantage they can get from it for the annual fee they pay. The following text aims to disclose a few reasons joining Chamber of Commerce may be worth it with examples related to Tomsk Chamber of Commerce and Industry which are relevant for any Chamber of Commerce throughout the Russian Federation and for many of those located in the most of Western world countries.

### 2. Reasons to join local Chamber of Commerce and Industry

#### 2.1. Reason one – Prestige and Image

In order to join a Chamber of Commerce you have to meet certain requirements. Before becoming a member you have to apply for it providing all the necessary information required to decision-making committee. The requirement may vary from place to place. In Tomsk Chamber of Commerce and Industry there are such requirements as:

- at least one year has to pass since the organisation establishment
- positive and stable cash flow

The final decision, about whether to give the organisation a status of a Chamber of Commerce member or not, is made by the Council of the Chamber and Commerce.

As a result, Chamber of Commerce membership is a guarantee that your organisation is a trusted and reliable business partner. This fact should make a positive image of your business in the minds of your potential business partners and customers that might significantly contribute to your business goodwill and therefore boost the growth of your company.

The Chamber of Commerce membership has value all over the country and even abroad and taken to consideration by your potential partners while they're making decision whether they're going to do business with you or they're not [1].

## *2.2. Reason two – Information*

Chamber of Commerce is a mighty resource of information. When join you become a part of informational network of most trusted organizations around the country.

Relying on the example of Tomsk Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chamber of Commerce membership gives you access to:

- the base of reliable business partners in your city, region and country
  - information about business events in your city, region and country
  - information related to the Chamber of Commerce work and events arranged by the Chamber of Commerce
- As information is one the most valuable resources nowadays it can make a good service to your business.

## *2.3. Reason three – Discounts*

Chamber of Commerce provides businesses with a wide range of commercial services. If you're a Chamber of Commerce member and you pay your annual fee bona fide you have the right to get a considerable discount in all commercial services. The types of services may vary. As an example, Tomsk Chamber of Commerce and Industry provides the following types of commercial services:

- legal services
- accounting
- consulting
- seminars

So, basically, a Chamber of Commerce provides any help a business might need. Tomsk Chamber and Commerce gives you up to 20 % discount on any commercial service. This fact may be quite beneficial if you intend to use Chamber's services and help often.

## *2.4. Reason four – Promotion and advertising*

Chamber of Commerce membership gives your business access to many tools for promoting and advertising your company and your products. As Chamber of Commerce is a network of organisations and business owners, information about its members spreads easily among other companies-members of Chamber and Commerce. Chambers have developed channels of communication between its members and between each other. Taking into account that each region has its own Chamber of Commerce branch it is an easy way to get information of your product to your potential clients and partners in your city and in other regions as well.

Tomsk Chamber of Commerce and Industry, aside from other promotion channels, has its own journal "First Economical" with monthly circulation of 4000 issues. The journal circulates in Tomsk, Tomsk region and other regions through the chain of Chambers of Commerce.

## *2.5. Reason five – Network*

One of the most valuable reasons to join Chamber of Commerce is becoming a part of business community of reliable business partners.

The whole idea of Chambers of Commerce is building a network of trusted business owners whose goal is to further the interests of businesses. With tools and instruments available with Chamber of Commerce you can easily find fair-dealing partner in your home region, other regions and spread to foreign markets outside your own country [3].

As an example, Tomsk Chamber of Commerce does a huge work building fruitful relationship with nearby regions as well as with businesses from other countries all over the world. Each year there are several delegations sent to other countries with business missions in order to make new business contacts outside the country.

### 3. Conclusion

Taking into account the above-mentioned reasons to join Chamber of Commerce its' membership might give a business a push needed to expand to a new level. New business connections, channels of product promotions, guarantee of your trustworthy as a business partner and other benefits that result from Chamber of Commerce membership might help your business penetrate new markets, widen your client base and give your business resources for stable growth. As a result, Chamber of Commerce membership might be considered as an effective business strategy.

### References

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