



INSIDER

www.waceonline.com

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Find the 'Why' of Your Chamber: Make 2017 the Year You Live and Work Your Brand

I was looking at the historic gavel that immediate past Chair Nancy Lindholm gave me at the W.A.C.E. annual conference, signed by past chairs dating back to the 1960s.

Among the many industry icons, I found the faded printed signature of Bill Dauer, former CEO of the San Francisco (CA) Chamber. Bill retired in Lodi, that's how I knew him as I was truly the last person to be mentored by him.

Knowing that I now hold the gavel, the same one Bill and many others of his caliber have held, is a truly humbling and awesome experience. I suppose every person to get this chairmanship honor says, "All I want to do is not screw things up."

Brand Research

I believe doing my best for the organization and individual members



Pat Patrick takes over leadership as W.A.C.E. Chairman.

will be to help CEOs see themselves cloaked in the important findings of our W.A.C.E. Chamber Branding research. I also believe that chamber leaders can become examples of our brand's values and pillars, which are our foundation.

Study Findings

Our research has pointed out many important things, including what people think chambers should be on our best days and what excellence produces when we do. But the singular most important finding of the study, in my opinion, is the reason, the *why*, we do it. That answer is a highly personal mystery, laced in between the opportunity of our brand promise and how each of us engages the challenges and opportunities in our

day-to-day work. That is the key question you as a leader must answer. What lasting impact or game-changing work will people remember you by?

Chambers hold the only address at the intersection of successful businesses and a thriving community, which is where and why we exist.

When the question is asked, "Where is the Chamber on this issue?" The core of the answer is always the same. "The Chamber is working on the biggest issues facing our businesses to ensure they succeed so our community can thrive."

So I ask you, what are those issues in your community? What are those issues facing your business community? The ones you may think are too big to tackle, the ones too scary or politically charged to think about disrupting?

Find Your 'Why'

Read the branding research again and find your "why," find yourself and go for it.

The W.A.C.E. Board and staff are here to help you succeed and make 2017 the year you live and work the brand.

Pat Patrick is president and CEO of the Lodi District (CA) Chamber, and Chairman of the Board of W.A.C.E.

ACADEMY GRADUATES.....	2
LEADER TO LEADER	3
W.A.C.E. ANNUAL CONFERENCE PHOTOS ...	4-5
OPINION POLL	6
AWARDS RECAP.....	7
CHAMBER EXECUTIVES IN THE NEWS	8
MEETING DATES	8

COMMENTARY

Do We Have the Courage to Make the Choices and Cause the Change That Is Needed?



Dave Kilby

Our recently completed Chamber Brand Project has many in W.A.C.E. asking why chambers do what they do.

Do the things you do at "Your Chamber USA" have anything to do with what your members say is

important? Do your programs match up

well with the components of our "Chamber Brand Purpose"?

Brand Research

Our brand research clearly indicates that chambers exist to be the:

- Convener for leaders and influencers;
- Catalyst for business growth; and
- Champion for stronger communities.

While it was meant to be aspirational when presented at the W.A.C.E. annual conference earlier this year, reaction from chamber executives has generally been in two camps: confirming a chamber's current direction, or inducing stress because some cannot and are not (yet) "living the brand."

I'm fond of saying that tradition is great in "Fiddler on the Roof," but think there's no time like the present to rethink its dominant role in so many chambers of commerce.

Our core competencies clearly indicate that business people think their chambers should engage in activities that help strengthen the local economy, promote community, represent their interests with government, and take political action, such as helping elect business-friendly elected officials.

When you step back and examine what your chamber is doing, do those things match up with the Brand Purpose above?

Do your programs match up with the five core competencies? Is your chamber engaged in programs in one or two areas, while ignoring or being programmatically "absent" when it comes to the others?

Leadership

The issue may be leadership (or lack of leadership) to make the tough decisions and change, and do what needs to be done.

A month or so ago we asked our member CEOs to assess their chambers in a number of "embracing change" areas and near the bottom, in need of a great deal of work in most chambers, was: attracting, nurturing and motivating catalytic leadership.

Of the eight influences outlined in the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives *Horizons*, the importance of having the right leaders on the bus cannot, in my opinion, be emphasized enough.

There is no doubt that EVERY chamber and chamber executive is busy. But are we busy doing the right stuff? Are we doing things or getting important things done?

The late Mike Hauser, former CEO of the Santa Rosa (CA) Chamber, used to opine that "so many chambers are in the thick of thin things."

I'm hoping that all of you and your boards will take a step back and ask: why do we do the things we do? And then have the courage to make the choice to cause the change and excel at being catalysts, conveners and champions to help our businesses prosper and our communities thrive.

Dave Kilby is the president and CEO of W.A.C.E., and is executive vice president of corporate affairs at the California Chamber.

2017-2018 W.A.C.E. OFFICERS

Chairman of the Board

Pat Patrick

Lodi District (CA) Chamber
(209) 367-7840 • ppatrick@lodichamber.com

Chairman-Elect

Brad Hicks, CCE, IOM

The Chamber of Medford/Jackson County (OR)
(541) 779-4847 • brad@medfordchamber.com

Vice Chairman

Anne Glasscock, ACE

Kaufman (TX) Chamber
(972) 932-3118 • aglasscock@kaufmanchamber.com

Vice Chairman

Tallia Hart, ACE

San Francisco (CA) Chamber
(415) 392-4520 • thart@sfcchamber.com

Vice Chairman

Jill Lagan, ACE

Boulder City (NV) Chamber
(702) 293-2034 • jill@bouldercitychamber.com

Vice Chairman

Glenn Morris, ACE

Santa Maria Valley (CA) Chamber
(805) 925-2403 • glenn@santamaria.com

Past Chairman

Nancy Lindholm, ACE

Oxnard (CA) Chamber
(805) 983-6118 • n.lindholm@oxnardchamber.org

Published by: Western Association of Chamber Executives, P.O. Box 1736, Sacramento, CA 95812-1736 (916) 442-2223, Fax (916) 444-6685.
Website: www.waceonline.com

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and not W.A.C.E.

Chairman's Circle

Gold Members

- CalChamber
- Chamber Marketing Partners
- Citslinc International, Inc.
- PG&E
- WebLink International

The Chairman's Circle is a special group of members that have committed to support W.A.C.E. through sponsorships.

If your business would like to become a member of the Chairman's Circle, please contact Dave Kilby, W.A.C.E. president and CEO, at (916) 930-1202 or email dave.kilby@calchamber.com.

COMMENTARY

The Why, What and How of Your Chamber



Dave Kilby

When was the last time your leaders took a “pause” to reflect on and discuss the WHY of your chamber of commerce?

According to our brand research, your WHY or purpose needs to be the three Cs:

- Catalyst for

business growth;

and

- Convener of leaders and influencers;

- Champion for a stronger community.

If you take a look at *The Magicians of*

Main Street by Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives Senior Vice President Chris Mead, who chronicles the history of chambers of commerce from 1768–1945, chambers originally excelled at the three Cs.

You can open the book to almost any page and find examples of chambers leading by tackling business and community issues, all the while excelling at being conveners and coalition builders.

So what happened? Did we all of a sudden in the years following World War II have mission creep or amnesia and become chambers of events?

I’ve been around long enough to remember the day when the bulk of ALL chamber funding (approximately 80%) came from dues, but somewhere along the line, we adopted a “user fee” mentality and went “all in” doing events, and many got addicted to government money. The combination of the two, I believe, dramatically changed our organizations.

The possibility exists that we now have an opportunity to change again—and return to normalcy—and be more like the magicians of main street showcased by Mead, fighting for causes that will improve our communities and local economies.

For many chambers, the possibility exists that our brand research may be the stimulus needed to give them permission to change.

WHAT We Do

With the above three C purpose in mind as our WHY, we also have data from thousands of business people across the United States which clearly indicates that members think it’s important for their chamber to

focus on five core areas. At W.A.C.E., we have called these our core competencies and think they are the WHAT for today’s chambers:

- Build business relationships;
- Political action;
- Promote the community;
- Represent the interests of business with government; and
- Strengthen the local economy.

Even though most chambers have plenty of room for improvement when it comes to doing the above, you don’t have to stretch your imagination very far to connect the dots and see how these core competencies fit with the three Cs.

HOW We Do It

A case can be made that while the WHY and the WHAT for chambers is nearly universal, every chamber can be different when you look at HOW chambers follow through, and the programming needed to fulfill their brand promise and mission.

The specific programs in a tourism town may be *very* different than in an agriculture community—just as the challenges in a metro chamber are, most likely, *very* different than a bedroom community.

The HOW is where each chamber can do its own thing. But I strongly suggest, as our research points out, that chambers not lose sight of their WHY or the core competencies (their WHAT) as they keep the promise of chambers in the 21st century.

Dave Kilby is the president and CEO of W.A.C.E., and is executive vice president of corporate affairs at the California Chamber.

2017–2018 W.A.C.E. OFFICERS

Chairman of the Board

Pat Patrick

Lodi District (CA) Chamber
(209) 367-7840 • ppatrick@lodichamber.com

Chairman-Elect

Brad Hicks, CCE, IOM

The Chamber of Medford/Jackson County (OR)
(541) 779-4847 • brad@medfordchamber.com

Vice Chairman

Anne Glasscock, ACE

Kaufman (TX) Chamber
(972) 932-3118 • aglasscock@kaufmanchamber.com

Vice Chairman

Tallia Hart, ACE

San Francisco (CA) Chamber
(415) 392-4520 • thart@sfcchamber.com

Vice Chairman

Jill Lagan, ACE

Boulder City (NV) Chamber
(702) 293-2034 • jill@bouldercitychamber.com

Vice Chairman

Glenn Morris, ACE

Santa Maria Valley (CA) Chamber
(805) 925-2403 • glenn@santamaria.com

Past Chairman

Nancy Lindholm, ACE

Oxnard (CA) Chamber
(805) 983-6118 • n.lindholm@oxnardchamber.org

Published by: Western Association of Chamber Executives, P.O. Box 1736, Sacramento, CA 95812-1736 (916) 442-2223, Fax (916) 444-6685.
Website: www.waceonline.com

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and not W.A.C.E.

Chairman’s Circle

Gold Members

- CalChamber
- Chamber Marketing Partners
- Citslinc International, Inc.
- PG&E
- WebLink International

The Chairman’s Circle is a special group of members that have committed to support W.A.C.E. through sponsorships.

If your business would like to become a member of the Chairman’s Circle, please contact Dave Kilby, W.A.C.E. president and CEO, at (916) 930-1202 or email dave.kilby@calchamber.com.

COMMENTARY

Will We Change Our Attitude and The Future?



Dave Kilby

The chamber of commerce industry has essentially been thrown into a whitewater river and we have to re-learn what we do and how we do it or, frankly, we might not make it.

Even though we've been able to get by for decades by floating along on doing what we've always done, that's not going to cut it anymore.

In 2018 the waves are big, the current is fast and it's changing all the time and is different around every turn. If we follow the old "floating" game plan, we'll capsize and maybe even drown.

These whitewater times require us to not only paddle like heck, but we also need to be wise, chart a new course and develop a new game plan to stay afloat.

Our W.A.C.E. brand research has mapped out a direction to help chambers successfully navigate these rough waters.

Chamber Choices

The "Chamber Choices 2018" statements on the next page, while a work in progress, will give you an idea what needs to be done. I'm hoping that chambers of commerce will eventually be able to honestly, without hesitation, answer "YES" to each and every one of them!

Now I'm betting that some are saying "we're just a small chamber" and the Chamber Choices list on page 3 only pertains to "big chambers."

So only big chambers are concerned about being a catalyst for business growth, convening leaders and influencers to get things done and being a champion for a thriving community? I DON'T THINK SO!

You can be anything you want to be...

any kind of chamber you want to be. It's all about choice. Or more completely stated, it's about courage, choice, chance and change. Choose wisely.

Attitude Adjustment Needed

The last time someone used the "we're just a small chamber" line with me, I responded, "With all due respect, maybe it's your attitude that's small and if it doesn't change, your chamber will, if you're lucky, always be just like it is today or it might even get smaller."

The response...dead silence...then a bit later, "You're right; we need to start thinking differently about what we want to be and how we get it done."

Chambers of commerce are at a fork in the road (or river). We can go one way and keep doing what we've been doing, expecting different results, or we can go down the other way, seldom before ever traveled and re-invent our organizations.

The 4Cs of Life: Courage, Choice, Chance and Change. You've got to have the courage, to make a choice, to take a chance, to make change happen. Good luck!

Dave Kilby is the president and CEO of W.A.C.E., and is executive vice president of corporate affairs at the California Chamber.

2018-2019 W.A.C.E. OFFICERS

Chairman of the Board

Brad Hicks, CCE, IOM

The Chamber of Medford/Jackson County (OR)
(541) 779-4847 • brad@medfordchamber.com

Chairman-Elect

Todd Sanders

Greater Phoenix (AZ) Chamber
(602) 495-2195 • tsanders@phoenixchamber.com

Vice Chairman

Nathan Ahle

Fresno (CA) Chamber
(559) 495-4800 • nahle@fresnochamber.com

Vice Chairman

Jill Lagan, ACE

Boulder City (NV) Chamber
(702) 293-2034 • jill@bouldercitychamber.com

Vice Chairman

Chris Romer

Vail Valley (CO) Partnership
(970) 476-1000 • cromer@visitvailvalley.com

Vice Chairman

Tallia Hart, ACE

San Francisco (CA) Chamber
(415) 392-4520 • thart@sfcchamber.com

Past Chairman

Pat Patrick

Lodi District (CA) Chamber
(209) 367-7840 • ppatrick@lodichamber.com

Published by: Western Association of Chamber Executives, P.O. Box 1736, Sacramento, CA 95812-1736 (916) 442-2223, Fax (916) 444-6685. Website: www.waceonline.com

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and not W.A.C.E.

FOLLOW W.A.C.E. PRESIDENT DAVE KILBY @DaveKilbyWACE



<http://twitter.com/DaveKilbyWACE>

Chairman's Circle

Gold Members

- CalChamber
- Citslinc International, Inc.
- MemberClicks

The Chairman's Circle is a special group of members that have committed to support W.A.C.E. through sponsorships. If your business would like to become a member of the Chairman's Circle, please contact Dave Kilby, W.A.C.E. president and CEO, at (916) 930-1202 or email dave.kilby@calchamber.com.

Questions to Help Improve Your Chamber

For each question below, circle the answer YES or NO that best fits your chamber TODAY.

1. Are you regularly quoted in the local media on issues of importance to business and the community (NOT events)? **YES NO**
2. Does the chamber excel at collecting and analyzing feedback from its members (NOT just an annual membership survey)? **YES NO**
3. Do candidates for local political office often seek chamber guidance and advice on business and community issues? **YES NO**
4. Is the chamber a regular convener (NOT just a participant) of local coalitions of business and community stakeholders? **YES NO**
5. Does the chamber regularly convene meetings of business CEOs and major private-sector employers? **YES NO**
6. Does the chamber have a multi-year vision of the community? **YES NO**
7. Does the chamber CEO spend more of her/his time on issues, rather than events? **YES NO**
8. Does the chamber have an advocacy alert program in place to "make the phones ring" and "turn up the heat" with elected officials? **YES NO**
9. Is there a policy platform in place that allows the chamber to take action & communicate positions quickly? **YES NO**
10. Does the chamber have a Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) program in place? **YES NO**
11. The chamber stays two steps ahead of other groups because it spends a significant amount of time on horizon scanning? **YES NO**
12. The chamber Board looks like a "who's who" in the community (NOT a "who's that" of second stringers)? **YES NO**
13. The chamber Board is dominated by catalytic, change-oriented leaders (NOT protectors of the past)? **YES NO**
14. The chamber CEO and officers are on a first-name basis with elected officials (can pass the "hallway test" — recognizable at 30 yards in a hallway)? **YES NO**
15. Has the chamber recently conducted a public opinion poll (either on its own or with a group) to gather feedback from the community or registered voters on key issues? **YES NO**
16. Does the chamber have a consistent editorial voice and presence opining on key business and community issues? **YES NO**
17. The Chamber CEO is viewed as a community leader and peer by local business owners—NOT just the person who manages the chamber? **YES NO**

Email dave.kilby@calchamber.com with the number of your "yes" answers.

COMMENTARY

If You're Not Willing to Rock the Boat, You Just May Miss the Boat



Dave Kilby

don't, they might "miss the boat."

It seems that so many folks in the chamber world, execs and their boards of directors are afraid to "rock the boat"—possibly fearing that they might "sink the boat"—when in reality, if they

Translation: So many chamber leaders seem to be reluctant to embrace change... fearing that they might do something wrong or fail...when, in reality, if chambers don't change, they may go out of business.

Must Do: Embracing 3Cs

While the status quo and being a chamber of events or a chamber of contacts might be the easy way to go, as I travel around the country talking about the new chamber brand, NOBODY has disagreed that embracing the 3Cs—being a catalyst for business growth, a convener of leaders and influencers to get things done and a champion for a thriving community—is a MUST do for the chamber industry.

However, the reality, according to our latest survey data, is only about a third of the chambers have embraced the 3Cs, a third definitely haven't and a third are somewhere in the middle.

There is no doubt that becoming a 3C chamber isn't easy and may take your organization to a new and maybe even an uncomfortable place—a far different world than that of a 3P chamber that focuses on parties, parades and pageants.

If chambers are going to embrace being in the "solutions business" and excel at being problem solvers, then they

need to make sure that they know the real "pain points" facing their members.

Gather Good Data

In order to select the appropriate causes to be addressed, chambers are going to have to up their game at gathering intel and data from their members and others in the community.

As you may know, at W.A.C.E. we've tried to develop a culture that is research oriented and has good data. Everybody has anecdotes, but only winning organizations invest in customer research and analytics to help them make smart decisions and back up the stories, beliefs and decisions that are made during board meetings.

Does your chamber have the willingness to "do its homework" and be more data driven? And then after you have that information, does your chamber have the courage to "rock the boat" or will you "stay the course" doing business as usual and maybe even "miss the boat"?

Bluntly put, the future success of your organization may depend on how you answered the above questions.

Dave Kilby is the president and CEO of W.A.C.E., and is executive vice president of corporate affairs at the California Chamber.

2018–2019 W.A.C.E. OFFICERS

Chairman of the Board

Brad Hicks, CCE, IOM

The Chamber of Medford/Jackson County (OR)
(541) 779-4847 • brad@medfordchamber.com

Chairman-Elect

Todd Sanders

Greater Phoenix (AZ) Chamber
(602) 495-2195 • tsanders@phoenixchamber.com

Vice Chairman

Nathan Ahle

Fresno (CA) Chamber
(559) 495-4800 • nahle@fresnochamber.com

Vice Chairman

Jill Lagan, ACE

Boulder City (NV) Chamber
(702) 293-2034 • jill@bouldercitychamber.com

Vice Chairman

Chris Romer

Vail Valley (CO) Partnership
(970) 476-1000 • cromer@visitvailvalley.com

Past Chairman

Pat Patrick

Lodi District (CA) Chamber
(209) 367-7840 • ppatrick@lodichamber.com

Published by: Western Association of Chamber

Executives, P.O. Box 1736, Sacramento, CA
95812-1736 (916) 442-2223, Fax (916) 444-6685.

Website: www.waceonline.com

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and not W.A.C.E.

Visit Us On **facebook** facebook.com/WACEPAGE

Chairman's Circle

Gold Members

- CalChamber
- Citslinc International, Inc.
- Google
- MemberClicks

The Chairman's Circle is a special group of members that have committed to support W.A.C.E. through sponsorships. If your business would like to become a member of the Chairman's Circle, please contact Dave Kilby, W.A.C.E. president and CEO, at (916) 930-1202 or email dave.kilby@calchamber.com.

COMMENTARY

How Do We Become a 3C Chamber?



Dave Kilby

As I've traveled around the country speaking to chamber executive associations this past year, the question I have been asked several times is: "This all sounds good, but how exactly do we

make our chamber a 3C Chamber—what steps do we need to take?"

Unfortunately, the pathway to becoming a 3C Chamber that is a catalyst for business growth, a convener of leaders and influencers to get things done, and

a champion for a thriving community is not a simple step-by-step process like following a recipe to make your favorite dessert.

Becoming a 3C Chamber has a lot to do with what you do and what you communicate, which can end up being what you're known for.

Successful chambers understand that they are in the "solutions business," and, as such, don't shy away from playing a leadership role in solving problems.

W.A.C.E. Past Chair Pat Patrick shared the following from the late Bill Dauer, who decades ago served as the CEO of the San Francisco (CA) Chamber, that still resonates today, "Find the biggest problem that needs to be fixed for your members and the community. Fix the problem; then members and money will come to the chamber."

Questions to Ask

So when someone asks "How do we become a 3C Chamber," I usually answer their question by asking them questions:

- What are the biggest problems and needs facing your business members?
- What needs to be done to make your community a better place to live?

Getting the answers to the above questions can be done a number of ways: member surveys, 12 at 12 lunches, quick

insta-polls at events, town hall meetings/ listening posts around the community, and public opinion polling, just to name a few.

Once you have the answers about what needs to be done...you need to take ACTION. The action step probably includes convening leaders and influencers to get things done and forming a task force or coalition to develop a game plan.

How Do You Communicate?

Almost as important as determining what needs to be done and developing an action plan is what and how you communicate.

What does the chamber look like in print, on your website, in your e-newsletter and in your social media posts?

Do you look like a "chamber of events" or do you look like a KAPS (kick ass problem solver)? What's the top story in your e-newsletter—a ribbon cutting or an event or an issue?

Sometimes the only way to change results is to change behavior.

Let's go for it in 2019!

Dave Kilby is the president and CEO of W.A.C.E., and executive vice president of corporate affairs at the California Chamber.

2018–2019 W.A.C.E. OFFICERS

Chairman of the Board

Brad Hicks, CCE, IOM

The Chamber of Medford/Jackson County (OR)
(541) 779-4847 • brad@medfordchamber.com

Chairman-Elect

Todd Sanders

Greater Phoenix (AZ) Chamber
(602) 495-2195 • tsanders@phoenixchamber.com

Vice Chairman

Nathan Ahle

Fresno (CA) Chamber
(559) 495-4800 • nahle@fresnochamber.com

Vice Chairman

Jill Lagan, ACE

Boulder City (NV) Chamber
(702) 293-2034 • jill@bouldercitychamber.com

Vice Chairman

Chris Romer

Vail Valley (CO) Partnership
(970) 476-1000 • cromer@visitvailvalley.com

Past Chairman

Pat Patrick

Lodi District (CA) Chamber
(209) 367-7840 • ppatrick@lodichamber.com

Published by: Western Association of Chamber Executives, P.O. Box 1736, Sacramento, CA 95812-1736 (916) 442-2223, Fax (916) 444-6685.
Website: www.waceonline.com

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and not W.A.C.E.

Visit Us On **facebook** facebook.com/WACEPAGE

Chairman's Circle

Gold Members

- CalChamber
- Citslinc International, Inc.
- Google
- MemberClicks

The Chairman's Circle is a special group of members that have committed to support W.A.C.E. through sponsorships. If your business would like to become a member of the Chairman's Circle, please contact Dave Kilby, W.A.C.E. president and CEO, at (916) 930-1202 or email dave.kilby@calchamber.com.