

Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce

Analyzing the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce Memberships



Prisha Saraf

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Alameda County District 1 Intern

Pleasanton, CA, 94566

INTRODUCTION

The Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce is a membership-based 501(c)(6) nonprofit organization that has served as a pillar of Pleasanton's local economy, a thriving suburban city in Alameda County, since 1997. Its mission is to support and advance small business development through networking, advocacy, and access to local resources. However, many businesses in Pleasanton, especially smaller or independently owned ones, are unaware of the Chamber's membership. When businesses are not connected to support systems, they may miss opportunities that can help them succeed and contribute to their community. Increasing Chamber membership can strengthen business participation, improve communication, and support economic resilience across Pleasanton.

RESEARCH

In order to understand the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce's membership strategies and information, an interview was conducted with Jeanette Schaub, the Membership Director of the Chamber. During the meeting, she revealed that there are over 4,000 businesses in Pleasanton, with over 600 businesses in Pleasanton Downtown alone. However, the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce currently only has around 600 members, a number that is considerably low compared to the wide range of firms in the city. Members of the Chamber of Commerce range from real estate, tax firms, to nonprofits, which make up the large majority with over 121 organizations. Their most common demographic is small and large businesses that are individually owned and are small to medium-sized.

The Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce's website, events, and publications all garner the attention of potential members. Additionally, the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce utilizes social media and the New Business License List, a compilation of 50 to 60 newly established businesses in Pleasanton

provided by the city, although these are not their primary methods (Jeanette Schaub). Unfortunately, many businesses in Pleasanton are closing and moving to more urban areas, resulting in a loss of memberships. Jeanette Schaub also mentioned that the Chamber “does not have enough time to engage with the community.” On the other hand, though, most of their members join due to the Chamber’s membership benefits, leading to a growth in membership rates.

Membership benefits include referrals, events, publications, and name association. The official website of the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce receives over 16,000 views per month, including 2,900 views on average for the Business Directory and 1,900 views for the Events Calendar (Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce). This data indicates that the Chamber drives a significant amount of traffic to their website, demonstrating their outreach prowess. Members of the chamber would see an increase in recognition through this feature, proving that visibility is their greatest benefit. Additionally, the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce hosts mixers, committee meetings, and workshops. A few events offered are trade show mixers, golf outings, luncheons, community service awards, economic development events, and monthly networking mixers (Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce). These events allow members to network and establish connections with other fellow members, fostering relationships and potential partnerships. Another benefit of these events is that it allows members to learn about current trends, identify power partners in the community, and interact with important stakeholders in the business world. Regarding publications, the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce publishes three different resources: the Business Connection, a bi-monthly newspaper part of the Pleasanton Weekly on the first Friday every other month, the E-Business Connection, the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce’s personal electronic newspaper that is sent to all members and published on the website on the first Tuesday of every other month, and Monday Update which is a weekly email containing news, updates, and opportunities sent to all members (Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce). Each publication serves a different purpose as the Business Connection reaches the residents of Pleasanton and spotlights successful Chamber members.

The E-Business Connection targets its members and online viewers on the website by raising awareness about its members' businesses, while the Monday Updates are solely for members, informing them about upcoming events and news. Lastly, being connected to the Chamber of Commerce drives customers to Chamber members. According to a study from the American Chamber of Commerce Executives, Chamber members witness that 63% of consumers are more likely to purchase goods or services, 59% of consumers see being a Chamber member as an effective business strategy, and 44% of consumers think more favorably of the business, all due to their membership (Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce). By just associating with a local Chamber of Commerce, a customer's perception of a business changes, leading to a higher volume of customers and an increase in profit.

CONCLUSION

After reviewing all the data compiled from the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce, visibility proves to be the largest advantage of a Chamber of Commerce membership. Through their official website, online publications that function as advertising, community events, and name association, Chamber members are able to thrive and raise even more awareness about their business. The areas for growth are social media since the majority of the population is active on those platforms, exposing the Chamber of Commerce to a broader audience. Additionally, the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce can increase the amount of memberships by collaborating with the City of Pleasanton to have new businesses referred to the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce. This arrangement is beneficial for both parties because the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce will gain more traffic through this, and the new businesses will discover the Chamber's resources and support. By increasing outreach and strengthening local business connections, the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce can continue to support economic growth throughout Pleasanton.

REFERENCES

Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce. (n.d.). Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce - Advancing the economic vitality of the Pleasanton Community. Pleasanton, California; Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce.

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