
ST. CLOUD AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

MEMBERSHIP VALUE SURVEY 2022

REPORT PREPARED BY
ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY SURVEY CENTER
FACULTY DIRECTORS:

DR. AMANDA HEMMESCH, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
DR. ANN FINAN, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
DR. SANDRINE ZERBIB, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
DR. JAMES COTTRILL, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- An online survey was distributed to St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce members to assess their perceptions about the value of Chamber membership in February-March 2022.
 - This report includes information from 426 completed surveys, mostly representing long-time organizations in the St. Cloud area who intend to renew their Chamber membership.
 - The results are based on an 88% cooperation rate and a margin of error of plus or minus 4.7%.
 - The largest participant groups were professionals (23%), CEOs/presidents (18%), and vice presidents/department heads (15%). Approximately 56% of participants were women and 96% were white.
- When comparing results longitudinally, we find:
 - More members than in previous years report that their ideas are used and that they are encouraged to talk to staff.
 - Consistent with previous years, about 80% of members are satisfied while the rest of the members are neutral and a very small majority are dissatisfied. The same pattern is true for members feeling that their membership is good for business, networking, and worth the investment.
- It is worth noting that data for this study was collected in early 2022, nearing the two-year mark of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated social and organizational disruptions. These disruptions have no doubt had an impact on many of the Chamber's programs and member experiences, as has occurred for other community organizations. However, despite pandemic-related disruptions and uncertainty, results from this year's member value survey were comparable to previous surveys.

SATISFACTION

- Overall satisfaction was very strong and members continue to value their membership for their organization/business. Nearly eight out of ten members agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the Chamber and that membership is good for their business/organization.

ADVOCACY

- All advocacy programs are also highly valued 1) Chamber's Convention and Visitors Bureau (91%), 2) Legislative Updates (85%), 3) Candidate Forums (82%), 4) Government Affairs Meeting (79%), 5) Evening at the Capital (73%).

- The Chamber is doing well in advocating for business in Central Minnesota (80%), promoting a pro-business legislative agenda (70%), building the regional economy (70%), promoting equity of opportunity in business practices and supporting an inclusive business community (60%).

PROMOTION/RECOGNITION/NETWORKING

- The Chamber is doing well with the following promotion/recognition/networking programs: Business Referrals to Members (95%), Business After Hours (90%), Sauk Rapid Chamber (90%), Waite Park Chamber (89%), Chamber Connection (89%), Business Award Luncheon (84%), NEXT-Chamber's Emerging Leaders (83%), St. Cloud Business Showcase (82%), Central MN Forum Show (75%), Star Celebration (68%), Chamber Open (61%).
- The chamber is doing well with networking, advertising, and visibility (89%).

EDUCATION

- Members see educational programs as important: Business Training Seminars (90%), St. Cloud Area Leadership (89%), NEXT-Chamber's Emerging Leaders (88%), Unite for Success (81%), Executive Dialogue Groups (81%).
- The Chamber is doing well with Quality Training at Affordable Price (83%) and Employee Retention (67%).

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICATIONS

- Members selected as important communication outlets: Business Central Magazine (83%), Membership Directory (82%), Chamber Edge (78%), and Bottom Line (53%).
- The Chamber is doing well achieving communication goals with Activity Information (95%), Business News (91%), Connect Members (90%), Encouraging members to do business with each other (87%).

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

- This year's study incorporated a new section assessing the Chamber's work in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Results indicate that most members (about two thirds) support these efforts. Approximately 50% of participants strongly support attracting minority-owned businesses and employees of color. Approximately 40% strongly support the Chamber coordinating with other local DEI efforts and providing DEI educational programming.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH OVERALL SATISFACTION

- Factors that were more strongly associated with the overall satisfaction scale created for this study included: members feeling encouraged to talk to Chamber staff; participation in Chamber Connection; and perceptions that the Chamber was advocating well for Central Minnesota businesses; providing quality and affordable training; providing opportunities for networking, advertising, and visibility; and encouraging members to do business with each other,

INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT AND METHODS

The St. Cloud State University Survey Center is a multi-disciplinary research institute affiliated with the School of Public Affairs Research Institute, comprising faculty from the College of Liberal Arts and the School of Public Affairs. The Survey Center's mission is to serve the academic community and public and nonprofit sector community through its commitment to high quality survey research and to provide education and experiential learning opportunities to researchers and students. The SCSU Survey Center maintains the highest ethical standards in its procedures and methods, and follows the guidelines outlined by AAPOR, the American Association for Public Opinion Research.

SCSU SURVEY FACULTY TEAM

The Survey's faculty directors are Dr. Amanda Hemmesch (Professor of Psychology), Dr. Ann Finan (Professor of Sociology), Dr. Sandrine Zerbib (Professor of Sociology), and Dr. James Cottrill (Associate Professor of Political Science). The faculty directors subscribe to the Midwest Association of Public Opinion Research (MAPOR) and the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) code of ethics.

METHODOLOGY

The 2022 Membership Survey findings are based on online surveys, with a final sample of 426. Surveys were conducted through Qualtrics, a cloud-based survey software package that facilitates survey design, distribution, data collection, and secure data storage. Online surveys were collected from Thursday, February 16th, 2022, to Tuesday, March 8th, 2022. The first call for participation was sent via email to all members who had provided an email when they joined the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce organization on the afternoon of Thursday, February 16th. A reminder email was sent on February 24th, on March 1st, and on March 8th to increase the cooperation rate. The final reminder called for participation by Tuesday, March 8th (end of data collection).

To increase participation, all participants were eligible to participate in a prize drawing (see Appendix II). Prizes were donated by area businesses and did not exceed a value of 50 dollars. At the end of the main survey, respondents were given the option to follow a link to a second survey instrument that only asked them to enter their name and email if they wished to be included in the random prize drawing. From those submitted emails, we randomly selected participants, and provided that list of prize winners to the Chamber. Winners were then notified by the Chamber's Vice President, Gail Ivers, who then worked with Chamber personnel to oversee

awarding the prizes. No information was provided to the Chamber that could link email addresses of winners with data provided in the main survey. The SCSU Survey Faculty Directors submitted an Institutional Review Board protocol that was approved on Monday February 14th, 2022.

The sample was obtained from Gail Ivers, St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce's vice-president, and included all current members of the organization. The Chamber provided a list of 2,559 email addresses of members, provided to the Chamber for organizational contact. The information provided to the Survey Center did not include any information beyond the email address. A total of 2,559 potential participants were contacted via email.

The total survey data set consists of 25 substantive variables and 6 demographic variables, plus an implied consent survey question at the beginning of the survey (see Appendix I). This report includes methodology, findings, and the questionnaire for the entire survey.

PROTECTING RESPONDENTS' DATA SECURITY AND PRIVACY

No information was collected in the survey questions that would indicate a particular individual's identity. The SCSU-owned software system used for data collection, Qualtrics, collects IP addresses of the device on which the survey is taken, as well as rough geographic location information. This information, like an email address, could be used to identify an individual respondent. Therefore, the survey faculty team removed IP addresses and all location data, as well as removing the original contact email address, from the dataset before analysis, leaving only an anonymous dataset. All information is stored on password-protected computers and password protected institutional cloud storage systems.

DATA CLEANING AND PREPARATION

Data was collated by the Qualtrics software, and then exported as an SPSS file for the analysis.

In most cases, multiple responses from the same IP address were removed to avoid a respondent submitting more than one completed survey. In instances of identical submissions from the same IP address, the most complete or first submission from an IP address was retained; any other submissions were removed from the dataset. In most cases, duplication was a result of respondents not completing the survey at their first attempt, and then coming back to complete it later.

Because it is possible for multiple respondents to use the same device, and therefore have the same IP address associated with their submissions, only identical duplicate responses were deleted. When different submissions were collected from the same IP address, all unique submissions were retained.

The dataset was cleaned by removing any data from the testing phase of the project, responses from participants who did not explicitly agree to take the survey (Question 1 – see Appendix I; n = 4), duplicate submissions from the same IP address (n = 1), and participants who only answered the consent item and none of the substantive items from the survey (n = 46).

The data cleaning and processing resulted in the following:

A total sample of 477 surveys were collected via Qualtrics. Of those 477 cases, 51 cases were deleted based on the cleaning process above. The final sample of completed survey used in this analysis consists of **426** current members.

Data was analyzed using frequency distributions to determine how participants responded to each substantive survey item. Chi-square statistics were conducted to determine if business/organization or participant characteristics (e.g., firm longevity, participant gender) were associated with responses; no comparisons reached the threshold for statistical significance, so they were not included in this report.

Finally, the following information is important to assess the generalizability of the results provided here in this report.

COOPERATION RATE

The Qualtrics distribution report for this study indicates an 88% cooperation rate.

MARGIN OF ERROR

The margin of error reflects the sample size, i.e. the total number of completed surveys. The margin of sampling error¹ for the complete set of weighted data is $\pm [4.7]$ percent at the 95 percent confidence level.

¹ Sampling of error is based on sampling error calculated multiplied by margin of error due to weighting. Calculation based on $1.96 \times \sqrt{P_u(1 - P_u)/n}$ or $1.96 \sqrt{.5 (1 - .5)/426} \times 100$ (using .25 as P_u conservatively) was .05. Margin of error = $\pm 4.7\%$

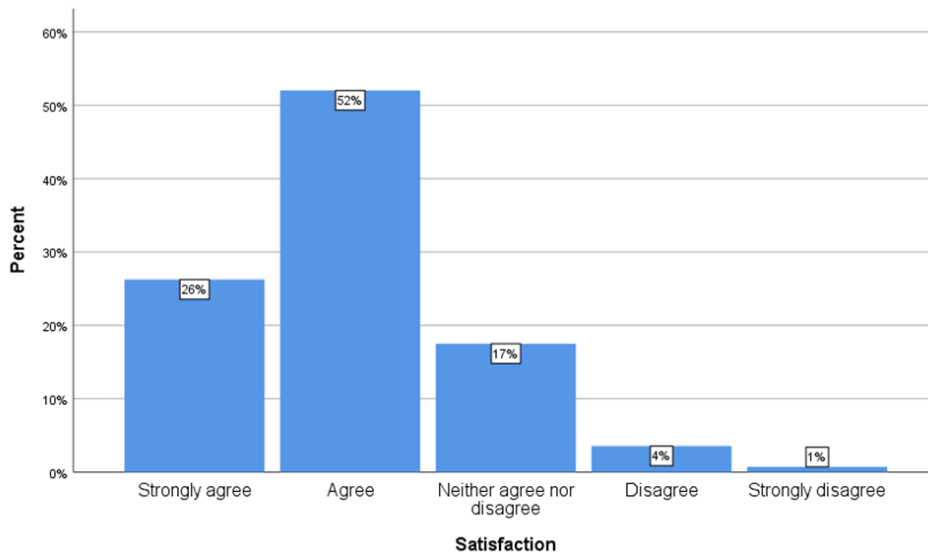
RESULTS

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE CHAMBER

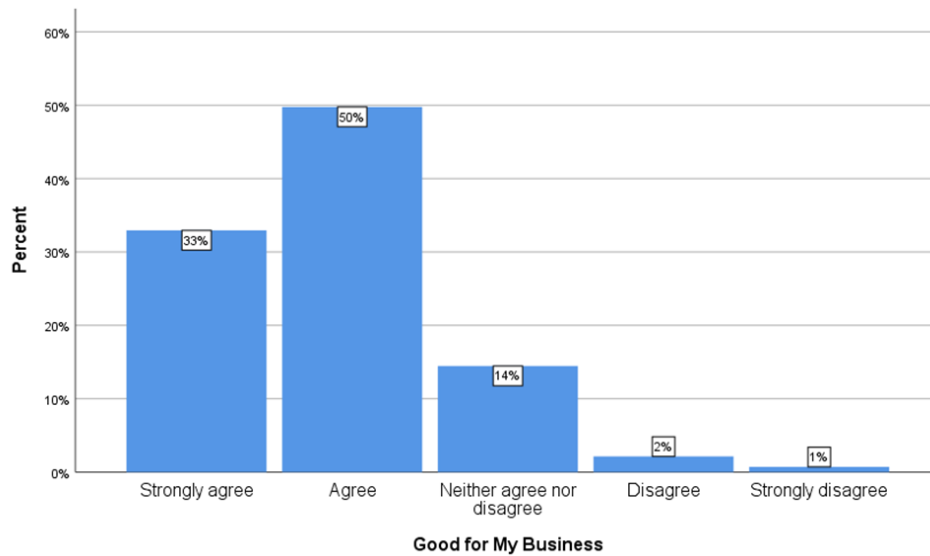
Five questions were used to measure members' overall satisfaction with the Chamber and perceptions of value. For each item, participants could choose if they strongly agreed, agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the statements. The 2022 items measuring overall satisfaction were identical to these items from the 2016 survey so that direct comparisons could be made regarding satisfaction over time.

Overall, as in previous years, a large majority of respondents indicated satisfaction across the several items measured.

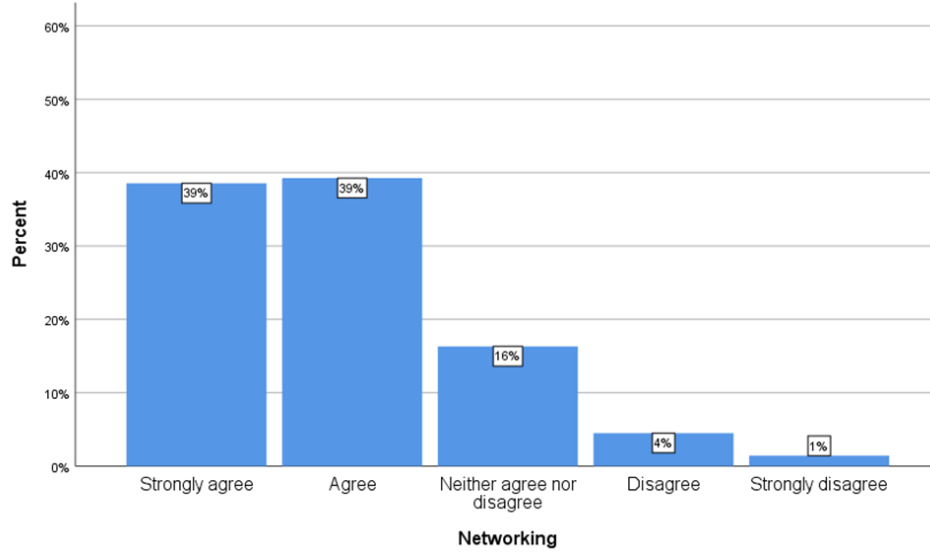
- As in 2016, approximately 8 out of 10 members who completed surveys agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with current Chamber programs and services.



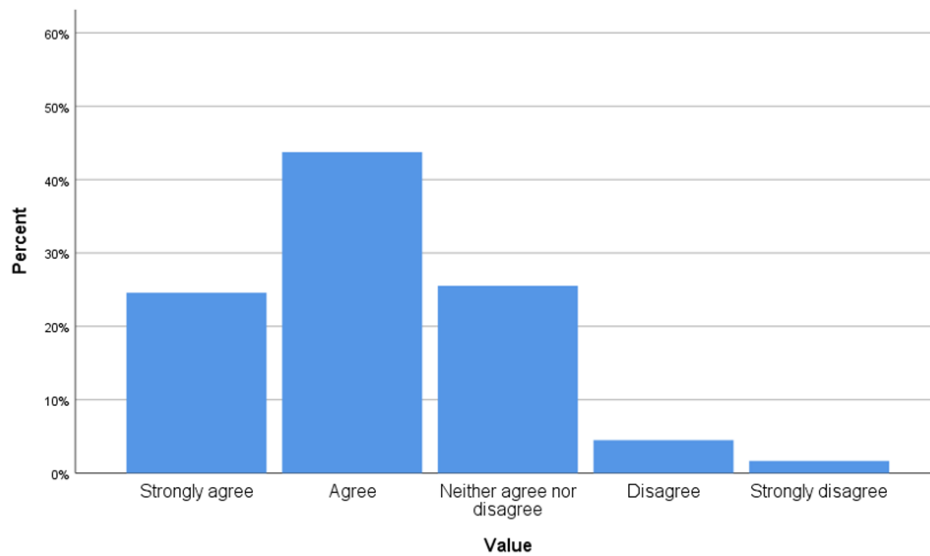
- About the same percentage of members agreed that membership is good for their business or organization.



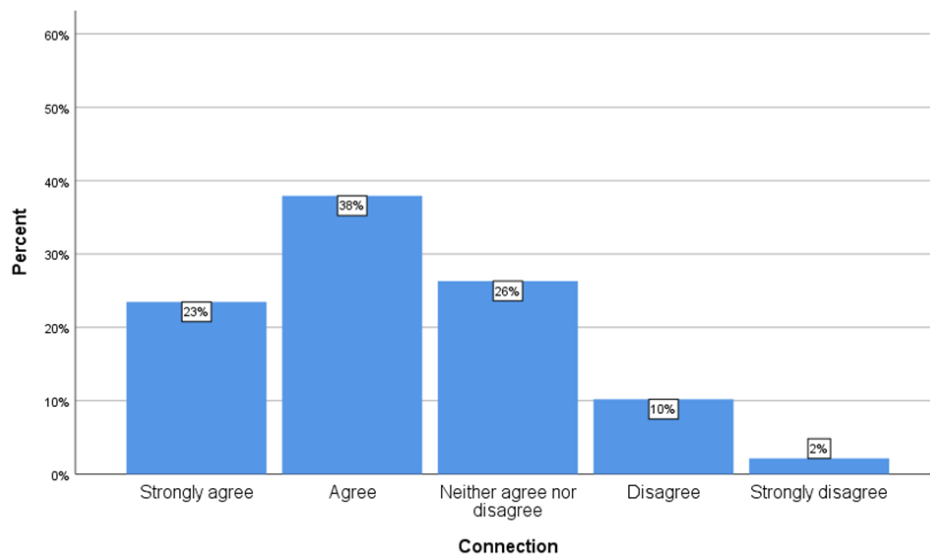
- Similarly, nearly eight in ten agree that they make worthwhile professional contacts through the Chamber.



- Nearly seven in ten agreed that they get their money’s worth from Chamber membership.



- More than six in ten agreed that they felt connected to the Chamber.

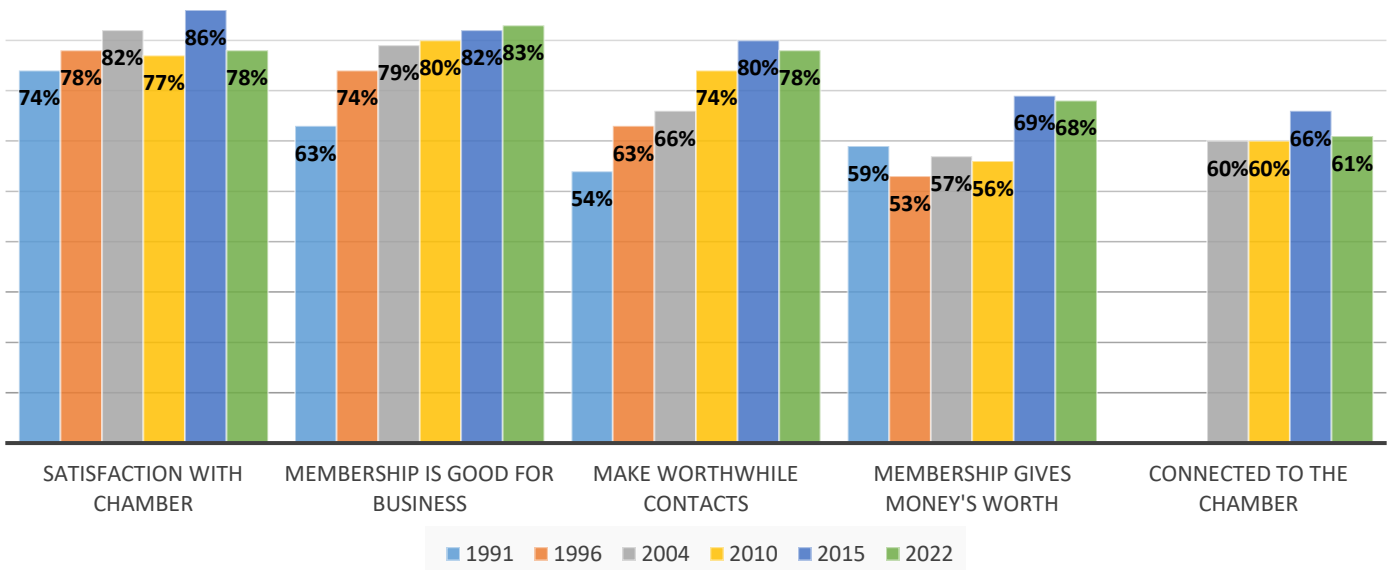


Overall, the satisfaction findings closely resemble findings from the 2016 Member Value Survey, which suggests that membership continues to be relatively satisfied with Chamber programs and services. In particular, the “Value” measure (“membership gives me my money’s worth”) has remained very strong, nearly equaling its all-time high of 69% from the last survey. Given the economic disruption the past two years due to the pandemic, this is a noteworthy result.

Crosstabulations reveal that members who are most satisfied with membership in the Chamber most frequently indicated satisfaction with Chamber efforts at “Advocating for Central MN Businesses” (90%), “Business Referrals to Members” (86%), “Promoting Central MN” (80%). Analysis of Age and Longevity (number of years of Chamber membership) do not show any significant differences in either Satisfaction or Value among members in each age and membership cohort, unlike in the 2016 report when those who had members for five years or less were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree that membership in the Chamber gave them their money’s worth. Similarly, we did not find any statistically significant differences in member perceptions of the Chamber “being good for my business” based on position or title; from the owners and CEOs to VPs, sales, and professional titles, respondents had positive perceptions of the benefits of Chamber membership.

	1991 Survey	1996 Survey	2004 survey	2010 survey	2015 survey	2022 Survey
Satisfaction with Chamber	74%	78%	82%	77%	86%	78%
Membership is good for business	63%	74%	79%	80%	82%	83%
Make worthwhile contacts	54%	63%	66%	74%	80%	78%
Membership gives money's worth	59%	53%	57%	56%	69%	68%
Connected to the Chamber			60%	60%	66%	61%

Satisfaction over time, 1991 - 2022

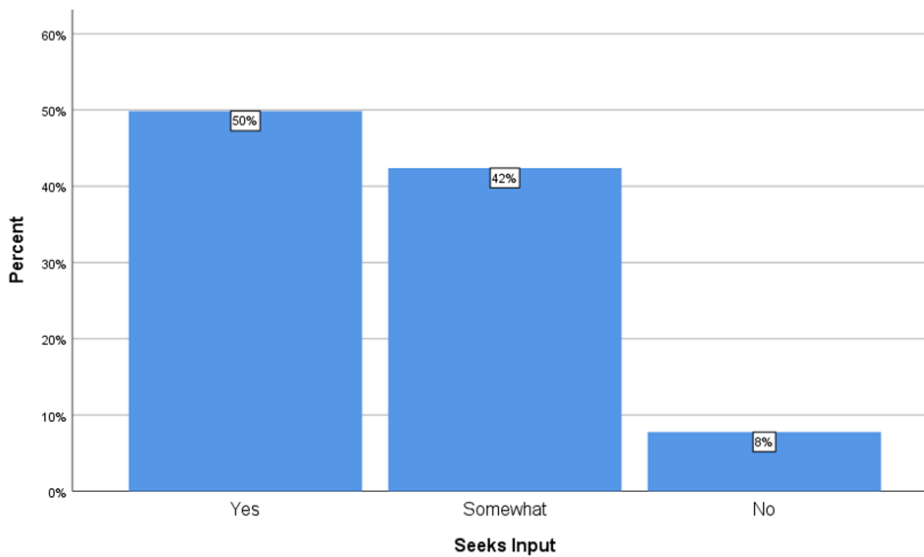


Percent based on collapsing "strongly agree" and "somewhat agree" responses.

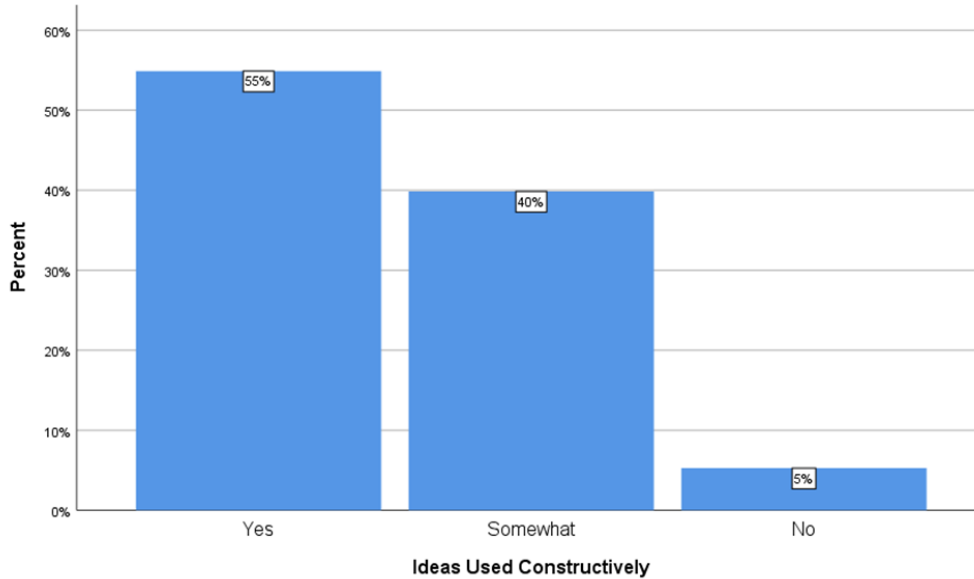
CHAMBER ORGANIZATION AND WORKING WITH MEMBERS

Three questions measured members' perceptions of Chamber organization and how well it works with members. Participants could respond to the items by selecting yes, somewhat, or no. As the charts and tables below show, member perceptions of the Chamber's organization and responsiveness to members is strong and has improved – especially in the area of “member ideas used” since the last report in 2016.

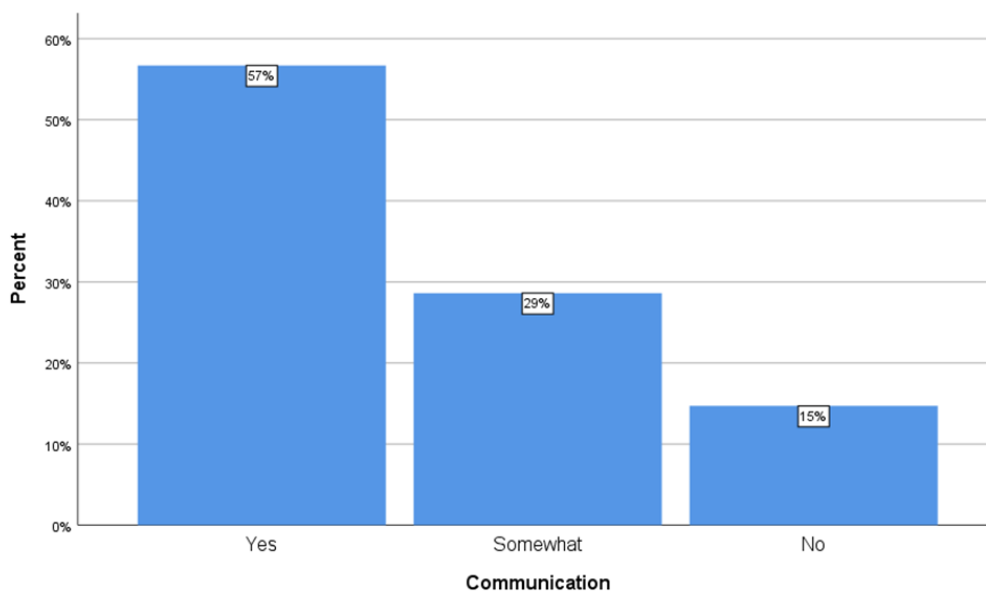
- The first item asked if the Chamber actively seeks members' opinions and ideas. Approximately half of members agreed that the Chamber does this and about 40% of members agreed that the Chamber ‘somewhat’ does this. This is comparable to findings from the 2016 membership survey.



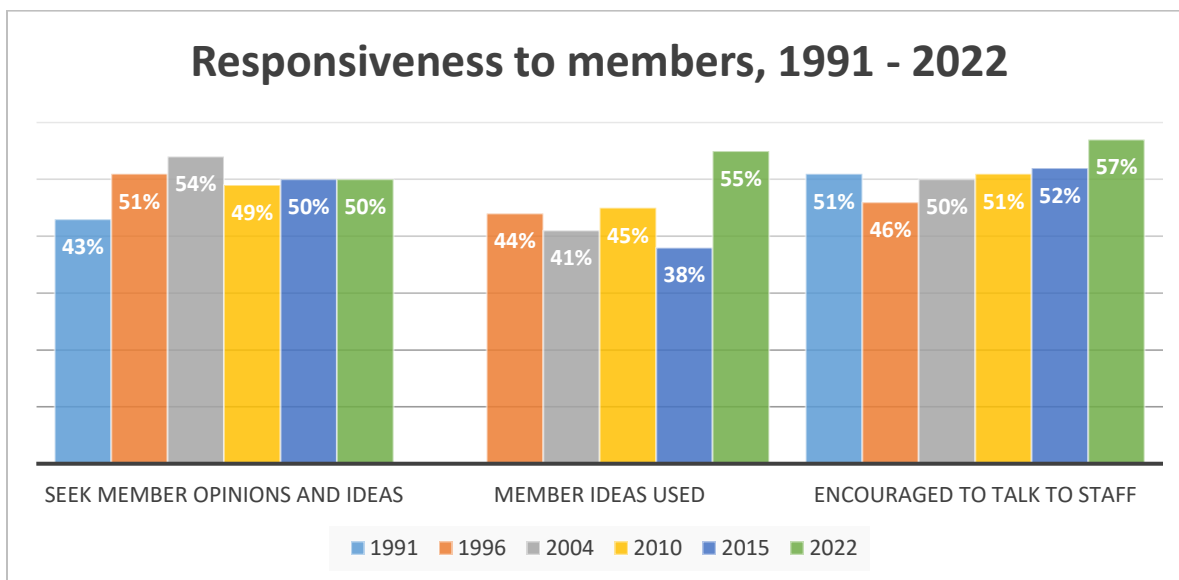
- The next item asked if ideas were used constructively. Nearly all members (95%) agreed that the Chamber does that at least somewhat well (55% agreed and 40% somewhat agreed). Data from this survey indicates a noteworthy increase in members' perceptions that their ideas were used constructively; in 2016, only 38% of participants agreed that their ideas were used constructively.



- The last item in this section asked if members felt encouraged to talk with Chamber staff about their concerns. 57% of members agreed and 29% somewhat agreed. This is comparable to the 2016 membership survey.



	1991 Survey	1996 Survey	2004 survey	2010 survey	2015 survey	2022 survey
Seek member opinions and ideas	43%	51%	54%	49%	50%	50%
Member ideas used		44%	41%	45%	38%	55%
Encouraged to talk to staff	51%	46%	50%	51%	52%	57%



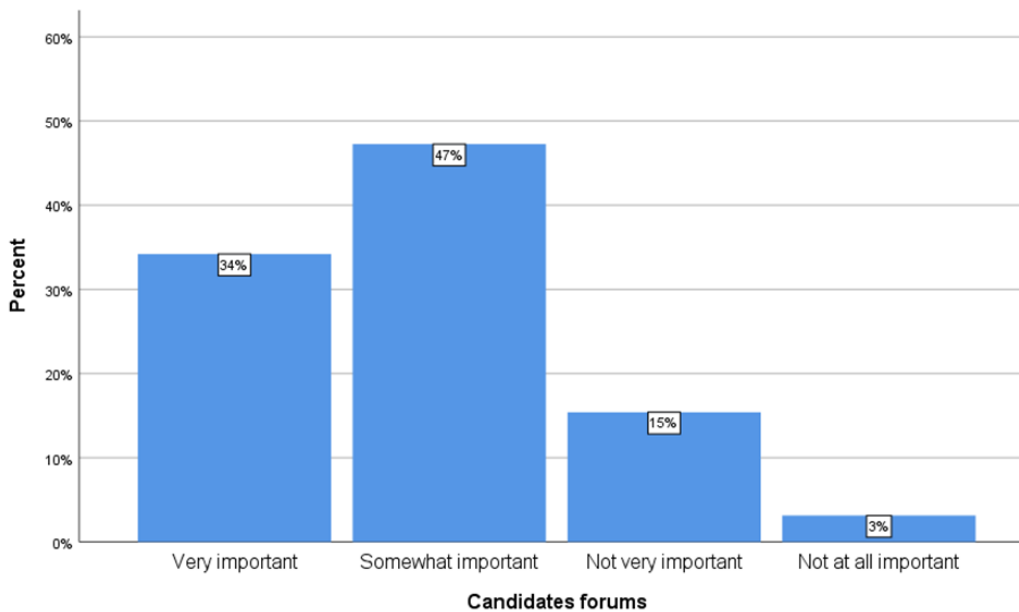
Percents reported indicate those answering “yes” to the items in this section. Other possible responses include “no”, “somewhat”, “don’t know”, and “prefer not to answer”.

ADVOCACY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

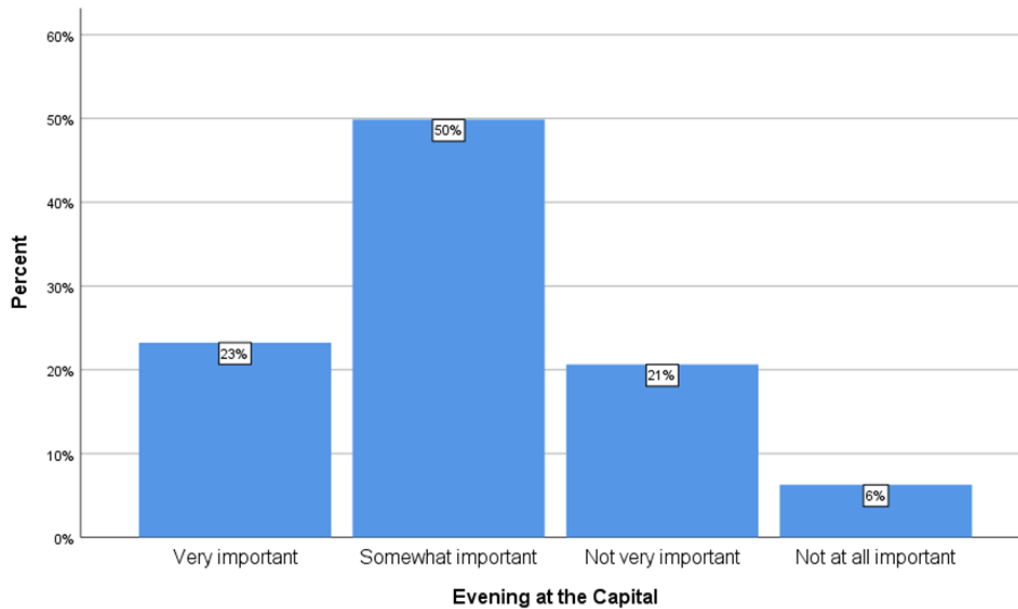
Like the previous survey, this year's membership survey included items asking about the perceived importance of different advocacy work that the Chamber does on behalf of members, as well as items about how well the Chamber is achieving their advocacy goals. For the items asking about how important each program or service is, participants could respond very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important.

Overall, members were most likely to reply that the Convention and Visitors Bureau was important to them, followed closely by the Legislative Updates and the Candidate Forums, suggesting that outreach and policy are important to Chamber members this year. Very few members (5% or less for each program/service) stated that the Chamber's advocacy work was not at all important to them. These findings are similar to results from the 2016 and 2010 surveys, which also found that members at those times found that the Convention and Visitors Bureau and Legislative Updates were important to them.

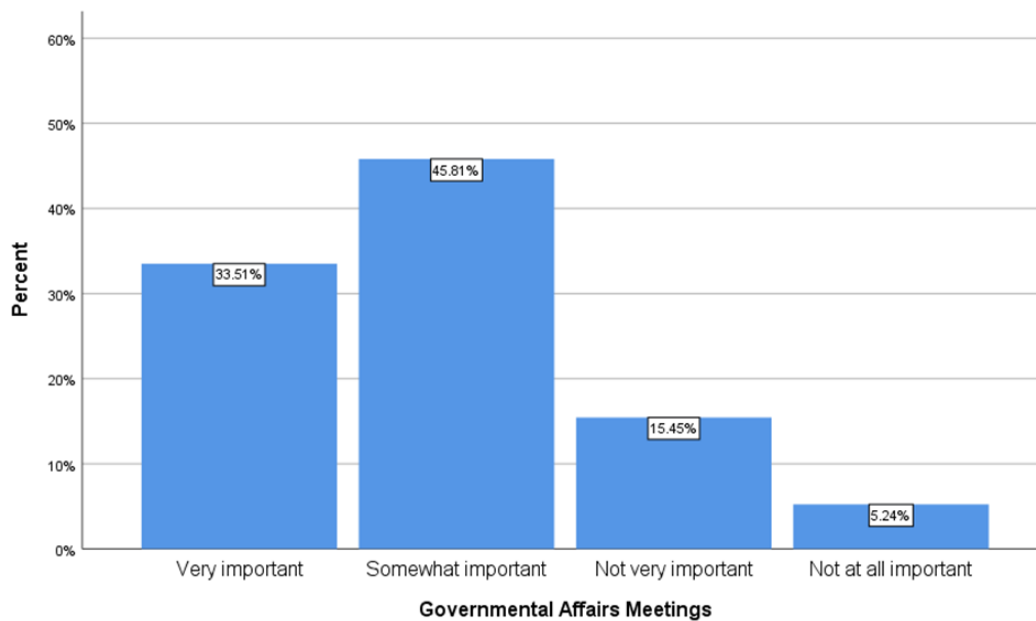
- 82% of members who completed the 2022 survey replied that Candidate Forums were very (34%) or somewhat (47%) important.



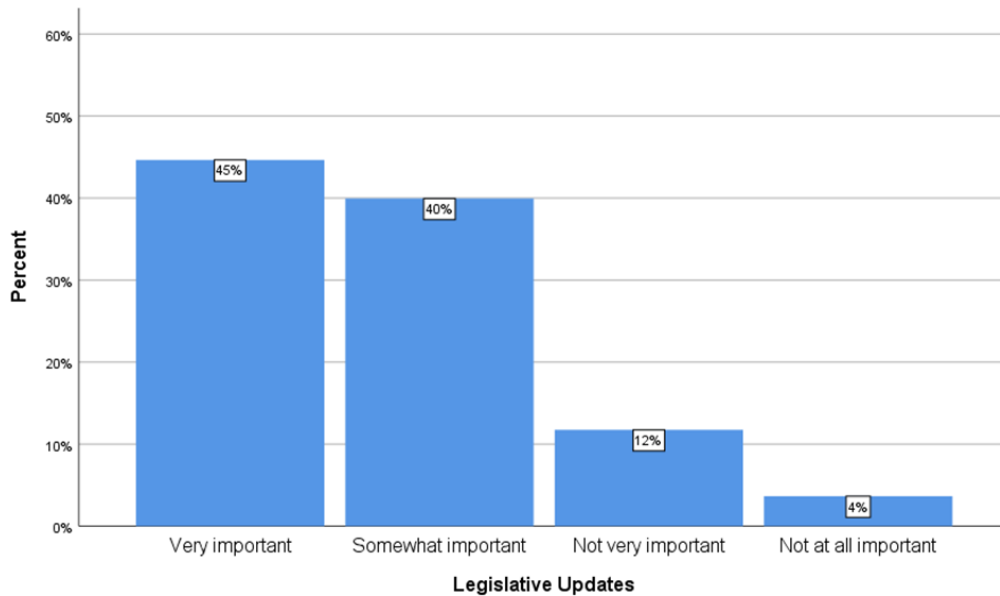
- 73% of members replied that the Evening at the Capital was very (23%) or somewhat (50%) important.



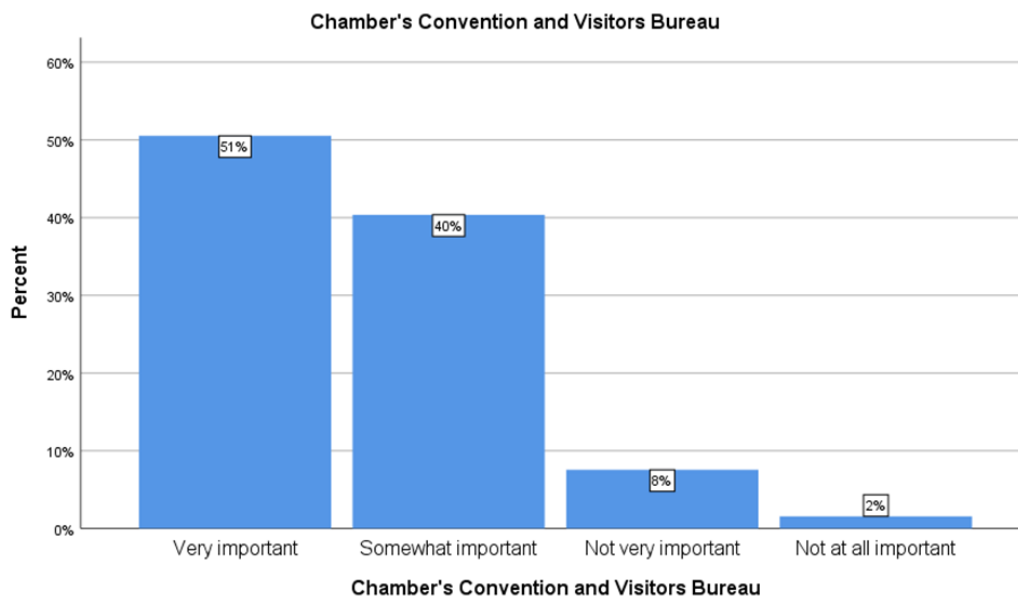
- 79% of members replied that the Governmental Affairs Meetings were very (33%) or somewhat (46%) important.



- 85% of members replied that the Legislative Updates were very (45%) or somewhat (40%) important.



- 91% of members replied that the Chamber's Convention and Visitors Bureau was very (51%) or somewhat (40%) important.

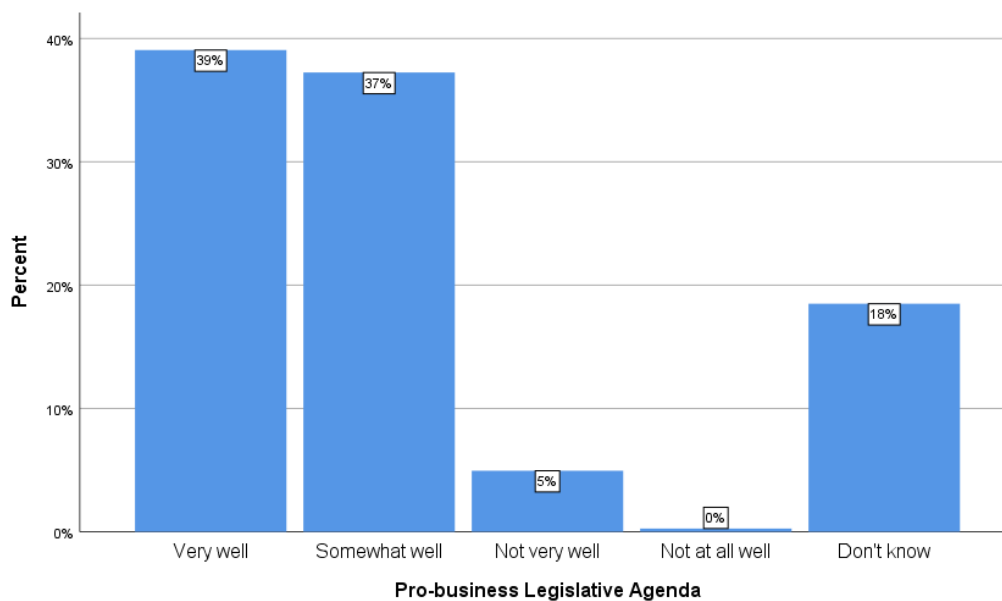


ADVOCACY GOALS

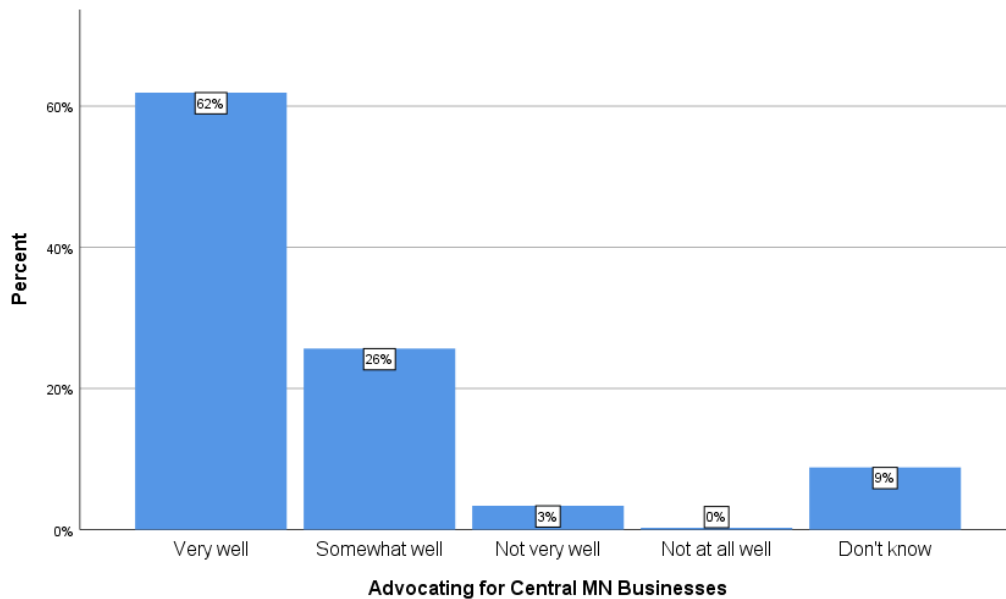
Members were asked six questions about how well the Chamber was achieving their advocacy goals. Participants could select very well, somewhat well, not very well, or not at all well in response to these questions. The results from the 2022 member value survey were similar to the results from the 2016 survey.

A relatively high percent of respondents indicated “don’t know” in response to questions about how well the Chamber is meeting its stated advocacy goals, ranging from 9% to 19% of total participants. This may indicate that the general membership is not familiar with the details of the organization’s efforts in these areas, but it may also be influenced by the fact that this is a difficult question for participants to answer in a survey format. If a more nuanced understanding of these issues is desired, it may be useful to follow up with a focused study using interview or focus group methods.

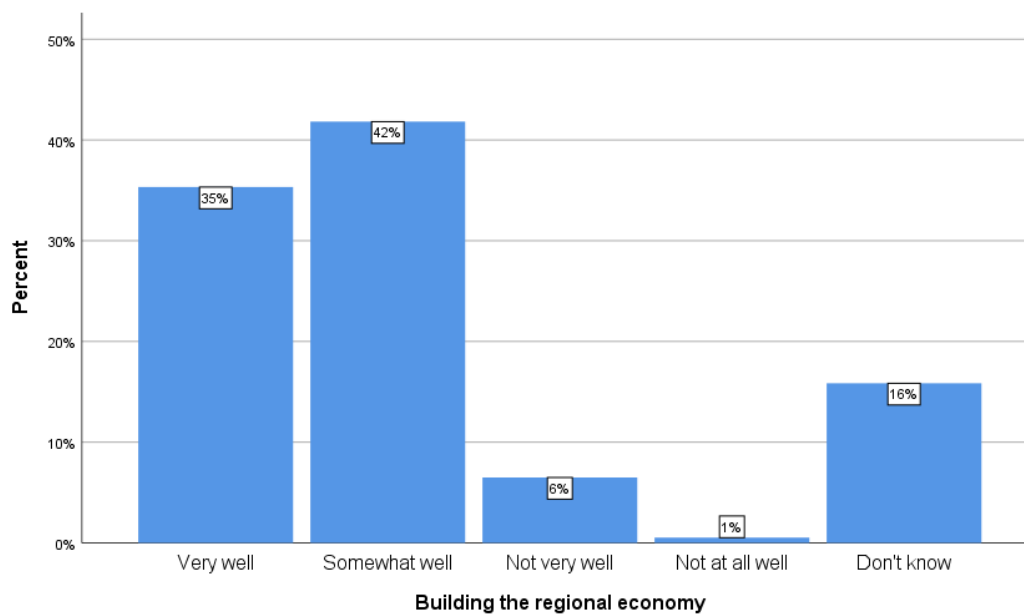
- Most participants (nearly 70%) reported that they felt the Chamber was doing somewhat or very well promoting a pro-business legislative agenda. This is similar to findings from the 2016 survey.



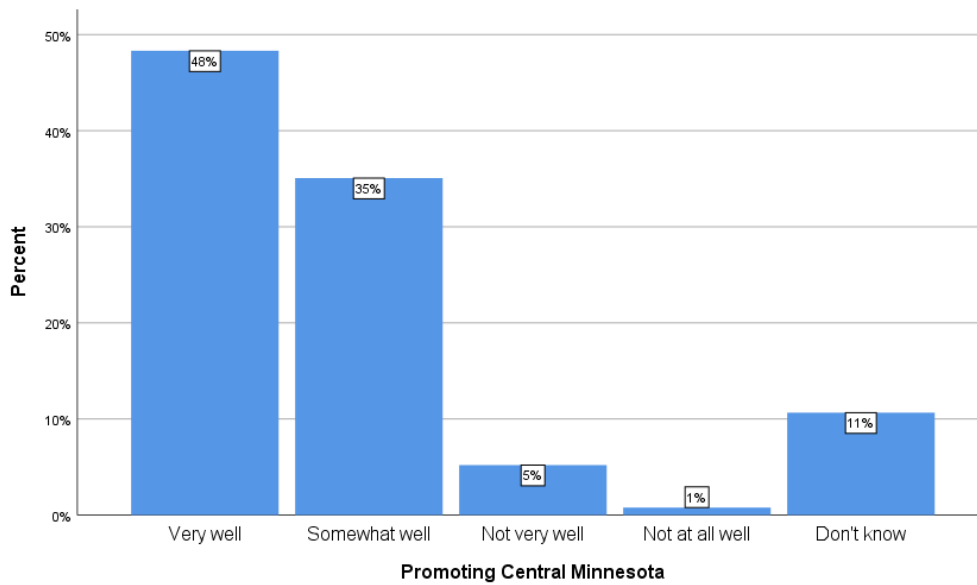
- Participants also felt that the Chamber was doing well advocating for businesses in Central Minnesota. Over 80% of participants felt the Chamber was doing this somewhat or very well.



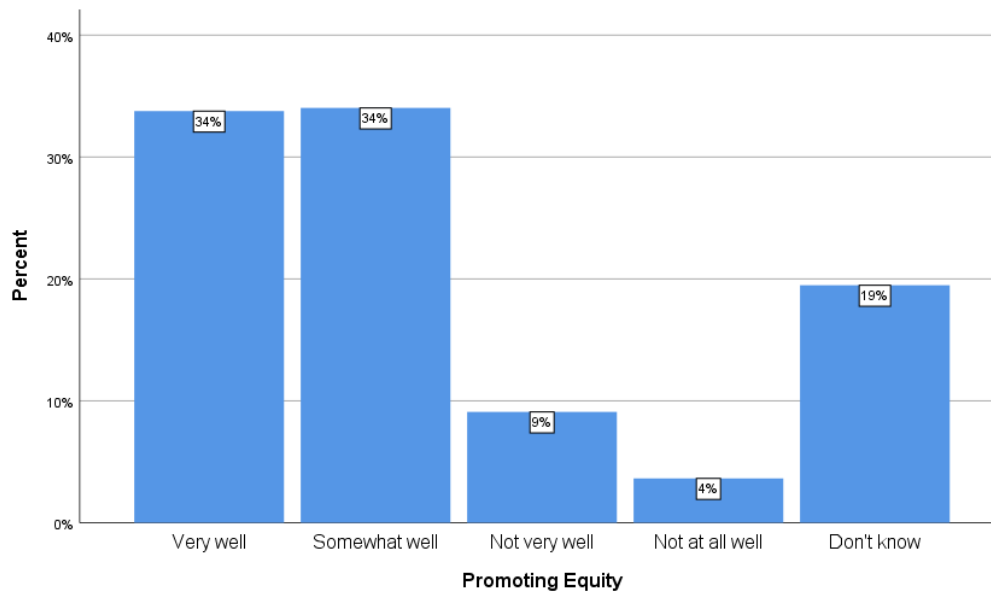
- Over 70% of participants also agreed that the Chamber was doing well building the regional economy.

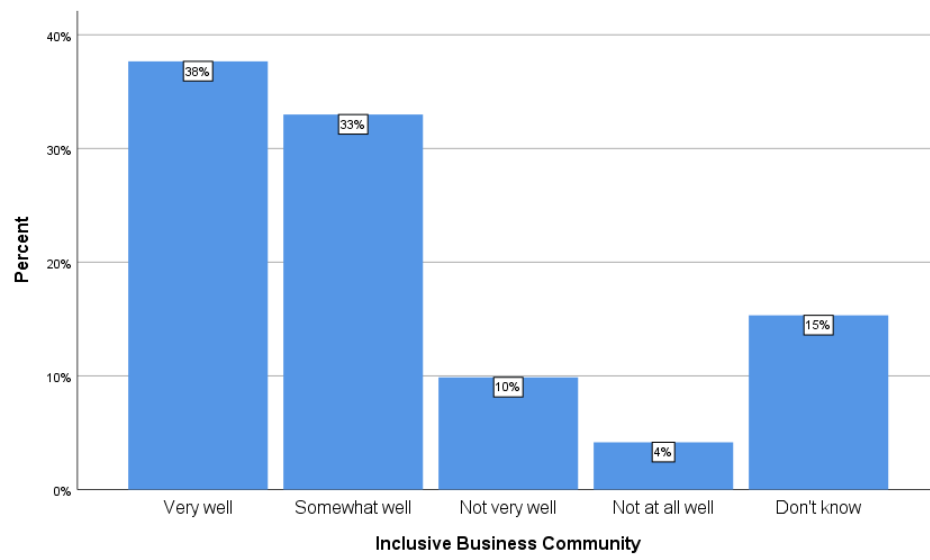


- Even more participants (over 80%) thought that the Chamber was doing well promoting Central Minnesota as a good place to hold a convention or event through the activities of the Chamber's Convention and Visitors Bureau.



- Over 60% of participants reported that the Chamber was doing somewhat or very well promoting equity of opportunity in business practices and supporting an inclusive business community (see the next two graphs below).

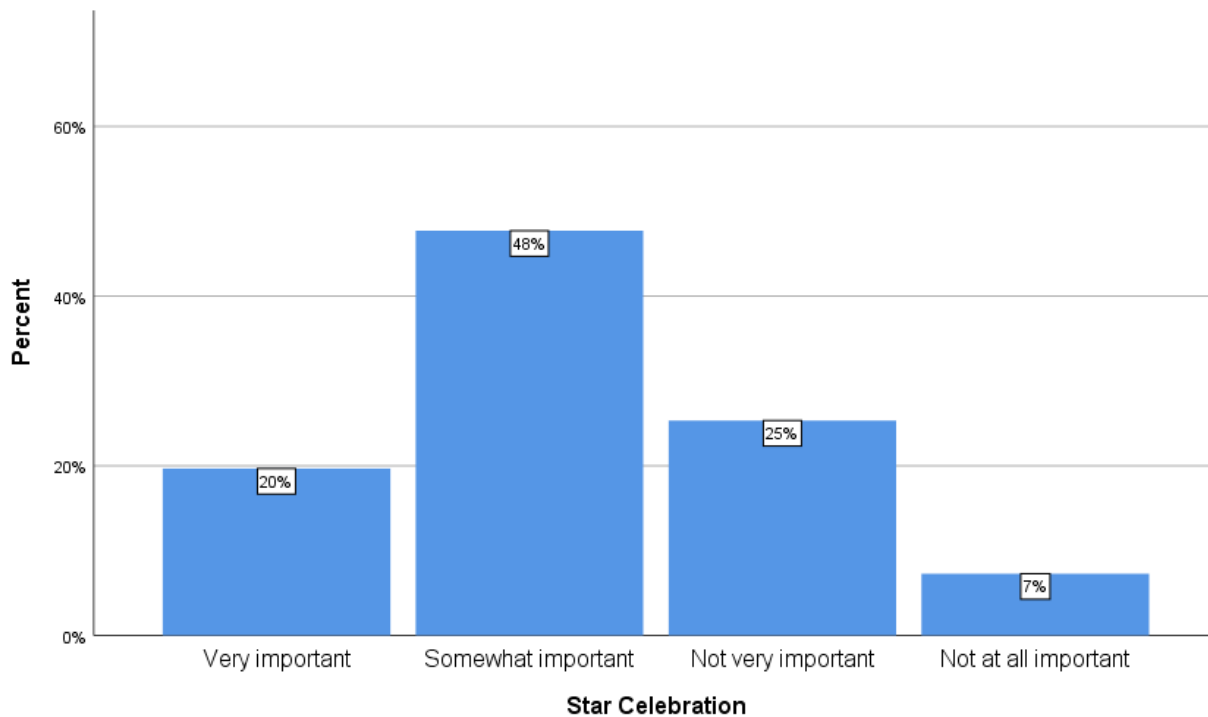




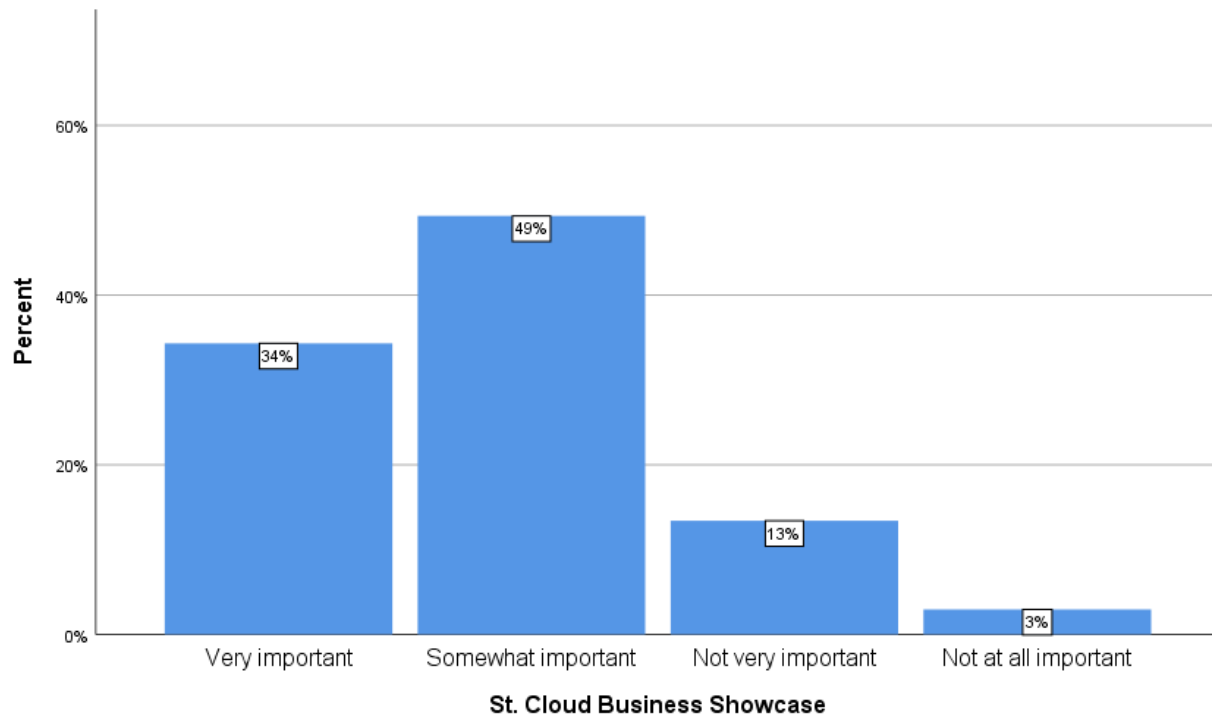
PROMOTION, RECOGNITION, AND NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

The next section of the membership value survey asked questions about the Chamber's promotion, recognition, and networking activities. Participants were asked about how important different programming was to them, as well as about how well the Chamber is achieving its goals related to promotion, recognition, and networking. Findings show that members especially value the Chamber's ability to provide business referrals to members, the Sauk Rapids Chamber, the Chamber Connection, and the Business After Hours monthly socials. Findings from this section of the survey are comparable to the previous member value survey results.

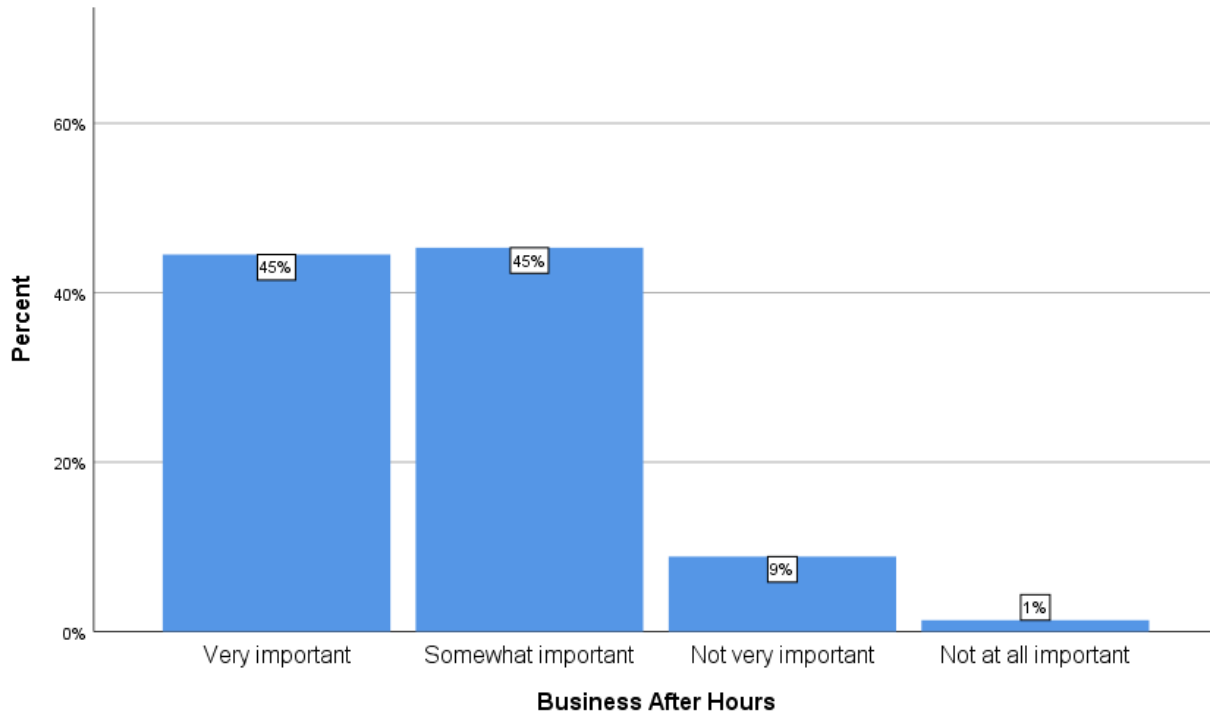
- 68% of the respondents see the Star Celebration event important with a fifth seeing this event as very important.



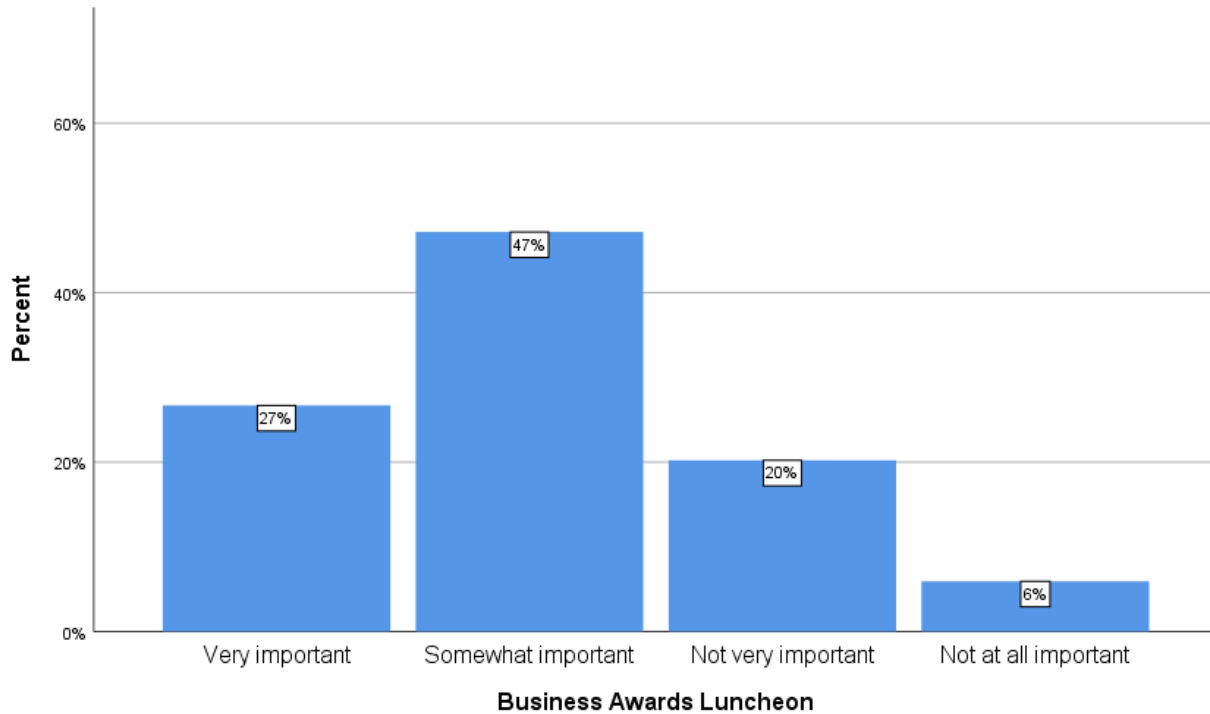
- 82% of the respondents view the St. Cloud Business Showcase event as important with a third viewing the showcase event as very important.



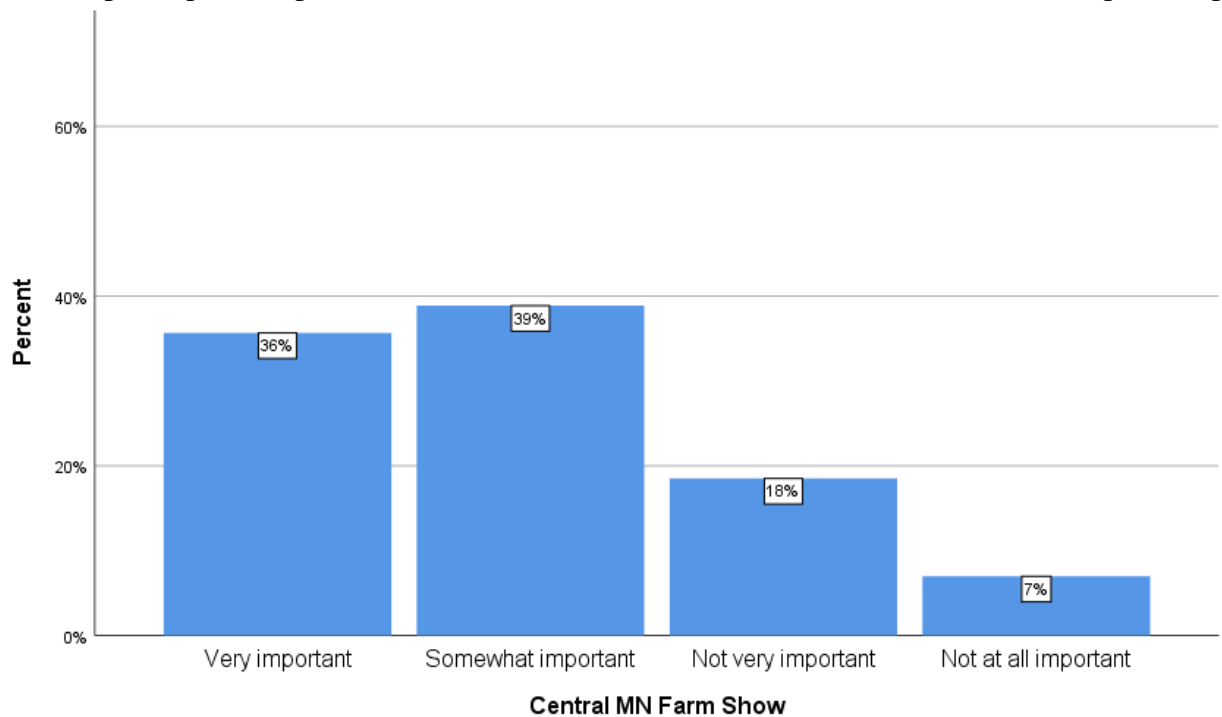
- Only 10% of the respondents do not see the Business After Hours program important. 90% of the respondents who value it as important are equally split between choosing “very important” and “somewhat important” answers.



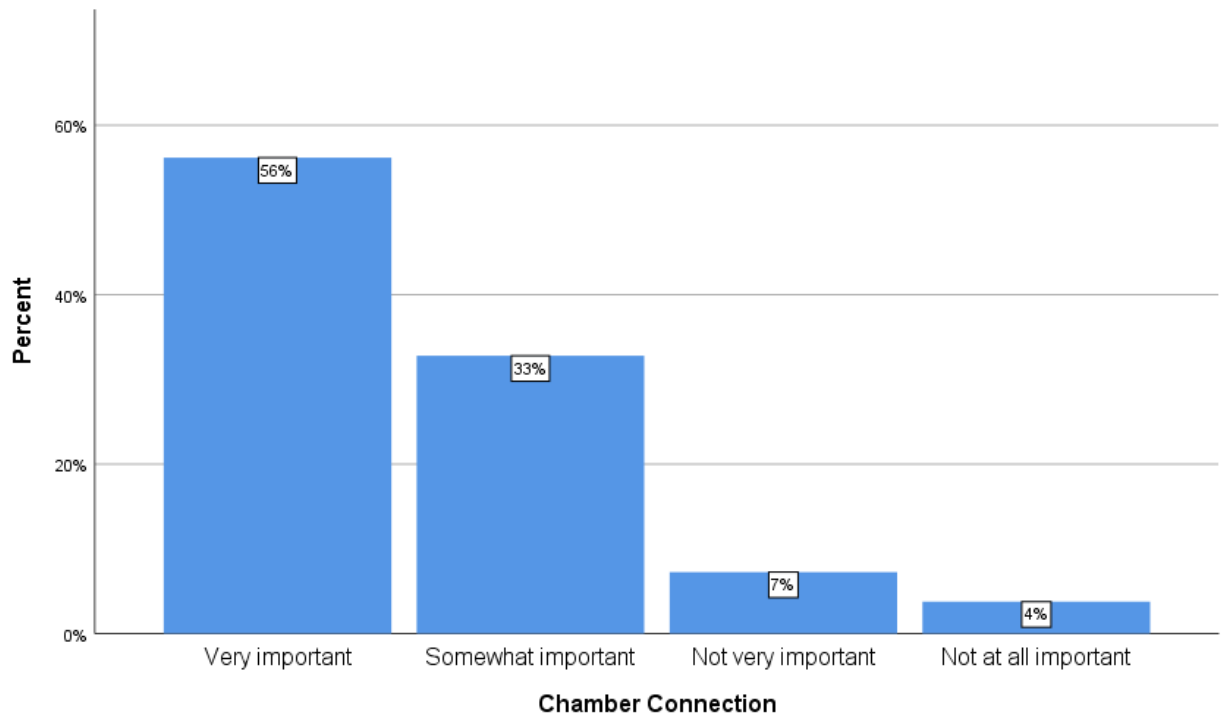
- The majority of participants indicated that they thought the Business Awards Luncheon was either somewhat (47%) or very important (27%), though approximately one in four members did not find this important.



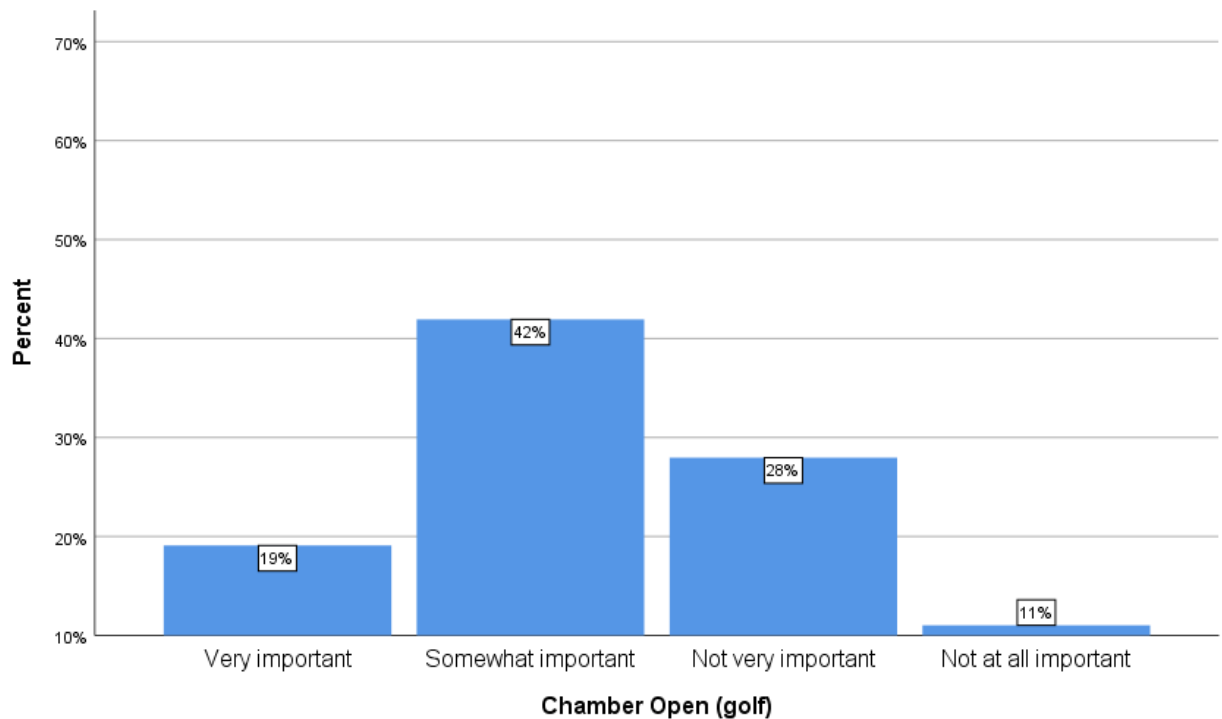
- 75% of participants reported that the Central Minnesota Farm Show was an important program.



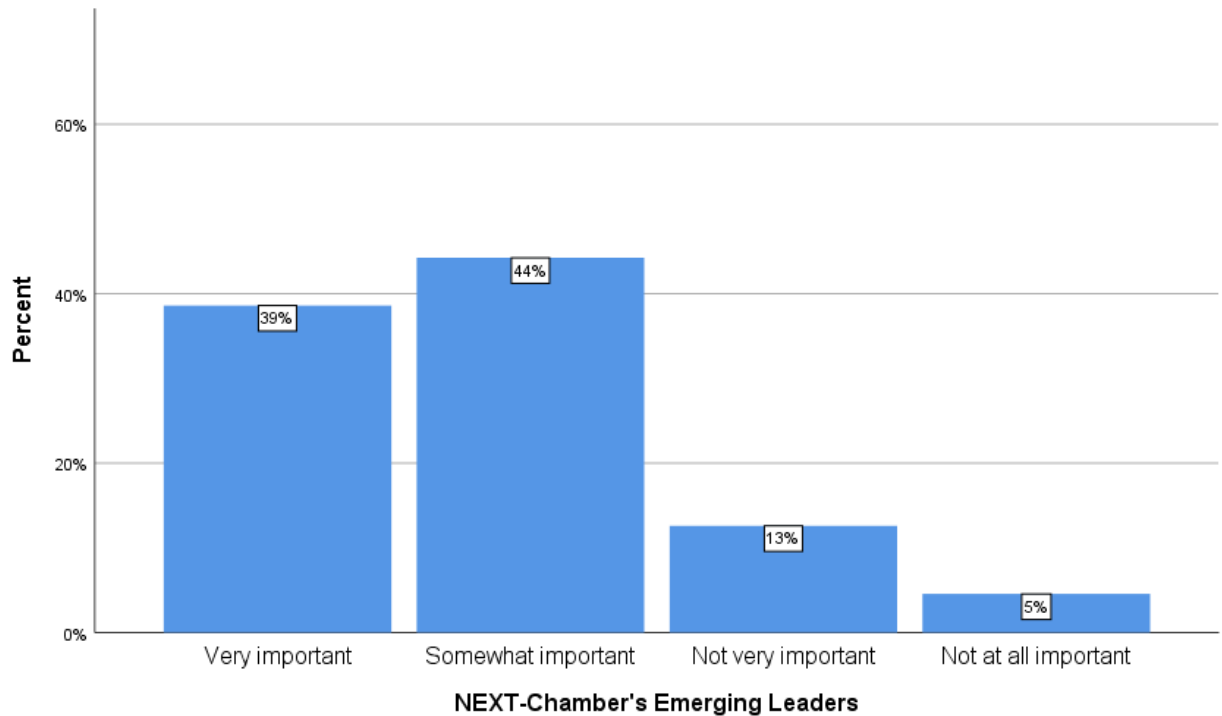
- Only 11% of participants did not report that the Chamber Connection was important to them, with the majority reporting that this was very important.



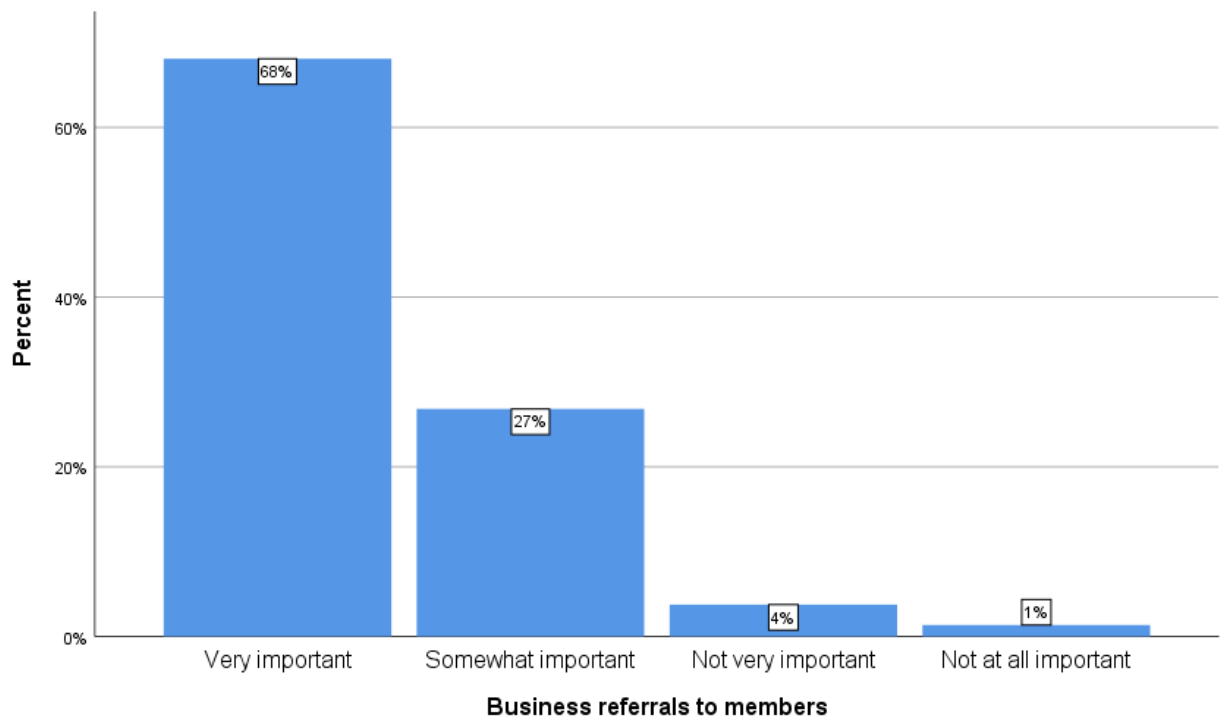
- Fewer participants thought that the Chamber Open golf outing was very important, though most participants still reported that it was at least somewhat important to them.



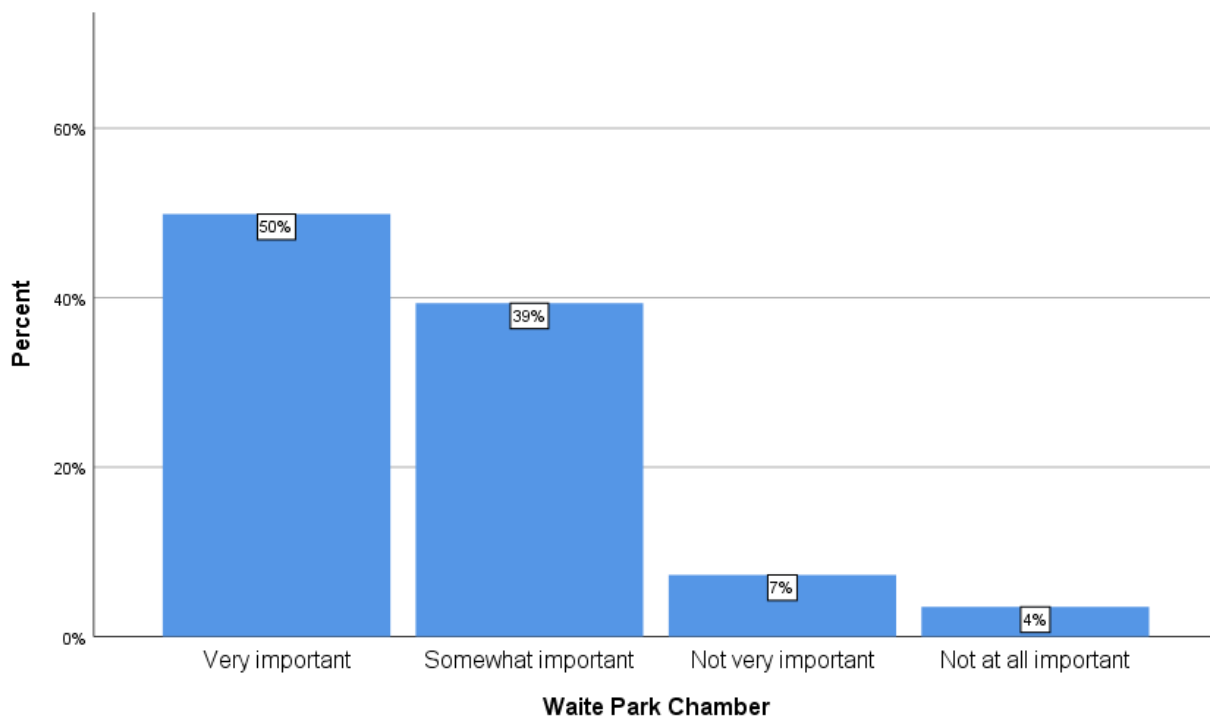
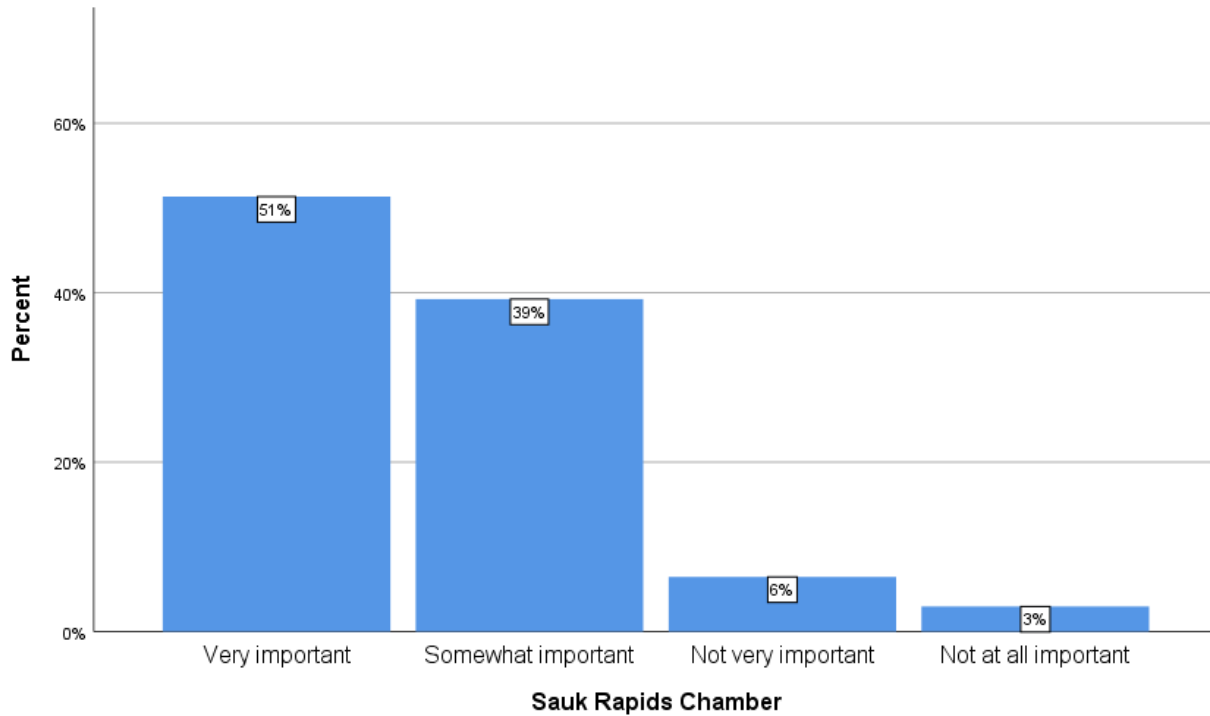
- Nearly three quarters of participants thought that the NEXT – Chamber's Emerging Leaders program was very or somewhat important.



- Most participants, 61%, reported that the Chamber's business referrals to members were very important (68%). Only 4% of participants said this was not very important. This service seems to be among the most important promotion, recognition, or networking service that the Chamber offers to members.

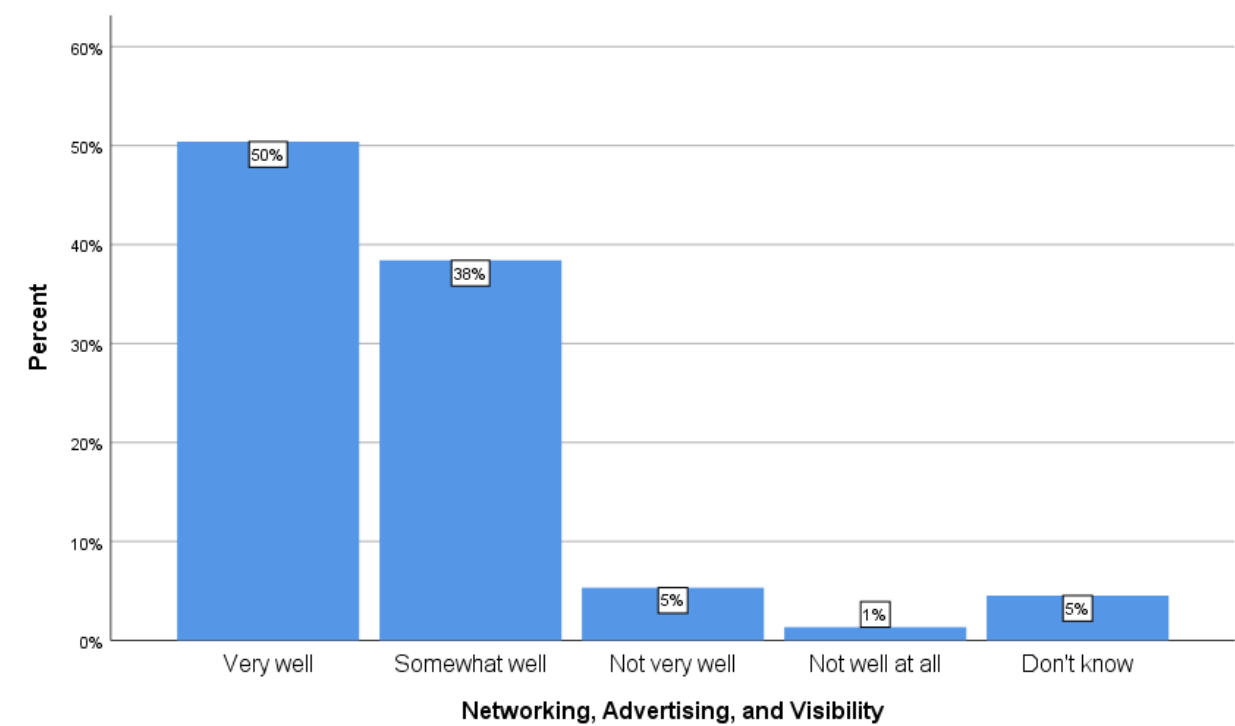


- Approximately half of participants reported that the Sauk Rapids and Waite Park Chambers were very important, and approximately 90% of participants reported that they were at least somewhat important to them (see the following two graphs).



PROMOTION, RECOGNITION, AND NETWORKING GOALS

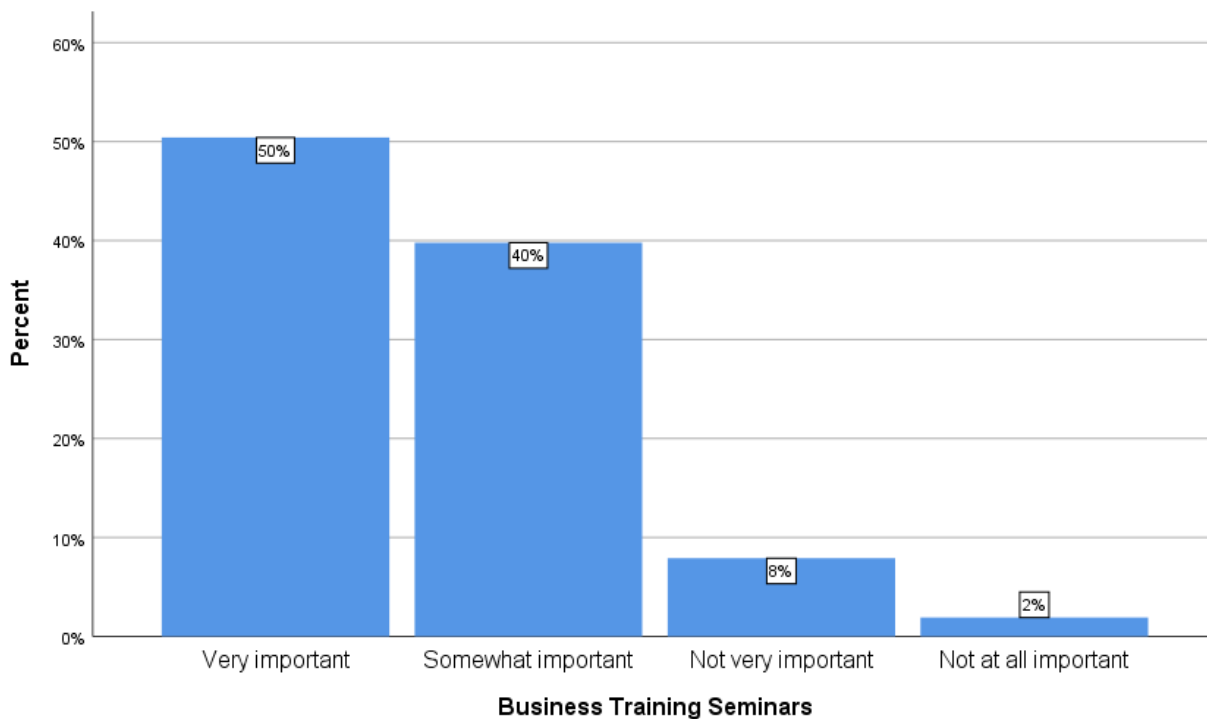
Most participants responded positively when considering how well these promotion, recognition, and networking programs and services are achieving the Chamber’s goal to provide opportunities for networking, advertising, and visibility that will ultimately lead to or result in sales. Nearly 90% of participants agreed that the Chamber was doing this somewhat or very well, with half of participants reporting that the Chamber does this very well.



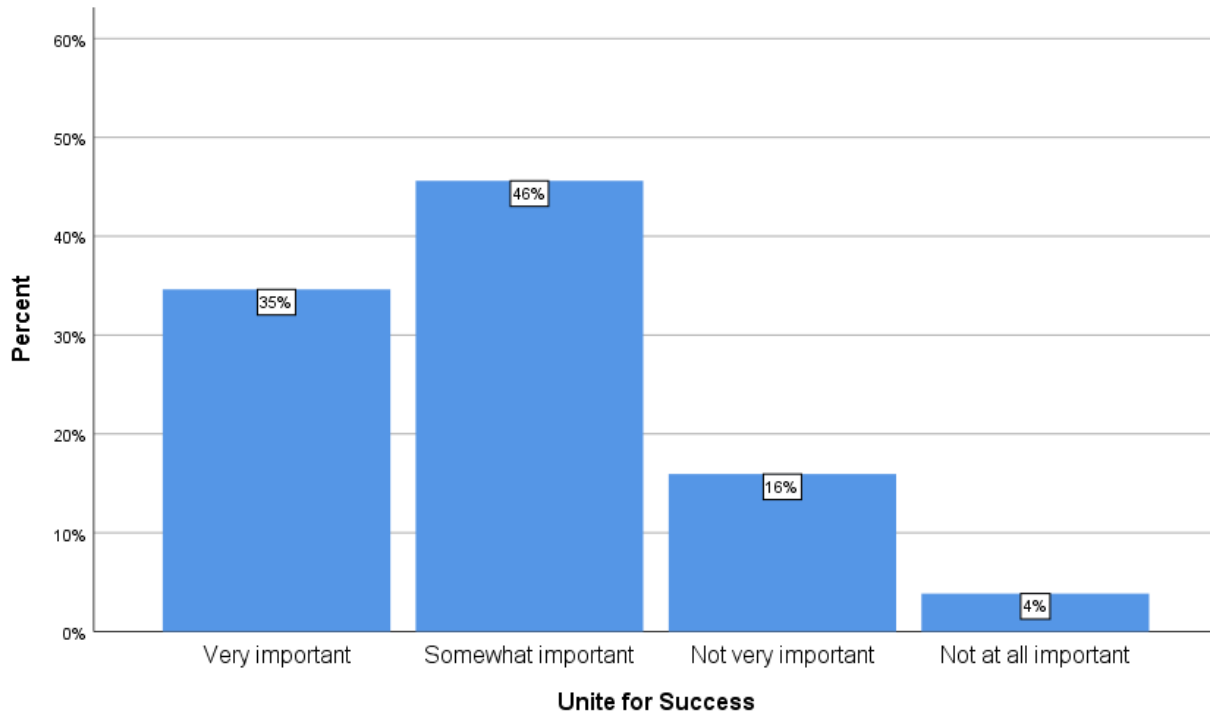
EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The next block of questions asked about five of the Chamber's educational programs and services. As with previous sections, the majority of Chamber members found these to be at least somewhat important. At least 80% of the members who completed the 2022 survey reported that each of these programs were important to them. The 2022 findings show consistency or improvement in ratings of educational programs since 2016, suggesting that members continue to value these Chamber offerings.

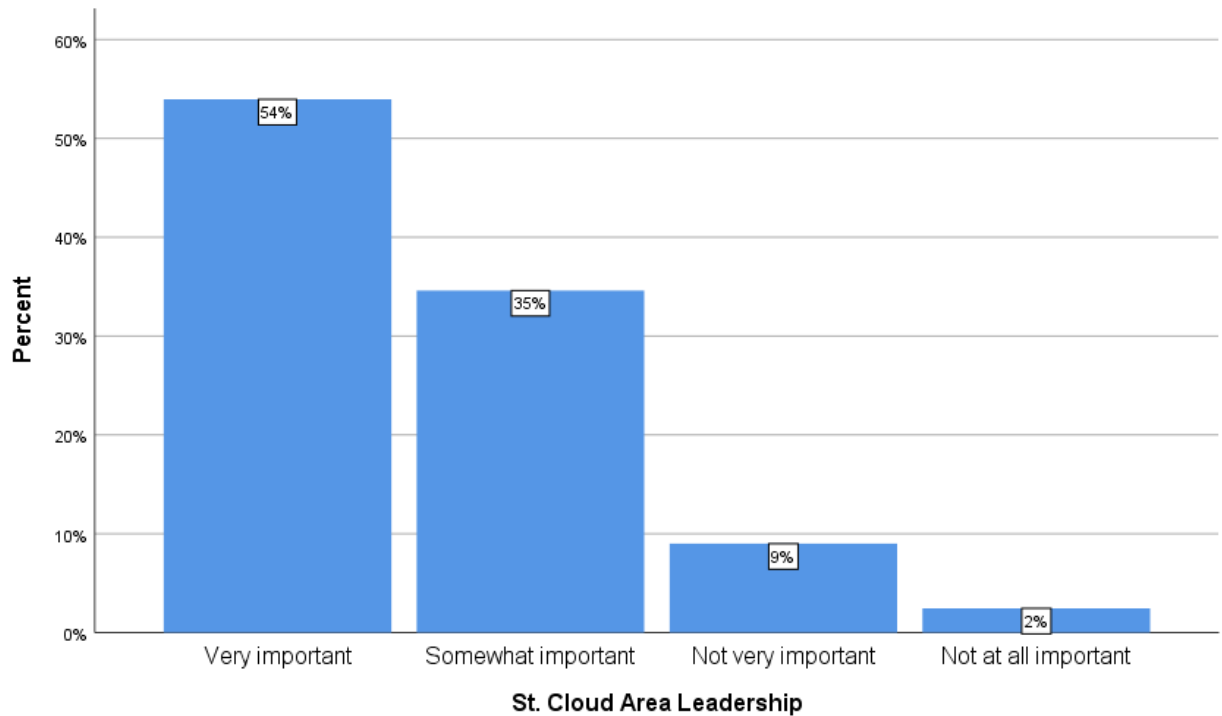
- 90% of participants thought that the Chamber's business training seminars were somewhat (40%) or very (50%) important. This represents a small increase since the 2016 survey.



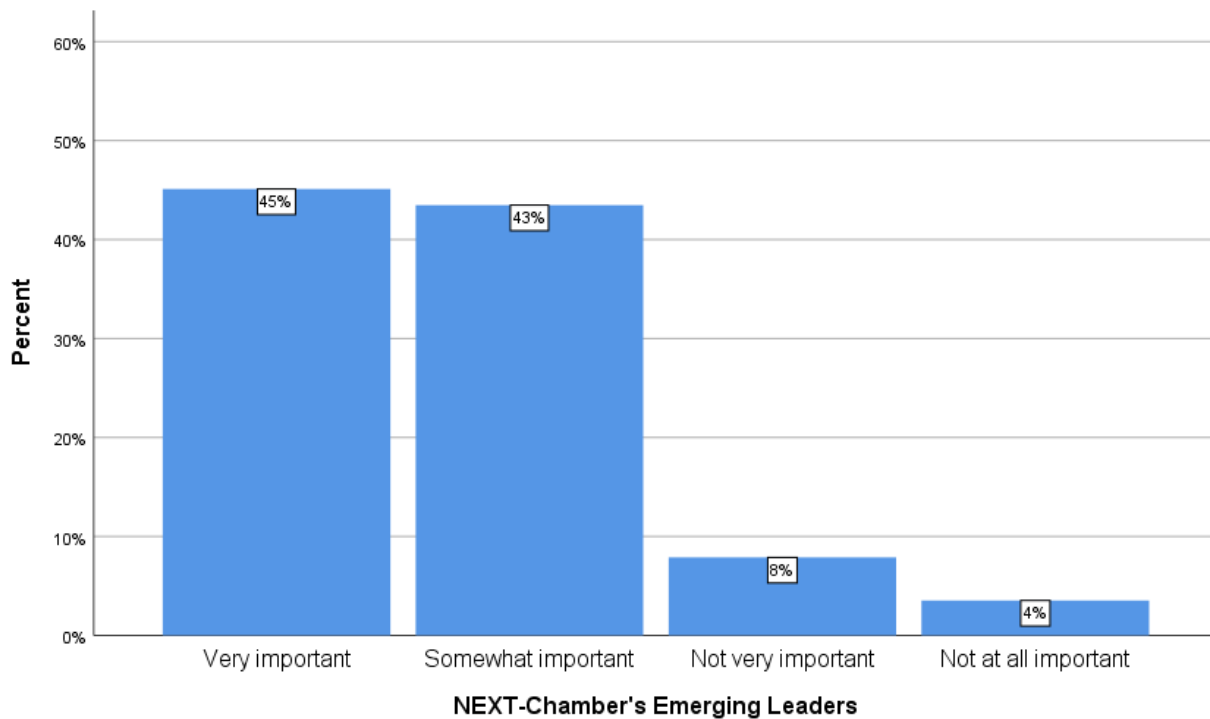
- Approximately 80% of participants thought that the Unite for Success high school scholarship program was somewhat or very important. The 2022 survey suggests that members are more familiar with this program now than they were in 2016.



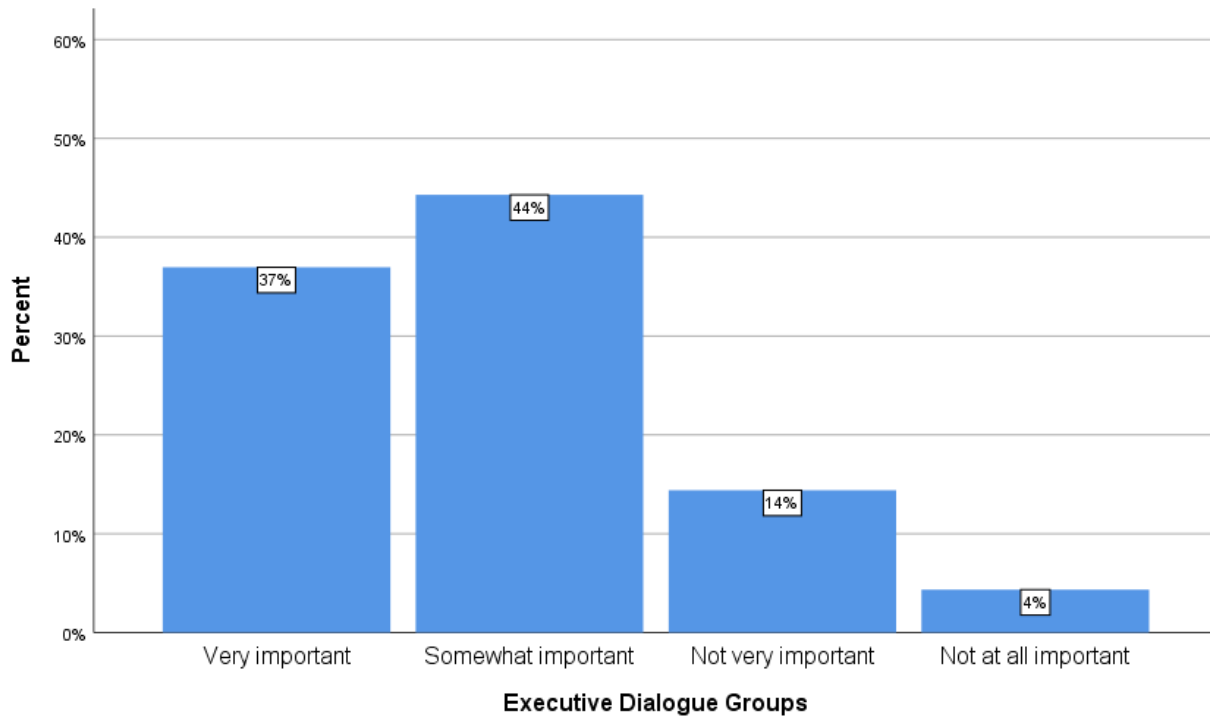
- Nearly 90% of participants rated the St. Cloud Area Leadership adult leadership program as somewhat or very important, with 54% reporting that this program was very important.



- Similarly, nearly 90% of participants rated the NEXT Chamber's Emerging Leaders young professionals group as somewhat or very important.

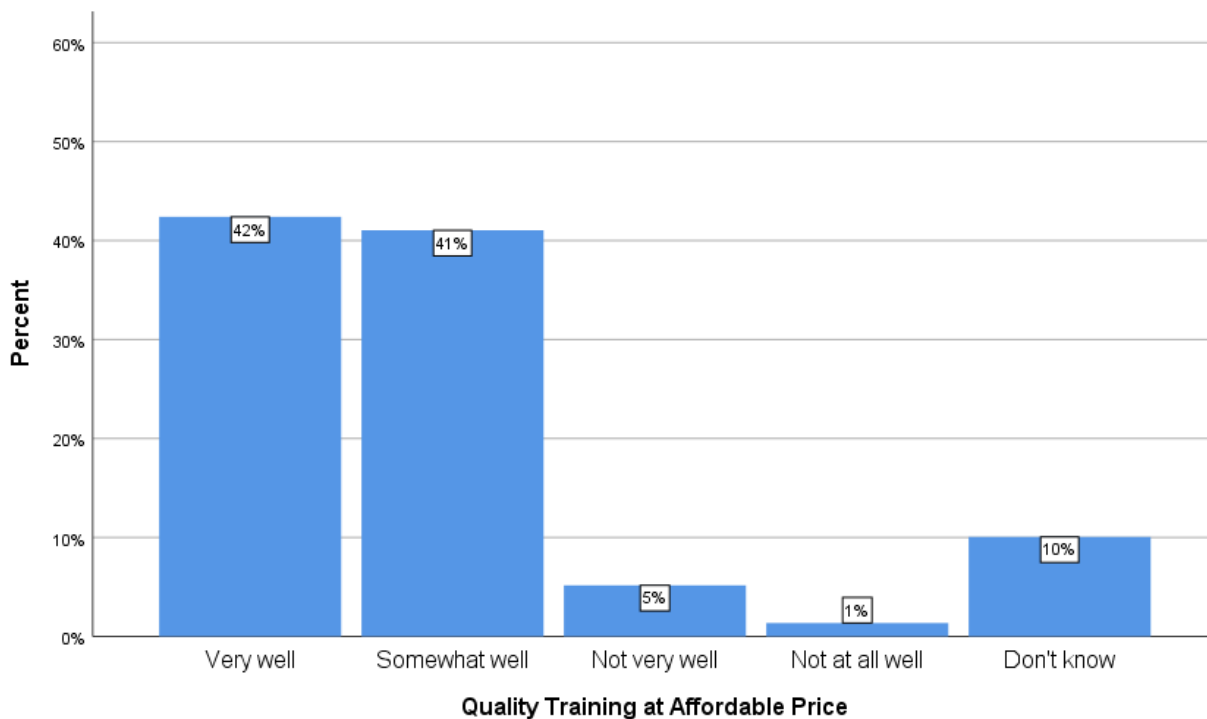


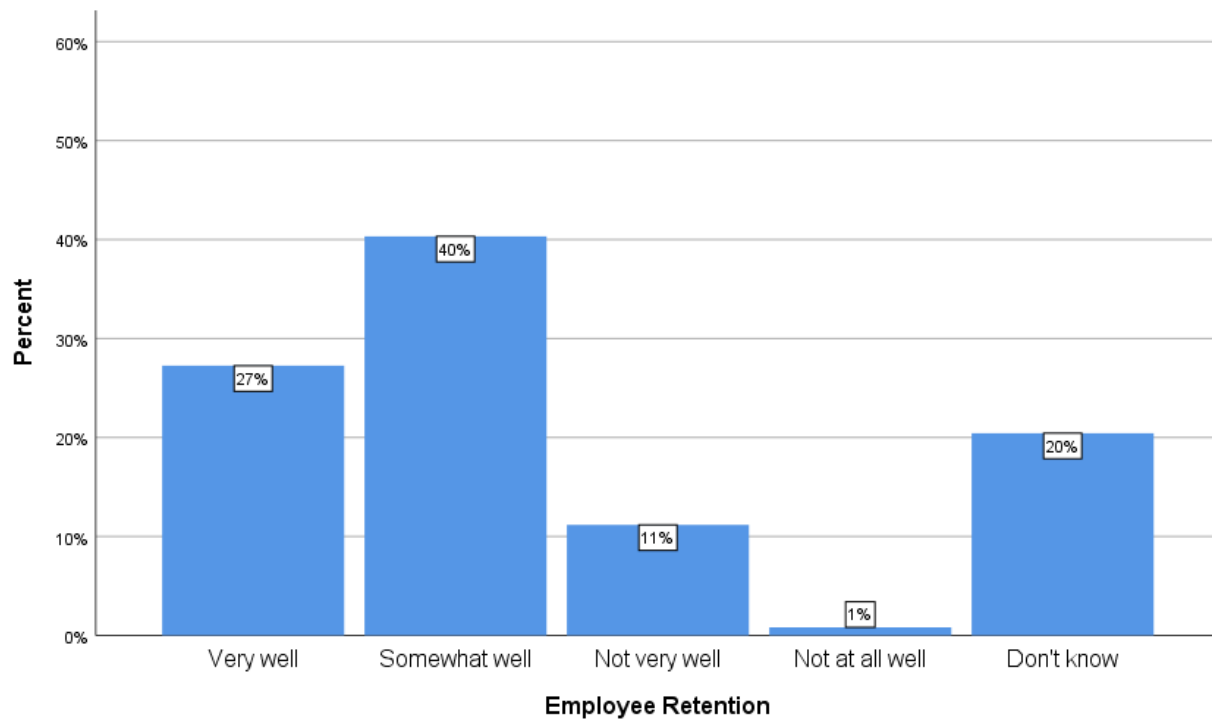
- Approximately 80% of participants reported that the Executive Dialogue Groups were somewhat or very important to them.



EDUCATION GOALS

The second section of the Education block asked participants to reflect on how well programming and services meet the Chamber's goals for education. Most members surveyed in 2022 (over 80%) thought the Chamber was doing somewhat or very well providing quality business training at an affordable price to Chamber members to assist in their success and growth. About 67% of members thought that the Chamber's educational offerings helped achieve the goal of retaining existing employees. The high percentage of "don't know" responses suggest that the Chamber may want to do more outreach to members about how programming is designed to meet these goals. The two graphs below show members' responses to both questions about achieving educational goals.

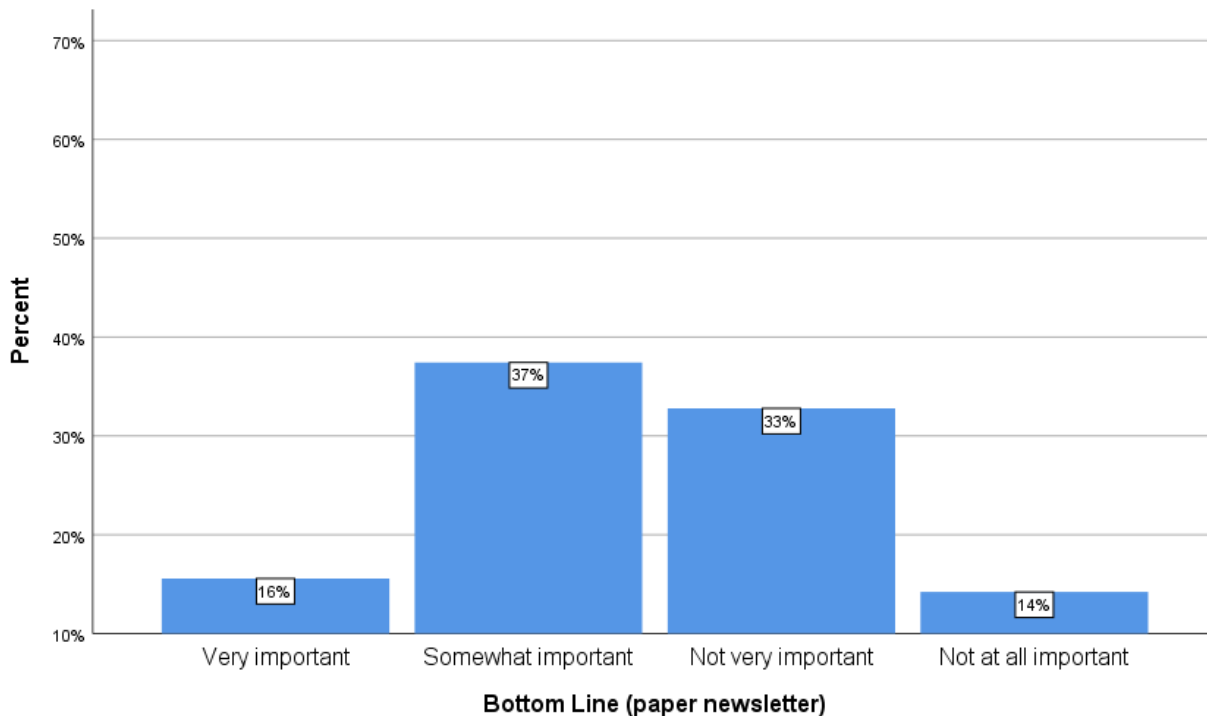




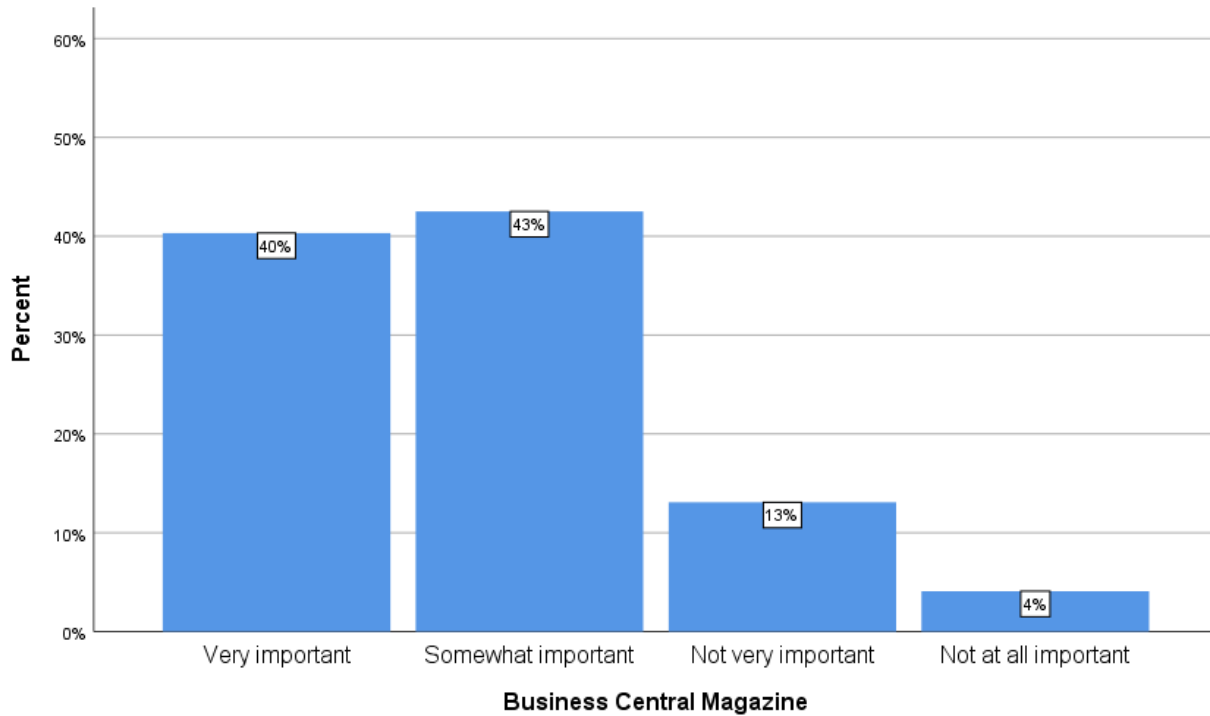
COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The next section of the survey included questions about the Chamber’s mission to “increase business contacts, enhance professional development, and provide leadership and information on local and state business issues.” Participants seemed to especially value the Chamber’s Business Central magazine, Chamber Edge electronic newsletter, and Membership Directory.

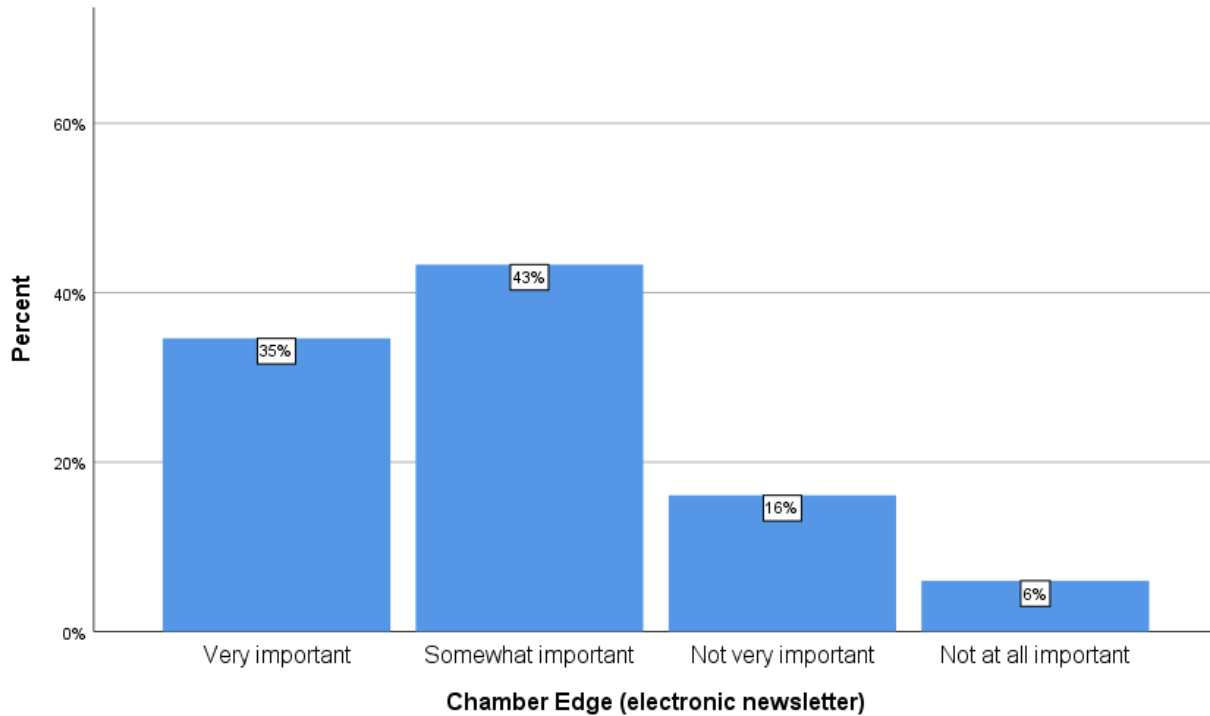
- Participants rated the Bottom Line paper newsletter lowest in importance when considering the Chamber’s various communications and publications. This represents a noteworthy change since the 2016 survey. In 2016, 78% of participants said that the Bottom Line was somewhat or very important to them. However, in 2022, only 53% of participants said that the Bottom Line was somewhat or very important.



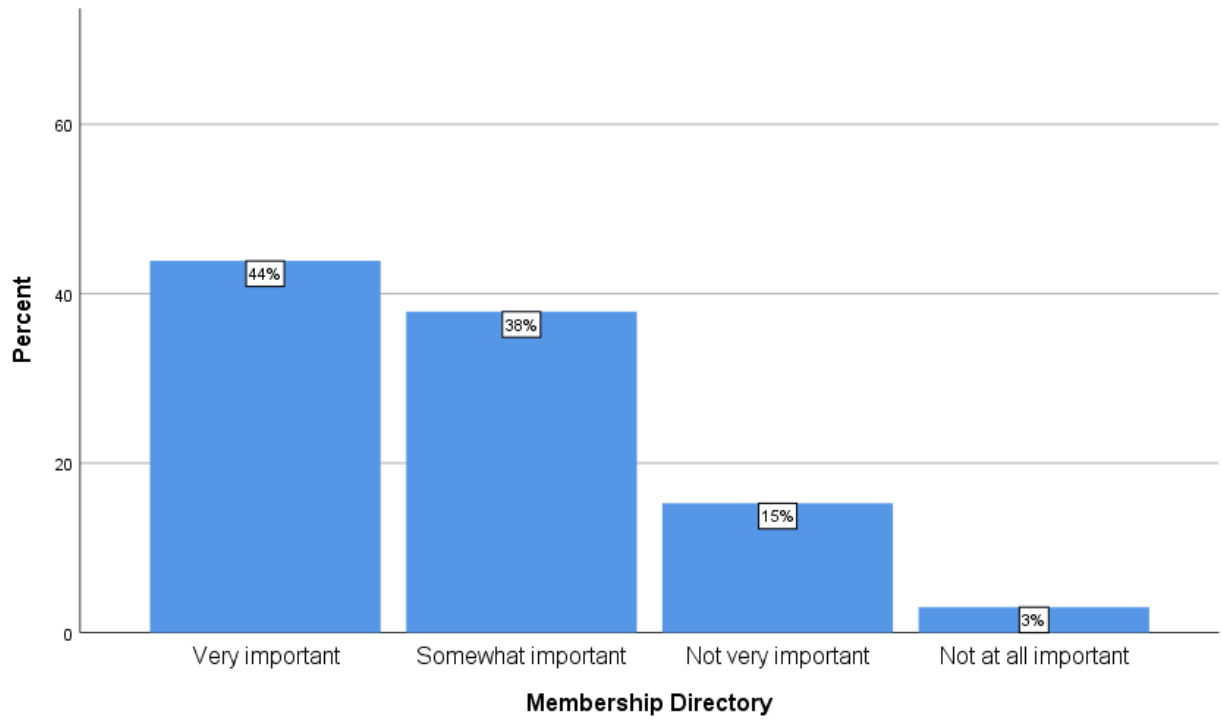
- Participants viewed the Business Central magazine most positively, with 83% of members stating that it was somewhat or very important. The importance of Business Central has declined somewhat since 2016, when 92% of participants rated it as somewhat or very important.



- 78% of members surveyed said that the Chamber Edge electronic newsletter was somewhat or very important to them. This also represents a small decline in importance since 2016, when 84% of participants rated this newsletter as important.



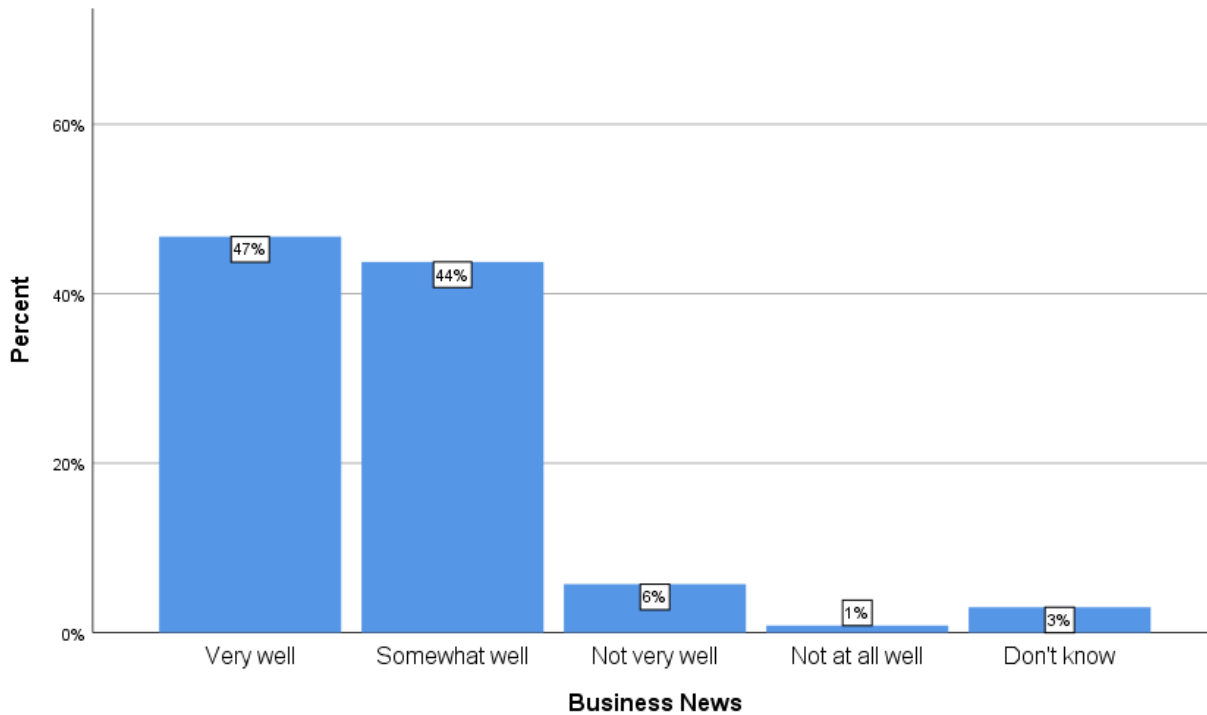
- 82% of participants rated the Membership Directory as somewhat or very important in this survey, which is comparable to 2016 findings.



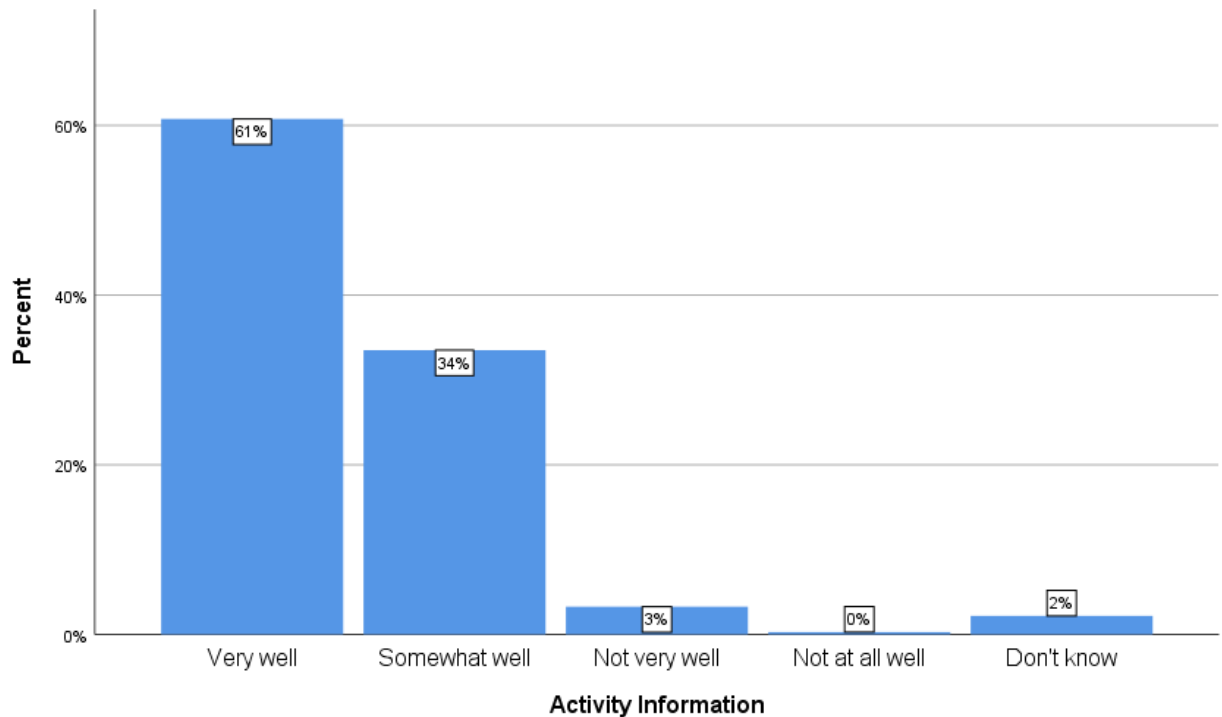
COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICATION GOALS

Participants were also asked to reflect on how well the Chamber's communication and publications achieve their goals regarding communication. Overall, participants felt that the Chamber was doing well to achieve their goals in this domain. Results from the 2022 survey were similar to the 2016 member survey results.

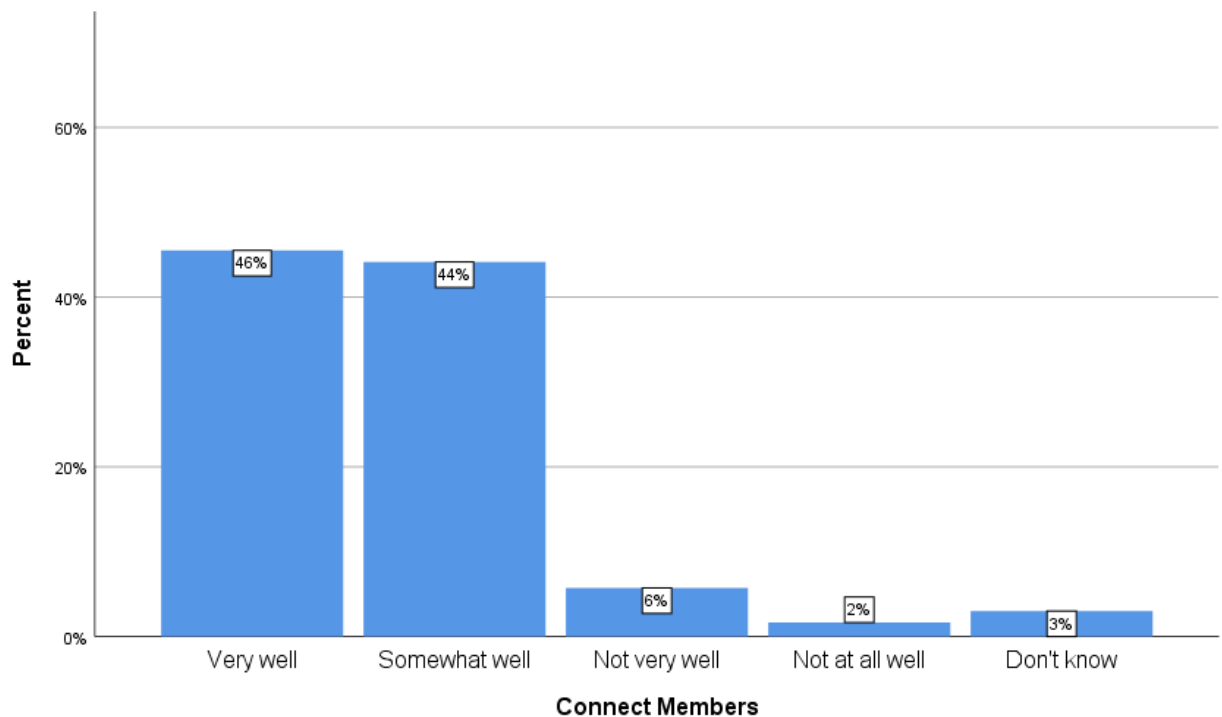
- Approximately 90% of participants thought that the Chamber was doing somewhat (44%) or very (47%) well keeping members abreast of what is going on in the business community.



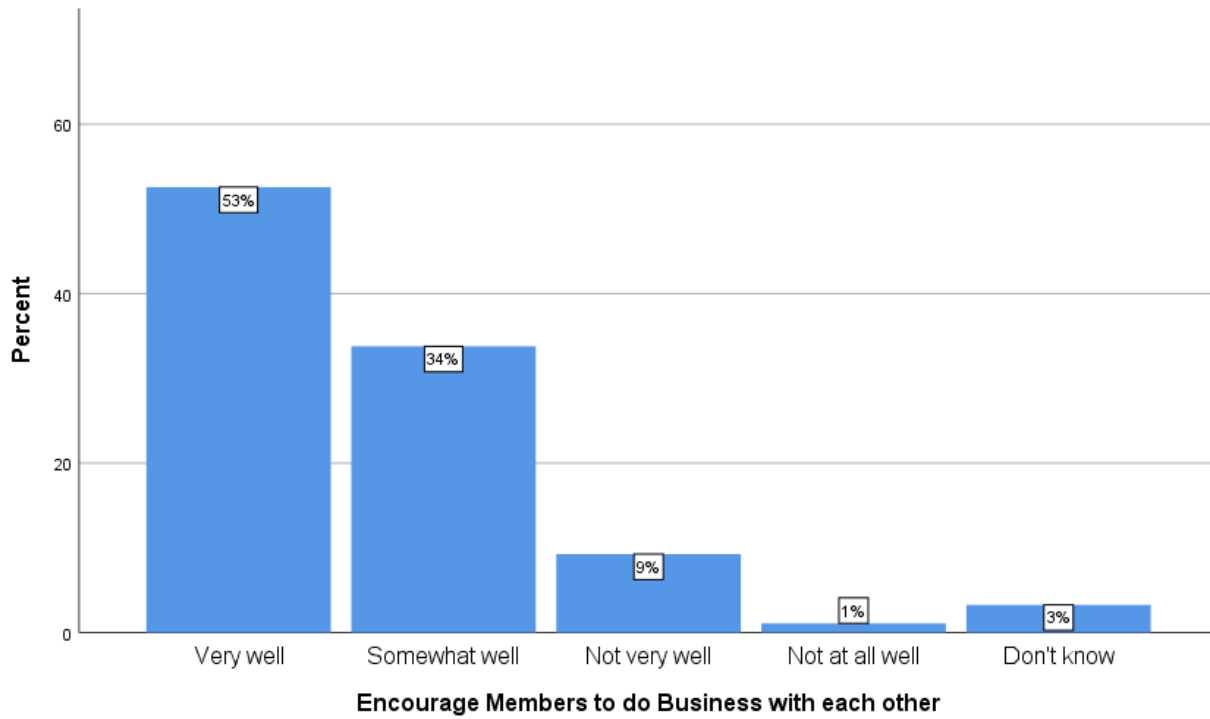
- Over 90% of participants also thought that the Chamber was doing somewhat or very well informing members about the activities of the Chamber in which they might want to participate. The majority of members surveyed (61%) thought the Chamber was achieving this goal very well.



- Over 90% of participants thought the Chamber was doing somewhat or very well connecting membership to the Chamber.

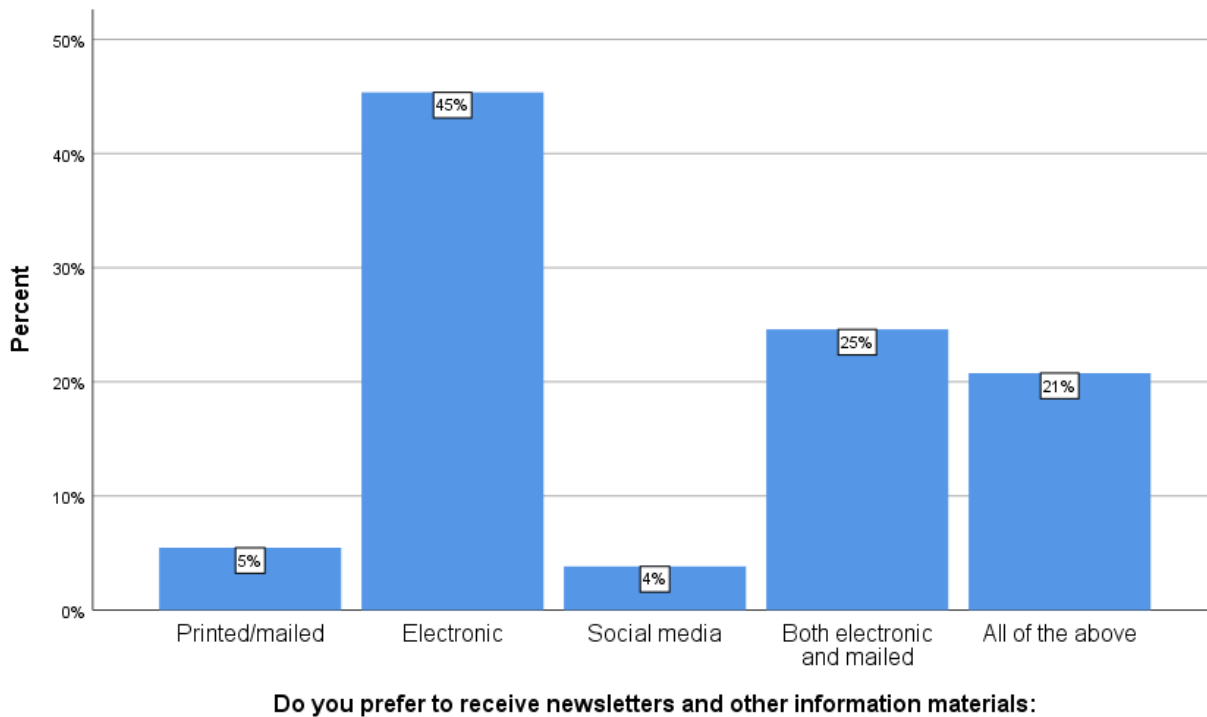


- Nearly 90% of participants thought the Chamber was doing somewhat or very well encouraging members to do business with each other.

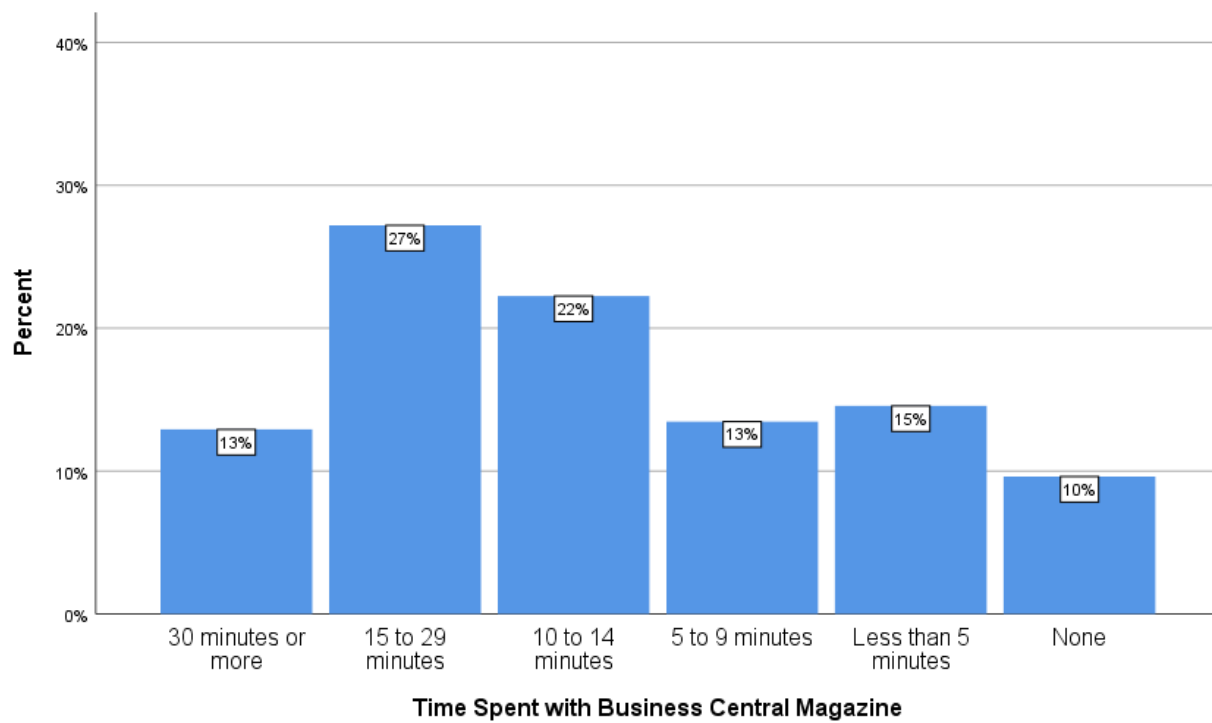
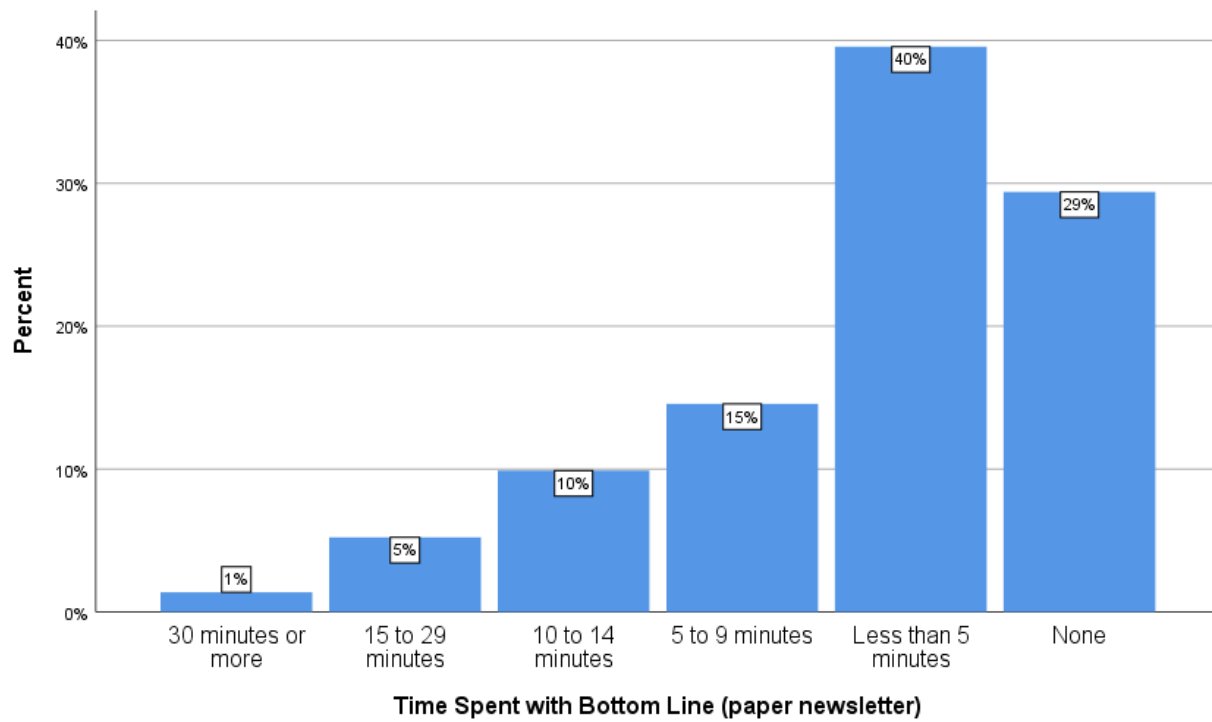


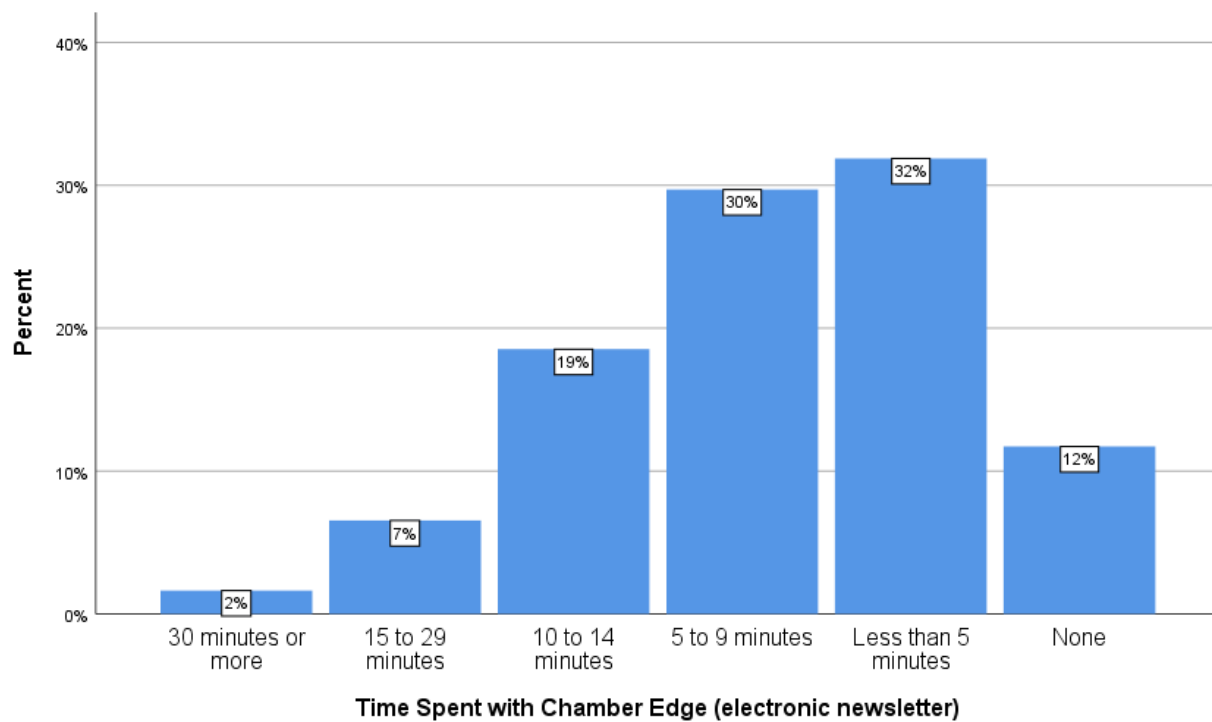
COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICATION PREFERENCES

The last questions in this portion of the survey asked participants about their communication preferences. Most participants preferred either electronic communications or a combination of electronic and mailed communications, which is consistent with the importance ratings participants provided earlier in this section. Very few participants preferred only printed or mailed communication or social media.



Additional questions asked participants to estimate how much time they spent with each Chamber publication in a typical month. Participants spent the most time with the Business Central magazine, and less time with the Chamber Edge electronic newsletter and the Bottom Line paper newsletter. Overall, participants reported spending less than a half hour each month reading any of these publications, and nearly three in ten said they did not read the Bottom Line at all.

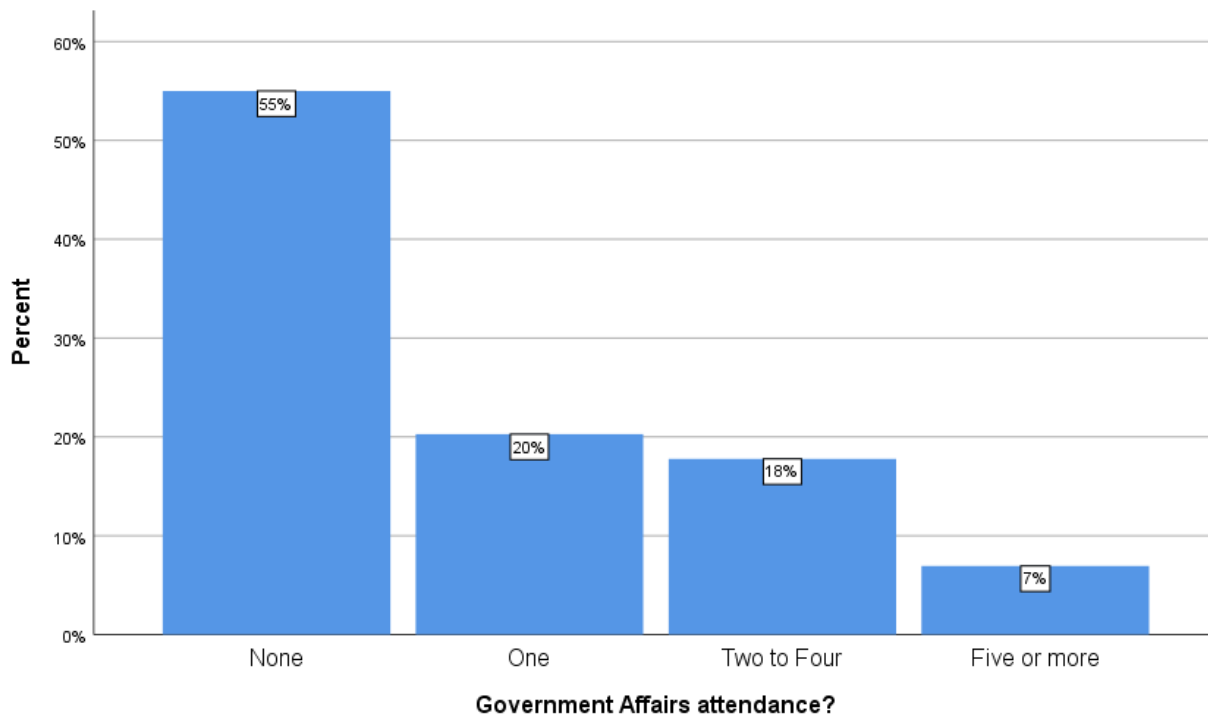




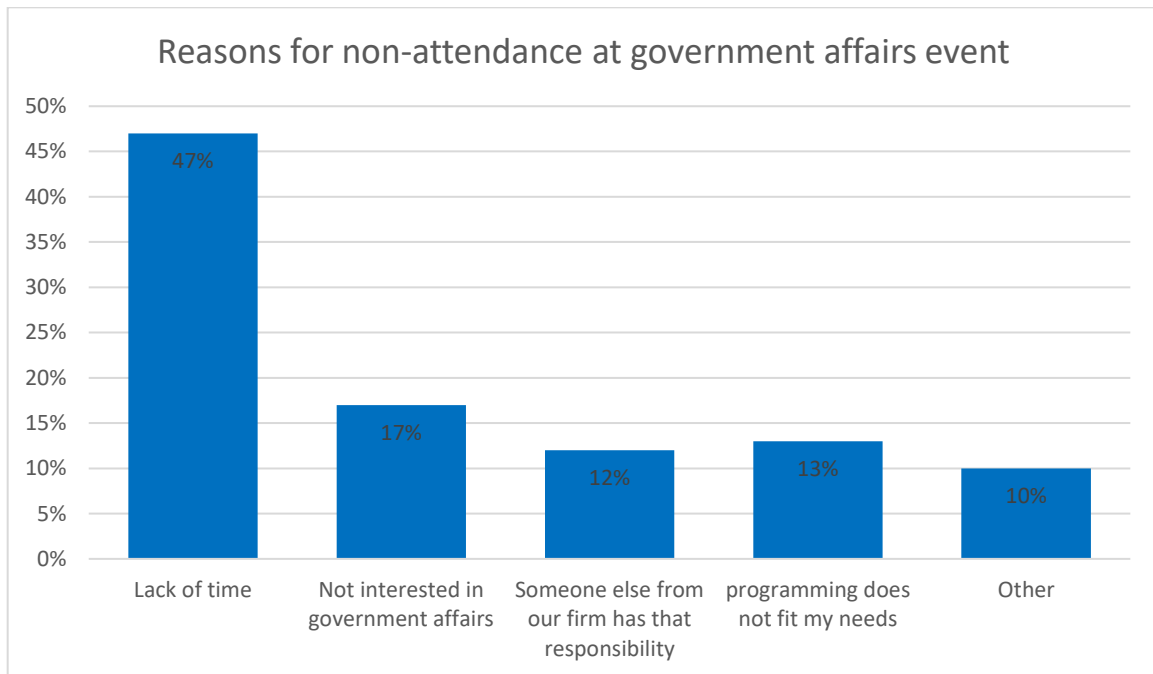
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Like previous surveys, this year participants were asked about how many government affairs functions they attended in a typical year, including regular government affairs meetings, candidate forums, and visits to St. Paul.

- Over half of participants reported that they did not attend any government affairs meetings. These results are similar to findings from 2016, before the Covid-19 pandemic.



- Participants reported that a lack of time was the most common reason they would not attend government affairs events, which was also the most common reason in 2016. Fewer participants selected any of the other reasons for not attending.

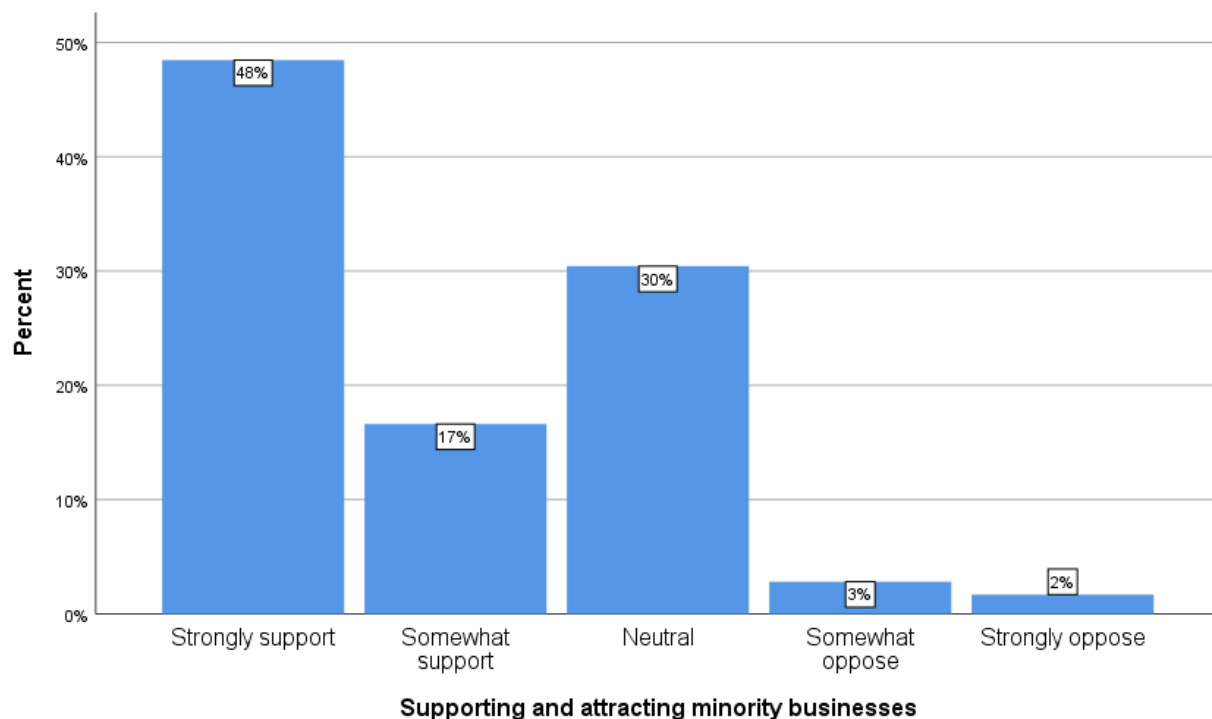


The 2022 member value survey included a new section about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the Central Minnesota business community to help the Chamber integrate DEI into their strategic planning. This section included two sets of questions. The first set asked about programming topics; the second section asked about investments. For both sets of questions, participants could select among the following options: strongly support, somewhat support, neutral, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose.

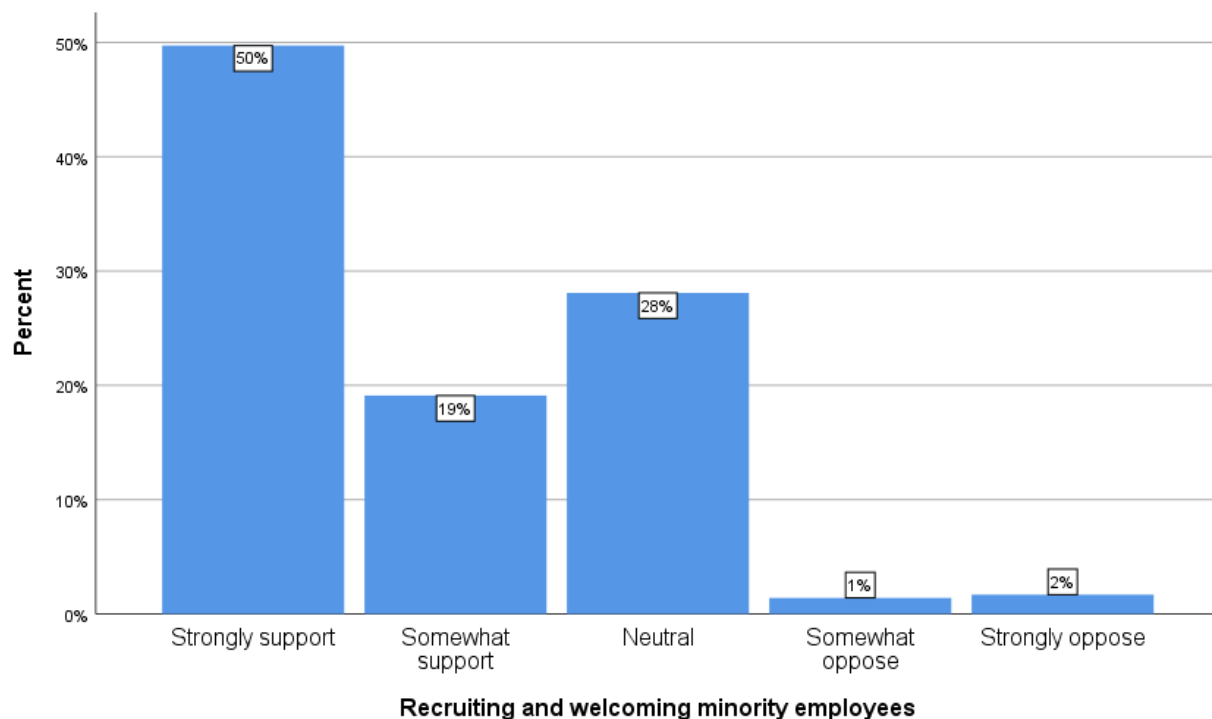
Overall, it is worth noting that DEI programs, while relatively new, have received a very positive reception from the membership, with over half of all respondents indicating that they either “strongly support” or “somewhat support” these initiatives. Additionally, respondents usually indicate a lower level of support for proposed or hypothetical programs, and higher support for extant or active programs.

On the other hand, while these results suggest general support for DEI initiatives among membership, we strongly advise some caution in the interpretation of these results. The high percentage of “neutral” responses may be capturing opposition from members who are reluctant to express their opposition in areas that are regarded as racially or culturally sensitive and for which there is a perception of broad social support. “Social desirability bias” is a well-documented response bias in the public opinion literature, so it is important to consider this possibility in interpreting these results.

- Nearly half of participants reported that they strongly support the Chamber supporting and attracting businesses owned by people of color to the region. Only 5% of members opposed this type of programming, though three in ten were neutral about it.

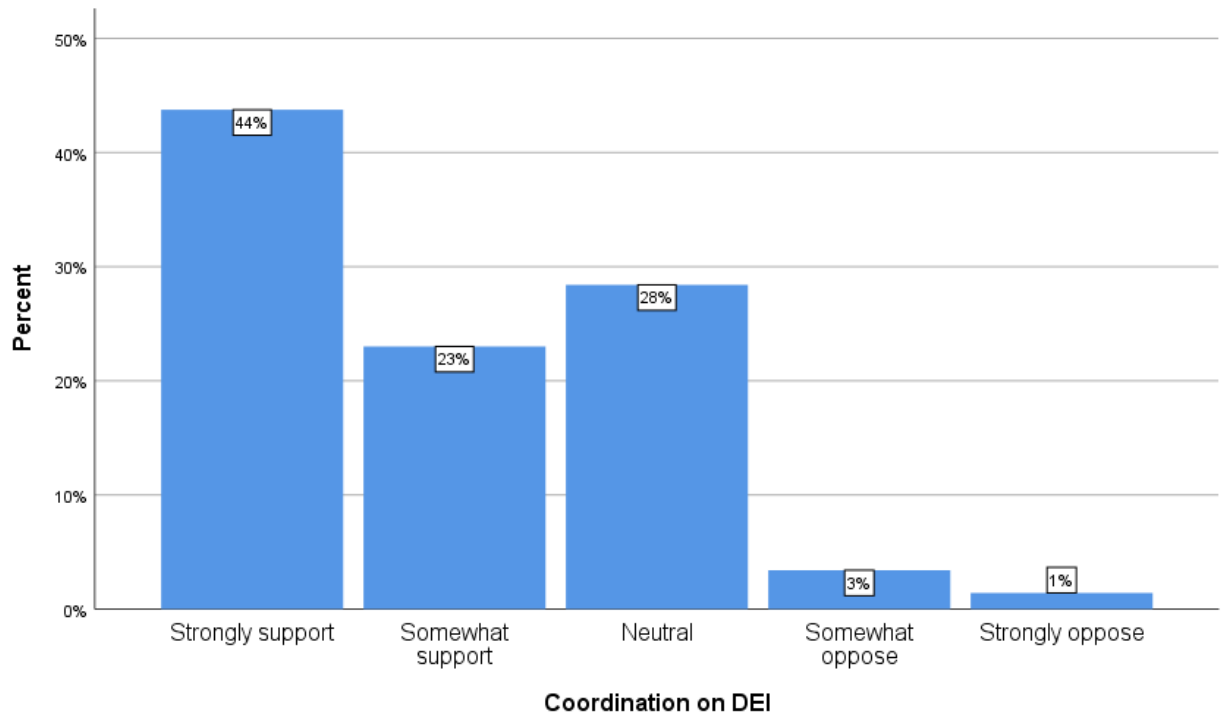


- Half of participants reported that they strongly support the Chamber recruiting and welcoming new and potential employees who are people of color. Only 3% of participants opposed this type of programming, though three in ten were neutral about it.

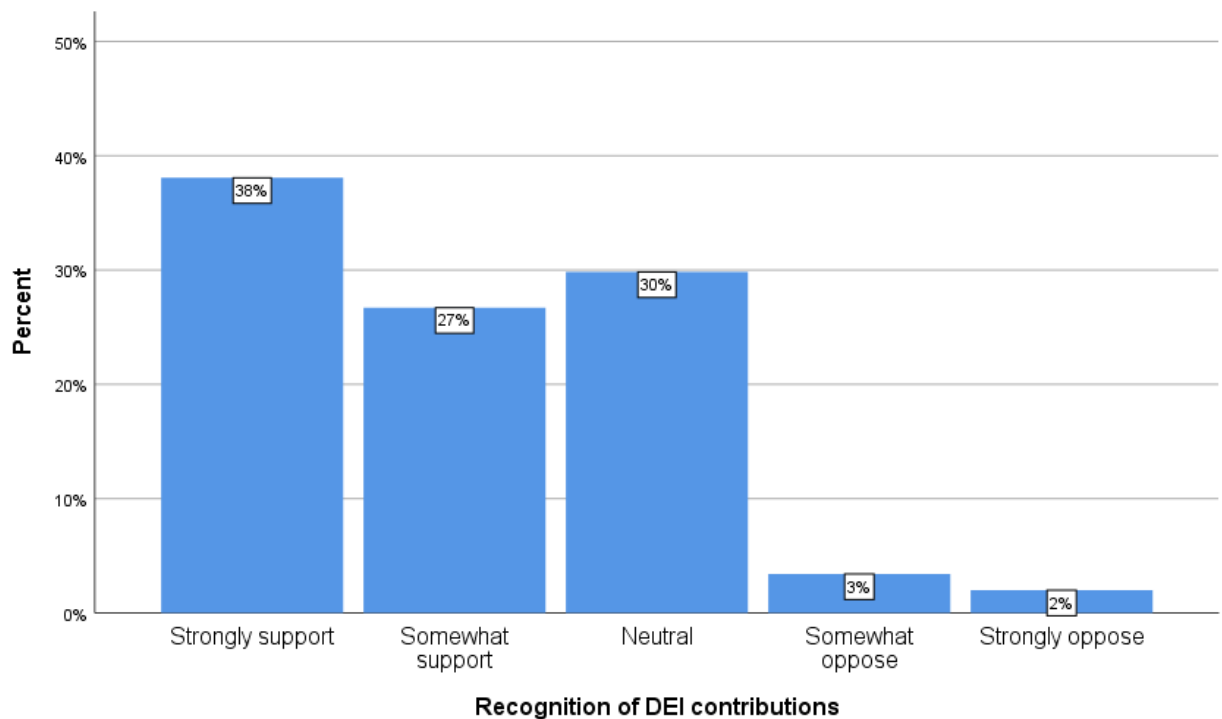


The second set of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) questions asked about potential Chamber investments. Most participants were positive or neutral about supporting the following investments regarding diversity in the Central Minnesota business community. Participants were most supportive of DEI educational programming and coordinating with other Central Minnesota organizations to provide DEI efforts.

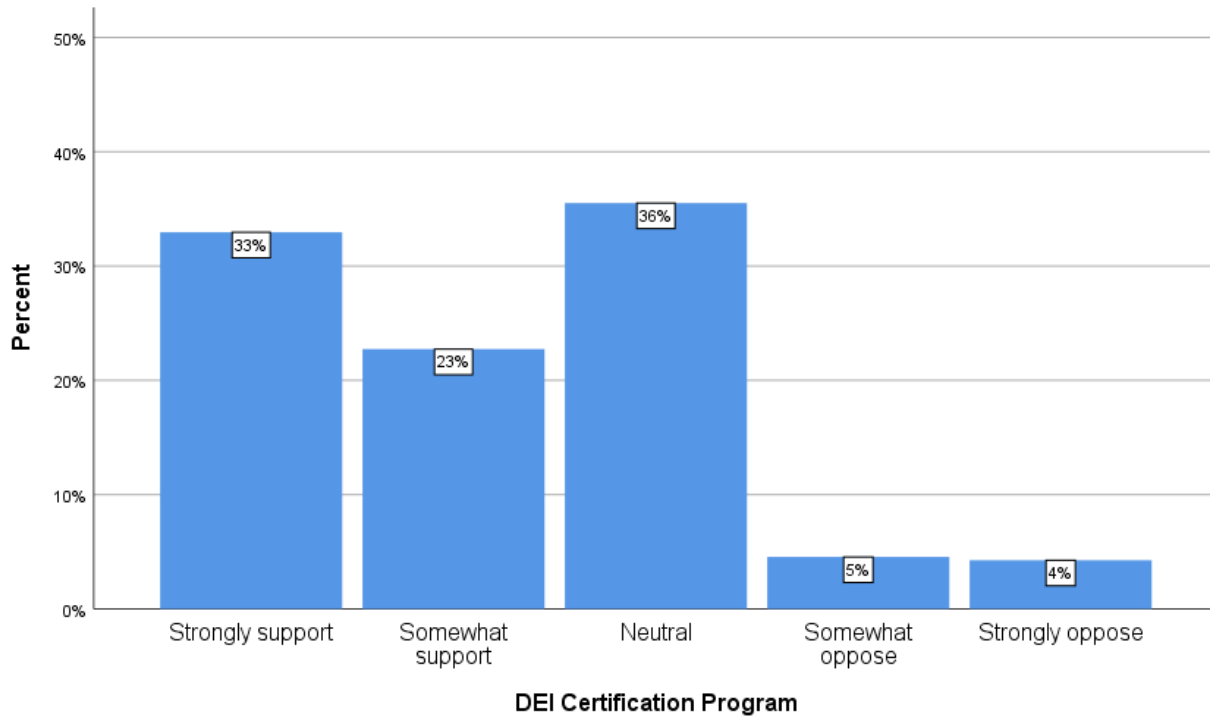
- 67% of participants supported the Chamber coordinating with other Central Minnesota organizations to develop programs that support community-wide DEI efforts.



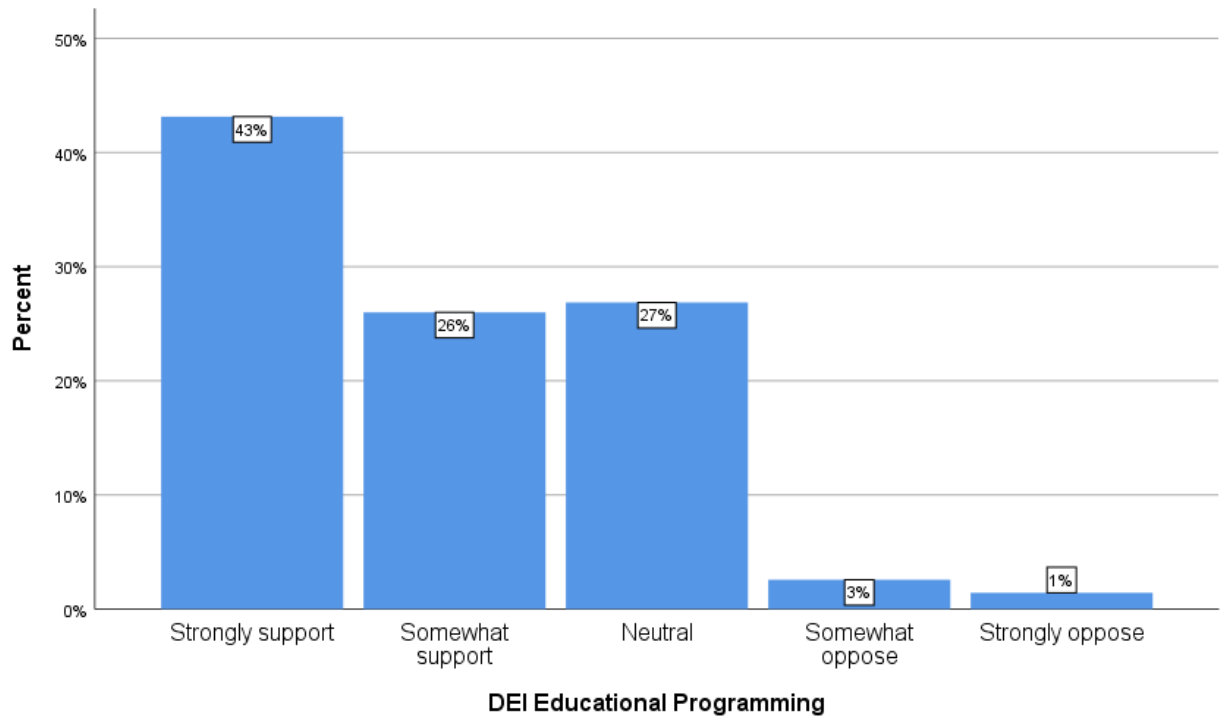
- 65% of participants supported recognition of outstanding contributions to DEI within the Central Minnesota business community.



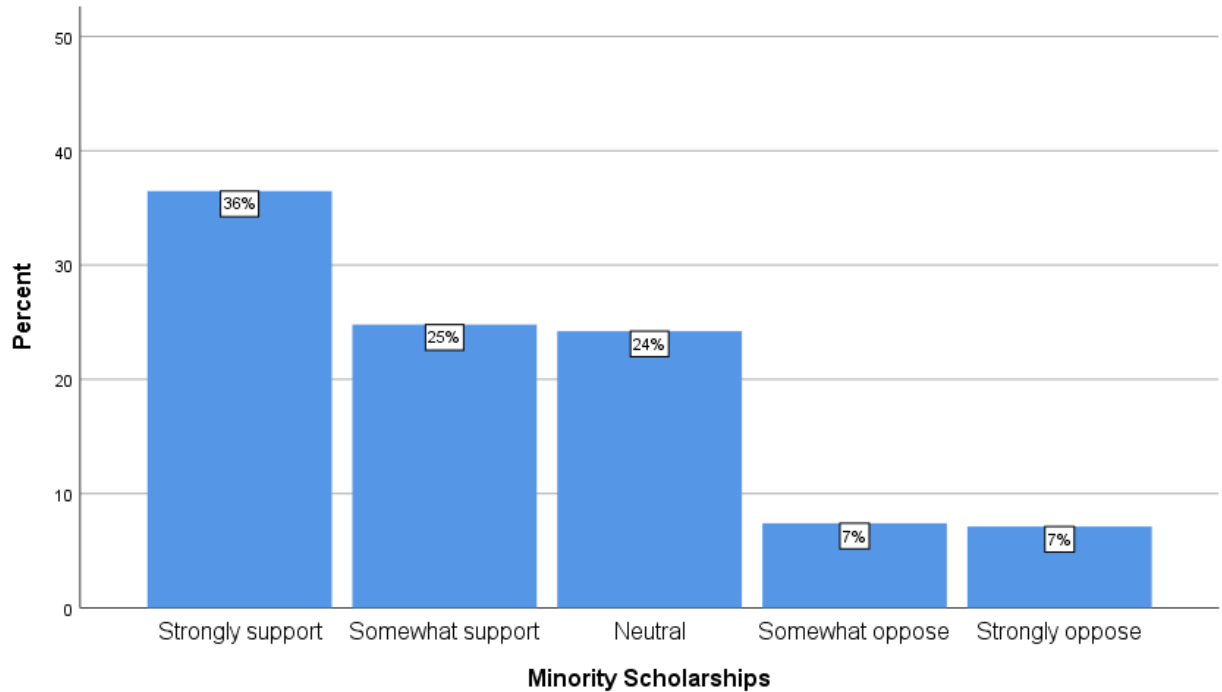
- Slightly fewer participants, 56%, supported the development of a DEI certification program for Central Minnesota businesses.



- 69% of participants were supportive of the Chamber providing educational programming supporting DEI such as Lunchtime Learning meetings.



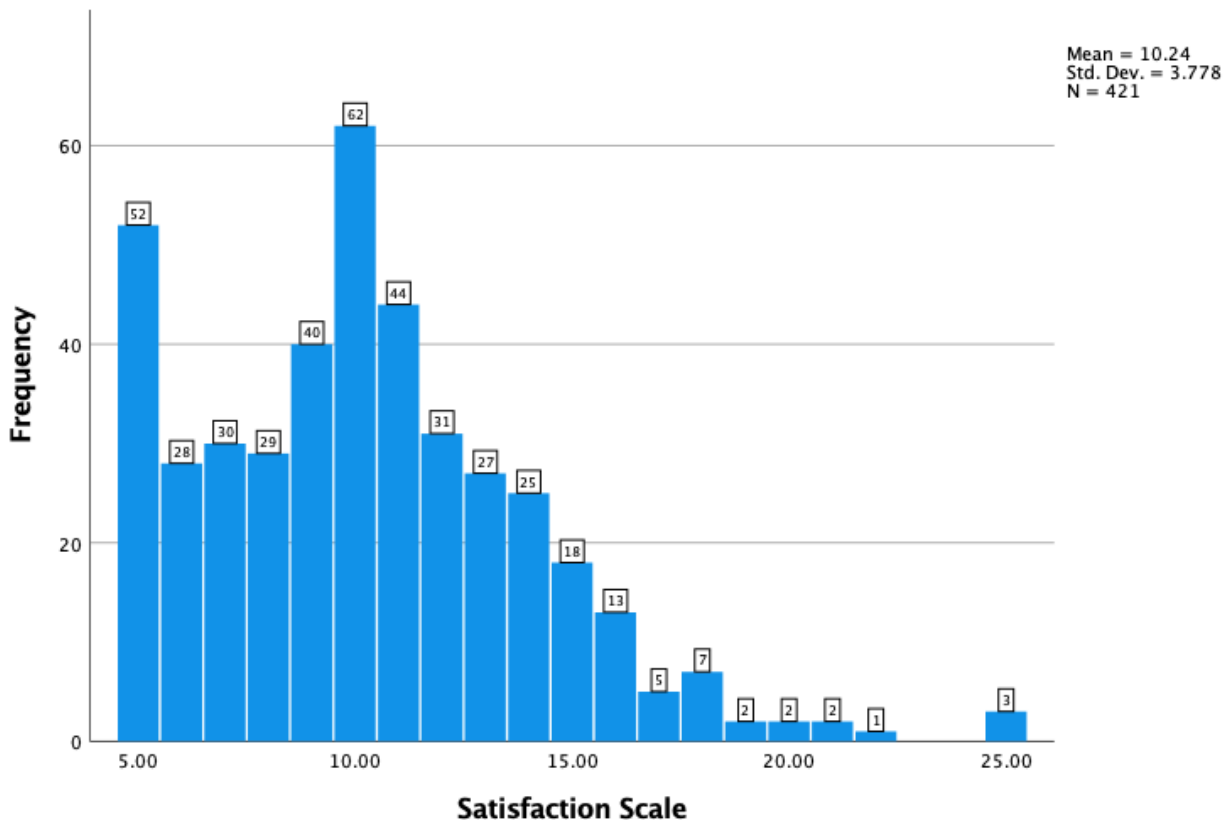
- 61% of participants supported scholarships to be put toward Chamber membership for minority-owned businesses. Notably, approximately 14% of participants opposed the Chamber supporting membership scholarships for minority-owned businesses. This was the largest opposition reported to the Chamber’s potential DEI-oriented programs and services.



SATISFACTION SCALE

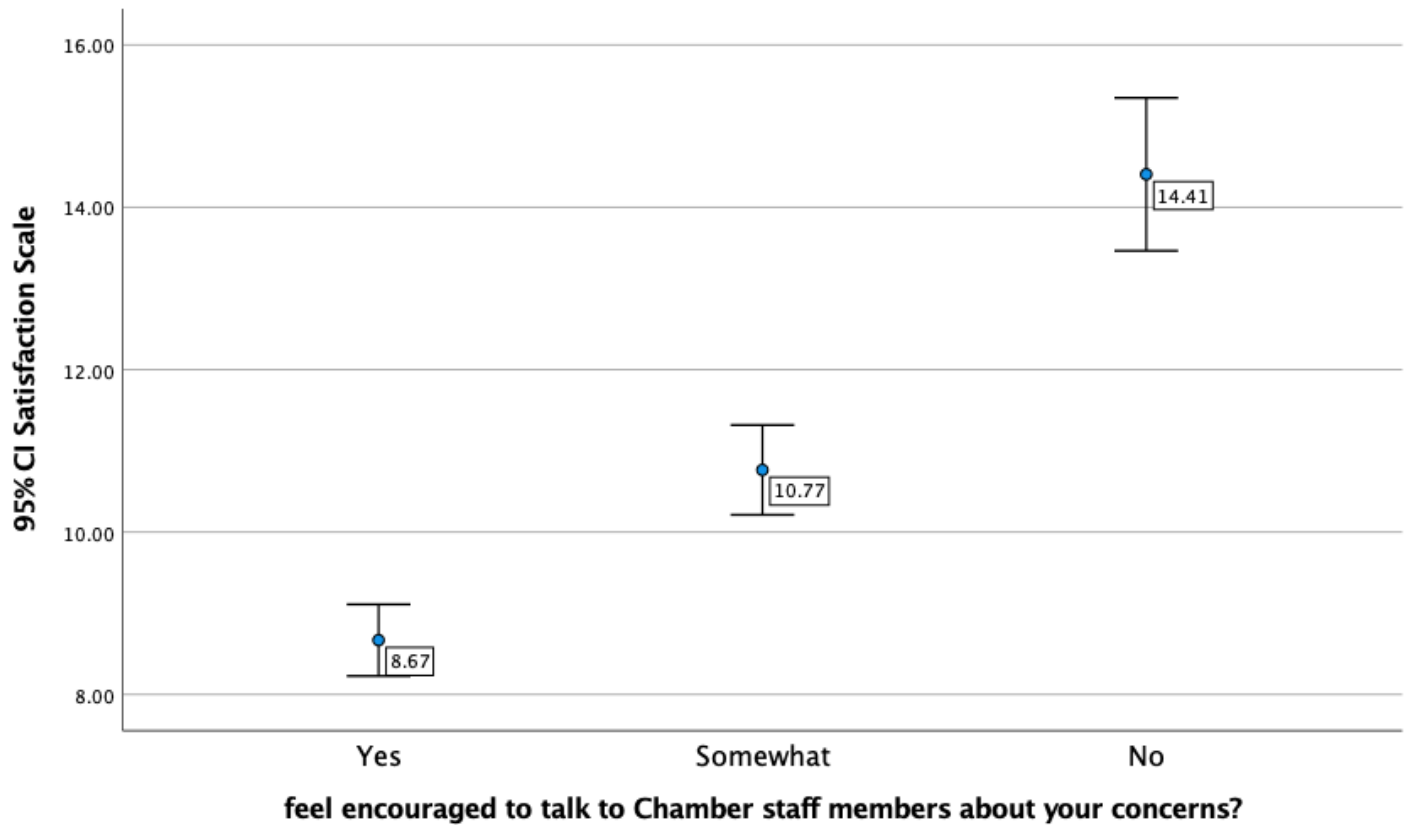
To look for relationships between Chamber programs and services and member satisfaction/value, we created a new scale that combined participants' responses to all the satisfaction items. The satisfaction scale was created by adding the five questions on satisfaction. These questions were based on a scale from 1 to 5 with "1" being "strongly agree" (very satisfied) and "5" being "strongly disagree" (very dissatisfied). Note also that a scale reliability test was conducted to assess the tight fit and interchangeability of those 5 items (Cronbach Alpha = .91, which indicates good reliability). A score of 5 means that respondents had been very satisfied on all five items; a score of 25 means that respondents had selected the most dissatisfied answer for all five items.

- Many participants' total satisfaction scores were 10 or below, indicating agreement or strong agreement with the overall satisfaction and value items. A score of 15 means having selected a neutral answer on all five items. As you can see above in the satisfaction figure below, the frequency of respondents being dissatisfied (somewhat and very) is very low.



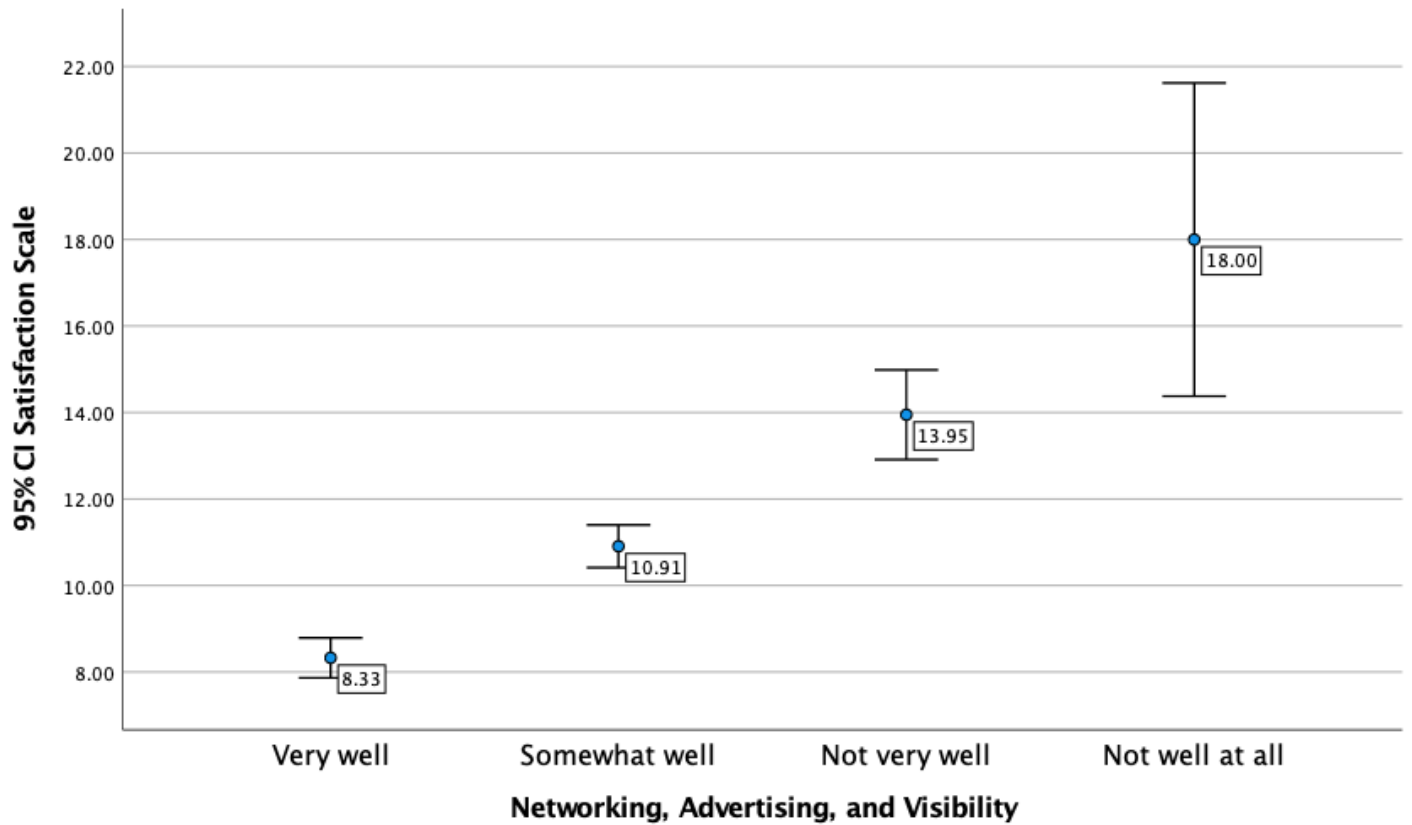
SATISFACTION BY FEELING ENCOURAGED TO TALK

When looking at the graph below, the mean (average) score on the satisfaction scale is identified among subgroups: “yes” (I feel encouraged to talk to Chamber staff), “somewhat,” and “no.” The mean score is the dot while the bracket represents the potential range of this mean score based on the subsamples. Clearly, the mean score on the satisfaction scale is lower (better) when members feel encouraged to talk to the Chamber. That means higher satisfaction among members when they feel encouraged to talk to the Chamber staff members about their concerns.



SATISFACTION BY NETWORKING, ADVERTISING, AND VISIBILITY

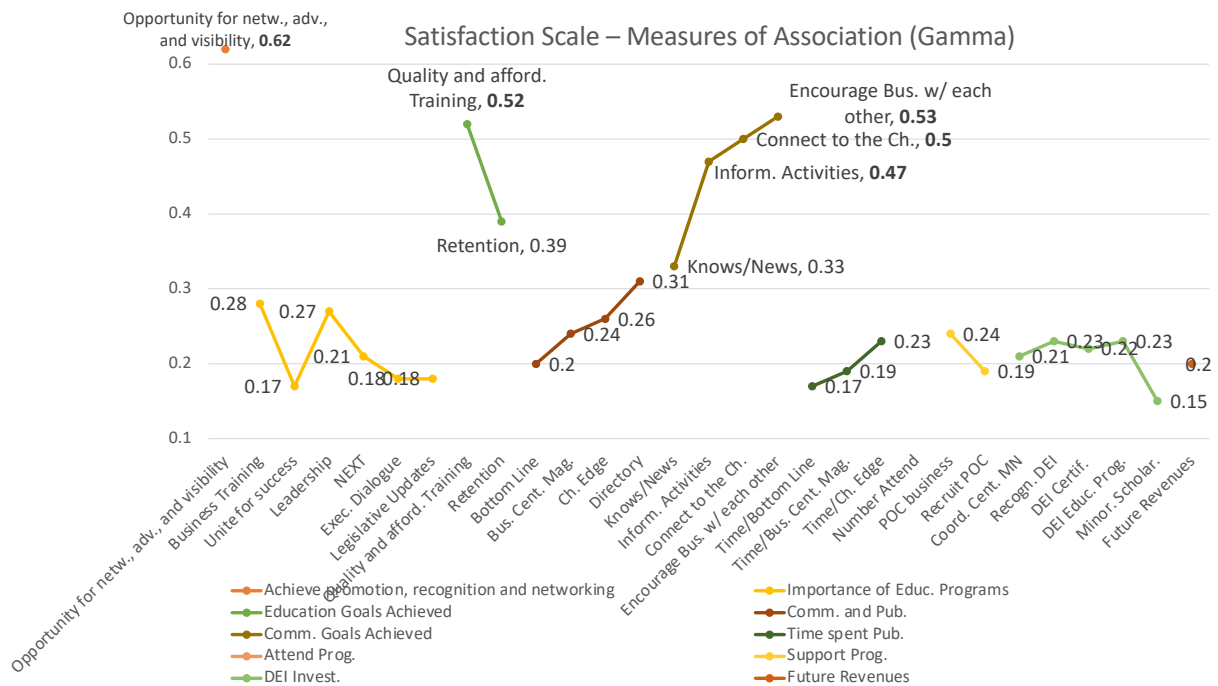
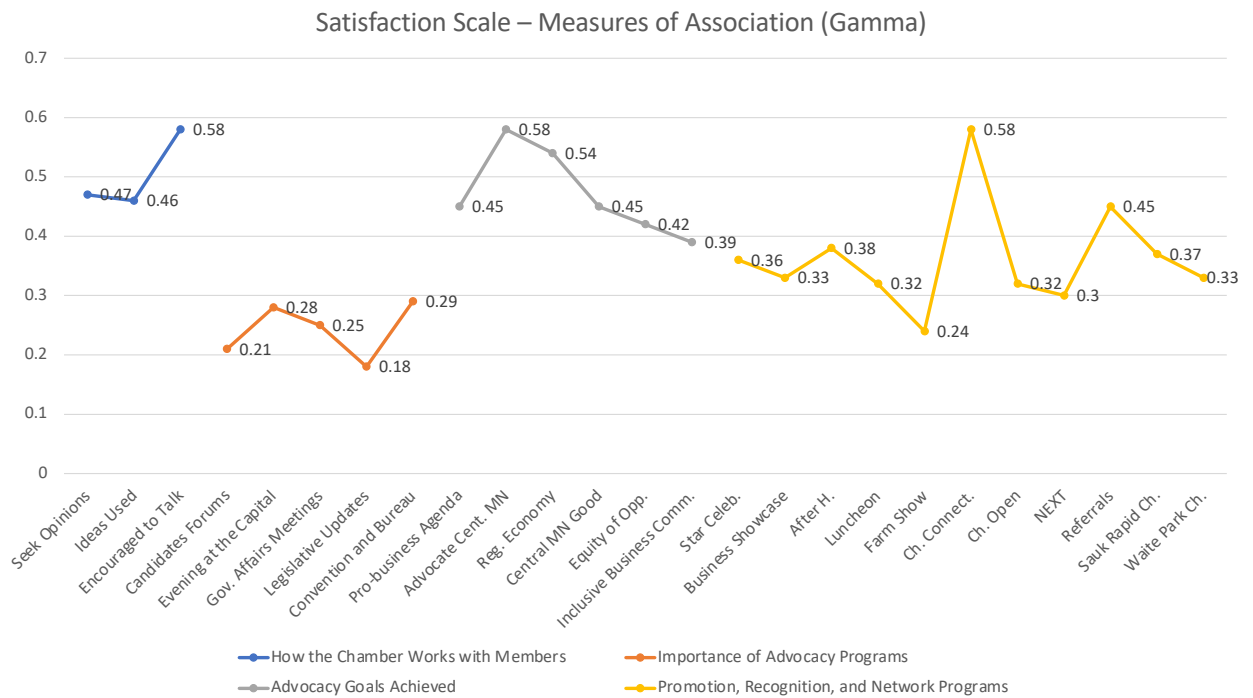
The same pattern seems to be true when comparing groups on how well they believe the Chamber is doing with networking, advertising, and visibility. The more likely members feel like the Chamber is doing a good job, the more likely they are satisfied with the Chamber.



FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SATISFACTION

By creating a satisfaction scale, we are also able to run measures of association with ordinal variables created from the survey. The appropriate measure of association for these analyses is gamma and it can be interpreted as an indicator of the best predictors of overall satisfaction. Those gamma values posted on this graph are all statistically significant at alpha equal or less than .05 (in other words, 5 chances in 100 that those values are wrong). A positive gamma means a positive relationship between the paired variables. All gammas are positive here. As scores obtained on the satisfaction scale increase, the “pairing” pattern with the other variables also suggests an increase. For example, a higher value on “encourage members to talk (which would be a “no” instead of a “yes”) is more closely related to a higher value on the satisfaction scale (which would be a more dissatisfied answer). Also, note that the value of gamma is interpreted in terms of ability to predict satisfaction score by knowing scores on the other variables. The closer to 1.00 the gamma value, the closer to the ability to predict without mistakes the satisfaction score. The range of gamma is between 0 and 1.0. A moderate ability to predict the satisfaction level would be a gamma value that ranges from .4 to .6. The strongest predictors of satisfaction with the Chamber are the ones above the .5 line in the graph above. Any gamma value below the .3 line means that our guesses would be weak when linking those items to the ability to predict satisfaction level.

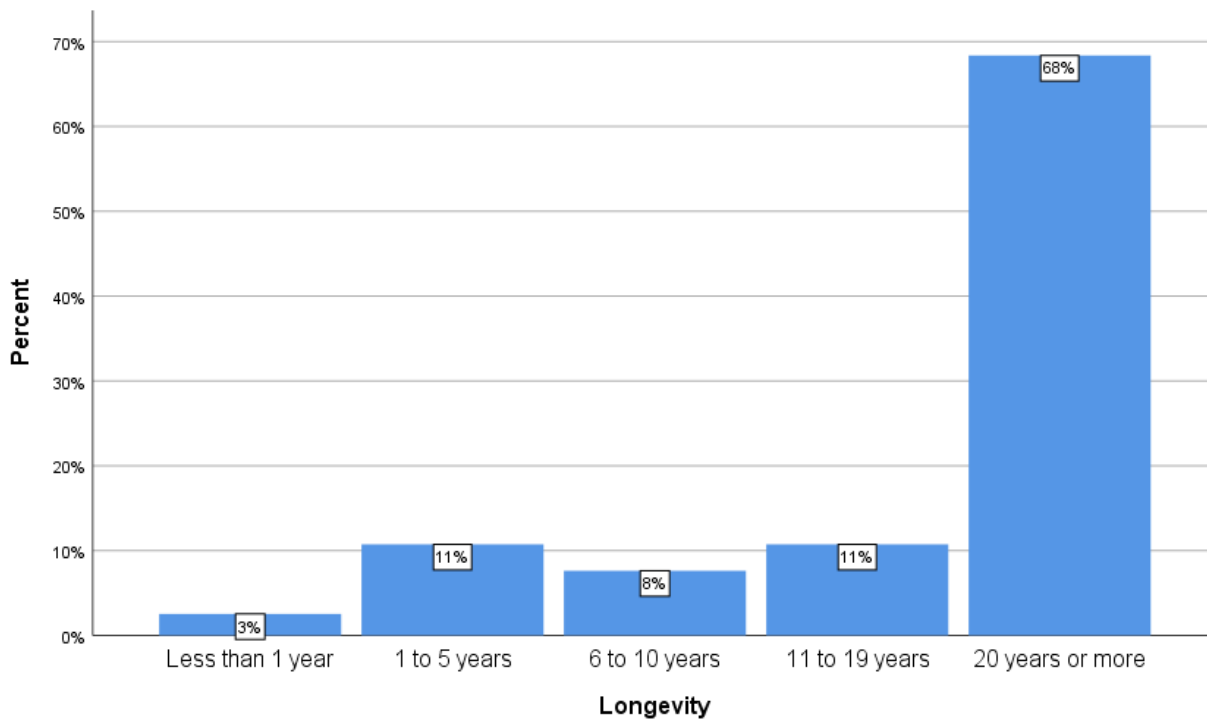
- The strongest associations with satisfaction with the Chamber are: opportunity for networking, advertising, and visibility (gamma = .62), quality and affordability training (gamma = .52), encouragement to do business with each other (.53), and ability to connect with the Chamber (gamma = .5).

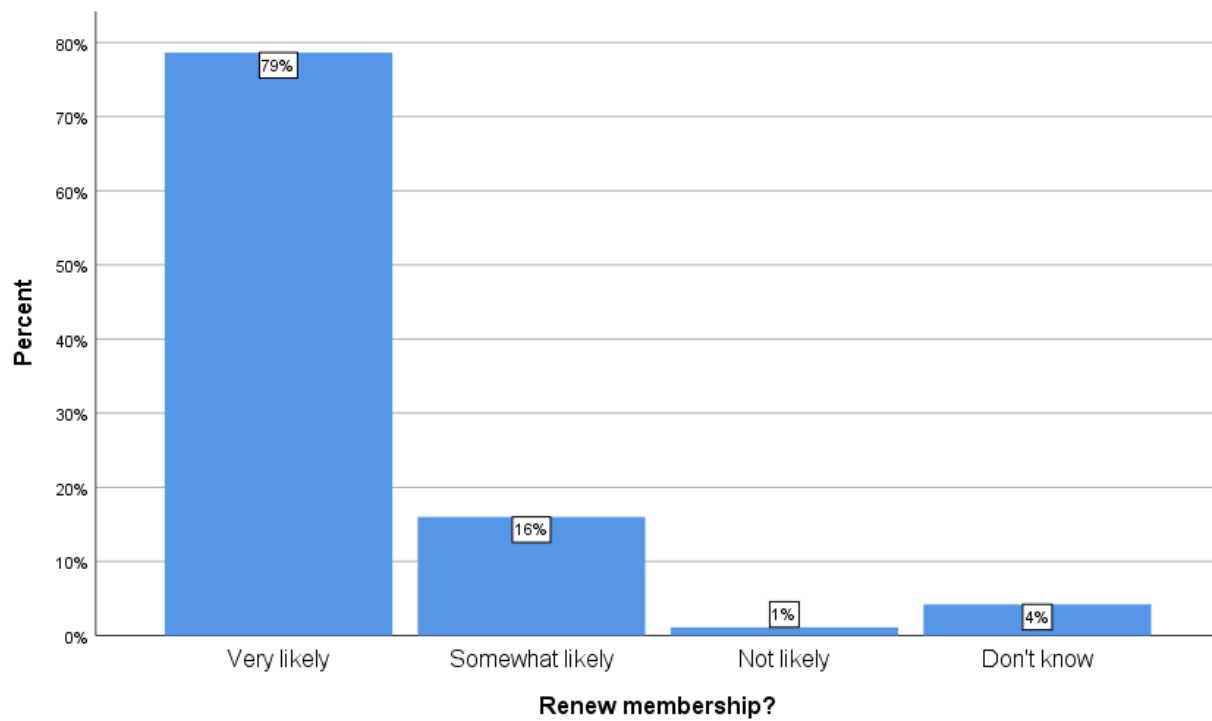
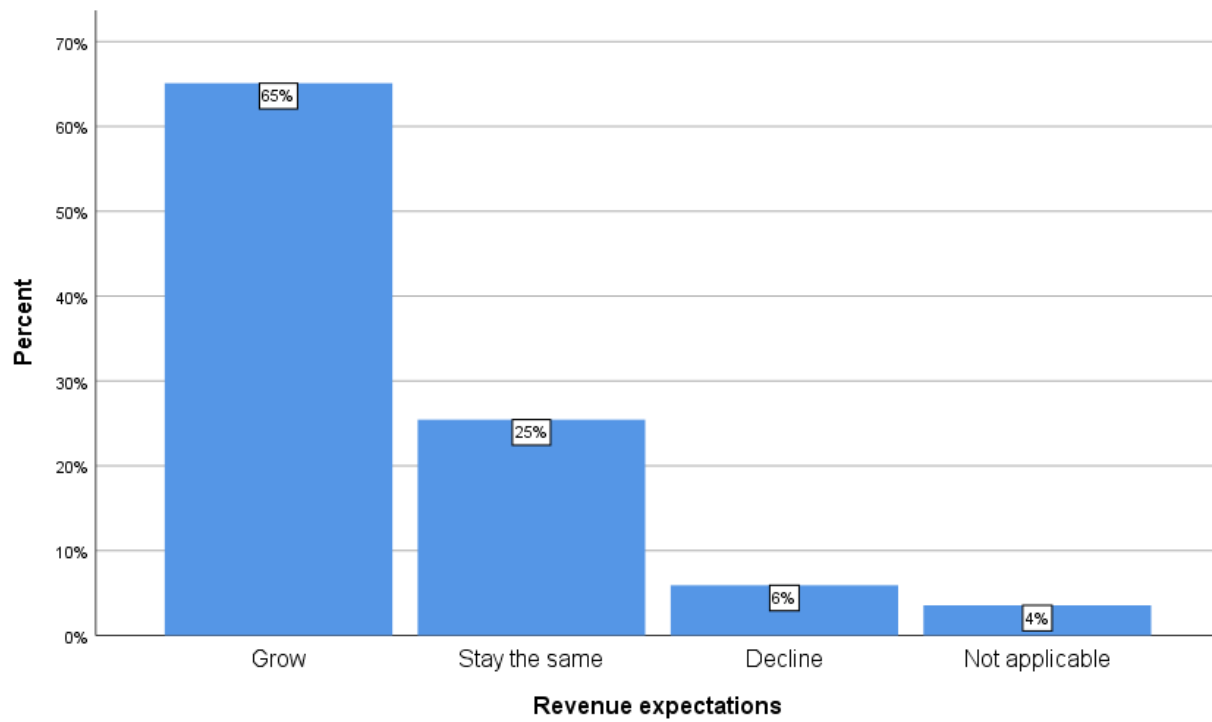


BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION CHARACTERISTICS

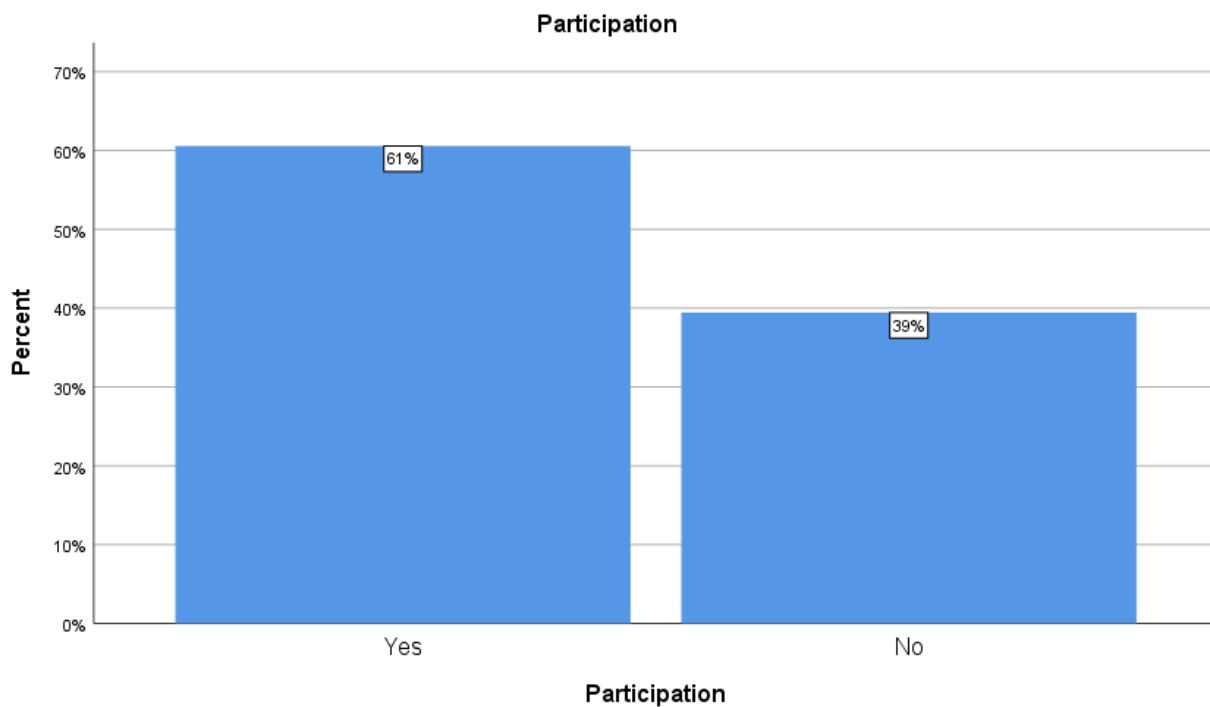
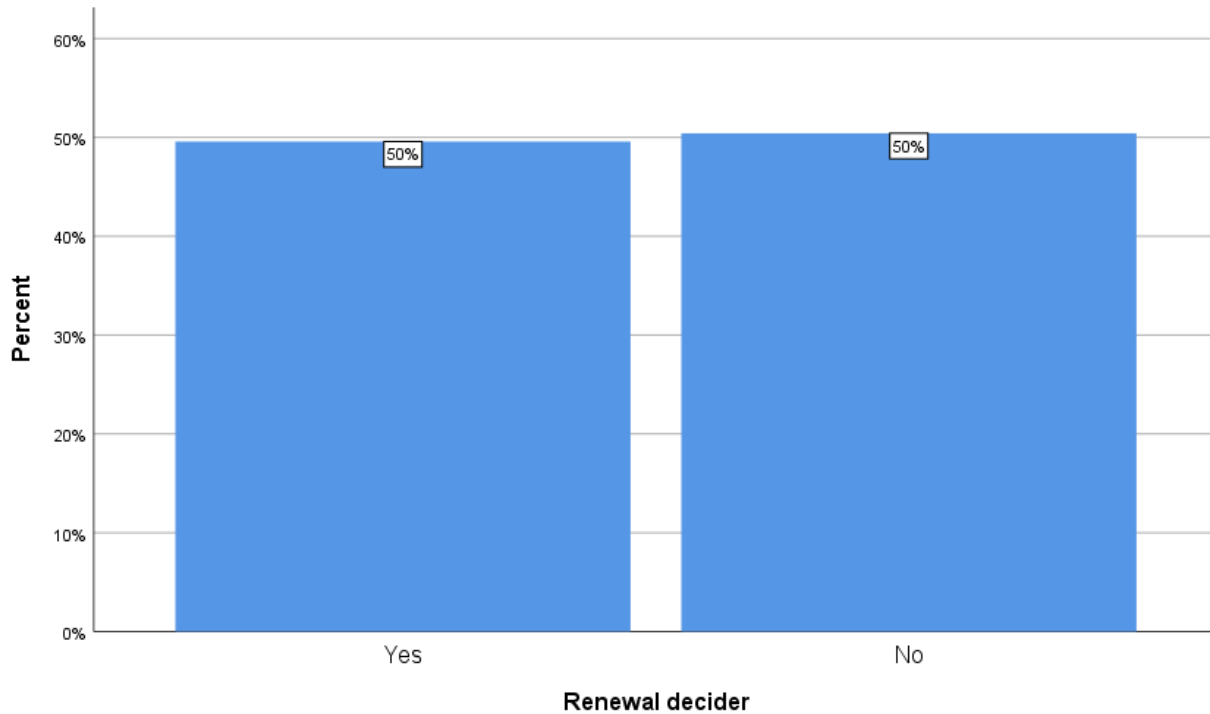
Most firms represented in this sample of Chamber members are established businesses in Central Minnesota and expect to grow in the next year. Nearly all firms represented in this survey expected to renew their Chamber membership.

This section also included an open-ended item asking participants to share their primary reason for belonging to the Chamber. Common responses were to network; build and strengthen connections with other businesses, the community, and government; grow their organizations and expose them to other businesses and clients; learn more about the local business community; support important work and become involved in the larger community; access education and training; provide opportunities for personal and professional development; get involved in legislative advocacy; and support other businesses.





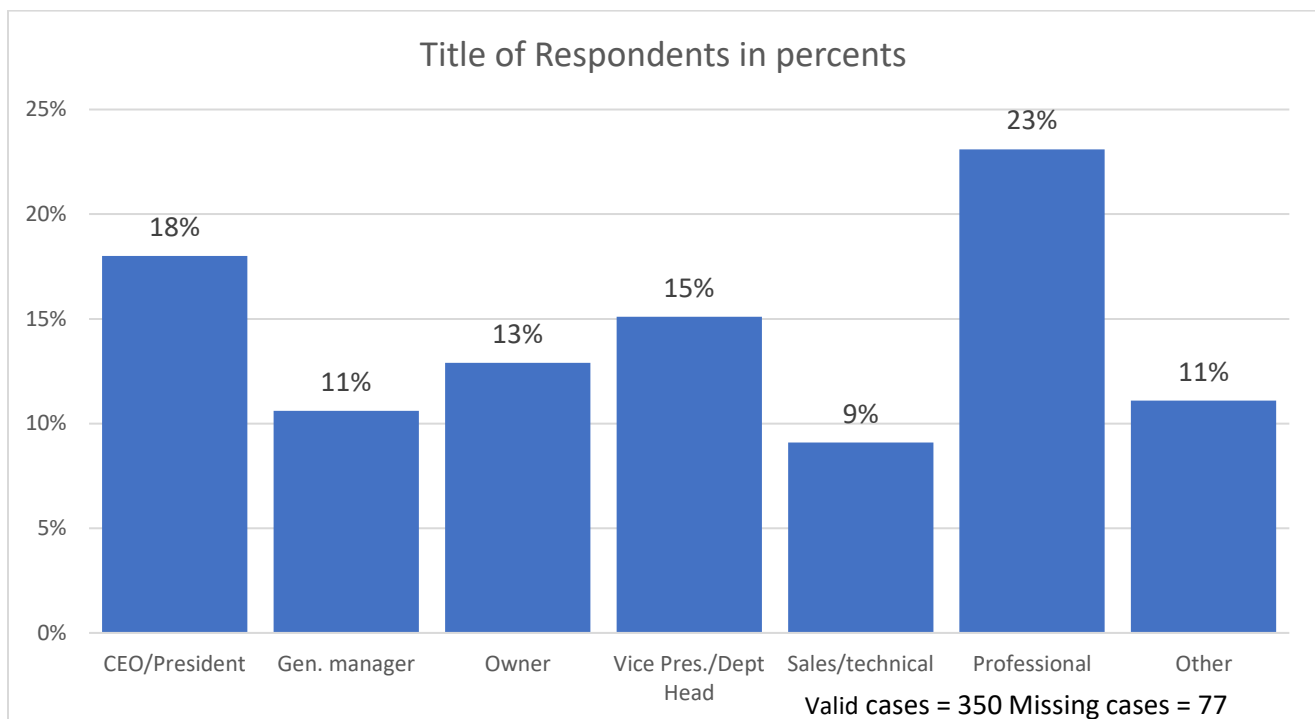
- Half of the participants in this year's member value survey are the people from their firm who decide on Chamber membership renewal, and over half determine the level of Chamber participation appropriate for their firm.

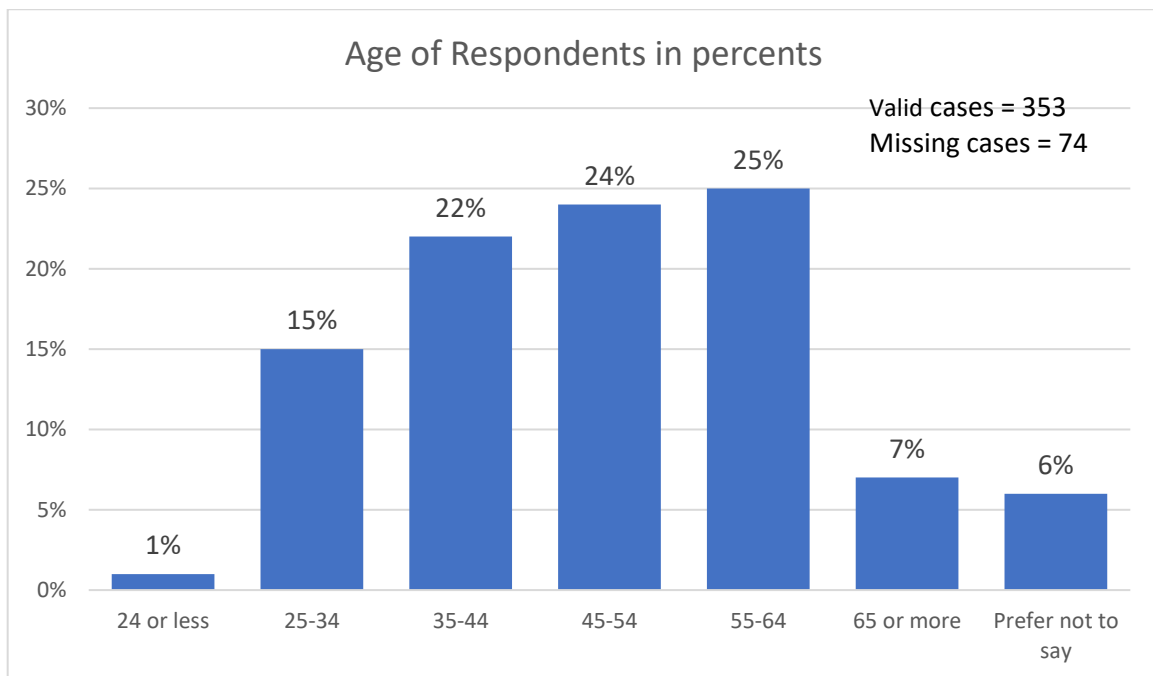
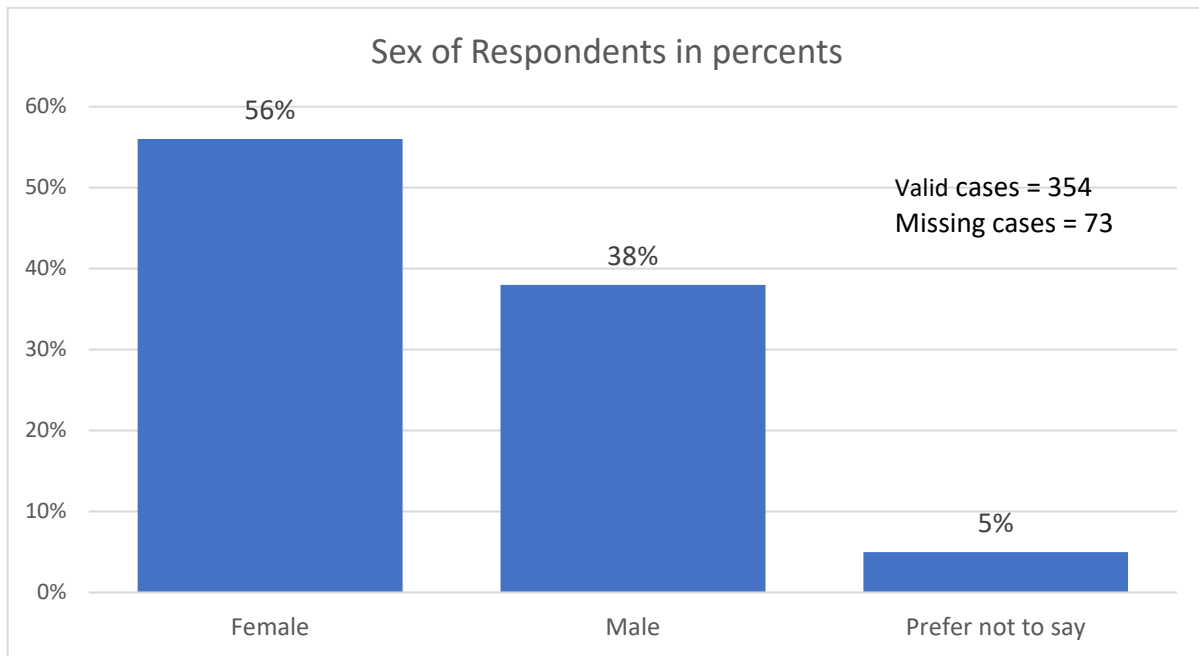


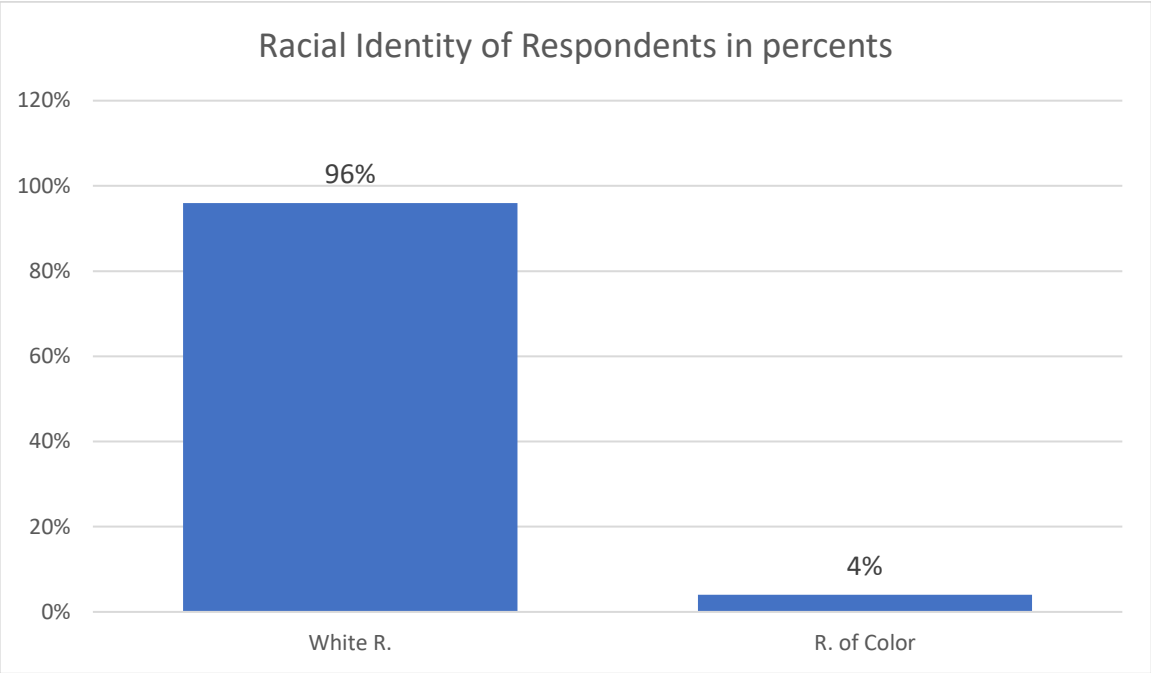
PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

The final section of this year's member value survey collected demographic information. This information was collected for two purposes: (1) to see if different groups of members have different opinions about the Chamber, and (2) to determine if the sample collected for this survey was representative of the overall Chamber membership.

Participants were mostly women (55%), mostly White (96%), and represented many roles within their firms. Most age groups were well represented in the survey, though only 1% of participants reported that they were 24 years of age or younger. While the response rate for this study was fairly high, we are not able to know how well our sample represents the actual population of Chamber members since there are not data available. In future, it may be useful for the Chamber to collect some basic demographic data such as gender, age category, and racial or ethnic identity.







APPENDIX I: ST. CLOUD AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2022 MEMBERSHIP VALUE SURVEY

St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce Member Value Survey 2022

Q1 We are conducting a study of members of the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce to determine if the Chamber is providing programming that best meets your business needs. This survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. We value your time and would appreciate your participation.

Please note that this survey is best displayed on desktop or laptop computers. Some features may be less compatible with mobile devices. If you are interrupted during the survey, you can return to the survey later and the survey should keep your answers. Once you have completed the survey, you can no longer edit your responses or re-enter the survey.

This study is being conducted by the St. Cloud State University Survey Center on behalf of the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce. If you would like to contact the researchers of this study to discuss this research, please email the Survey Center at survey@stcloudstate.edu.

There is no direct benefit and no anticipated risk for participating in this study. You may not receive any compensation for your participation, though you will have the option to opt into a prize drawing upon exiting the survey. You can opt into the prize drawing even if you do not complete the survey.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your responses will be completely confidential and no personal information will be connected to your responses. IP addresses will be available to researchers, but will be removed before data analysis to maintain confidentiality.

By clicking the button below, you acknowledge that your participation in the survey is voluntary, you are 18 years of age or older, you are a member of the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce, and that you are aware that you can stop your participation in the survey at any time and for any reason with no consequence.

- Yes, I agree to participate (1)
- No, I do NOT agree to participate (2)

*Skip To: End of Survey If We are conducting a study of members of the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce to determine if th... =
No, I do NOT agree to participate*

Q2 Please indicate your satisfaction by clicking one answer for each statement.

	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
I am satisfied with current Chamber programs and services. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Membership in the Chamber is good for my business or organization. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have made worthwhile professional contacts through membership in the Chamber. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Membership in the Chamber gives me my money's worth. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel connected to the Chamber. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q3 These next questions ask about how the Chamber works with members.

	Yes (1)	Somewhat (2)	No (3)	Don't know (4)
Does the Chamber actively seek members' opinions and ideas? (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are members' ideas used constructively? (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you feel encouraged to talk to Chamber staff members about your concerns? (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4 According to its mission, the Chamber "...increases business contacts, enhances professional development, and provides leadership and information on local and state business issues."

How important to you are each of these advocacy programs and services? Please click one answer for each program.

	Very important (1)	Somewhat important (2)	Not very important (3)	Not at all important (4)
Candidates forums (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
St. Cloud Area Evening at the Capital (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Governmental Affairs Meetings (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legislative Updates (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chamber's Convention & Visitors Bureau (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q5 Below are the goals of the Chamber advocacy programs and services listed above. How well is the Chamber doing at achieving these goals?

	Very well (1)	Somewhat well (2)	Not very well (3)	Not at all well (4)	Don't know (5)
Promoting a pro-business legislative agenda (1)	•	•	•	•	•
Being an advocate for businesses in Central Minnesota (2)	•	•	•	•	•
Building the regional economy (3)	•	•	•	•	•
Promoting Central Minnesota as a good place to visit or hold a convention or event through the activities of the Chamber's Convention & Visitors Bureau (4)	•	•	•	•	•
Promoting equity of opportunity in business practices (5)	•	•	•	•	•
Supporting an inclusive business community (6)	•	•	•	•	•

Q6 According to its mission, the Chamber “...increases business contacts, enhances professional development, and provides leadership and information on local and state business issues.”

How important to you are each of these promotion, recognition, and networking programs and services? Please click one answer for each program or service.

	Very important (1)	Somewhat important (2)	Not very important (3)	Not at all important (4)
Star Celebration (Annual Banquet) (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
St. Cloud Business Showcase (annual social w/member booths) (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business After Hours (monthly open house/social) (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business Awards Luncheon (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Central Minnesota Farm Show (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chamber Connection (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chamber Open (golf outing) (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NEXT-Chamber's Emerging Leaders (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business referrals to members (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sauk Rapids Chamber (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waite Park Chamber (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q7 Below are the goals of Chamber promotion, recognition and networking programs and services listed above. How well is the Chamber doing at achieving these goals?

	Very well (1)	Somewhat well (2)	Not very well (3)	Not well at all (4)	Don't know (5)
To provide opportunities for networking, advertising, and visibility that will ultimately lead to, or result in, sales (1)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8 According to its mission, the Chamber “...increases business contacts, enhances professional development, and provides leadership and information on local and state business issues.”

How important to you are each of these education programs and services? Please click one answer for each program.

	Very important (1)	Somewhat important (2)	Not very important (3)	Not at all important (4)
Business training seminars (1)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unite For Success (high school scholarship program) (2)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
St. Cloud Area Leadership (adult leadership program) (3)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NEXT-Chamber’s Emerging Leaders (young professionals group) (4)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Executive Dialogue Groups (5)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q9 Below are the goals of Chamber education programs and services listed above. How well is the Chamber doing at achieving these goals?

	Very well (1)	Somewhat well (2)	Not very well (3)	Not at all well (4)	Don't know (5)
To provide quality business training at an affordable price to Chamber members to assist in their success and growth (1)	•	•	•	•	•
To retain existing employees (2)	•	•	•	•	•

Q10 According to its mission, the Chamber “...increases business contacts, enhances professional development, and provides leadership and information on local and state business issues.”

How important to you are each of these communication and publication programs and services? Please click one answer for each program.

	Very important (1)	Somewhat important (2)	Not very important (3)	Not at all important (4)
Bottom Line (paper newsletter) (1)	•	•	•	•
Business Central Magazine (3)	•	•	•	•
Chamber Edge (electronic newsletter) (4)	•	•	•	•
Membership Directory (5)	•	•	•	•

Q11 Below are the goals of Chamber communication and publication programs and services listed above. How well is the Chamber doing at achieving these goals?

	Very well (1)	Somewhat well (2)	Not very well (3)	Not at all well (4)	Don't know (5)
To keep members abreast of what's going on in the business community (1)	•	•	•	•	•
To inform members about the activities of the Chamber in which they might want to participate (2)	•	•	•	•	•
To connect the membership to the Chamber (3)	•	•	•	•	•
To encourage members to do business with each other (4)	•	•	•	•	•

Q12 Do you prefer to receive newsletters and other information materials:

- Printed/mailed (1)
- Electronic (2)
- Social media (3)
- Both electronic and mailed (4)
- All of the above (5)

Q13 Is there particular information you would like to receive from the Chamber that you don't currently receive?
Please enter your response here:

Q14 In a typical month, how much time do you spend with the following publications?

	30 minutes or more (1)	15 to 29 minutes (2)	10 to 14 minutes (3)	5 to 9 minutes (4)	Less than 5 minutes (5)	None (6)
Bottom Line (paper newsletter) (1)	•	•	•	•	•	•
Business Central Magazine (2)	•	•	•	•	•	•
Chamber Edge (electronic newsletter) (3)	•	•	•	•	•	•

Q15 In a typical year, how many government affairs functions do you attend? These could be regular government affairs meetings, candidate forums, St. Paul visits, etc.

- None (1)
- One (2)
- Two to Four (3)
- Five or more (4)
- Don't know (5)

Q16 Which of the following are the most likely reasons you wouldn't attend a government affairs event? Please check all that apply.

- Lack of time (1)
- Not interested in government affairs (2)
- Someone else from our firm has that responsibility (3)
- Programming does not fit my needs (4)
- Other (please specify) (5) _____

Q34 Consistent with the mission and values of the Chamber, we recognize the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the business community of Central Minnesota. The following questions will help us integrate those values in our strategic planning process.

Which of the following programming topics would you like to see the Chamber support? Would you support those that are geared toward:

	Strongly support (1)	Somewhat support (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat oppose (4)	Strongly oppose (5)
Supporting and attracting businesses owned by people of color to the region (1)	•	•	•	•	•
Recruiting and welcoming new and potential employees who are people of color (7)	•	•	•	•	•

Q35 Which of the following new diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) investments would you like to see from the Chamber?

Would you support:

	Strongly support (1)	Somewhat support (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat oppose (4)	Strongly oppose (5)
Coordination with other Central Minnesota organizations to develop programs that support community-wide DEI efforts (1)	•	•	•	•	•
Recognition of outstanding contributions to DEI within the Central Minnesota business community (2)	•	•	•	•	•
Development of a DEI Certification Program for Central Minnesota businesses (3)	•	•	•	•	•
Educational programing supporting DEI such as Lunchtime Learning (4)	•	•	•	•	•
Scholarships to be put toward Chamber membership for minority-owned businesses (5)	•	•	•	•	•

Q17 These next questions help us categorize your responses.

Q18 How long has your organization operated in the St. Cloud area?

- Less than 1 year (1)
- 1 to 5 years (2)
- 6 to 10 years (3)
- 11 to 19 years (4)
- 20 years or more (5)
- Don't know (6)

Q19 What do you anticipate will happen to your organization's revenues in the next 12 months?

- Grow (1)
- Stay the same (2)
- Decline (3)
- Don't know (4)
- Not applicable (5)

Q20 These questions are designed to help us draw a profile of our membership, to help in planning.

Q21 How likely is your organization to renew your membership in the Chamber when it next comes due?

- Very likely (1)
- Somewhat likely (2)
- Not likely (3)
- Don't know (4)

Q22 Are you the person who decides on Chamber renewal for your firm?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q23 Do you determine the level of Chamber participation appropriate for your firm?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q24 What is your primary reason for belonging to the Chamber? Please enter your response here:

Q25 These questions help us see if different groups of members have different opinions.

Q26 Which of these is closest to your title? Please select one.

- CEO/President (1)
- General manager (2)
- Owner (3)
- Vice president/department head (4)
- Sales/technical (5)
- Professional (6)
- Other (please specify) (7) _____

Q28 What is your gender?

- Female (1)
- Male (2)
- Prefer an alternative identifier (please specify) (3) _____
- Prefer not to say (4)

Q29 What is your age?

- 24 years or younger (1)
- 25 to 34 years (2)
- 35 to 44 years (3)
- 45 to 54 years (4)
- 55 to 64 years (5)
- 65 years or older (6)
- Prefer not to say (7)

Q30 What is your racial identity? (Please select all that apply)

- American Indian or Alaskan Native (1)
- Asian (2)
- Black or African American (3)
- Middle Eastern (4)
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (5)
- White (6)
- Prefer an alternative identifier (please specify) (7) _____
- Prefer not to say (8)

Q31 Do you identify with any of the following ethnicities? Select all that apply.

- Hispanic or Latinx (1)
- Hmong (2)
- Somali (3)
- None of the above (4)
- Don't know (5)
- Prefer not to say (6)

APPENDIX II: ST. CLOUD AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2022 MEMBERSHIP
VALUE SURVEY – INCENTIVE DRAWING

St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce Survey 2022 - Incentive Drawing

Q1 Thank you for your interest in the incentive drawing for the St. Cloud Area of Commerce 2022 Member Value Survey. Participation in this drawing is voluntary, and is open to participants whether or not they have completed the Member Value Survey. You may choose to terminate your participation in this drawing at any time and for any reason with no penalty.

Please enter the information requested below to be added to the drawing. Winners will be contacted after data collection has ended.

Q3 First name:

Q4 Last name:

Q5 Email address:

(Please note that only valid email addresses will be considered for the drawing; if we are unable to contact you, you will not receive a prize)
