

Clayton Chamber of Commerce 2.0

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PROBLEM

The Clayton Chamber of Commerce is critical to the local business community and helps to drive local impact. After 75 years, it abruptly stopped operating, creating risk to the local business community and jeopardizing community impact.



**The Clayton Chamber of Commerce
is proud to have served the Clayton community
for almost 75 years.**

Dear Members and Community Partners,

Over the past several years, the Chamber, like many other non-profit organizations, has faced numerous challenges. Since 2020, there has been a significant cultural shift in work and socialization patterns. Many businesses now operate in a hybrid environment, and business connections increasingly now take place virtually rather than gatherings in person. Economically, inflation has led many businesses to tighten their marketing and sponsorship budgets. Despite our best efforts to adapt and

Objective & Approach

Provide a new strategic direction for a newly formed Clayton Chamber of Commerce with specific recommendations on how to best drive sustainability and collective local impact.

Primary Research

- Learned from past Clayton Chamber of Commerce members and supporters.
- Learned from leaders of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce.

Secondary Research

- Studied 20 different chambers across the United States.
- Studied chamber-related market insights publicly available online.





Recommendations Summary

Utilize A Segmented Approach To Drive Success

Not everyone who engages with a chamber is alike.

Provide Offerings With The Highest Mutual ROI

Aligning activities with what matters most.

Create An Effective & Efficient Operating Model

Operating lean without sacrificing quality

Activate In A Strategic & Prioritized Manner

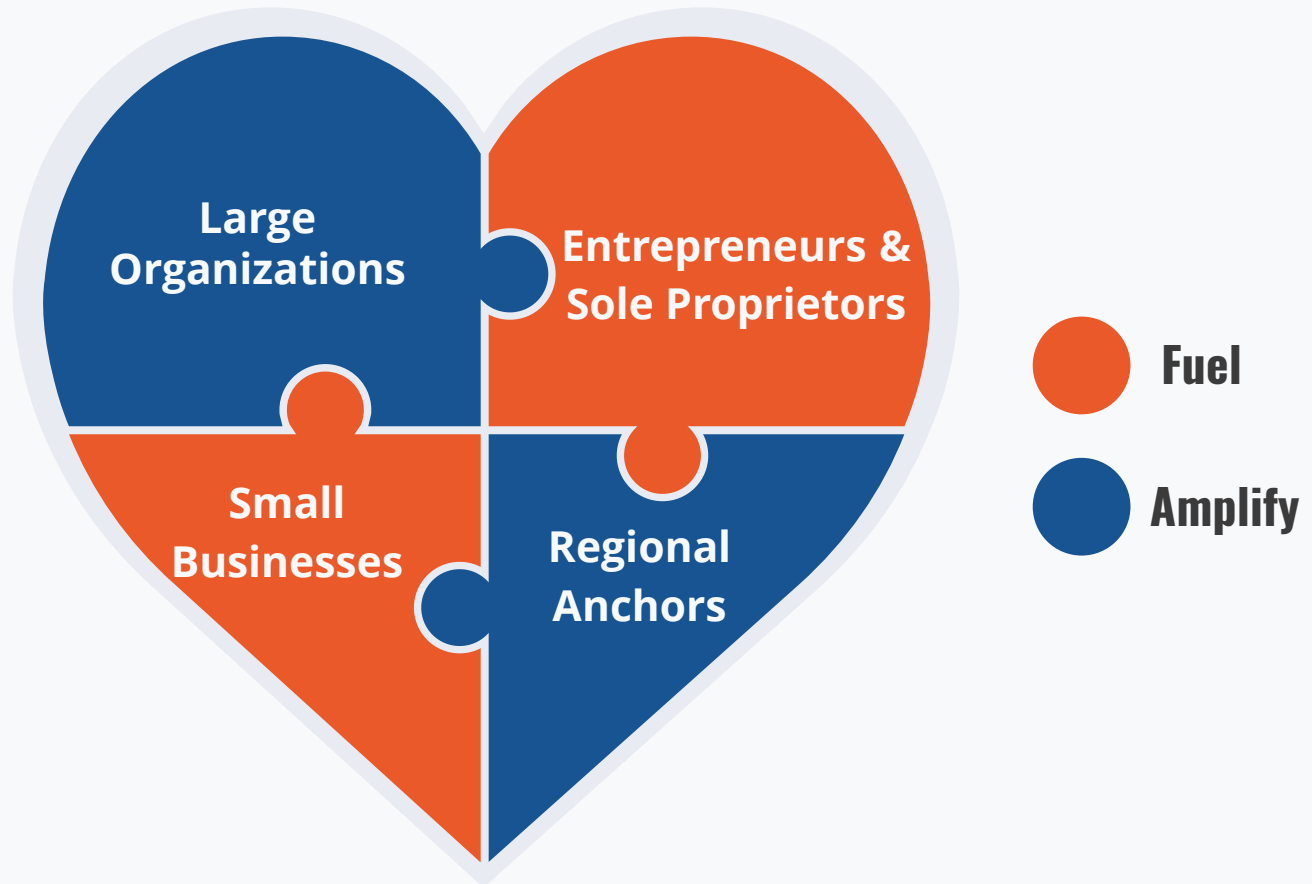
Achieve sustainability as quickly as possible.



A Segmented Approach To Success

- Large Organizations
- Regional Anchors
- Small Businesses
- Entrepreneurs & Sole Proprietors

Interconnected Constituencies



Large Organizations

Clayton, Missouri, serves as a significant business hub within the St. Louis metropolitan area, hosting the headquarters of several prominent companies.

Brand Reputation & CSR Initiatives

Research indicates that such investments can increase customer loyalty, improve employee engagement, and positive financial returns.

Connection To Other Large Organizations

Chambers serve as conduits, connecting enterprise leaders with relevant local stakeholders to address shared objectives or challenges.

Advancing Local Public Policy Efforts

According to the National Chamber of Commerce, 73% of large companies participate in local chambers for advocacy purposes.

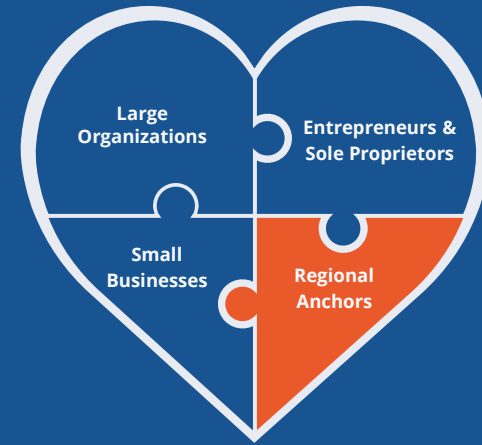
Access To Talent & Market Insights

The USCC's Foundation's Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) assists large organizations in talent acquisition and development.



Regional Anchors

Clayton's economic strength is enhanced by many established firms with local customers in the community.



Strengthen Local Economy

Regional anchors benefit from a healthy pipeline of clients and opportunities to help them grow their own business.

Demonstrating Community Leadership

Engaging with the chamber allows them to visibly contribute to community development, reinforcing their role as stakeholders in the city's growth.

Building Vital Local Relationships

Connection, cooperation, and collaboration with other segments is a critical part of the near and long-term growth strategy.

Access To Talent & Market Insights

Similar to Large Organizations, regional anchors benefit from chambers' initiatives that support talent acquisition and development.



Small Businesses

Clayton is home to hundreds of small businesses, 232 of which are currently listed as “members” from the existing Clayton Chamber of Commerce website.

Providing Collective Benefits

Leveraging the advantages of scale can be a significant challenge. A key role of a chamber is to bridge this gap.

Offering Practical Resources

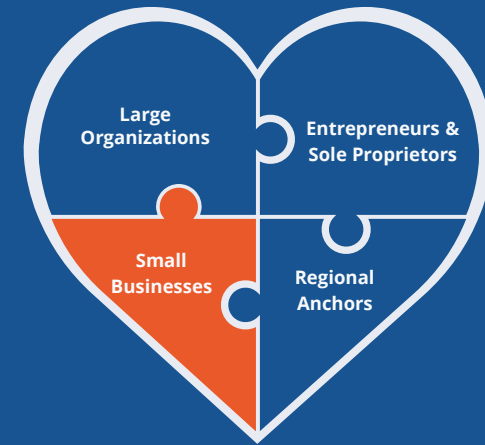
Chambers of commerce play a pivotal role in supporting small businesses by offering practical resources that address common challenges and promote sustainable growth.

Fostering Local Visibility & Connectivity

Chambers of commerce play a crucial role in enhancing the visibility of small businesses within their communities.

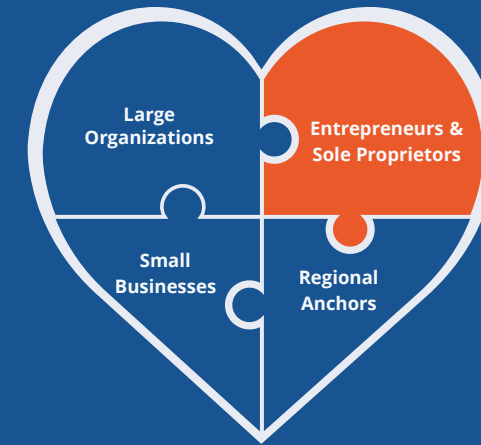
Advocating For Favorable Local Policies

Chambers are vital advocates, ensuring all voices are heard in policy discussions that directly impact their operations and their profitability.



Entrepreneurs & Sole Proprietors

Individuals with strategic ownership of their organizations either in the early stages or operating independently of others.



Access To Talent & Workforce Development

If and when this segment needs additional talent, the chamber becomes a vital source scale.

Providing Networking & Collaboration Opportunities

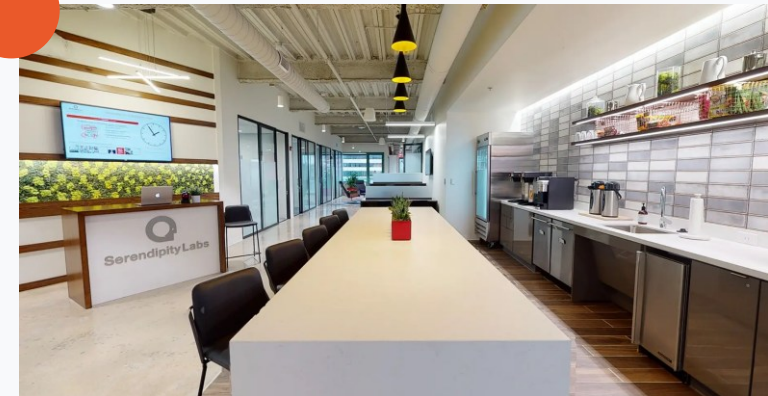
Networking is crucial for entrepreneurs and sole employees to build relationships, gain clients, and collaborate on projects.

Offering Business Development Programs

Access to resources that help grow their businesses is essential for this segment. The chamber can offer workshops, webinars, and mentorship programs.

Advocating For Entrepreneurial Policies

Entrepreneurs and sole proprietors benefit significantly from chambers that advocate for policies supporting innovation and reducing barriers to growth.





High Mutual ROI Offerings

- Access
- Support
- Brand Building
- Local Impact



Fuelling Chamber Stability & Growth

Aligning with what matters most to small businesses, entrepreneurs, and sole proprietors

**Access To
Affordable
Healthcare**

**Practical
Business
Support**

Workshops & Webinars
Mentorship Programs
Funding Access & Management
Community Platform & Directory
Community Engagement Programs

**Connection,
Cooperation, &
Collaboration**

**Talent Access &
Development**





Amplifying Sustainability & Impact

Aligning with what matters most to large organizations and regional anchors

**Brand
Building**

**Achieving
CSR Goals**

**Connection,
Cooperation &
Collaboration**

Chamber Sponsorship
Event Sponsorship
Community Impact Programs
Thought Leadership Opportunities



Effective & Efficient Operations

- Governance & Leadership
- Revenue Streams
- Partnerships
- Technology Utilization
- Measurement

Effectiveness & Efficiency Flywheel

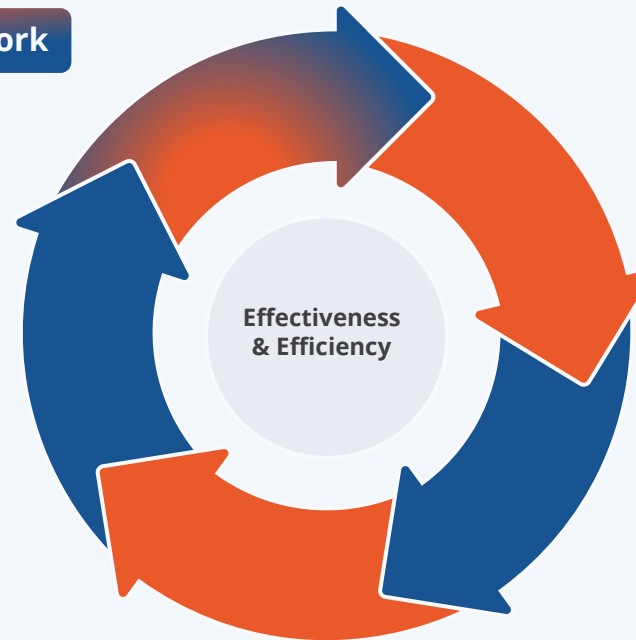
Continuously fuelling and amplifying the impact of the chamber in a financially sustainable way

Utilization Of A Measurement Framework

Regularly solicit member feedback and track key performance indicators to inform strategic decisions and improve retention, engagement, and resource allocation.

Strategic Use Of Technology

Leverage chamber-specific systems to automate operations and existing technologies like Zoom or Microsoft Teams to expand accessibility, streamline communications, and enhance operational efficiency.



Streamlined Governance & Leadership

Establish a small, active board for strategic direction, supported by dedicated staff and volunteer committees to distribute workload, enhance engagement, and drive key initiatives efficiently.

Diversified Revenue Streams

Implement tiered membership dues, develop sponsorship packages offering branding and thought leadership opportunities, and explore grants for initiatives.

Strategic Partnerships

Partner with local businesses for sponsorships and in-kind support, and collaborate with neighboring chambers to share resources, co-host events, and advocate on shared issues.



Strategic & Prioritized Activation

- Membership Stability
- Regional Anchor Support
- Large Company Backing
- Pragmatic Value Creation



6 Month Action Plan

Month 1 & 2

- Formation
- Staff & Board
- Volunteers
- Website

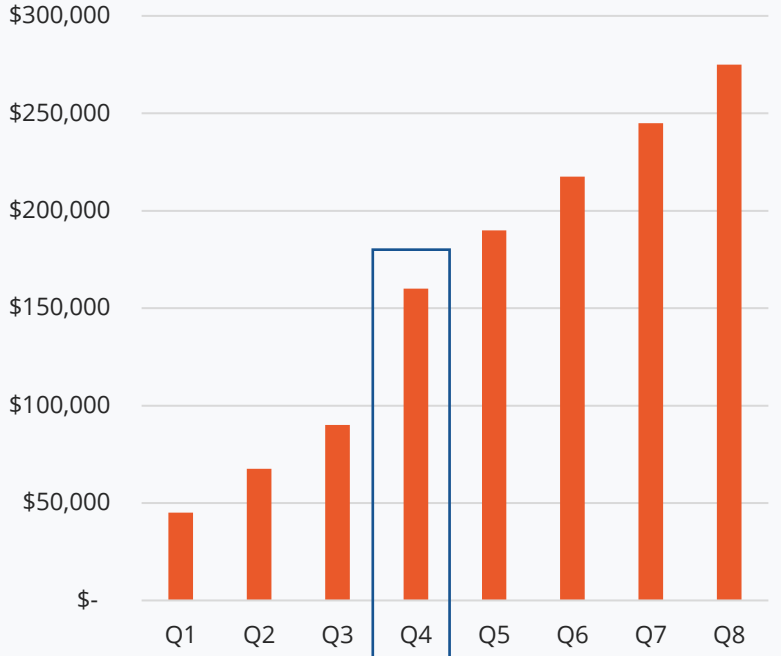
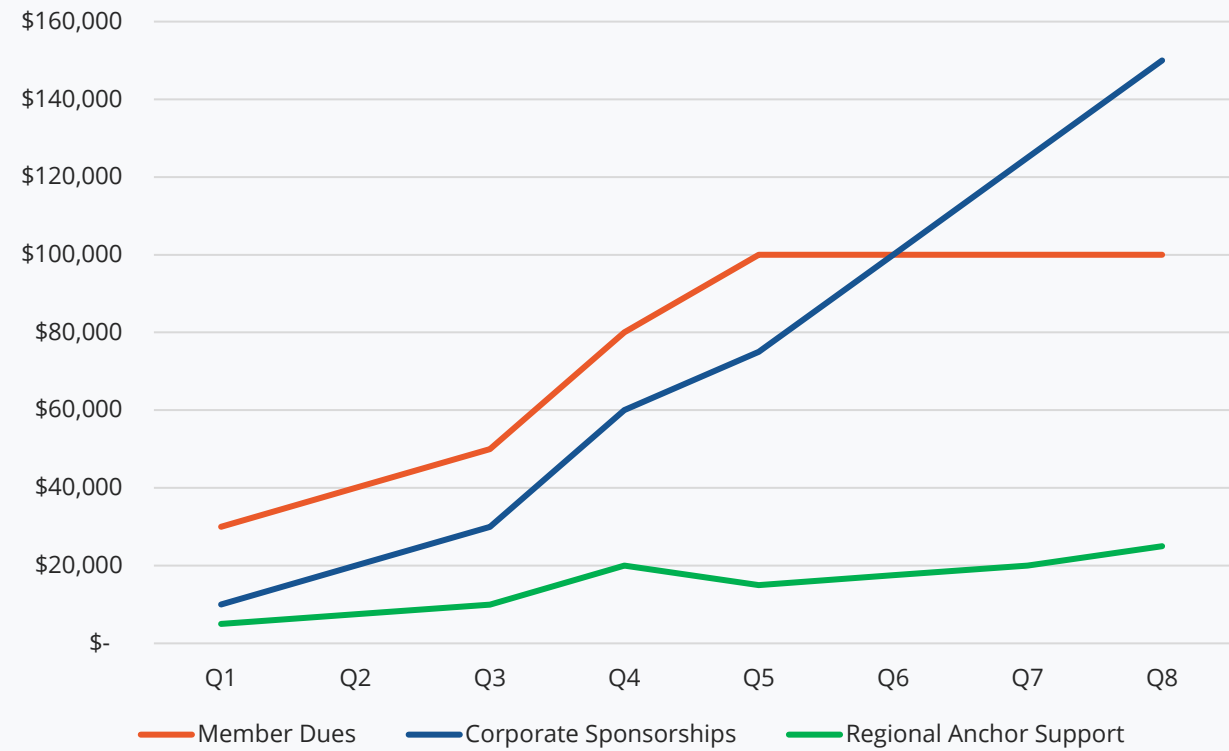
Month 3

- Regional Anchors
- Large Organizations
- Media
- Launch Event

Month 4, 5, & 6

- Pragmatic Events
- Grow Sponsorships
- Grow Memberships
- Add New Events

Establish Revenue Forecasting Targets



Experiential Learning At WashU

The Center for Experiential Learning (CEL) strives to transform business education, empowering students to achieve their goals, become impactful leaders, drive business success, and create meaningful community change. At the heart of this vision is the mission to deliver individualized, high-impact learning experiences that create a differentiated impact on students, businesses, and the community.

Each year, the CEL serves hundreds of students and organizations. To learn more about experiential learning opportunities at WashU, please visit the [CEL Website](#) or contact Michael Wall, Academic Director of Experiential Learning. – michael.wall@wustl.edu





**Thank
You**