

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA



Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Eastern Province

The World Chambers Competition 2007

The Category for the Chamber's Application

" BEST NEW MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT PROJECT "



EPCCI: New Membership Recruitment Projects

INTRODUCTION

The Eastern Province Chamber of Commerce & Industry (EPCCI) is one of Saudi Arabia's oldest and well-established service organizations devoted to the cause of promotion of the private sector contribution to the economy. The Province has a pride of place in the Saudi economy as it is the energy capital of the world. It has the distinction of possessing 25 percent of world's oil reserves and it is the world's largest oil producer and exporter. It is the home of the largest oil company in the world which also runs one of the world's largest networks of natural gas processing facilities, which has inspired the development of a flourishing petrochemical industry and other energy-intensive industries.

Oil is the strength and also the weakness of the economic structure of the region – strength because of the rich resources it brings; and weakness because of the dependence on a single commodity subject to price fluctuations. EPCCI, set up in the early 1950s, coinciding with the early stages of the oil sector growth, is dedicated to mobilize private sector resources to develop the non-oil economic sectors in the harmony with oil and gas.

In order to achieve this objective, the Chamber has devised a number of promotional and developmental services to give support to the private sector initiatives in industry, trade and services. As a result of these services, Chamber has been able to attract larger and larger numbers of members from year to year.

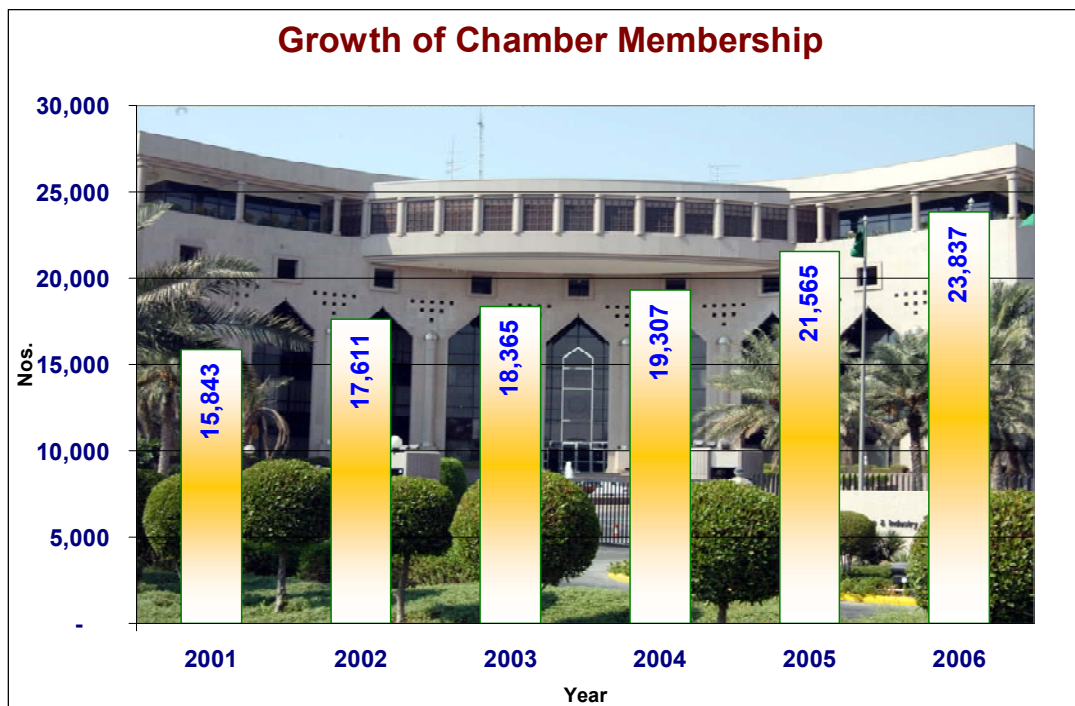
Chamber Vision

Leading the development of Eastern Province private sector activities.

Chamber Mission

We at the chamber of commerce pursue to be distinguished in providing distinct & high quality services that meet the expectation of the private sector, through the proper investment of available resources & ever changing technology, and the effective participation in the development of the economical and social aspects of the area, wherewith we attain the expectations / aspirations of our employees and customers, confirming the values and beliefs of our society.

During the last half a century and more, its membership has grown from just about a 100 initially to about 24,000 as at the end of 2006.



Major Chamber Activities which have helped the new membership recruitment drive

A. Women's Business Center: A large number of Saudi women are engaged in industries, trade and services, but because of certain traditional social customs, they are faced with special problems, which include difficulties in getting ready access to the Chamber's normal services. To solve their problems and to improve their contribution to the regions' business development, the Chamber has set up an exclusive wing for them, which has brought together all the business women in the Eastern Province. The Women's Business Center, the first of its kind in the world, is housed in a separate building and is run by women professionals, under the direction of women entrepreneurs. The Women's Business Center, which has about 800 members now, serves as a forum for discussion of common problems, runs entrepreneur development programs and conducts training programs in marketing and management.

The Women's wing has attracted a number of ladies engaged in business, big and small, and has thus increased the overall membership of the Chamber. The Chamber's support for Businesswomen Activities in the Eastern Province can be summarized as follows:

- The creation and establishment of the First Women Committee in the Chamber since its creation. The Committee includes 20 female members.
- The creation of the "Centre of Businesswomen", the first of its kind; and the creation of women branch in the centre that offers certification and authentication and other commercial services to the female members and businesswomen, and

changing of employment regulations for women, and the appointment of the first directress for the centre and a group of other female employees.

- The promotion of the women role through their participation with presentations in human resources meetings.
- The nomination of businesswomen from the Eastern Province to take part in conferences, and in local and international symposiums.
- The organization by the Businesswomen Centre of lectures, training workshops and courses for other businesswomen in the Eastern Province.

B. Sector-wise Committees: The EPCCI drive to expand the scope of its services to all sectors of the economy has paid dividends in terms of increasing its membership. The Chamber has set up 24 representative Committees for major industries, trade and other services. Each of these committees gives specialized attention to the problems and prospects for each of the sectors and acts as a link between the businessmen and the authorities. The extensive coverage of economic sectors has encouraged more and more businessmen, including medium-and small-scale business establishments, to join EPCCI.

C. Branches Development Drive: A peculiar feature of this Province is that industries and related businesses are not concentrated in one center. There are a number of clusters of industries, which are geographically apart and, therefore, cannot be handled from the Chambers' head office alone. To serve the businessmen of various localities, the Chamber has opened its branches and service centers in – Jubail, Qatif, Hafr Al Baten, Al Khafji, Al Khobar, Dammam Downtown, Dammam Ministry of Commerce & Industry Building – The branch expansion has served as a tool to promote membership.

D. Computerization and Networking: The Chamber has launched its E-Chamber program to expedite its services to its members. Members today can get on-line information from the Chamber, arrange authentication and pay membership fees, etc., which has speeded up members' dealings with the Chamber. This has encouraged many businessmen to join the organization.

The Chamber has introduced the following modern application systems to enhance and develop working methods:

- The construction and launching of the Chamber's web site.
- The addition of five interactive systems to the site:
 1. "Tawasul System" to interact with Sectors Committees members.
 2. "Pensioners Database" system for the Pensions Committee.
 3. "The Credit Centre information system" to give information on credit services to the members.
 4. "The Electronic Member System" through which the member can update his own information.
 5. "Events Centre" for posting activities and events of the Chamber, which is daily updated.

- The development of an electronic program for human-resources management.
- The implementation of the Enterprise Resources Program (ERP) to manage the financial and auditing systems.
- The implementation of the e-Chamber Program (Establishment Memory eEMS) to follow up on working plan progress and the internal administrative assignment.
- WiFi internet coverage for all auditoriums, meeting halls, dining hall and the main lobby.

- Improvements in the quality of the following aspects of the Chamber work relating directly to members are noteworthy in this connection.
 - The replacement of old traditional stamps for certification with new security stickers.
 - The launching and application of new management systems for electronic services offered for the members.
 - The set up and implementation of the comprehensive employee projects to minimize the service time.
 - The development of an electronic system of services for the membership, and commercial authentication and certification services.
 - The creation of electronic services link among all the branches of the Chamber.
 - The development of an external communication network by increasing the internet connection-line speed by 8 folds, and the internal line link by 4 folds.
 - Linking all members programs with the financial system in the Chamber in the centre as well as in the branches.
 - The formation of three committees of businessmen in the branches in: Hafr Al Baten, Jubail and Khafji.
 - The implementation of the new members' electronic system after it has been upgraded and updated.
 - The creation of special services division to offer services to distinguished members.
 - The modernization of the Qatif branch, and the transfer of Hafr Al Baten branch to its new headquarter.

E. V.I.P Services: EPCCI has set up a V.I.P center exclusively for large companies. This facilities priority treatment of large companies and thus avoids any types of delays caused by queuing up for services in the general stream. This service has attracted many new members.

F. New Rules for Renewal of Membership: Some of the relatively small companies do not renew membership every year and if it is to be renewed, they had to pay outstanding arrears. Chamber has decided to waive this clause and allowed all businessmen, who have defaulted in membership fees, to renew their membership without the payment of old dues. This gesture has brought in a new set of members to the Chamber.

G. Chamber's Promotional Services for Members

While these are some of the core functions of the Chamber which have the maximum impact on its membership drive, the Chamber has organized a network of departments to carry out various promotional functions for the members. A brief review of these functions are given below:

Members look up to the Chamber to get an inkling of new business opportunities in investment and trade, changes in economic and commercial policies at home and abroad and other market-oriented data.

1. Information Services:

- Local and International Database: Kompas , Data Media Systems (DMS), Zawya, Laws and Regulations Database, The Kingdom's Non-oil Export/Import Database, Export Database, Import Database and Statistical Database on Saudi economy.
- Information about companies and commercial establishments in the Eastern Province through Members System.
- Information about factories operating in the Eastern Province through Factory database system.
- Information about companies and factories through international databases offered through different commercial and industrial guides published by other Saudi Chambers of Commerce.
- Other economic and commercial information and statistics that are published by the governmental agencies and other statistical agencies.
- Easy and trouble-free access to all Saudi Laws and Regulations through Saudi Laws Encyclopedia.
- The distribution of all circulars and notifications to keep the members timely informed.
- The circulation of publications and industrial maps.
- The circulation of magazines and periodicals from other Saudi and Arab chambers..
- Access to the Web for browsing and research.
- A monthly updated list of projects compiled by data media systems (DMS) for the Saudi Commerce Magazine made available on the Chamber's website.

Chamber's following publications have also served the purpose of information dissemination:

Publications

The Magazines and Journals:

1. 12 Issues of “Al Ektisad” (The Economy) magazine annually, with an average printing of 17,000 copies monthly distributed to the members.
2. 12 Issues of “Saudi Commerce” magazine annually, with an average printing of 5,000 copies monthly distributed to the members.

Annual Directories and Other Publications:

1. The Industrial Directory in Arabic and English.
2. Commercial Directory in Arabic and English with Electronic Version
3. The Private Contractors Directory
4. The Services Sector Directory
5. The Eastern Province Today in English.
6. The Real Estate Directory
7. 1st & 2nd Industrial Cities Maps
8. Directory of Exporting Factories in the Eastern Province
9. Excellent Grade Members Directory
10. The Eastern Province Medical Directory.
11. The Industrial Zones Directory with electronic version on CD.
12. The Eastern Province Tourist Map.
13. Diary for Businessmen

Books and Studies:

1. The Construction Sector in Saudi Arabia under the WTO.
2. The Future of Commercial Agencies in the Light of World Trade Development.
3. Protectionist Policies and the Future of the Steel Industry under the World Trade Organization.
4. Dumping Issues and the Responsibility of the National Industry under WTO.
5. Exporters Guide to National Information Centers Responsible for Food Safety around the World.
6. Legal and Economic Consequences of the American Decision Regarding Steel Imports. (Study)
7. Government Transactions Guide for Small and Medium Companies.
8. Business Incubator Project. Study prepared in collaboration with The Human Resources Fund and The Bicentennial Fund.
9. Future Needs of Electrical Supply. Joint study with the Saudi Electric Company
10. The Importance of Al-Rugaii Gateway Study
11. The Saudi Exports Development Commission. Study.
12. Paper Recycling Industry. Study.
13. The Promising Economic Sectors in the Eastern Province. Study.
14. The Essential Factors in the Settlement of Local Investment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Study.
15. “The Transaction Processes in Dealing with the UN Procurement Policies Including Iraq Reconstruction”. A businessmen Guide.
16. Incentives to Investing in the Eastern Province. English

17. Annual Booklet: Investing in the Eastern Province.
18. Annual Booklet: Facts and Figures about the Eastern Province.
19. Annual Booklet: Business Incubator of the Eastern Province Chamber.
20. Annual Booklet: Developing Small and Medium Size Establishments.

2. The Centre for Studies and Research:

- The research department conducts studies and carry out research on issues relevant to the business of member-companies. The centre designs, organizes and carries out different researches and studies on different vital issues: economic, industrial, agricultural, commercial, services, statistical and others. It also follows up, evaluates and analyze all the hot issues that have any bearing on all development aspects in the Eastern Province.
- Offering of advice, consultations, and performing studies related to the Kingdom's accession to the WTO.

3. Investment Centre Services:

- The launching of a site in English Language on the internet.
- The issuing of a special CD about investment prospects in the Eastern Province on 5/2/2005, which was freely distributed to all members.
- Preparing a special annual publication about investment in the Eastern Province. In latest publication is "8 Reasons to Invest in Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia".

4. Training Centre Services:

- Holding various training courses including: developmental, general and specialized courses.
- The implementation of the National Joint Training Program for Employment.
- The offering of world Prometric Tests (men and ladies) which include: TOEFL-GRE-AMT- ABP-CAIA-AICPC-RHEM-GMAT-USMLE-ICMA-PMI.

5. Credit Centre Services:

- The launching of a credit information centre on the internet for (www.etiman.org.sa) for the service of members.

H. Legal Services and Consultations:

The Chambers' Legal Department provides consultation on legal issues to members and helps in solving commercial disputes: Its services include:

- Notary public services
- Solutions and settlements of legal commercial disputes including claims, protestations and arbitration.
- Offering of legal consultations including preparing and formulating work-mechanisms for sector committees including developing necessary by-laws, preparing draft laws, and legal adjudication.

I. Membership of the Executive Club of the Chamber

- Holding a monthly gathering in which members / businessmen get together to exchange views and ideas and meet with notable business executives.

J. SMEs Center

In absolute terms, the medium and small establishments represent the majority of our chamber membership. The support given to these units by the SMEs Center are as follows:

Organizing annual forums for small and medium size establishments:

- The first meeting was held under the title “Investment Opportunities in Small and Medium Size Establishments”. An exhibition of inventions and creations was also organized alongside.
- The second meeting for small and medium size establishment was held under the title “Small and Medium Size Establishments: A realistic Application of Free Enterprising Concept.”
- The third meeting for SMEs was held under the title “The Real Movers of National Economy”.
- The creation of awards for the best small establishment in each specific sector.
- Obtaining a real state site in the First Industrial Zone in Dammam to create the first business incubating area for small establishments in the Kingdom.
- Designing and executing training programs to qualify new Saudi entrepreneurs with new initiatives.
- Providing information in various domains to help starting and existing small and medium size establishments, and making this information available through the Chamber’s site on the internet.
- Offering help and support by the centre to entrepreneurs who seek to sell their small and medium size establishments.

K. The Chambers’ Support and Sponsorship for Specialized Joint Stock Companies:

- Preparing of technical and economic feasibility studies for the creation of a company called "Ikthar" for livestock development, propagation and distribution. It will be a joint stock company with an estimated capital of SR 1 billion. This mammoth project will contribute to Saudi Arabia's import substitution drive.
- The preparation of technical and economic feasibility studies for the creation of Construction and Real Estate Development and Financing Corporation with an anticipated capital of 500 million SR.
- Developing technical and economic feasibility studies for the creation of a giant national company for education and training “Human Resources Development Company” (Training City), owned and managed the private sector with training cities all over the Kingdom that can graduate up to 5000 trainee per annum starting from 2008, and covers most majors through various training programs

with respect to educational period and the field of specialization. The number of fields taught can reach 100 majors in every city with an anticipated capital of SR 500 million.

L. Strategic Planning : The launching of strategic planning and performance evaluation policy that has resulted in the following:

- The establishment of the Planning and Development Dept. tasked with drafting a long-term plan for the Chamber.
- Formulating a strategic future mission for the Chamber.
- The adaptation of the strategic vision and the strategic mission into workable objectives and goals that can be assessed regularly.
- The continual evaluation of the new strategies (short and long term) to ensure that the goals and objectives are met.