



Environment Management Centre of the Indian Chamber of Commerce

Executive Summary

1. The Chamber

1.1 The Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta (ICC) is located in Eastern India, in the city of Calcutta.

2. The Challenge for the Chamber

- 2.1 Industry in India began in Calcutta. Unfortunately, over the decades, technological obsolescence and shifting global patterns led to a flight of capital away from the region.
- 2.2 The Chamber faced a declining membership, and income generation from services was limited. No new investments in the region meant no new members.
- 2.3 The challenge was to plan for a new future of the Chamber, where funds for the activities and the development of the Chamber would come significantly from services, rather than new membership, given the low rate of new investments.
- 2.4 The challenge was also to find new areas for *niche leadership* to provide the Chamber with enhanced recognition.

3. The project for a new future

- 3.1 The Chamber decided to set up an **Environment Management Centre (ICC-EMC)** in 1997 with the primary goal of promoting environment management practices and systems as a tool for competitiveness of industry. International experience demonstrated that firms could increase profitability significantly through better environment management systems.
- 3.2 This was completely an **unconventional area** in the country, since environment management was not a “top-of-the-agenda” issue for corporates, and was not regarded as an area that could contribute to profitability or competitiveness.
- 3.3 The Chamber launched a unique and innovative model – **ATIRE** (*trademark applied for*) – to launch a comprehensive **one-stop servicing solution** for companies in the region. ATIRE stands for **Awareness, Training, Information, Roundtable and Empanelment**. The components are described in the proposal attached.
- 3.4 Thanks to that decision, and the efforts by the Chamber, the ICC-EMC now **is not only a leader in its field but is the largest revenue earner amongst all our services**.

4. Results and Benefits

- 4.1 Gave the Chamber an entirely new **niche expertise area** giving it tremendous recognition. Acknowledged as the **leader in this field** of services. Today, **it accounts for 50 % of the income** from services of the Chamber.
- 4.2 Forged a **unique relationship with Government and Regulatory Agencies** in a spirit of true partnership.
- 4.3 Have contributed to long term **competitiveness** of companies by focusing on an unconventional area of **profitability** – environment management.
- 4.4 Over **400 executives** Certified in **Train the Trainers** programmes. Multiple effect will be at least **4000 more skilled employees**. Over **3000** participants have attended Awareness programmes.
- 4.5 **Annual Awards for Environment Excellence awarded in the last 2 years**– has become the leading Award in the State for environmental performance.
- 4.6 **Envirosafe™ CD** produced by the **ICC-EMC** – a major product of the ICC-EMC which will generate continuous sales.
- 4.7 Compendium of **40 Success stories** – unique publication which highlights these success stories in India.

5. Applicability in other Chambers around the world

- 5.1 The effectiveness of the ICC-EMC and the simplicity of the ATIRE model can be replicated in all Chambers, be it Regional or National, with tremendous benefits. It does not involve huge start-up costs, manpower or technical know-how. It just needs commitment.



Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, India Application for World Chambers Competition 2003 Best Unconventional Project

Environment Management Centre of the Indian Chamber of Commerce – The Genesis –

I. **Briefly, describe how your project originated. How did the idea come about, what needs were identified and why ?**

1. The Chamber

1.2 The Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta (ICC) is located in Eastern India, in the city of Calcutta. Set up in 1926, as part of India's freedom movement, the ICC, as it is known, is the founder-member of the country's apex national Chamber – the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The ICC's regional reach covers 12 States of Federal India with a population of 260 million. ICC's proactive endeavours in advocating national policy, regional development issues and in offering a wide spectrum of services have earned it significant recognition. It works in partnership with Governments in the region, other sister Chambers, multilateral organizations and NGOs. See us at www.indianchamber.org



2. The Challenge for the Chamber

2.1 Calcutta in eastern India is where industry began in India. Business and Industry in Eastern India is mostly concentrated around this historic city. This is where the British, French, Portugese and others came to trade. A huge industrial base was set up in engineering, jute and tea. Unfortunately, over the years, technological obsolescence and the inability to keep pace with rapid advancements led to a major decline of business and industry in Eastern India. It has also led to capital moving out of the region to other areas in India.

2.2 The challenge that the ICC faced was a declining membership -- as a result of the diminished business activity, a region plagued by old and polluting industries, and a scenario where income generating services from the Chamber were limited due to the slowdown in business activity. Business Pessimism meant no new investments, and the predominant concern was survival, not growth. The number of new business establishments were insignificant and old established businesses were closing down.

2.3 The challenge was, essentially, four-fold :

- ☞ One, to plan for a future, where funds for the activities and the development of the Chamber would come significantly from services, rather than new membership, given the low rate of new investments.
- ☞ Second, to leverage the established brand image of the Chamber to diversify into a niche expertise area, which would not only earn revenue for the Chamber but give it a leadership position and recognition.
- ☞ Third, to utilize the niche expertise thus developed, to make a meaningful difference to the economic development of the region, and bring about change in mindset for sustaining a new phase of growth.
- ☞ Fourth, to provide an impetus to the growth environment in the region by facilitating the competitiveness of existing industries, through unconventional and innovative methods. It was our belief that if existing units are successful in the region, it would attract more new businesses, and therefore new membership and clients for the services of the Chamber.

3. Leadership in Environment Management – our choice for transforming business competitiveness

3.1 We knew what our challenges were. We realized what needs to be done, and had identified those needs. But, what would be our growth driver, our "niche expertise" area ? What would

be an unconventional and innovative way to meet all the above challenges and lay the foundations for a strong growth path ? On a visit to the US, for another purpose, we found the answer. *We saw how an emphasis on environment protection and preservation had transformed some very polluting cities, how companies became more profitable through better environment practices, how an eco-friendly system enhanced the quality of life of the people.* And we recognized the opportunity for our Chamber to unleash a completely new initiative, that we felt held the promise of bringing in significant positive change.

3.2 Thus our journey began. The birth of an idea, and now the challenge of putting it on the ground. When we decided that we shall strive to make environment management a driver of change and growth in our member companies and in the region, we were also aware of the adverse ground realities. Environment management was not looked upon in India as an economic function, companies did not necessarily give it a high priority, and it was more accepted as a necessary evil, but not at all as a voluntary, proactive management tool for improving competitiveness. Worse, no regional Chamber had any experience of providing environment management services. But we realized that we could make a difference. To the Chamber, to the business community, to the image of the region, and to the eventual quality of life of the people of the region.

3.3 Why did we choose to initiate a project on environment management as the *primary driver* of the growth process – an unconventional area of operation for a Regional Chamber ? We were convinced of the following :

- ✍ Globally there were several examples of better environment management leading to **higher profitability** of companies – this would help us in enhancing the competitiveness of our member firms. While most of them had gone through traditional and conventional restructuring options of cutting costs, technology infusion, process changes, almost none had looked at environment management as a tool to improve their profitability.
- ✍ **Polluting cities do not attract business investment.** By promoting better environment management, we could improve the conditions for investments in the region.
- ✍ While older industries were polluting and needed help in reducing their wastes and improving efficiency, even new units were looking for help in implementing state of art systems for pollution prevention and control. The ICC, Calcutta could become the facilitator in this process and provide **unique services**.
- ✍ **ICC, Calcutta would be able to provide an entirely new spectrum of services** ranging from Training, Implementation of ISO 14000, ISO 9000:2000, OHSAS, services for Environmental Audit, Environmental Impact Assessment, and so on. In the process, we would not only be rendering very useful services, but **earning significant revenue** as well.
- ✍ While regulatory bodies in the Government had the mechanism to punish or impose penalties for non-compliance of pollution norms, there were no advisory bodies in industry or a clearing house of information that could help industry in understanding its responsibilities and more important, implementing systems that would reduce their risks for those penalties. The ICC, Calcutta found a tremendous opportunity to step in and provide **advisorial services as well as value-added information**.
- ✍ By developing expertise in this niche area, the ICC would be able to assume **leadership position** in this field and gain significant recognition,
- ✍ The concern for protecting the environment was a global issue, and gave the Regional Chamber an opportunity to **advocate policies** that would even influence international and national policies. Besides, the Chamber would be able to tap assistance for capacity building and resources from several multilateral agencies committed to improving the global environment.

- 3.4 Today, thanks to that decision, the Environment Management Centre of the ICC, Calcutta is not only a leader in its field but is the largest revenue earner amongst all our services.

**Environment Management Centre of the Indian Chamber of Commerce
– The Project -**

- II. **Describe your project based on the category selected. (Category applied for : Best Unconventional Project)**

4. The Environment Management Centre – the first steps

- 4.1 Based on our conviction, outlined in Section I above, we decided to set up an **Environment Management Centre** at the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, known in short today as the **ICC-EMC**. The year was 1997.
- 4.2 Set up with the prime objective of facilitating growth in business and industry, the ICC-EMC has just one major goal :

To promote environment management practices and systems for enhancing competitiveness and efficiency of business and industry, which would also ensure a cleaner, safer and healthier environment for the society at large and the generations to come.

- 4.3 Our mission is to help business and industry understand that **environment is not just an issue about regulatory compliance**. We believe that **better management of the environment can actually add to the profitability of companies**. The ICC-EMC has aimed to take environment out of the realm of intangibles, and show that further economic progress would require us to give far more importance to issues relating to better environment management.
- 4.4 The first step was Capacity Building. We realized that we must equip ourselves with the knowledge and the tools to be able to effectively provide services. The **British Council** in Calcutta stepped in to provide a Consultant from a project in Singapore, who trained our core team players for two weeks on the basics of environment management and highlighted the services provided in countries like the UK. Subsequently, we visited the **UK** and the **Regional Institute for Environmental Technology in Singapore**, and got a first hand account of environmental services. We created a database of experts, technology providers, technology options and processes, consultants, and above all companies who could utilize our services. The ICC-EMC's formation and our collaboration with the British Council was announced in the presence of the then **British Prime Minister, Mr John Major**, when he visited Calcutta in January, 1997.
- 4.5 We started the first **Awareness Programmes** for business and industry. Response was sparse, but the journey had begun. In the beginning we could hardly attract 10 companies to these programmes. Today, over 200 companies and organizations regularly interact with the ICC-EMC, and are customers of our services.
- 4.6 Within one year of commercial operations, the **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** and the **United States Asia Environment Partnership (USAEP)** stepped in to join hands with us. Jointly, we organized several events with US experts and others in Eastern India. The **first web-site** was designed. In-house. We completed the USAEP project in record time, and expanded our scope of work in the same Budget. More alliances were formed. With Government agencies like the Pollution Control Board – **the first ever such partnership in the country**. With other regional players. Gradually, we emerged as a leader in conducting **Training Programmes** in Eastern India.
- 4.7 Within 2 years of operation, the ICC-EMC started **posting profits** for the Chamber. Revenue streams were healthy, and we were successful in launching a **self-sustaining centre** with **immense credibility**. Some of our important milestones are presented in **Annexure I**.

5. The key innovation in ICC-EMC : the foundation for success

5.1 At the heart of the ICC-EMC’s success, in such a short period of time, is a model that we developed – an innovation for providing the services in a comprehensive manner. We call it the **ATIRE** model (*Trademark applied for*). We have also replicated ATIRE in other areas of the Chamber’s services, with significant success. What is this innovation ? ATIRE stands for :

A	Awareness	Critical for raising awareness amongst business and industry through focused programmes. Shift enabled from mere compliance to management strategy.
T	Training & Consultancy	Specific Training Needs of companies. Also consultancy to go a step further.
I	Information	Large databases of information on an Intranet, web-sites, newsletters, a well stocked library, CD’s developed in-house for legislations, etc
R	Roundtable of Stakeholders	Roundtable of Regulators, Government, Industry, NGOs – have helped immensely in breaking adversarial positions
E	Empanelment of experts	Empanelment of experts, consultants and organizations, with proven track record verified by the ICC-EMC, and made available for direct projects in companies

5.2 **ATIRE** became a **comprehensive** package to deliver services of ICC-EMC. The critical innovation was in providing a model for corporate growth, that would be seen as a management tool, and therefore, implemented with more seriousness. As mentioned earlier, environment management for corporates was not a “top-of-the-agenda” priority issue, and the ATIRE innovation not only **helped top management to understand and focus on the benefits, but also helped everyone from the shopfloor to the operational staff to identify with the goals and contribute in a participatory manner to the firms success.**

5.3 Earlier, environmental issues were regarded as “altruistic” concepts, and not as an opportunity for increasing the firm’s competitiveness. ATIRE enabled that change. **In the process, a subject that evoked little or no corporate response at all got transformed into a major service of the Chamber and a significant revenue earner. In addition, the image of helping business “go green”, helped the Chamber attain a distinctive profile, giving it a niche advantage, that it never had.**

5.4 Very important, ATIRE provided to company clients a **one-stop shop solution**, where they could get comprehensive services and not just parts of a total system.

6. Innovative Components of the ATIRE model

6.1 It would be necessary to list some of the major components of the ATIRE Model to comprehend the innovation and unconventional nature of the project at all levels.

6.2 **The first component, Awareness :**

- ✍ The common tool to spread awareness is by organizing Seminars, Workshops, Conferences and Symposiums.
- ✍ We did that, but with a different strategy. Instead of issuing general invitations, we identified key industries and companies, talked to the top management and convinced them to send us their key employees for the awareness programmes. We took the awareness programmes **on-site to the companies.**
- ✍ We talked to the labour unions and increased their knowledge to help them participate more effectively in the process.
- ✍ We brought in international experts to bring in the **“global dimension”** to top management levels.
- ✍ We concentrated more on **showcasing successful case studies** instead of just theory.

- ✍ At the end of the Awareness programme, we showed how the ICC-EMC could be a partner in helping them implement environment management systems. That we would provide hand-holding services. Thereby demonstrating that we were not **just preachers but practitioners**.

6.3 **The second component, Training & Consultancy:**

- ✍ Once Awareness Programmes were undertaken, we realized that the next demand would be specific Training needs.
- ✍ We tied up with renowned experts, and concentrated on **Certified Training Courses** – certified by national and international certification bodies. Employees coveted such certificates, and took pride in clearing examinations to get the certificates. They were not certificates for mere **“participation” but “performance”**, and therefore valued more. Their employers would also give it more value and the additional skill developed would help employees in their career advancement in the company.
- ✍ The Training Courses were offered **at Premium Rates** (charges were over 10 times normal Chamber training programmes), and conducted by very reputed experts. We concentrated on **less participants, more programmes**, and carefully acted on all the evaluation suggestions made by the participants.
- ✍ While on-site training programmes were organized, we preferred participants to come away from work places, so that their attention was not divided. We also encouraged participation from different organizations, so that participants could **share experiences** and also **develop networks** in the process. So, in addition to training, they also benefited from experiences of other successful companies and developed a network of professionals. In the process, they also became our **“brand ambassadors”**.
- ✍ Training from ICC-EMC has established tremendous credibility, and is one of the major **revenue earners** for ICC-EMC.
- ✍ Since, Training for skill development was often followed by specific requests for system implementation, ICC-EMC also provided **consultancy** services with the help of empanelled experts. **Again, a one-stop shop solution** for companies.

6.4 **The third component, Information :**

- ✍ We recognized the most critical importance of being an **Information Clearing House** in the field of environment management, to help companies meet their specific needs. Towards this, we put in place a **multi-pronged strategy** :

1. **Websites (www.indianchamber.org/environment) (www.indianchamber.org/e2i)**
Comprehensive web-sites that provides basic information and links to other specialized sites. Contains information on ISO 14000, Environmental Legislation, Energy efficiency, Case studies, Tips, Related websites, Articles, etc.
2. **Newsletter (Environment Watch)**
A bi-monthly publication to keep industry updated on Environment Management issues. Highlights subjects like Environment Management for Competitiveness, Law Update, Trade and Environment, Green Business Opportunities, Environmental success stories and Regional environment issues.
3. **EnviroSafe™ (a comprehensive CD on environment legislation – a unique product of the ICC-EMC)**
A comprehensive database on CD ROM containing environment and safety related legislation in addition to references from the Indian Constitution and State Legislation. Provides a quick and structured reference to the laws and enactment for environment protection in a lucid and concise manner with a stress on the operational aspects. There is ease of reference to pertinent statutes / section, wherever the user finds it necessary.
4. **Reference Library**
Manuals, magazines, reference materials, videos, Workshop and Conference papers and computerized database information available to visitors and clients.
5. **Success Stories**

To showcase successful case studies, the ICC-EMC published a Compendium of Companies that have demonstrated Profitability through Green Enterprise and have also been accorded ISO 14001 Certification. This helped companies understand that they could also do it, and success stories were not the domain of advanced countries only.

6. Environment Information Centre (a project of USAID, FICCI and ICICI)

The EIC provides a comprehensive information service to its members. Information is collected from various sources and the institutional linkages of USAID, USAEP, Ministry of Environment and Forests and FICCI and is compiled into fully searchable computerized databases that can be accessed online through the internet and also through the Local Access Servers stationed at each region. The EIC eastern regional centre functioning under the umbrella of the ICC-EMC is a part of the country-wide environmental information network set up by FICCI. See www.cleantechindia.com.

7. Information on Request

Recognizing the need for specific information that companies require, from technology issues to experts, to process information, the ICC-EMC entertains requests on a chargeable basis.

6.5 The Fourth component, Roundtable of Stakeholders :

- ✍ A major innovation at the ICC-EMC. When we set about to promote environment management, we came across significant **adversarial positions** adopted by the different stakeholders. We decided to bring them to a common table, so that synergies could be developed in a partnership for common benefit to all.
- ✍ The Roundtable, inspired by NPPR, USA, attempts to forge a close partnership between all stakeholders viz., **Government and Regulatory Authorities, Industry, NGOs, Environmental Technology and Service Providers as well as the Academia.**
- ✍ **Tremendous success** achieved in the Roundtable meetings by bringing stakeholders together. Acrimony has been replaced by partnerships. Sharing of experiences took place.
- ✍ **A major achievement of this Roundtable is the Annual Environment Excellence Award, given by a unique partnership of a regulatory body and a Chamber of Commerce – an Award presented by the highest Government functionary in the State to outstanding companies who have implemented model replicable environment management systems.**

6.6 The Fifth component, Empanelment of Experts :

- ✍ Once companies wanted to implement systems after Awareness Programmes and Training, there was a need to provide expert consultants to help them implement systems on the ground. Since individual companies required to identify Consultants with good track record to ensure that investments were not wasted in the wrong direction, ICC-EMC empanelled experts with proven track records. These consultants were then made available to interested companies. **Once again, a one-stop shop solution** from ICC-EMC.

Environment Management Centre of the Indian Chamber of Commerce – The Benefits -

III. *What have been the results and influence of this project?(Short and long term impact, measurable data, benefits.)*

7. Results of the project

7.1 Short and Long Term Impact

- ✍ Gave the Chamber an entirely new **niche expertise area** giving it tremendous recognition. Acknowledged as the **leader in this field** of services.
- ✍ Became a **major Revenue earner** for the Chamber, in a situation when all other sources were getting diminished.
- ✍ Changed the **mindset of companies** towards looking at environment as a Green Profitability issue, than from mere compliance : major achievement.

- ✍ Forged a **unique relationship with Government and Regulatory Agencies** in a spirit of true partnership.
- ✍ Encouraged **employees** of companies to develop skills in this area.
- ✍ Focussed on Pollution free issues for the city and region **enhancing scope for investments.**
- ✍ Have contributed to long term **competitiveness** of companies by focusing on an unconventional area of **profitability** – environment management.

7.2 Measurable Data

- ✍ Revenue from ICC-EMC is now **50 % of the Chamber's revenue from services.**
- ✍ Over **400 executives** Certified in **Train the Trainers** programmes. Multiple effect will be at least **4000 more skilled employees.** **3000** participants have attended Awareness Preprogrammes.
- ✍ **2 Annual Awards for Environment Excellence awarded in the last 2 years**– has become the leading Award in the State for environmental performance.
- ✍ **Press and Media coverage on the Chamber increased**, as a result of the unique service
- ✍ **Envirosafe™ CD** produced by the **ICC-EMC** – a major product developed and sold by the ICC-EMC will generate continuous sales.
- ✍ Compendium of **40 Success stories** – unique publication which highlights these success stories in India.
- ✍ From a level of about **10 companies** in the initial association of ICC-EMC, the number has gone up to **over 200** today. It must be noted that the Eastern Region of India has fewer new firms compared to the rest of the country, and hence a lower client base.

Environment Management Centre of the Indian Chamber of Commerce – Can it be replicated ? -

IV. *Can your idea be applied in other parts of the world? (Please explain how and why.)*

8. Replication in other parts of the world

- 8.1 The serious concerns of environmental issues, in advanced, developing and least developed nations, require Chambers to take pro-active action. Industrial pollution and vehicular pollution are amongst the highest polluters in the world. Therefore, Chambers not only have a responsibility, but a **unique opportunity** to transform their responsibility into positive measurable benefits for member companies, who will not only become **more competitive** but enhance their image significantly. In addition, the Chamber has the opportunity to **augment revenue, membership and image.** Truly a **win-win** situation.
- 8.2 The ATIRE model of the ICC-EMC can be replicated and multiplied in every country, be it developed or developing. The sheer simplicity of the Model and our experience in this area provides an eye-opener that it can be applied extremely easily to other Chambers and similar organizations.
- 8.3 It **does not require major technical expertise** for the Chamber **or funds** to set up an Environment Management Centre. On the other hand, it actually brings in funds, membership and expertise and develops completely new networks. Therefore, the replication of ICC-EMC is not technology intensive or expensive, making it easy to replicate.
- 8.4 **Results are visible in the short to medium term.** This encourages the Chamber to continue its efforts and gain the acceptance of its membership.
- 8.5 **Multilateral agencies, MNC's, and International Aid agencies** support environment management systems and Chambers all over the world can tap their expertise and resources.
- 8.6 Generates **tremendous goodwill** for the Chamber and **support from Government, NGOs and other important opinion makers**, enhancing the Chamber's clout and position.
- 8.7 The entire ATIRE Model can be put **in place speedily**, given the fact that other Chambers will not have to "re-invent the wheel", but learn from our experiences.
- 8.8 **Extremely applicable to Regional Chambers** and local bodies, because of the simplicity of the model.

- 8.9 **Can** be managed with **very minimal staff**, since experts are outsourced. This increases services without significant investments.

**Environment Management Centre of the Indian Chamber of Commerce
– Why should we be a finalist ? -**

V. Why do you feel your project should be selected as a finalist and presented at the 3rd World Chambers Congress?

9. Our humble achievement

- 9.1 As a Regional Chamber, we have been able to develop leadership in a very unconventional area, which has demonstrated benefits to :
- The Chamber
 - Its Membership
 - Chamber's revenue
 - Chamber's image
 - Corporate competitiveness and profitability, and
 - To the society through lesser pollution loads
- truly a **win-win situation for all.**
- 9.2 The ATIRE model developed for this purpose is unique and easily replicable by other Chambers. **It needs to be propagated to others, so that they can be benefited by our experience and also reap the benefits we have got in the process.** The World Chambers Federation and the International Chamber of Commerce would tremendously help many Chambers in the world by sharing this example.
- 9.3 Environment is a key concern, which Chambers must give more credence to. It is a very positive way of giving back to the society and to the world a new future for the generations to come.
- 9.4 To the best of our knowledge, no regional Chamber has concentrated on this unconventional and innovative way of providing unique services such as those by the ICC-EMC.
- 9.5 Our efforts in this unconventional area would receive a tremendous boost and encouragement, if it is recognized by a body such as the International Chamber and the WCF. That would be one of our greatest rewards, which we will cherish immensely, on behalf of our members and our colleagues in the Secretariat, for whom the ICC-EMC has been a passion.

With this hope, we forward to you this proposal and await your decision. A decision which could perhaps help many more Regional Chambers find a new dimension and new ground to walk upon with confidence.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Select Milestones of the ICC-EMC



Milestones : Moments of pride for the ICC-EMC

- yet a short journey, but giant steps -

- January 10, 1997 : Partnership of ICC and British Council to form the Environment Management Centre (ICC-EMC) announced in the presence of the then British Prime Minister, Mr John Major in Calcutta.
- February 1997: Mr James M Strock, Head of the California Environment Protection Agency visits the ICC-EMC and provides valuable advice for the future.
- June 1997 : British Council provides expert to ICC-EMC to help in capacity building and identify services of the centre.
- September 1997: Memorandum of Understanding with Regional Institute of Environment Technology (RIET) of Singapore, for exchange of information and help in capacity building.
- December 1997 : ICC-EMC services launched on pilot scale. ICC contributes Mobile Pollution Testing Vehicle to Calcutta Police.
- February 1998 : A separate ICC-EMC Library set up to provide information on environment technology, experts, processes and case studies.
- February 1998 : First out-reach programme launched in the region in Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India on ISO 14001 awareness. AEA Technologies plc of UK provides expert for the programme.
- September 1998 : The ICC-EMC Roundtable launched with government, regulators, industry, academia, NGOs for the first time.
- November 1998 : ICC- EMC POSTS PROFITS IN FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION
- December 1998 : Kathleen McGinty, former Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, USA witnesses the MoU between ICC-EMC, USAID, USAEP for establishing an environment extension system.
- February 1998 : First comprehensive Web-site of ICC-EMC launched.
- April 1998 : ICC-EMC newsletter "ENVIRONMENT WATCH" launched.
- August 1998 : ICC-EMC Training Programmes launched in Calcutta and neighbouring States.
- July 2000 : US Ambassador in India, Richard Celeste inaugurates an on-line Environmental Information Centre (EIC) linking 4 States in the country. The EIC project lead partners : FICCI, USAID, ICICI.
- August 2000 : FIRST PRODUCT OF ICC-EMC – a CD on Environment Legislation entitled ENVIROSAFE TM – THE FIRST IN THE COUNTRY. Launched at a public function by the Chief Ministers of 3 States (Assam, Orissa and West Bengal).
- November 2000: The West Bengal Cleaner Production Centre launched as a partnership of the Regulatory Authority – West Bengal Pollution Control Board and ICC-EMC – THE FIRST PARTNERSHIP IN THE COUNTRY OF THIS NATURE.
- February 2001 : ICC-EMC team visits USA to forge institutional linkages and develop content for future programs. A new phase of Training Programmes launched.
- March 2001 : ICC-EMC awarded contract by NEXANT to develop a Business Exchange Service in Energy Efficiency to reduce wastage and promote energy conservation.
- April 2001 : ICC-EMC's INCOME FROM SERVICES TOUCHES 25 % OF THE CHAMBER'S TOTAL SERVICE INCOME.
- September 2001 : ICC-EMC and West Bengal Pollution Control Board announces Environment Excellence Awards for companies going beyond compliance – again A FIRST VENTURE OF THIS TYPE IN THE COUNTRY
- April 2002 : The FIRST ENVIRONMENT EXCELLENCE AWARD presented to 8 companies by the Chief Minister of West Bengal.
- May 2002 : ICC-EMC publishes a Compendium of Success Stories of 40 companies in India – companies who have successfully and profitably implemented environment management systems.
- May '02-May'03: ICC-EMC's INCOME FROM SERVICES REACHES 50 % OF THE CHAMBER'S TOTAL SERVICE INCOME.
- June '03 : SECOND ENVIRONMENT EXCELLENCE AWARD presented on World Environment Day by the Chief Minister.

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