

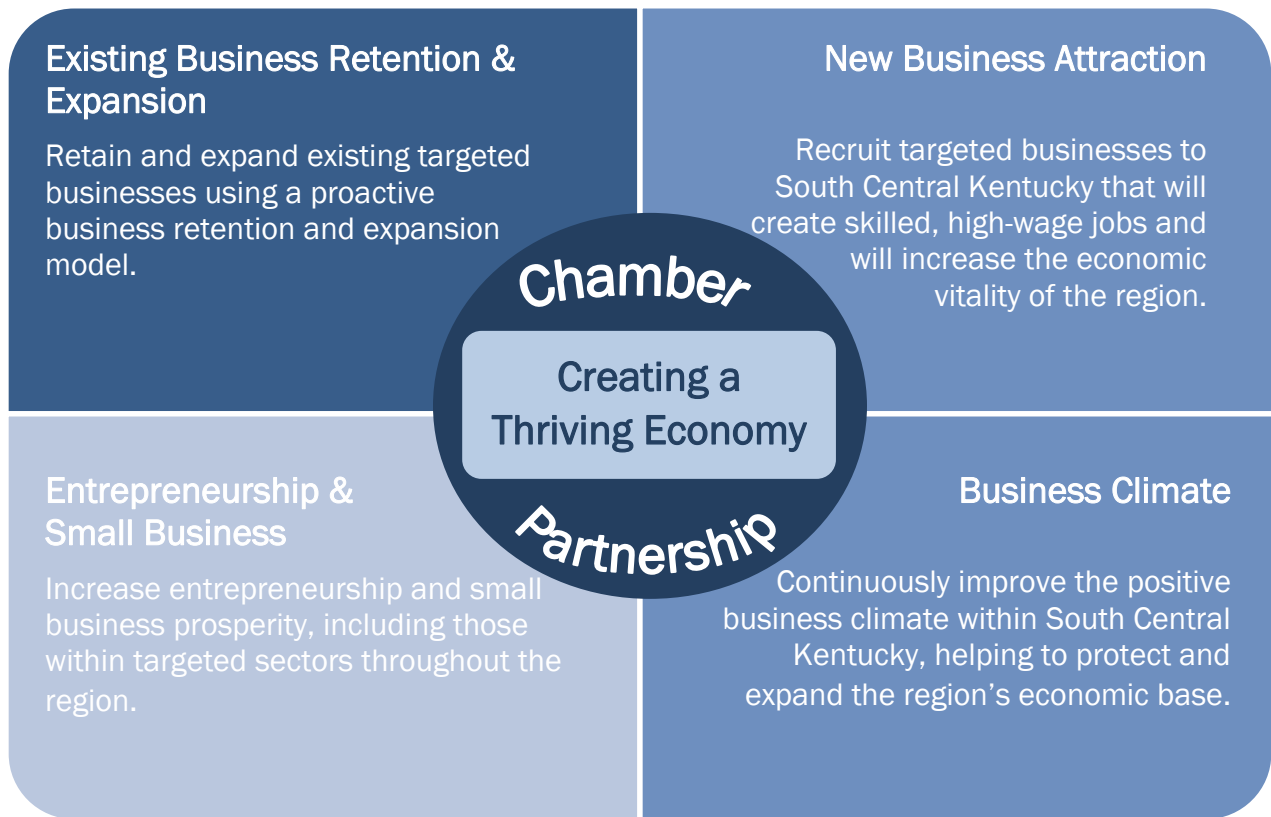
Leadership in the Global Innovation Economy

The Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce’s vision of success equals more high-paying jobs, more capital investment, and more wealth for South Central Kentucky residents. This vision is supported by the following goals:

- Grow and transform traditional sectors of South Central Kentucky’s economy
- Expand South Central Kentucky’s targeted business sectors
- Increase South Central Kentucky’s economic base

The Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce is the driving force for South Central Kentucky’s business community.

To accomplish these goals, the Chamber has adopted four strategic initiatives, which are depicted in the graphic below.



Measuring Strategic Success

To support the four strategic initiatives, the Chamber must employ a variety of tactics, which are outlined below, in 2012. These tactics are directly related to six priorities that support the Chamber's mission:



Chamber Partnership

The Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce considers partnership to be the overarching imperative that links together our four strategic initiatives:

- Existing business retention & expansion
- New business attraction
- Entrepreneurship & small business
- Business climate

Chamber Mission
Provide valuable services to our partners, advocate a positive business environment and stimulate economic development for South Central Kentucky.

The Chamber partnership creates the tools for these initiatives, and it is because of the partnership's strength that the organization has a history of success. The 2012 Action Plan outlines the four strategic initiatives, but first it is important to recognize the Chamber's objectives for its partnership in 2012. By maintaining these objectives, the Chamber sets its focus on business prosperity and generating wealth for South Central Kentucky.

Value

Provide value-added benefits for Chamber partners.

Growth

Increase the Chamber's reach to enhance the quality of business amongst current partners and South Central Kentucky.

Needs

Identify the needs of the Chamber partnership.

Segmentation

Foster connections between partners while meeting partners' individual needs and communicating with them in peer/interest groups.

Objective #1 – Value

- Meet the needs of the Chamber partnership through revisions to existing benefits and creating new programs and services.
- Document value-added benefits of Chamber partnership, including
 - Economic development
 - Chamber business referrals and “Buy Chamber” activities
 - Partner celebrations, ribbon-cuttings and groundbreakings
 - Networking events
 - Sponsorships
 - Advertising
- Demonstrate additional value for partners investing in the President's Club.
 - Host quarterly updates for President's Club partners to communicate the return on their investment.
- Update Chamber Long-Range Strategic Plan.

Objective #2 – Needs

- Conduct partner visits and calls to discuss business needs and Chamber satisfaction.
- Capture robust data in customer relationship management system.
 - Define data needs for consistent collection.

- Conduct quarterly topic-specific surveys and an annual comprehensive survey.
- Produce standardized reports for stakeholders and partners to promote transparency in the organization.

Objective #3 – Growth

- Promote the Chamber’s President’s Club and its premier partnership levels supporting economic development.
 - Conduct quarterly updates, communicating progress and success in economic development to President’s Club partners.
 - Revise President’s Club benefits according to value analysis.
 - Expand President’s Club, encouraging current Chamber partners to invest at a higher level in the organization.
- Retain a percentage of partners well above the national average of 82.5% (2010 data).
 - Communicate with partners per their segmented interests, increasing cross-promotion opportunities.
- Recruit 125 new partners by incorporating knowledge from segmentation efforts into the process.
 - Engage non-partners in “A Taste of the Chamber” opportunities such as an event pass or partnership attraction workshop.
 - Coordinate a resource campaign utilizing volunteers to support partnership and programming.

Objective #4 – Segmentation

- Utilize technology to create strategic partner connections based on needs, interests and experiences, and to capture more dollars from the region.

Strategic Initiative #1: Existing Business Retention & Expansion

Retain and expand existing targeted businesses using a proactive business and retention model.

Connections

Continue to deepen relationships with existing targeted businesses across South Central Kentucky to evaluate their needs, explore potential growth opportunities and build collaboration amongst existing businesses.

Talent Development

Create national model to fulfill businesses' workforce needs, heightening current and future employees' skill sets while providing low-cost training solutions for employers.

Marketing & Communication

Share existing businesses' success stories in economic development marketing and public relations efforts, creating recognition for these businesses and for South Central Kentucky as a location for business success.

Synergy

Provide existing businesses with opportunities in South Central Kentucky based on the region's assets.

Foster growth in research and development, innovation and globalization by encouraging public-private partnerships on a local, state and national level.

Resources

Meet existing businesses' research and data needs utilizing tools available at the Chamber and through key stakeholders.

Increase presence as the "go-to" organization for existing business assistance.

Appreciation

Host events and activities to support and recognize the impact of existing targeted businesses on South Central Kentucky's economy.

Objective #1 – Connections

- Enhance the South Central Kentucky Regional Profile.
- Utilize customer relationship management software to best meet businesses' needs, maintain connectivity and share results with stakeholders.
 - Monitor company activity and announcements
- Initiate regional roundtable meetings for business leaders to share best practices, identify regional opportunities and explore future partnerships.
- Create electronic newsletter to provide regular communications and regional updates to targeted businesses.

Objective #2 – Synergy

- Complete the innovation asset map, thereby connecting existing businesses with technology assets readily available in the region, such as the large chamber scanning electron

microscope at the WKU NOVA Center and the robotics and mechatronics programs at Bowling Green Technical College, and with other stakeholders and companies.

- Explore Innovator Roundtable/Technology Council concept, to be coordinated by the Chamber.
- Explore medical device opportunities with healthcare sector.
- Connect businesses with research and development assistance and student labor through post-secondary educational institutions.
- Seek grant funding opportunities to benefit existing businesses and post-secondary educational institutions.
- Conduct feasibility and business plan for increasing export activity for existing businesses.
 - Increase relationships with the U.S. Commercial Service and the World Trade Center, potentially establishing a recurring (or co-located) presence in South Central Kentucky.
 - Host export training seminars.
 - Explore resources for connecting existing businesses with lead opportunities.
 - Create export directory.

Objective #3 – Talent Development

- Complete Competitive Workforce Feasibility Study & Business Plan
 - Develop incentive process to partner businesses needing training with stakeholders/allies.
 - Seek to create one point of contact and approximately \$0 cost to expanding and locating companies for workforce recruitment, screening and training.
 - Produce 3- to 5-minute video share company data.
- Complete Talent Recruitment Feasibility Study & Business Plan
 - Create collaborative network to assist local companies when filling key executive-level positions.
 - Form “key hire” support team with Chamber partners to provide quality-of-life experiences and information for prospective hires’ families.
- Expand current workforce training programs.
 - Grow existing businesses’ participation in Warren County Industrial Training Consortium and increase enrollment in the Supervisor Certificate Program.
 - Refine the Chamber’s Work Ethic Seal and Business Education Partnerships Programs to meet workforce needs and encourage participation.
- Continue to adopt National Career Readiness Certificate requirements as benchmarks for workforce development success.
- Pursue Work Ready Community Certification with the assistance of a steering committee, overseen by the Chamber.
- Growing The Leader in Me® Program by Stephen Covey.
 - Collaborate with Bowling Green Independent School District and Warren County Public Schools to promote the success and potential impact of the program to investors and to the public.
 - Utilize the Business Education Partnership participants to coordinate and support the Leader in Me in local schools, increasing resources and building the future workforce.
 - Establish The Leader in Me Foundation Advisory Board within the Chamber Foundation to support the capital campaign and disburse funds.
 - Build a Legacy Council of individuals extending public support for the program and coordinate a capital campaign to fund The Leader in Me.
 - Promote to regional communities in consideration for their own school districts.

- Coordinate Leadership Bowling Green Program to graduate a class of 25 to 30 local professionals and meet its non-dues revenue goal.
 - Expand the program to incorporate the *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*®.
 - Investigate the potential for the program to support the Leader in Me efforts.
- Complete Leadership South Central Kentucky Feasibility Study & Business Plan.
 - Establish curriculum for program's launch in 2013.
- Re-engage the Young Professionals of Bowling Green, the Leadership Bowling Green Alumni Association and similar organizations to support workforce development and talent growth.

Objective #4 – Resources

- Meet existing businesses' research and data needs utilizing tools available at the Chamber and through key stakeholders.
- Increase presence as the “go-to” organization for existing business assistance.
- Complete State of the Region Feasibility Study and Business Plan.
 - Host 2012 regional event.
- Complete Regional Indicators Approach Feasibility Study and Business Plan.
- Expand Wage & Fringe Study to additional sectors.
 - Partner with stakeholders such as the Southern Kentucky Society for Human Resource Management (SKY-SHRM)

Objective #5 – Marketing & Communication

- Complete innovation asset map to identify assets and capabilities in the region, as well as capture information about patents and innovative measures, products and services from existing businesses.
- Document information about existing businesses with current international presences.
- Share information about value of training assets and programs.
- Communicate regularly with media outlets (local, state and national) to pitch stories and create awareness

Objective #6 – Appreciation

- Host Business Appreciation Month activities, including Business Appreciation Banquet, Women in Business Breakfast, and Business Appreciation Golf Challenge
- Continue Chamber's award recognition program, which includes
 - John B. Holland Business of the Year
 - Expansion Project Awards
 - New Project Awards
 - Green-to-Gold Achievement Awards
 - Export Excellence Awards
 - Innovation Awards

Strategic Initiative #2: New Business Attraction

Recruit targeted businesses to South Central Kentucky that will create skilled, high-wage jobs and will increase the economic vitality of the region.

Clusters

Expand attraction focus with additional target clusters, working to recruit businesses in these sectors

- Advanced manufacturing
- Fabricated metals, industrial machinery, plastics
- Green-building products (wood)
- Automotive parts & suppliers
- Food processing (products, equipment, packaging & distribution)
- Logistics & distribution

Long-term niche sectors: Cellulosic bio-fuel, cyber defense and medical devices.

Regionalism

Promote South Central Kentucky's assets through the 10-county regional marketing partnership and Menu of Services Program, deepening the collaboration between counties to achieve economic development success.

Marketing

Refine current marketing plan to effectively and efficiently promote South Central Kentucky's competitive assets, utilizing allies, website, technology and other tools to increase awareness, reach contacts and convert leads to wins.

International Reach

Define international facet of attraction program, identifying relationships and opportunities through existing businesses and stakeholders.

Elevate brand awareness and knowledge of competitive assets available in South Central Kentucky for international prospects.

Competitiveness

Utilize resource management tools to capture current business activity, build sales funnel and track success.

Gather and document research to enhance marketing efforts and illustrate competitive assets of South Central Kentucky.

Management

Maintain and expand the management agreement with the Intermodal Transportation Authority, continuing to market the Kentucky Transpark as the premier industrial park in the region.

Oversee the Bowling Green Area Economic Development Authority (BGAEDA) as it supports economic development activities in Bowling Green-Warren County.

Objective #1 – Clusters

- Identify targeted business leaders, conducting aggressive outreach campaign using lead aggregators.

- Maintain current business case data and research, as well as ideal sites and buildings inventory, for each target cluster.

Objective #2 – Regionalism

- Continue to enhance Menu of Services Program.
 - Maintain Principles & Practices agreement.
 - Revise marketing agreements.
 - Report regional investor value on a quarterly basis.
 - Deepen collaboration between partners by hosting monthly team meetings.
- Celebrate regional successes and communicate the economic impact to the public, stakeholders and media outlets.
- Support regional business climate as outlined in Strategic Initiative #4.

Objective #3 – International Reach

- Partner with the U.S. Commercial Service, the Kentucky World Trade Center and the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, along with local companies and stakeholders, to identify existing and potential international business relationships.
- Package South Central Kentucky as an ideal location for international business activity.
- Explore potential for joint marketing missions with allies, existing businesses, President’s Club partners and other stakeholders.

Objective #4 – Competitiveness

- Enhance economic development competitiveness by utilizing technology and research tools to gather robust data and enhance the region’s business climate. Use resources such as
 - JobsEQ
 - MetroComp
 - Industry association databases and trade publications
 - Sites and buildings databases
 - State and national resources

Objective #5 – Marketing

- Update www.southcentralky.com, the economic development website for South Central Kentucky, on a regular basis to provide current, relevant data for economic development professionals.
 - Include case studies, testimonies and videos on website.
- Create print-on-demand materials for prospect visits, proposal responses and other project work.
- Produce 30-second to one-minute videos promoting South Central Kentucky’s assets.
- Develop library of case studies and testimonies about the value of doing business in the region.

Objective #6 – Management

- Maintain and expand the Intermodal Transportation Authority management agreement to market the Kentucky Transpark.
 - Set baselines for land sales, leads and visits, and track results to report to stakeholders.
 - Continue to gather engineering and site information for infrastructure and to obtain site certifications.
 - Advocate for virtual building product acceptance on the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development's sites & buildings database and on the Tennessee Valley Authority's sites & buildings database.
- Oversee the Bowling Green Area Economic Development Authority (BGAEDA) and its economic development support activities.
 - Maintain dashboard of contacts, leads, projects and wins to report to stakeholders. Report activity to stakeholders.
 - Identify inventory needs, as well as other needs, to remain competitive in economic development.

Strategic Initiative #3: Entrepreneurship & Small Business

Expand entrepreneurship and small business prosperity, including those within targeted sectors throughout the region.

Relationships

Identify key stakeholders to form partnerships that will sustain and grow entrepreneurship and small businesses in South Central Kentucky

Opportunities

Introduce entrepreneurship and small business opportunities to the public, including youth

Advancement

Build an ecosystem in South Central Kentucky, serving as the clearinghouse and one-stop shop for existing, new, and potential entrepreneurs and small businesses

Appreciation

Host events and activities that will support local entrepreneurs and small businesses, giving them access to contacts, leads and resources, and providing recognition for their successes

Objective #1 – Relationships

- Communicate Chamber value statement to partnering small businesses and entrepreneurs, identifying key partner benefits and promoting Chamber engagement.
- Partner with organizations such as the Small Business Development Center, the Central Region Innovation & Commercialization Center, and SCORE to share best practices and assist entrepreneurs and small business owners.
- Facilitate or support the establishment of (or access to) an Angel Investment Fund.
- Engage the Chamber partnership in embracing the successes of entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Objective #2 – Opportunities

- Provide monthly training sessions through partnerships with the WKU Gordon Ford College of Business, the Small Business Development Center and other organizations.

Objective #3 – Support

- Create Small Business Ecosystem to serve as clearinghouse for entrepreneurship and small business support
 - Build strategic partnerships with organizations such as Procurement Technical Assistance Centers,
 - Build web portal/virtual one-stop shop concept to complement Kentucky's new portal: www.onestop.ky.gov.
 - Establish contacts for small business leaders' needs.
 - Coordinate Small Business CEO Roundtable groups.
 - Develop customer service/communication processes
- Collaborate with workforce development stakeholders to create pools of trained, qualified job candidates.

- Update Small Business Benefits Manual for Chamber partners.

Objective #4 – Appreciation

- Support entrepreneurs and small business owners with appreciation and networking activities
 - Host Small Business Expo
 - Partner with Western Kentucky University to host Welcome Back WKU, a festival for Chamber partners to showcase their businesses to college students.
 - Coordinate Small Business Appreciation Week activities
 - Recognize winners of the ATHENA and ATHENA Young Professional Awards.

Strategic Initiative #4: Business Climate

Continuously improve the positive business climate within South Central Kentucky, helping to protect and expand the region's economic base.

Community Development

Identify current community issues that affect the South Central Kentucky region, the improvement of which will enhance the region's competitiveness for economic development.

Advocacy

Determine and advance legislative issues that impact business success and address concerns of Chamber partner businesses, regional partner counties and key stakeholders.

Communication

Produce South Central Kentucky Priority Needs List and Legislative Scorecard based on considerations from the Chamber partnership, regional partners and key stakeholders.

Engagement

Increase Chamber partnership involvement in community and governmental affairs, encouraging them to actively participate in improvement of the regional business climate.

Objective #1 – Community Development

- Collaborate with Chamber partners to identify community needs.
- Determine property development and incentive needs to enhance competitiveness of South Central Kentucky region.
- Support talent development projects in the region, whether through educational institutions, organizations or stakeholders' efforts, to increase the current and future workforces' skill sets.
- Assist in economic development efforts for downtown Bowling Green.
 - Offer technical assistance and incentive coordination to the Downtown Redevelopment Authority and the Warren County Downtown Economic Development Authority to support business location, infrastructure/parking and funding for quality of life projects and facilities.

Objective #2 – Advocacy

- Review and revise the Chamber's Legislative Guiding Principles and also its Public Policy Statements.
- Identify governmental affairs issues impacting business, including agribusiness, metropolitan planning and infrastructure considerations.
 - Survey the Chamber partnership.
 - Collaborate with community and regional leaders and area elected officials.
- Align with local, state and national entities promoting and advancing advocacy issues that parallel the Chamber's legislative priorities or positions.

Objective #3 – Communication

- Produce South Central Kentucky Priority Needs List and Legislative Scorecard.

- Distribute to legislators, the Grassroots Network and the Chamber partnership.
- Distribute a series of action alerts and electronic communications to the partnerships to inform partners about the General Assembly activities.
- Recreate the Chamber's Legislative Action portal at www.bgchamber.com to be the primary resource for partners to be informed and communicate with our legislators.

Objective #4 – Engagement

- Host Chamber events to promote legislative involvement and to engage legislators.
 - South Central Kentucky Night
 - South Central Kentucky Washington D.C. Fly-In
 - Legislative Previews, Updates and Wrap-Ups
 - Candidate Forums
- Invite key stakeholders to the 2012 General Assembly Kick-Off Day in Lexington, Ky.
- Reactivate and orient the grassroots network, increasing the pool of partners and advocates participating.
 - Investigate Grasstop efforts and the benefit to our partners.
- Cultivate future elected officials and legislative leaders by engaging Chamber volunteers, including Board of Directors members, Ambassadors, Young Professionals of Bowling Green members, Leadership Bowling Green alumni, etc.