

Ennis Chamber

Strategic Plan 2010 - 2015

**Approved
by
Chamber
Executive
01/09/09**

August 2009

1. Visions

1.1 Ennis

Ennis Chamber sees the town and its environs as a dynamic and profitable commercial and leisure hub where:

- business investment and innovation is supported by educational excellence and quality business support services
- the town, and its environs, secures its position as a national retail and leisure destination
- the town, and its environs, is a centre for investment in research and development, environmental technologies, renewable energy, cultural tourism, outdoor pursuits and the arts
- the town has a comprehensive infrastructure of internal and external roads, rail links, water supply, waste water facilities, energy capacity, and broadband network
- the town becomes a centre for the regeneration of the West and Mid-West, as a counterbalance to the economic power of Greater Dublin
- it is understood and agreed, in the community at large, that sustainable lifestyle opportunities and the attractiveness of Ennis as a place to live and work, are underpinned by a successful and profitable business sector
- the natural and built environments are protected and developed to their full potential

Underpinning the achievement of the above will be a properly researched and implemented positioning and branding strategy for the town.

1.2 Ennis Chamber

In working towards its vision for the town, Ennis Chamber will be

- a working partnership of business and professional individuals dedicated to the growth and positive development of the business environment in the area of Ennis and its immediate environs
- a critical catalyst for energising and vitalising the stakeholders in the region to achieve continued business growth, to attract inward investment in the area, improve educational opportunity, and to promote the area to potential visitors.
- an effective leader in unifying all its stakeholders to maximise the potential of the Ennis area as a dynamic and profitable place to do business.

2. Mission

The Mission of the Ennis Chamber of Commerce is:

- to promote and support the economic well-being of local businesses, in particular that of its members
- to create a dynamic business climate in which entrepreneurial flair can flourish
- achieving a consensus for the strategic development of the town as an attractive place to do business, live and visit

3. SWOT

The Executive of the Chamber agrees that the following are the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the Chamber:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff numbers • FAS CE Scheme • 200 + members • networking events • reseller of Chambers Ireland services • knowledge of the local business environment • understanding of local issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no clear vision • under -representation in non-retail and non-professional sectors • very poor relationship with local authorities • communication with members • clear perception of role[amongst members] • clear perception of role[amongst non-members] • no clear value perceived by non-members [and some members] as to value of membership • poor/inconsistent branding of town
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of portfolio of value-added services for members • to become central player in development of Ennis as hub town • to become key player in development of Atlantic Corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being seen as irrelevant by the business community • being seen as irrelevant by local authorities • being replaced as representative body for local businesses • failing to raise sufficient revenue to fund its current business • failing to raise sufficient revenue to fund new initiatives • falling membership numbers and sponsorship revenue as result of current economic environment

4. Purpose of Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015

The purpose of the 2010 - 2015 Strategic Plan is to provide guidance and goals for:

- realising the vision and accomplishing the mission of the Ennis Chamber
- building on the Chamber's current strengths and addressing its weaknesses
- seizing opportunities and planning against threats that currently face the Chamber

4.1 Key Objectives

The Plan is structured so as to achieve three key objectives: s

1. Support Local Business
2. Attract New Investment to Town
3. Generate New Revenue for Ennis Chamber

3.2 Core Values

In achieving its objectives, the Chamber will model the following core values:

Honesty	Trust	Innovation	Entrepreneurship	Consensus-building
Loyalty	Cooperation	Professionalism	Unity	Community Pride
Commitment	Resourcefulness	Enthusiasm		

3.3 Stakeholders

It is understood that, in achieving its objectives, the Chamber needs to consider the interests of the following stakeholders:

Chamber Members
SME Business Owners
MNCs and national businesses in area
Local Business Managers
Local entrepreneurs
Residents
Local Authorities
CCI and other Chambers in the MidWest and West
Educators
Regional Development Bodies

It is further understood that, when interests of stakeholders might conflict, it is imperative that, with its ongoing commitment to its above values, the Chamber makes every attempt to achieve a consensus. At the same time, it cannot lose sight of the fact that its core mission is to promote the economic well-being of its members.

4. Objective 1: Support Local Businesses

4.1 Key Actions:

The Chamber will support local business through:

- a. benchmarking its activities against the tenet that 'our members are our customers' and ensuring that its activities add value to its 'customers'
- b. broaden the range of the services that it offers its members, including:
 - enhanced web offering, including critical networking and communications components
 - developing member-to-member services [e.g. discounts, barter, tender services]
 - more formalised regional networking/matchmaking event
- c. broadening the range of services so as to be relevant to:
 - local manufacturing companies
 - execs working for MNCs who spend a lot of time working outside the town, often abroad
 - entrepreneurs[current and prospective]
- d. Development and implementation of communications plan
- e. development of branding/positioning strategy for town [jointly with other stakeholders]
- f. joint marketing of town as a visitor destination [consistent with branding strategy], including support of existing festivals and development of new festival initiative[s] [inc Celtic Festival?]
- g. support and development of a 'Shop in Ennis Initiative', including Town Gift Card/Voucher
- h. management of creative and positive working relationships with local authorities, including developing a consensus on:
 - branding of the town
 - development of Ennis as a hub town
 - Ennis Christmas initiative
 - pedestrianisation
 - parking
 - commercial rates
 - waste management
 - other matters that may arise
- i. lobbying of national and regional bodies in support of interests of local business community

4.2 Key Result Measures

Overall: Development of individual Action Plans, with timelines for actions 1a-1g inclusive, and a 'champion', from the executive, to drive each Action Plan. The 'champion' will enlist a small team to support him/her in her/his work

Action 1a: - Development of annual customer satisfaction survey, which enables measurement of trends in levels of customer [member] satisfaction
- use of language, in all internal and external communications, that embraces this value
- achievement of targets identified in Objective 3

Action 1b: - deepening of range of value-added services offered to members
- use of new services by members
- achievement of targets identified in Objective 3

Action 1c: - evidence of broadened profile of members
- developing services targeted at new member profile
- achievement of targets identified in Objective 3

Action 1d: - production of communications plan, including key performance measures

Action 1e: - successful development of branding/positioning strategy for town
- evidence of buy-in from stakeholders

Action 1f: - working with current actors to develop strategic plans for Ennis Trad Festival and Ennis Fashion Week
- developing new festival for the town
- strengthening of visitennis initiative

Action 1g: - strategic marketing plan in support of 'Shop in Ennis' initiative
- launch of Gift Card/Voucher

Action 1h: - develop benchmarks that provide evidence of desired relationship
- achievement of consensus in each of identified areas

Action 1i: - evidence of consistent and effective lobbying, in support of the Chamber's objectives and values
- continue to develop working relationships with local and national elected officials

5. Objective 2: Attract New Investment to Town

5.1 Key Actions:

- a) work with local authorities to develop coherent strategic, including branding/positioning strategy for leveraging hub town status
- b) draft, in association with public authorities, a marketing and communications plan, aimed at attracting new investment in the town, targeted in particular at international companies, national chains and regional start-ups
- c) develop with local authorities, a strategic plan to integrate, promote and maximise access to current third-level and lifelong learning opportunities in the town
- d) develop, in association with other Chambers, from Mid-West and West, new initiatives aimed at positioning the region positively as a place to invest
- e) develop ongoing relationships with national business editors and journalists and have regular stream of stories that position the town positively in the light of Objective 2
- f) lobby relevant regional and national organisations and authorities in the support of the goals and targets of Objective 2

5.2 Key Result Measures

Overall: Development of individual Action Plans, with timelines for actions 2a-2f inclusive, and a 'champion', from the executive, to drive each Action Plan. The 'champion' will enlist a small team to support him/her in her/his work.

Action 2a: - be active participant, and one of key drivers, in Ennis Hub Action Group/Committee
- elicit views/ideas/suggestions on leveraging this status

Action 2b: - draft a Chamber 'Invest in Ennis' Strategic Plan
- agree 'Invest in Ennis' strategy with local authorities, including an implementation plan

Action 2c: - draft a Chamber 'Education Ennis' Strategic Plan
- agree 'Education Ennis' strategy with local authorities, including an implementation plan

Action 2d: - set up initial meeting with Chambers in Mid West
- be key driver in developing Mid-West Chambers Initiative

Action 2e: - build db of relevant editors and journalists
- contact db on monthly basis with positive stories that supported targeted positioning

Action 2f: - evidence of consistent and effective lobbying, in support of the Chamber's objectives and values

6. Objective 3: Generate New Revenue for Chamber

[a] – achieve the following target membership levels:

Current [2008-2009]	205
2009 – 2010	200
2010 – 2011	220
2011 – 2012	240
2012 – 2013	260
2013 – 2014	275
2014 – 2015	300

[b] – each member of executive to recruit 2 new members

[c] – development of Sales Plan to include plan for existing sales lines and to develop new revenue lines

[d] – develop new major fundraising event

[e] - Promotions & Marketing Plan for Chamber

6.2 Key Result Measures

Overall: Development of individual Action Plans, with timelines for actions 2a-2f inclusive, and a ‘champion’, from the executive, to drive each Action Plan.

Action 3c: - creation and monitoring of ‘recruitment scorecard’

Action 3d: - drafting and implementation of Sales & Promotion Plan

Action 3e: - creation, launch and running of new fundraising event

Action 3f: - drafting and implementation of Promotions & Marketing Plan

7. Resources

7.1 HR/Structure

With a view to achieving the objectives of this plan, the Chamber will review:

- current job descriptions and the allocation of tasks
- current management structures and responsibilities

7.2 Premises

The Chamber will investigate the current use of its premises and ways it could generate revenue for the Chamber.

7.3 Key Result Measures

- review and implementation of recommendations for current structure and roles of Chamber management and executive
- broaden membership of executive [eg invite representation from Enterprise Ireland]
- review and implementation of recommendations for use of premises

8. Timelines

The executive would expect to consider plans for each of the 18 Action Plans required by this strategy by its meeting in early October

9. Review

a. Three-monthly review of:

- development of plans under each action, including timelines
- progress of implementation of plans in each action

b. Annual review of actions and targets in 5-Year Strategic Plan



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