This is a tale of two economies. We find a divergence between confident consumers and wary businesses. The consumer, buoyed by a low unemployment rate, decent wage growth, higher net worth, lower debt service and a rising stock market, continues to spend. The business sector, on the other hand, has sharply pulled back on investments. Industrial production and the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) manufacturing survey are in territory usually associated with a contracting economy. (See figure 1.)

This is important to the state of Ohio because the largest portion of Ohio’s GDP is manufacturing. At the same time, job openings and manufacturing payrolls here have been slipping. Lastly, trade tensions and global economic weakness are undermining overall business confidence.

This tug of war will only end if the consumer can convince businesses to reverse their negativity as they did in 2015 and 2016. The other unfortunate possibility is that businesses start cutting jobs, which would erode consumer confidence. While late in the economic cycle, workers’ pay is still rising faster than consumer prices, and almost everyone who wants a job has one. The outlook for the consumer sector remains solid; the manufacturing sector is facing some challenges because of tariffs and geopolitical uncertainties. In the end, we believe the consumer will carry the day, so we are not likely to see a recession in the coming year.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK 2020

However, we expect sluggish economic growth here and abroad. (See figure 2.)

STOCKS
Bull markets rarely die of old age. This is good, because the current stock market rally, which began in March 2009, is the longest bull market in history. It has also produced one of the highest 10-year total returns on the S&P 500. (See figure 3.)

As a result, valuations are now extremely elevated. Fortunately, the momentum of the stock market is still positive. Corporate profit growth has stagnated since 2011, so corporations have been buying back shares to increase earnings per share. Corporate stock repurchases have amounted to $2.4 trillion over the past 10 years, one of the reasons the market had such strong returns. (See figure 4.)

In addition, low interest rates have allowed corporations to issue debt to repurchase shares, which then boosts earnings per share. Unfortunately, these extreme corporate debt levels pose a risk for investors. Typically, this phase of the presidential cycle is favorable for stocks. However, due to the uncertainty about the trade war and impeachment, stocks may have already enjoyed most of this benefit in 2019. (See figure 5.)

We are finding some relative value opportunities in the finance and energy sectors. Due to the lateness in the economic cycle and the popularity of passive investing, we believe large stocks should continue to advance, but smaller stocks offer opportunities. International stocks have underperformed U.S. stocks for many years, but valuations are very attractive in some developed and emerging market. This provides potential opportunities.
In 2019, we all worked toward greater outcomes.

Together we all shared greater success.

In 2020, we look forward to even more accomplishments.

We’re all for Ohio.

Thank you for your membership with the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. By working together, we are going to make this New Year Ohio’s best yet as we bring you:

• A redesigned website
• Cost-saving member services
• More educational opportunities
• Valuable information on the 2020 election
• An informative Annual Meeting
• A voice at the Statehouse

And we are doing this all while carrying out our mission to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.
Ohio is a great place for businesses to succeed. We are located in one day’s drive of 60 percent of the population of the U.S. and Canada. And Ohio has an eager and well-trained workforce, coupled with a culture of innovation. Since taking office last January, Lt. Gov. Jon Husted and I have been driving that point home, from Cleveland to Cincinnati and from London to Tokyo. During the past year, we have been working hard to make the business climate better by:

- **Making Ohio the best place in the Midwest to start and maintain a business.**
  - My administration is promoting workforce development and training through our new TechCred program, in which businesses work with colleges or tech schools to design appropriate classes for employees looking to gain new skills. The business then applies for funding to pay for the training. For more information, visit TechCred.Ohio.gov.
  - We are improving the transportation infrastructure for businesses and residents by investing in our roads to keep them safe and reliable. With funding included in the new transportation budget, we were able to move important projects forward.
  - We also continue to work with JobsOhio and its regional partners to bring investment and new jobs to the state. During the first three quarters of 2019, JobsOhio finalized 206 projects, with 16,069 new job commitments and 33,858 retained jobs, for a total of $8.8 billion in annual payroll. Additionally, new and existing companies made $4.85 billion in total capital investment commitments.
  - We returned dividends of $1.5 billion to Ohio employers following strong returns on investments by the Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation. This is in addition to a historic cut in rates for public and private employers.
  - We also maintained the Business Income Deduction, which allows business owners to take the first $250,000 of their income tax-free.

- **Creating international business.**
  - In September, I led a business development mission to Japan and attended the Midwest United States-Japan Association (MWJA) annual conference in Tokyo. Japan is Ohio’s top international investor, with more than 310 Japanese companies employing at 852 Japanese-owned establishments across the state. During the mission, Northeast Ohio-based KeyCorp Manufacturing announced it was investing $15 million to expand its facility in Preble County and adding 70 new jobs to its workforce of 800 Ohioans.
  - In October, Husted traveled to London to finalize a deal with the London Stock Exchange Group’s Elite program to open its first American headquaters in Cleveland in 2020. The Ohio headquarters will provide small-to-medium sized U.S. companies the opportunity to list their stocks in London to finalise a deal with the London Stock Exchange Group’s Elite program to open its first American headquaters in Cleveland in 2020. The Ohio headquarters will provide small-to-medium sized U.S. companies the opportunity to list their stocks.

- **Generating opportunities through programs and incentives.**
  - Those invest in the 320 qualified opportunity zones designated in Ohio by the U.S. Treasury as part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 will be benefiting from capital gains tax breaks while undertaking projects that bring steady employment and affordable housing to neighborhoods that desperately need them.
  - To further entice investors, we added a 10 percent employee ownership tax credit for the federal incentive. Communities are using our free marketing tool at OpportunityZones.Ohio.gov to promote their zones and projects.

- **Eliminating unnecessary regulations.**
  - The Common Sense Initiative was created to reform regulatory policies and help make Ohio a business-friendly state. The initiative, overseen by the lieutenant governor and advised by the Small Business Advisory Council, reviews Ohio’s regulatory landscape and provides recommendations for simplifications and modifications that stand in the way of job creation. When we took office, the legislature eliminated 1,423 rules awaiting attention. Today, the backlog has been cleared, and we are looking at creative ways to improve the regulations that remain.

Meanwhile, we have unfinished business to attend to on our STRONG Ohio violence prevention initiative and its related bill, which protects positive momentum, particularly when contrasted with the first half of the year. The challenge will be carrying that positive momentum into 2020, translating it into even more action, especially given that 2020 is an election year.

An election year can mean a slowing of the legislative process, in part because legislators seeking re-election want to be back home in their districts interacting with their constituents without creating projects that would lead to increased health insurance premiums for employers.

From a business perspective, the 2019 legislative year ended with much positive momentum, particularly when contrasted with the first half of the year. The challenge will be carrying that positive momentum into 2020, translating it into even more action, especially given that 2020 is an election year.

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It’s here. Election year 2020 has officially arrived. Admittedly, it feels like we’ve been in this national election cycle since 2016. But let’s leave the presidential race and talking points to the media and take a look at how down-ticket Ohio Statehouse races are shaping up.

Out of the 99 Ohio House seats, 17 incumbents are vacating their seats due to term limits, retirement or attempts to run for the U.S. Senate. The offices. The distribution of those open seats by party matches up with the current distribution in the House — 12 open seats are Republican-held districts, five are Democrat held, and the Ohio House currently maintains a 64-member Republican supermajority.

One interesting component is how many “incumbents” appointed in the past year will be running for their seat for the first time. With nine of those new appointments this year (so far) this General Assembly, just over a quarter of all Ohio House districts will have relatively fresh names and faces running in those races in November.

On the Ohio Senate side, only half of the 33 districts are up in 2020 due to the four-year terms. Of those 16 even-numbered districts, five are open seats. All five of these open seats are Red Republican districts, but the Ohio Democratic party is running a candidate in all 16 Senate races on the ballot in 2020. Just like the House, the Senate also has four members appointed in 2019 who will be running for re-election but will be on the ballot for their district for the first time.

The previous two national elections in 2016 and 2018 have changed the game for campaigns at the state level. With a lot of the partisan lift coming from their expenses in promoting their products and services to the world.

Through the International Market Access Grant for Exporters, known as IMAGE, companies can be reimbursed for some of their expenses in promoting their products to foreign markets. For more information about the grants and to apply, visit IMAGE. development.ohio.gov. Applications are being accepted until Feb. 20.

In addition, Development’s Export Assistance Office and the Export Assistance Network of regional offices can help companies with other international business initiatives, as well. To learn more, visit exportassistancedevelopment.ohio.gov or call 1-800-382-9673. In 2020, the Export Assistance Network office, https://development.ohio.gov/bs/bs_iae.htm.


canada. Now, BioThane is successfully selling custom products to these international markets. The IMAGE grant made this possible and is making a huge difference for a small business like us.

international sales are a major factor for the Ohio economy, and the Export Assistance Office at the Development Services Agency works to help companies grow their foreign markets.

“Exporting is vital to the Ohio economy, with nearly $55 billion worth of international sales by Ohio companies in 2018,” says Lydia L. Mihalik, director of the Ohio Development Services Agency. “IMAGE is key to helping small businesses compete in the global marketplace.”

The IMAGE program is funded, in part, through the U.S. Small Business Administration’s State Trade Export Program (STEP). A list of participating Ohio businesses can be found at https://ohiochamber.com/politicalgrassroots/. If you are interested in seeing a deeper analysis of individual state-level races, become a member of OCCPAC and make a contribution at https://ohiochamber.com/politicalgrassroots/occpac to receive the OCCPAC Ohio Politics Insider Newsletter.

Provided by the Ohio Development Services Agency

You have a product or service that many in the world would want to buy, and now you can get help letting the world know that you’re here.

The Ohio Development Services Agency is a resource that can help.

Through the International Market Access Grant for Exporters, known as IMAGE, companies can be reimbursed for some of their expenses in promoting their products and services to the world.

The IMAGE grant made this possible and is making a huge difference for a small business like us.

Through the International Market Access Grant for Exporters, known as IMAGE, companies can be reimbursed for some of their expenses in promoting their products and services to the world.

Transportation

Through the International Market Access Grant for Exporters, known as IMAGE, companies can be reimbursed for some of their expenses in promoting their products and services to the world.

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BUSINESS LEADERS WARY OF FUTURE UNCERTAINTY

The survey also revealed some of the top concerns weighing on Ohio’s business leaders. While the cost of health care is and remains the No. 1 concern for Ohio businesses, state and local taxes climb the rankings, and workforce issues and the state’s political environment re-enter the top five. We anticipate that the results of the next survey will reflect some of the recent activity surrounding the announced plans to implement the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), although ongoing negotiations with China and the impact of tariffs on other countries may still give businesses pause.

These surveys help the Research Foundation provide insight from business owners to thought leaders and public officials across the state. With a busy fall ahead and the election year on the horizon, the Prosperity Pulse will remain a great barometer of economic performance in Ohio.

To see the full results of the 3Q Prosperity Pulse survey, or any of the previous editions of the survey, visit http://www.ohiochamberfoundation.com/projects. Thank you to all the business owners who responded to our quarterly Prosperity Pulse survey last fall. As we circulate the next survey in the coming weeks, be on the lookout and make sure your voice is heard.

INterns help ohio businesses Boost International sales

More than 50 Ohio college students are preparing to focus on the international marketplace over the next eight months, and they will boost Ohio companies’ sales in the process.

Companies can apply now to have a highly motivated and knowledgeable intern join their staff during the summer of 2020. The Ohio Development Services Agency will reimburse companies half of the intern’s salary, up to $1,600.

Companies have found success through the Ohio Export Internship Program in the past. Bionix Development Corp. in Toledo, which develops, manufactures and markets innovative single-patient-use medical products, has participated in the program for multiple years.

“Our intern came to Bionix well-prepared,” says Brett Smith, director of market development at Bionix. “She was able to research, analyze and provide a well-developed plan for addressing specific European markets. She also fit our culture well.”

Companies looking to expand existing markets or find new ones can get the help they need through the internship program.

Since the internship program began in 2012, 274 students have worked with 176 Ohio companies to improve their international sales. The intern’s work has resulted in 335 new international markets, distributors or customers for the companies.

“The Export Internship Program is a great opportunity for all involved, an opportunity for the students to grow and learn in their field of study and a great opportunity for the businesses to grow in international markets,” says Lydia Mihalik, director of the Development Services Agency.

“There’s great opportunity in international markets, and what that means is an expanding workforce within the state of Ohio. Fifty-four students will be part of the Ohio Export Internship Program for 2020 and will start the upcoming journey by taking export-focused coursework during the spring semester at one of four universities that are partners with the Development Services Agency.

Those universities are:
- The Ohio State University
- Max M. Fisher College of Business
- Cleveland State University
- Monto Ahuja College of Business
- Youngstown State University
- William and Mary College of Business
- University of Dayton, School of Business Administration

Eleven of the students will travel from their home institutions to take the export course. Those universities are Ohio Wesleyan University, Shawnee State University, Denison University, Bowling Green State University, Ashland University, University of Akron and Baldwin Wallace University.

After completing the course in May, the students will be assigned to Ohio companies that apply to be a part of the program, and they will work at the companies for 12 weeks, from May into August 2020.

The Export Assistance Office at Development is closely involved throughout the program. Staff visits with students during the spring semester class and with the companies that apply. Those contacts help Development’s staff determine which intern will be a good fit for a particular company.

During the internships, Export Assistance Office staff continues to mentor the students throughout the summer. The internships culminate in the annual Ohio Export Internship Program Showcase, where the students’ achievements are celebrated in a ceremony at the Ohio Statehouse.

“I think the export internship program is very well run and managed,” says Chuck Ferrell, vice president of sales and marketing at Engineering Consultants Group Inc. in Akron. “ECG wants to thank the state of Ohio for these services and the Ohio Development Services Agency for their leadership and support.”

Company applications are being accepted now for on-site meetings that have begun and run through February 2020. The final deadline for companies to apply is Feb. 1, 2020.

For more information and to apply, visit eip.development.ohio.gov.
Written documents are critical for an effective and comprehensive drug-free workplace. Without documented, memorialized program provides legal protection in the event that the general public or a disgruntled employee charges the organization, especially as it pertains to drug and alcohol testing (considered search and seizure by the Uniform Search and Seizure Act, an important and the US Constitution). A program must adhere to federal and state law and any other authority to which the company is subject.

To be consistent and fair, an effective program dealing with employee drug use needs specific and clear policy statements and written directives. Details in all documents must be compiled and maintained in a central location. Without detailed, company-specific procedures, an enterprise can be left potentially exposed when faced with real-life drug and alcohol issues. Here are examples of five operational issues that are often overlooked — and shouldn’t be.

1. Alcohol consumption. Is there ever a time when employees are allowed to drink in connection to work, e.g., at holiday gatherings, work, e.g., at holiday gatherings, or other company-sponsored events? Is there a time when employees are allowed to drink in connection to work, e.g., at holiday gatherings, or other company-sponsored events? Do employees know what to do if that happens? While you don’t want to prevent employees from properly using medication, your program documents should offer directives for what employees should do if they are taking something that could jeopardize safety or productivity.

2. Use of prescription drugs. Employers have protections under federal law requiring their use of prescription medications, but the side effects of some medications can jeopardize safety. Do employees know what to do if that happens? While you don’t want to prevent employees from properly using medication, your program documents should offer directives for what employees should do if they are taking something that could jeopardize safety or productivity.

3. Post-accident testing. Testing an employee after an accident is prudent, but what counts as an accident in your organization? To prevent management from misinterpreting an accident, post-accident testing must be performed on subjective criteria — e.g. they think the employee was high — you need a detailed, objective definition of what constitutes an accident and what qualifies for post-accident testing. Having a written and meticulously followed policy by employees about when to send, or not send, an employee for post-accident testing.

4. Program coverage. A company’s DFWP typically applies to both full- and part-time employees. What about temporary employees, interns, independent contractors, or volunteers? Are these individuals subject to — or just some of — the program rules and testing applications? Are they excluded altogether, or covered under a different contractual agreement? An operationally sound program should clearly articulate the expectations of all individuals that could impact the safety, productivity or public image of your organization.

5. Employee assistance. DFWP are designed to help employees, in addition to helping the organization. Does your program provide specific directions to employees struggling with alcohol or other drug issues? Where can they go for help, and what if they need time off to seek that help? What safety precautions should the company take if an employee voluntarily shares information about a program or is identified as having a problem via a positive test? These decisions will be influenced by your organization’s preferences and needs but by any compliance mandates you follow. However, whatever action is taken in this situation must be dictated by your program’s written documents. Addressing real-life situations like these, along with others you will encounter while operating your DFWP, makes your program live in a functional way.

The procedures for handling situations may be contained in a single drug-free workplace policy, or to prevent the policy from becoming too cumbersome, in a separate program, procedures document. Remember, a program dealing with employee drug use doesn’t live in a silo separate from nondrug free workplace policies and procedures. Practices need to be interwoven with all other related corporate policies, e.g. HR, safety, administrative. To deal with drug issues responsibly, an employer needs to have policies and procedures around drug testing, fair-change practices, time-off guidelines, applicable insurance, benefits and other available assistance, re-entry support and more. Regardless of where you put the information, operational details on all related corporate practices must be congruous and documented.

While operating your DFWP, if something occurs, you must be able to pull out your policy and procedures to guide your actions. If something happens and you don’t know how to respond, don’t wing it. Find a specialist who knows the law, can help work through the situation and ultimately add a new operational procedure to your program.

NEW RULING GIVES EMPLOYERS ADDITIONAL DISCRETION TO PROHIBIT EMPLOYEES FROM USING EMAIL FOR NONBUSINESS PURPOSES

On Dec. 16, 2019, the National Labor Relations Board’s (NLRB) decision in Caesars Entertainment d/b/a Rio All-Suites Hotel and Casino ruled that employers can prohibit use of their email system for nonbusiness purposes, thereby overturning the board’s decision and conclusions in Purple Communications. In Purple Communications, the board held that employees who are granted access to the employer’s email system have an employee’s NLRA rights to control the use of its email system for nonwork purposes in the typical workplace; that better balances an employer’s property right to control the use of its email system and employees’ right to self-organization.’’ The board further noted that employees’ property right to control the use of their email systems. Accordingly, the policy was deemed lawful under the NLRA.

This decision marks a continuing return to an approach by the board that better balances an employer’s right to legitimate policies and rules for its employees that govern important aspects of their employment and company business, with employees’ right to act concurrently to improve terms and conditions of their employment. One note of caution, however, the board concluded that this ruling applies to the “typical” workplace, where there are other means of communication between employees, including personal time. Thus, in the rare instance where use of employer email or IT resources is the only means of communication, the policy may draw additional scrutiny.

For employers interested in implementing new rules related to employee use of computer resources and emails, contact your employment legal counsel.

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NEW MEMBERS
We welcome the following new members to the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. These companies joined the Ohio Chamber between Nov. 3 and Dec. 19, 2018. As of Dec. 19 we have welcomed a record 618 new members. We looking forward to working with all of these new companies, as they are all fabulously.

Able Fence of Columbus Inc., Columbus
Advanced Mechanical Services, Fairborn
Advanced Plastic Systems, Gahanna
Alliance Building Group LLC, Xenia
Allied Builders, Dayton
Alumina Railing Products Inc, Cleves
AMEND Consulting, Cincinnati
ARES Inc., Port Clinton
Armcor Construction Inc, Celina
Artculation, Columbus
Assured Partners Consulting Inc., Boardman
AssurePartners NL LLC, Cincinnati
Auto Additions Inc., Westerville
Avon RV Center, Medina
Benchmark Insurance Management Inc., Westerville
Benefit Strategies Agency LLC, Findlay
BenefitsNetwork - a Division of Risk Strategies, Cincinnati
Borgers Ohio Inc., Norwalk
Brad Smith Roofing Co. Inc., Westlake
Buckeye Beach Park, Thornville
Burnside Law LLC, Portsmouth
Carey Electric Co, Vandalia
Catchweight, New Albany
City-Plating and Polishing LLC, Cleveland
Cleveland Air Comfort Corp, Cleveland
Coil Processing Reapir Inc, Celina
Colburn Pest Control Inc, Columbus
Concord Fabricators Inc, Grove City
Cortrella Corp, Walton Hills
Crayon Fire Protection, Dayton
Cresco Labs, Chicago
Cunningham Insurance Ltd, Mt Vernon
Dawn Enterprises Inc., Valley View
DeMarly Truck, Columbus
Dick Baker Roofing Inc., Columbus
DODS Inc., LLC, Oakwood
Dietz, Futrell and Walters Insurance, Beverly
Dryden Builders Inc., Centerville
DS Benefits Group, LLC, Medina
Duling-Warrock Residential, Hilliard
Eagle Concrete Construction LLC of Ohio, Springboro
EDP Renewables North America LLC, Chicago
Elford Development Ltd., Columbus
ELK Promotions, Columbus
Energy Insurance Agency, Lexington, Kentucky
Faircreek Church, Fairborn
Falcon Tool & Machine Inc., Dayton
Fayette County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Washington Court House
Find My Benefits, Cleveland
First Insurance Group of the Midwest Inc., Defiance
First Tracks Technology, Lewis Center
Front Health, Columbus
Frontier Electric Services, Columbus
Girl Scouts of Ohio’s Heartland Council Inc., Columbus
Grady Enterprises Inc., Columbus
Greer & Whitehead Construction Inc, Harrison
Hamman Family Partnership, Mt. Sterling
Helping Hands Health and Wellness Center, Columbus
Hill & Hamilton Inc., Bellefontaine
JAB Benefits LLC, Columbus
Innogy Renewables US Inc, Westerville
IP Security Reps, Springfield
JA Knapp Agency, Sunbury
Jon Edwards Steel, Columbus
K&B Professional Wood Services LLC, Mansfield
KjetodDoggy Daycare LLC, St. Mary’s
Kessler & Associates Inc., Dayton
Knowlton Industrial Steel Supply Inc., Norwich
Koch Sporting Goods, Cincinnati
Lakeside Supply Co., Cleveland
Law General Contracting, St. Louisville
Lee Cleveland Property Management, Pepper Pike
Life Rocks LLC, Cincinnati
Luken Construction Inc, Cincinnati
M.J. Mck & Associates LLC, Centerville
Malbasa Financial Services, Cleveland
Mathie Benefits Inc., West Chester
Maximum Accessible Housing-WEST, Cleveland
McGohan Brabender, Dayton
Milligan Construction Co., Sidney
Mistras Group Inc, Newark
NPF Corporate Services (OH) Inc, Independence
Northeast Automotive
Northwest Therapy Service Inc., Belfonte
Ohio Athletic Committee, Sandusky
Ohio Green Works LLC, Waynesville
Ohio Library Council, Columbus
Ohio Quarter Horse Association, Columbus
Ohio Tool Systems Inc., Richfield
Precision Alignment and Tire, Delaware
Prime Inc., Columbus
Quest Restoration, Toledo
Quicken Loans Inc, Mentor
Rader Environmental Services, Findlay
Radics Inc, Columbus
Restoration Brew Ware, Delaware
Restoration Park Church, Medway
Richard Residential Inc., Middletown
Sandusky State Theatre, Sandusky
Sawin Sales Associates Inc., Chagrin Falls
Schoedel Scullin & Bestic LLC, Canfield
Shawnee State University, Portsmouth
Shoreline Construction & Exca vit ing Ltd, Russell
Smart Parks Learning Centers Inc., Cleveland
Sokol Eisenberg Insurance, Columbus
Springfield Township, Clark County, Springfield
Straton Creek Wood Works LLC, Kimson
Strinteg Corp, Cleveland
TAH Benefits, Westerville
The Benefit Source Inc., Beachwood
The Columbus Architectural Studio LLC, Columbus
The Daimler Group Inc., Columbus
The Nghi Law Group LLC, Columbus
The Sandel Corp, Gahanna
The SEBO Group, Columbus
The Siekmann Co, Plain City
Thomas R. Bates, CFP LLC, Columbus
Thompson-Cunningham Insurance, Worthington
Total Athletic Development Inc., Graveline
TRI Hedge & Associates, Dublin
Tri-Craft Inc./Tech-Matic Inc., Middleburg Hts
Vanderhorst Financial Services LLC, Sidney
Vapor Emporium, Findlay
Verhoff Atlas Inc., Ottawa
Village of Sunbury
Village of Wintersville, Wintersville
Worker Owned Restaurant Corp, Athens
Worthington United Methodist Church, Worthington
Zimmer Development Co., Wilmington, North Carolina

www.ohiochamber.com
A PROFILE OF OHIO CHAMBER MEMBERS

As of this writing, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce added a record 600 new members in 2019. So what is the profile of Ohio Chamber membership?

Of our 8,000 members, 20% are in manufacturing. This is the largest industry group represented in our membership. The rest of the top 10 industry categories are:

- 1% are in non-profits and other chambers of commerce
- 10% are in retail
- 10% are in construction
- 9% are in health care
- 4% are in industrial
- 4% are in business services
- 3% are in wholesale

As for company size,

- 33% have one to 10 employees
- 3% have 26-50 employees
- 24% have 11-25 employees
- 7% have 51-100 employees
- 7% have 101-200 employees
- 5% have 201-500 employees
- 2% have 501-1,000 employees
- 3% have 1,000-10,000 employees
- 7% have over 10,000 employees.

The majority of our members are located in Northeast Ohio, 24% in Central Ohio, 21% in Northwest Ohio and 7% are in the southeastern part of the state.

As you can see, we represent a variety of members – just like Ohio’s business community, which is made up of a variety of businesses in all industries and of all sizes. This year we added new members like Facebook, SHARE and AirStream, plus many more. We have featured these new members in social media posts throughout the year and highlighted some of them in this publication.

Our elected officials want to hear from a variety of businesses, as well, which is what makes our organization such a unique advocate for business. When one of our team members is testifying in front of a committee at the Statehouse, our elected officials know they are speaking on behalf of a diverse and influential group.

There are many times when we need members to help carry our message. Whether it is contacting elected officials to let them know how their decisions will impact the business community, or coming to Columbus to testify in person, our elected officials are interested in hearing from our members.

Because this is an election year, it is very important for you to let the candidates for the Ohio House, Senate and Ohio Supreme Court know the issues that are important to your business. Invite them to your company so that they can learn first-hand how their decisions impact business.

Later this year, we will announce our endorsements for those running in the Ohio House, Senate and Ohio Supreme Court. We have a thorough endorsement process so that you can be assured the people we endorse are supportive of economic growth and Ohio’s job creators. We encourage our members to become active in the political process by not only voting in the March 17 and Nov. 3 elections, but also by supporting our endorsed candidates by sharing the information with your employees, contributing to the Ohio Chamber Political Action Committee or even helping out on their campaigns.

The variety in our membership base best reflects the entire business community in our state. It’s the uniqueness of our membership that really sets us apart. Whether you are a sole proprietor or part of a large international company, your voice is heard at the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.