Ohio businesses resilient through COVID-19 uncertainty

Ohio businesses stay resilient through COVID-19 uncertainty

By Lillian van Wyngaarden, Communications Coordinator

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“Financial uncertainty and programs like the PPP led businesses like CBIZ, Inc., a financial services and business consulting firm headquartered in Cleveland, to pivot from a busy tax season in mid-March to becoming experts on governmental programs, all while supporting clients and transitioning to a home work environment. “We were making adjustments where we could to support our clients and understand the government’s new programs,” says CBIZ Chief of Staff Elizabeth Newman.

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Businesses continue to navigate the hardships of the pandemic, helping each other and exposing a resilience and creativity that many say will remain long past the pandemic. “It’s easy in the spirit of fear to feel hopeless and lose that drive, but the business community has been encouraging in their response to change,” says Rush. “We have to stick together, take care of our customers, be nimble and stay focused on the community. We’ll find solutions.”

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From commercial credit cards to program management tools to innovative payment technologies, we have the right solution to help your organization reduce payment costs, enhance control and streamline your entire payment processing function.

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John Hammond
U.S. Bank Business Development Consultant
216.548.3190 or john.hammond1@usbank.com
Employers will have access to lower health benefits,” says OCHBP Executive Director Scott Colby. “We know the recovery from COVID-19 will not be easy or fast, but what the Ohio Chamber Health Benefit Program does is provide our members with an affordable choice when choosing health benefits,” OCHBP Executive Director Scott Colby said.

“Through UnitedHealthcare’s exclusive Predictive Personalization, which includes the use of technology, analytics and member data across medical, behavioral, clinical and pharmacy, provides UnitedHealthcare with a view of each covered employee’s health, health care interactions and attitudes. Data analytics and technology platforms enable easy identification of a covered employee’s health care support needs, enabling UnitedHealthcare to anticipate and respond to questions and concerns using their preferences.

Advocate4Me connects consumers through a single toll-free number or their preferred communication channel with the advocate who “owns” a covered employee’s request until it’s resolved. Advocates help employees take ownership of their health care and earn their trust as they help them understand their benefits, assess the right care, which may potentially save them time and money, and perhaps most importantly, make more informed health care decisions. Advocates have a broad team of specialists from clinical, wellness, behavioral, financial, pharmacy and medical plan to tap into. UNITEDHEALTHPREMIUM® PROGRAM

When it comes to health care, it may be less clear what quality means or how to go about evaluating it. To help Ohio Chamber members make more informed decisions about their employees’ health care, the UnitedHealth Premium® Program recognizes doctors who meet 240 quality and cost-efficiency guidelines. The program evaluates physicians using national evidence-based guidelines for quality and local market benchmarks for cost efficiency. The UnitedHealth Premium® Program can help covered employees make more informed health care decisions and choose the care that’s right for them. Additionally, information is shared with physicians to help health care professionals deliver quality care and use health resources efficiently. The result is a better health care system for all.

TELEMEDICINE AND UNITEDHEALTHCARE’S ADVOCATE4ME APP

When you need care — any time, day or night — telemedicine (or virtual visits) can be a great option especially for older adults, children and those with special needs. However, not all visits are the same.

For more information on the Ohio Chamber Health Benefit Program, contact Scott Colby at (614) 639-0933 or scotcolby@ohiochamber.com. Or visit www.oohiochamber.com and click on the red box that says Learn More.
DESPITE PANDEMIC, BUSINESS AS USUAL AT THE STATEHOUSE

Like just about everything else so far in 2020, legislative routines typically followed by the Ohio legislature were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and much of the state—including businesses — was shut down. When Ohio’s Mike DeWine issued his executive order on March 9 declaring a state of emergency for Ohio due to the “dangerous effects of COVID-19,” the 137th session of the General Assembly’s primary election was only eight days away and the legislature was already in midseason of a scheduled break from Columbus so that its members could return home to campaign.

Through that point in time in 2020, it had been business as usual, both for employers and our economy, as well as for state lawmakers.

While it’s almost hard to believe now, Ohio’s economy was growing and business leader optimism was high before the arrival of the coronavirus. In fact, when the Ohio Chamber of Commerce Research Foundation released its fourth quarter 2019 Prosperity Pulse Index, Ohio business leaders in early March, the Prosperity Pulse Index was up to 118, its fourth-highest reading in survey history, and a majority of respondents had a positive outlook on the future of the economy overall.

At the Statehouse, business as usual meant the House and Senate were often at odds, discussing how to tackle priority issues and failing to concur on four separate bills—bringing the total number of bills to which the original chamber wouldn’t accept the other chamber’s changes to 10, an extraordinarily high number given that the two chambers are controlled by the same party.

Unfortunately, business as usual during this two-year session of the General Assembly also has come to mean high-impact priority bills to make our business climate more competitive advance slowly through the legislative process, if at all.

The most significant pre-coronavirus legislation we developed with our employers, for example, was not a positive one—the passage by the House of House Bill 308, which would allow for a mental injury without any underlying physical harm to be a compensable workers’ compensation claim. Specifically, HB 308 entitles peace officers, harm to be a compensable workers’ compensation claim, and benefits under Ohio’s HB 308 entitles peace officers, as well as for state lawmakers.

The Ohio Chamber doesn’t object to providing businesses with additional liability protection and/or limiting legal risks for businesses. The Ohio Chamber urged DeWine to work closely with the Ohio Chamber to begin reopening the economy.

During the height of the pandemic, in March and April, the Ohio Chamber’s focus was to begin reassuring businesses understand and navigate the various new programs and resources that Ohio and the federal government created to help preserve jobs and provide financial and emotional hardships, while also making available to help businesses transform.

Nobody is immune to the mental health challenges of daily life, especially in these trying times. Accordingly, Ohio’s COVID-19 survey from the U.S. Census Bureau, one-third of all Americans are experiencing mental health and substance use disorder benefits—contained in most health insurance policies—can provide access to much-needed health care. But some businesses may not be aware that these benefits are available to them.

Employers looking for clarity on these benefits can contact their insurance agent or health insurance provider, while employees may already have received information regarding their benefits from their employer or health plan. Employers can also contact their human resources department and/or their health plan directly.

Another resource is the Ohio Department of Insurance (ODI). We are one of the largest consumer protection agencies in the state and are here to answer your questions from both employers and employees. Our staff also reviews health plans for compliance with mental health and substance use state and federal laws, as well as monitors and investigates insurance company practices for compliance with applicable laws.

The department also provides a number of resources for mental health and substance disorder benefits.

These resources include an online toolkit at insurance.ohio.gov with specialized information on mental health and substance use benefits and how to access them, and experts are available at complaints@insurance.ohio.gov and (800) 686-1525 to answer your questions.

We also encourage your review of articles and reviews in situations where a consumer believes that their health plan wrongly denied a claim or reduced payment for a benefit or service. We have information on our website to walk people through this process.

Navigating the complexities of health insurance to access mental health and substance use disorder benefits can be overwhelming. Please reach out to the Ohio Department of Insurance to take advantage of our services. We are here to help you.

While it’s almost hard to believe now, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, the Ohio Department of Insurance, and consumer advocates for mental health and substance disorder benefits can return home to campaign.

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It’s safe to say that the coronavirus outbreak has touched every aspect of society — personal, business, health care, government and social services. As the world collectively held its breath and works through the uncertainty caused by COVID-19, many business owners now find themselves in uncharted territory, with nothing but more uncertainty ahead.

How long will the coronavirus pandemic last? Will the economy skid into a severe recession, or even a depression? How long could that last? How will my industry change? How will consumers and my customers change? What will the world look like when this is all over?

There are endless questions, and virtually no answers. Even so, it is possible to come out of this stronger. And now more than ever is the ideal time for you and your team to come together and strategize methods that will allow you to stay afloat and succeed.

**UPDATE YOUR BUSINESS STRATEGY TO FOCUS FORWARD**

As the leader of your company, all eyes will be on you as the business determines ways to continue thriving while dealing with unplanned fluctuations. As you work to create your new normal, it’s imperative to make sure all team members understand that, if possible, the business must stick to its ultimate goal — providing top-notch products and services for your clients.

Reanalyze previous budgets and goals and revise them to be realistic and achievable. Perhaps there are additional goals that you want to put in place. Perhaps there are policies or benefits you were able to establish or revise. This is a good time to make those improvements to your strategy and operations. Communicate often and honestly with your team to make sure everyone is working together to help the business come out stronger. And remember — throughout history, businesses that have found effective, creative ways to bounce back through times of crisis.

With your laser focus on business objectives, embrace out-of-the-box ideas and forward thinking. It is indeed possible to lead your team to success in an economic slowdown. As you work to create your new normal, it’s imperative to make sure all team members understand that, if possible, the business must stick to its ultimate goal — providing top-notch products and services for your clients.

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GAIN A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE BY BOOSTING YOUR MARKETING IN A DOWN ECONOMY

Continued from page 5

‘very concerned’ with continued economic uncertainty, and with ongoing economic turbulence, it’s easy to see why. While the survey does well to keep us informed of current conditions, where the Prosperity Pulse will be most useful is in continuing to track the sentiment of Ohio business leaders in the coming months as we chart a course to economic recovery in the wake of this pandemic, and monitoring the issues weighing most heavily on the minds of business owners. We will be in the midst of another quarterly survey period in early to mid-July and would love for you to make your voice heard.

To participate in the survey, or to see the full results of the Q2-2020 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 the Quarterly Prosperity Pulse survey earlier this year. We look forward to keeping track of business leader sentiment in the future.

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON THE BENEFITS OF CORPORATE CARDS

Provided by U.S. Bank, provider of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce’s One Card

In early April, we conducted our most recent quarterly Prosperity Pulse survey of business leader economic sentiment. We conduct this survey at the end of every quarter to keep tabs on how business owners across the state are feeling about the economic landscape in Ohio, challenges facing their businesses and how they describe the road ahead.

The majority of workers who receive employee perks say that these benefits improve their lives. Nearly half (49 percent) say that receiving these benefits means they know that their employers are invested in them as individuals. 1

Organizations may also choose to trade reward points for merchandise or gift cards to thank clients or reward employees, electing to use these more tangible items in their overall employee incentive program. Regardless of the option, rewards from a corporate card program can play a valuable role in an organization’s employee engagement strategy. When it comes to corporate card reward programs, assess which ones provide for a rewarding experience for both your business and your employees, as well as the redemption value of rewards. It comes down to evaluating which types of rewards are most motivating for your employees, the value of the rewards and finding a system that fits your organization’s unique needs.

The One Card from the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and U.S. Bank is a single, flexible solution that members can use to cut costs, manage vendor payments and operate more efficiently. For more information, please contact John Hammond at (216) 548-3190 or john.hammond@usbank.com.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Kellie Borth is the CEO and chief strategy officer at GREENCREST, a 30-year-old marketing, advertising, public relations and digital marketing agency where we turn market players into industry leaders. Kellie holds one of 35 certified brand strategists in North America. Reach her at (614) 885-7501 or kborth@greencrest.com. For more information, visit www.greencrest.com.

1 Clutch “What Employee Perks and Company Culture Matter,” 2018-18 U.S. Bank. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners. 02-0015-01 CAT-15987626
NEW MEMBERS

The following companies joined the Ohio Chamber of Commerce between Feb. 24 and June 12 of this year. We welcome all of our new members and look forward to working with them.

Consolidated Employer Services, Columbus
Consumer Lighting (U.S.) LLC, North Canton
Cooper & Elliott LLC, Columbus
Cotter Merchandise Storage of Ohio, Akron
Curran & Horgan LLC, Dublin
D & T H.T. Employee Leasing LLC, Reese, Michigan
D.J. Group Inc., Beverly
David Schwartz DMD MD LLC, Beachwood
Dave Knapp Ford Lincoln Inc., Greeneville
David Bauer Custom Homes Inc., Blanchester
Dees Investment Partners LLC, Dublin
Dephis Public Library, Delphos
Die-Mension Corp., Brunswick
Donley Homes Inc., Reynoldsburg
Dr. Clark Transport LLC, West Alexandria
Dr. Marcus A. Castro LLC, Beachwood
DRK Construction Services LLC, West Chester Township
Drs. Bahms Cohn & Leb Inc., Beachwood
Dyonitee Inc., Columbus
Eagle Laboratory Glass Co. LLC., Painesville
Elevated Integrity, Baltimore
Elliot Lumber Co., Malta
Emitt, Dayton
Eqafax, Atlanta
E-Volve Systems LLC, Cincinnati
Ewing Funeral Services LLC, Coshocton
F & W Properties, Columbus
F.D. Thomas Inc., Central Point, Oregon
Fanta Equipment Co., Cleveland
Farmers National Insurance LLC, Cortland
Financial Partners Group, Dayton
Flora’s Diesel Repair Service Inc., Johnstown
Floral’s Diesel Repair Service Inc., Johnstown
Flynn, Py & Kruse Co. LPA, Sandusky
Fox Lit, Inc., Fairborn
Frontier Remodeling LLC, Baltimore
G & L Heating, Dillowlane
Gahanna Old Time Barbershop, Gahanna
Gil & Mike’s Transmission Service LLC, Batavia
Gilbert’s Risk Solutions, Sharon, Pennsylvania
Google, Mountain View, California
Gregory Alonso Inc., Beachwood
Grooveport Apostolic Church dba TurnPoint Apostolic Church, Grooveport
Grpyhon Financial Partners LLC, Columbus
Harmon Insurance Brokerage LLC, Zanesville
Hill Street Construction Inc., Cleveland
Hittle Buck GMC Inc., Greenville
Hoffman & Harpt Co Inc., Toledo
Hoffman Builders Inc., Maumee
Houston Plumbing and Heating Inc., Newark
IEN Risk Management Consultants LLC, Ashland
Ingram, Cassesse & Grimm LLP, Youngstown
Innovative Hardware Inc. dba EPS Ohio, Canal Winchester
Innovatus Group Benefits, Akron
Interior Wood Products, Plain City
Interjet West Inc., Swanton
ITSecureNow LLC, Grove City
J. Adam Suesa, Sonora, California
James Air Cargo Inc., Brook Park
John D Gonia - KCM Consulting Co., Toledo
Kapp Construction Inc., Springfield
Kayline Co., Cleveland
Kerek Industries, Mayfield Village
Kirby’s Auto & Truck Repair Inc., Lebanon
Kratziv, Brown & Doritch LLC, Columbus
KR Plumbng Inc., Ashville
L And R Technologies LLC, Powell
Lauterbach & Elber, Columbus
Leen Spliter Benefits Group, Dayton
Little Brother’s Tool Sales LLC, West Salem
Louis & Partners Inc., Akron
M & D HD LLC, Zanesville
M Five Construction Group LLC, Medina
Maeder-Quint-Tibens Funeral Home Inc., Columbus
MediView XR Inc., Cleveland
Memorial Park Cemetery, Lima
Midrex Technologies, Inc., Charlotte, North Carolina
Midwest Dock and Door LLC, Fort Recovery
Miller-Albrecht-Hess DDS Inc., Marysville
Minute Men Staffing Services, Cleveland
Multifamily Media Management LLC, Westlake
Nicks Well Plugging LLC, Warren
Nanzin’s Pizzeria Inc., Cleveland
Ohio Valley Excavating, Waynesville
OnComm Communications Inc., Columbus
Open Door Baptist Church Inc., Lima
Paul E & Lawrence E Hilty, Holmesville
Paulozzi Co. LPA, Brooklyn Hts.
Pediatric Associates Of Mount Carmel, Cincinnati
Penny Fab LLC, Columbus
Platinum Restoration Contractors Inc., Elyria
Plymale Insurance Agency Inc., Bucyrus
Podiatry of Hamilton Inc., Liberty Township
Portsmouth Area Chamber of Commerce, Portsmouth
Pratt Industries, Wapakoneta
ProMedica, Toledo
Quality Pest Control Inc., Columbus
Quality Yard and Home Maintenance, Pataskala
Quillen Brothers Inc., Bryan
Quinci Emporium, Columbus
Radagrandis LLC, Parma
RD Energy, Granville
Resource Strategies Inc., Pepper Pike
Rocking Horse Center, Springfield
Rockwell Springs Trout Club, Clyde
Ronald L. Reddy DDS Inc., Beaver Creek
RMLS LLC, Mansfield, Pennsylvania
Sales Velocity Partners LLC, Cleveland
SCSV Holdings LLC dba SafeWire, Westerville
SearchClose of Columbus Ltd., Powell
Select Home Care LLC, New Albany
Shannon Callan, Dillowlane
Sidewipe Brewing LLC, Columbus
Signalys Inc., Cincinnati
Southeast Planning Associates Inc. dba Snider, Fuller and Storoh, Athens
Statecrest Carpet & Flooring Inc., Bedford Heights
Stealth Entry LLC, Westerville
Sterling Associates Group LLC, Mayfield Heights
Stone-Walz Inc. dba Defiance Dental Group, Defiance
Sunday Creek Valley Water, Millfield
SunForest Building Co., Columbus
Team Apparel Group Inc., Beachwood
Telling Industries LLC, Willoughby
The Glass Guru of Mason, Mason
The Individual & Group Health Insurance Agency LLC, Ostrander
The Inn At Summit Trail Management Co LLC, Reynoldsburg
TNT Papercraft Inc., Cincinnati
Toolmatic Inc., Delaware
Town & Country Tree Service Inc., Columbus Station
Tulkoff Food Products, Baltimore, Maryland
Unlimited Excavating Solutions LLC, West Jefferson
ValleyWide Insurance LLC, Martins Ferry
Veera, Dublin
Vision Home Healthcare LLC, Whitehall
Volkswagen Group of America, Washington, D.C.
Waelbel Energy Systems, Vandalia
We Can Code IT LLC, Cleveland
We-R-Beeon Farm Co. LLC, Uniontown
Westerville Golf Center, Westerville
Wichert Insurance Services Inc., West Jefferson
Wighbird Insurance Services Inc., Cuyahoga Falls
Wilminton Public Library, Wilmington
Woodlawn Cemetery Association, Lima
York Township - Medina County, Medina
Youngs Sand & Gravel Co., Laoudsville
Zillow, Seattle
WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

Welcome back to Ohio Matters!

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not publish a May/June issue, but that doesn’t mean we weren’t working for the businesses of Ohio. Quite the contrary — we were just working differently. A lot has changed these last couple of months, and we have learned a lot since early March, but those changes and lessons learned have only made us better. Here are a few examples of the services we provided to keep everyone informed during this time.

When it became evident that there were going to be weekly, even daily, executive orders impacting business, our team got together to discuss how to best convey that information to our members. The Coronavirus Business Resources webpage was created on our website, which then spun off a Businesses Helping page. As of this writing, the Coronavirus Business Resources page has been visited by over 35,000 individuals.

During this time, we continued to interface with our members, the General Assembly, statewide elected officials, other business organizations and our counterparts at other state chambers. We were part of numerous task forces that were formed to address the pandemic. By being involved, we were able to bring the business perspective into the decision-making process.

We became pros at holding Zoom meetings, sometimes several in a day, and adapted to our new way of doing business. When we moved into our new offices two years ago this month, each staff member was provided with a laptop instead of a traditional desktop. The benefits of that decision became very evident when we had to close our physical offices and open up in-home offices throughout Central Ohio. Our staff members were able to easily access our internal network in order to continue serving our members.

Besides our weekly Legislative Updates, which contained pandemic-related information alongside our usual legislative information, we sent out 43 emails to keep our membership up to date on the latest information. And although we had to cancel our 2020 Annual Meeting & Legislative Reception, we kept in touch electronically. We offered five unique webinars with hundreds in attendance on topics such as the Payroll Protection Act and paid leave, and hosted speakers such as the U.S. EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler and Ohio Lt. Gov. Jon Husted.

Through an online survey, we collected information from our members on what you were experiencing during this time. That information was used not only to help shape our advocacy efforts, but our Vice-President, Government Affairs Keith Lake used it when providing remarks to the House Economic Recovery Task Force in April.

We have learned a lot these past four months, and I’m sure we will continue to do so as we work together to conquer the unknowns. As our state and nation reopen and recover, we look forward to continuing to fulfill our mission of aggressively championing free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans. The Ohio Chamber of Commerce has been here for 127 years, and we plan on being here for another 127 and beyond.