

Greenville Accolades!

Top 5 Places to Live in America – Least Expensive Mid-Sized US Location for Business – Number One in the Nation for New and Expanding International Firms – Top 10 Markets for Economic Development in the New Millennium – Top 5 Affordable Places to Weather the Economic Storm – and the most recent one by AARP – The #2 Place to Retire!

Small Business to Grow Greenville!



Two Lucky Chamber Members Will Win a New BMW!

Greenville's ongoing, exciting story has caught the nation's notice, earning accolades for our business environment and quality of life. At the Greenville Chamber, though, we recognize the often overlooked role that small business plays in *creating* our heralded quality of life, economic growth, and spirit of innovation.

Small businesses are the lifeblood of Greenville, and they join the collective small businesses around the country that are the pulse of the nation. During this major economic downturn that pulse has weakened. In addition, a troubling economic scorecard, released last year by Clemson, shows that over the past decade Greenville did not maintain per capita income on par with its peer communities, which translates to losing \$1.35 billion of spendable income each year. On the horizon, as well, is an uptick in entrepreneurs who are starting their own businesses after losing their jobs. They'll need help. Entrepreneurs and established small businesses are the underpinning of our economy and job base, so we knew we had to step up to these challenges. Our members equate expenditures and value every day and want more from their Chamber.

Last spring, we reached out to our small business members and asked them to tell us what they needed. And they did. They participated in one-on-one discussions, focus groups, and surveys – **and we listened**. Their powerful insights and suggestions helped us retool, redesign, and rebuild.

Today, we've made it easier for small business members to engage and work with the Chamber. We have a new series of targeted workshops and programs to provide the hands-on skills and knowledge to meet their needs and to help grow their business. And, we're making it easier for anyone to become a member.

We also strive to become a stronger voice and advocate for small business at the statehouse in Columbia. That means we must increase our market penetration, which

currently stands at 12% of the over 20,000 businesses in the Greenville area. The national average is 25%. We had to think differently – a typical membership drive wouldn't do.

On Monday, October 5th, Jim Rohrer of Independence Bank will join me and the entire Chamber leadership team in launching a year-long “Grow Greenville – Grow U” campaign. This campaign asks current members and Greenville's business leaders (and anyone who will reach out to those they know) to help us add 2,010 new members in 2010!

Rohrer, as chairman of *Grow Greenville*, says, “A strong Chamber benefits every single business in countless ways, both tangible and intangible. At the Chamber, members can learn the skills needed to operate a business, develop key relationships with other business owners, and heighten their company's visibility – all aspects of growing a business.”



CENTURYBMW

To thank our current members and those who join us this year, the Chamber and Century BMW are excited to announce a give-away of two BMW 1-Series automobiles! That's right! Two new or current members will drive off in a brand new BMW. How can you get a key that might turn the ignition? Three ways: 1) Each new member that *joins* the Chamber gets a key; 2) each current member who *refers* a new member gets a key;

and 3) current members who *increase* their membership investment by \$400 will all get a key. You'll never have odds this great to win one of the world's best automobiles!

A healthy business environment supported by a strong and vibrant Chamber of Commerce is what enables a great quality of life. A small investment will make a big difference for your business! So, when someone asks you to join the Chamber why not take a moment and find out how we can help one another and GROW GREENVILLE! Oh, and wouldn't a new BMW look great in your driveway?

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