

The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce

Strategic Plan 2007-2008



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2007-2008 Strategic Plan

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The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce

2007-2008 Two-Year Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) exists to serve the South Florida Christian business community. Increasingly, Christians are seeking to integrate their faith and values with their work. The MCCC exists to help encourage and facilitate this integration. While the Christian community is generally fragmented across racial, cultural, economic, and denominational lines, the MCCC encourages business interactions which transcend these boundaries. The Bible exhorts Christians to do good to all, particularly those who are of the household of faith¹. The MCCC believes that business relationships provide an ideal mechanism by which this biblical mandate can be fulfilled, as business relationships have the potential to link people who share the same faith and values; strengthening the body of Christ and increasing its impact in the community.

Towards this end, the MCCC has three primary goals. The first goal is to help facilitate increased interaction among and between members of the local Christian faith community. More than "fellowship" (which is typically found in church or social circles), the MCCC actively encourages the formation of business relationships, particularly those which are delivered by entrepreneurs, franchisees, and/or representatives of local organizations. The MCCC believes that by facilitating face-to-face contact in a professional setting, Christians will become more familiar with the offerings of other who share the same faith and values are offering. To encourage business interaction, the MCCC promotes a high standard of biblically-based excellence with respect to both professionalism and integrity in the marketplace.

Increased business interaction among and between Christians will benefit the body of Christ in three ways; by blessing others with business and/or referrals, by consumption of one another's goods and services, and by creating ties resulting in accountability between members of the Christian business community. The end result will be a stronger Christian business community, both financial and spiritually, which in turn will allow for more resources to be directed into ministries and organizations which are impacting South Florida for Christ and for a stronger platform from which to edify the local church as well as share the gospel.

In support of this mission, the MCCC seeks to help equip Christians in business with practical tools and resources which can be *directly* applied to work activities. These tools and resources incorporate biblical principles which have been proven to significantly increase the likelihood for success. The consistent and faithful application of these Biblical principles by Christian

¹ Galatians 6:10

entrepreneurs, employers, and employees will also result in an improved perception of Christians conduct in the marketplace by society at large. This in turn will result in improved opportunities for Christians to establish business relationships and more importantly to impact the community for Christ.

Background & History

The initial concept of a new Christian Chamber for Miami-Dade County began in 2003. In September of that year birth was given to the concept of a Hispanic Christian Chamber in Miami-Dade County. For several months, five individuals met regularly to develop the groundwork for this vision. These individuals were Pablo Miret, Al Otero, Tony Dieguez, Val Alvarez, and Rene Hernandez, subsequently joined by Joe Pruna.

In early 2004, the Miami Christian Chamber began laying its current foundation. Several of the founding Board members who had planted the seeds for a Christian Chamber in Miami-Dade County retired from the Board and were replaced by new Board members who would help the chamber grow to the next level. The Board grew in size from five members to twelve.

With the growth in Board size came a new strategic perspective. While the initial thrust of the Chamber was meeting the needs of local *and* international Hispanics, the new Board felt that it was a more urgent priority to provide a business Chamber for local Christian business community irrespective of cultural or ethnic distinctions. This perspective change was pivotal and led to a broader vision of a Chamber which would serve the Miami-Dade Christian Community prior to expanding internationally. As a result of this new focus, the name of the Chamber was officially changed from the *Hispanic Christian Chamber of Commerce* to *The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce*.

In September 2004, a market research survey was conducted to identify and prioritize the needs and interests of the Miami-Dade Christian business community. This survey was distributed to a convenience sample of local Christian business representatives. The results of the survey confirmed that the concept of a Christian Chamber in Miami-Dade Country resonated well with the local business community, as 97% of respondents expressed a "High Interest" in the concept of *promoting business relationships* among Christian *business* representatives, a central goal of the Chamber.

Initial market research findings were subsequently incorporated into a Board goal-setting session. A lengthy list of potential Chamber goals was condensed into a short-list of five goals, which were subsequently prioritized. To prevent a young Chamber from losing focus, the exercise was to clarify the strategic goals of the Chamber and unify Board efforts around these goals. As a result of this activity, the goals for the Chamber were condensed into three

core goals: 1) Networking to promote business relationships among and between members of the local Christian business community, 2) Providing practical Christ-centered tools and resources for businesses, and 3) Promoting biblical standards of integrity in the workplace. These three strategic goals were subsequently incorporated into Chamber mission and vision statements. While the goals of workplace evangelism and outreach to Latin America were also considered to be worthwhile at the individual level, they were excluded from the core Chamber goals to prevent diffusion of focus. The other excluded goal, international expansion to Latin America, was considered to be a viable long-term goal to be pursued once a solid foundation for the Chamber was established in Miami-Dade County. As a result of this goal-setting process, the Board was more unified and focused and an important foundation was laid for future strategic planning efforts. The Chamber website and marketing brochures were also created to reflect the new focus of the Chamber.

In December 2004, the Board gathered socially for a holiday event at the home of one of the Board members. This activity provided the Board members with a “teambuilding” opportunity to bond at a personal level. Energized by this event, leadership was poised to make significant strides in early 2005, with the first “kick-off” networking event planned for February 2005. The event was successful, with over seventy participants converging at the Miami-Airport Radisson Hotel². The February 24, 2005 exceeded the quality and turnout expectations of participants and created a favorable first impression for the young Chamber. Despite a minimal advertising budget, word-of-mouth, local radio station support, e-mail, and word-of-mouth promotion generated enough local awareness to result in a strong turnout. At the event, the Chamber introduced a unique “round-table” networking format, which provided a high-degree of participant interaction and was very well-received³.

Following the successful kickoff event, subsequent events were planned monthly. Events would be primarily focused on networking and take place at the Miami Airport Sheraton from 6:30pm – 8:00pm. A Chamber photographer was introduced as well as a live English-to-Spanish translator. Future events were successful but experienced moderately reduced turnouts due to limited promotion. During events, many relationships were formed and guest conversations often continued beyond the event end-time. Quantity was offset by quality and participant satisfaction was strong. Despite lower than expected turnouts, the events were able to generate a small surplus as expenses were offset by new member revenue, entry fees (for catered events), and sponsorships.

² Currently the Sheraton Miami-Mart Hotel, centrally located near Miami International Airport..

³ The “roundtable networking” format consists of several small roundtables around which event attendees are randomly grouped. Each table participant introduces themselves to the others at the table and is directed to another table with a computer-generated grouping of new event participants. The format allows for each attendee to get a quick understanding of the other attendees and direct more focused conversation to those who have complementary business interests.

In subsequent months, several short mini-seminars were presented by Chamber representatives on topics such as *Strategy and Vision*, *Biblical Employee-Employer Relations*, and *Tax Planning*. The Small Business Administration also provided a short seminar to event participants relating to services which are available to help support small business.

The event highlight in 2005 was a September 29th luncheon presentation entitled "*The Seven Points of Light- A Marketing Strategy*" by nationally-known speaker and author Michael Pink of *Selling Among Wolves*. A pre-event interview with Michael Pink was conducted on-air by Spirit FM coupled with spot airplay. This luncheon event was well-attended (despite poor weather) and the attendees were very impressed with the quality of the presentation.

In addition to the events described previously, 2005 was a pivotal year in that the Chamber also developed relationships with several other organizations and ministries. In April 2005, the Chamber was a booth participant at the Miami *Expolit* event, which featured numerous ministries representing Hispanic Christian media as well as nationally known speakers and musicians. This event provided the Chamber with broad exposure to both local and international attendees. In September, the Chamber participated with a table at the September *Christians in Action Trade Show*, a well-attended trade show in southern Broward County. Contact was also formed with *The Inspired Leadership Group*, a group affiliated with the nationally known Blackaby Ministries International, serving the senior Christian executives and community leaders. The Chamber also continued to forge a strong relationship with Spirit FM (WMCU). As a result of the events and relationships formed, Chamber membership increased significantly⁴.

In late 2005, the Board felt the need for a more formal strategic plan and converged for a facilitated strategic planning session to further develop goals and objectives. The Board conducted SWOT Analysis⁵ and established short and long-term goals for 2006-2008. Strategic planning was co-facilitated by two consultants on the Board. As a result of this activity, committees were formalized, the organizational chart was modified, goals and corresponding outcome measures were established. A summary of this planning session was formally presented by the Board during a Chamber Members-only event on January 19, 2006.

A new 2006 market research survey was conducted by a professional survey firm to build on insights related to the needs and interests of the Christian business community. This survey was helpful in answering questions related to the format and focus of events as well as the preferred times and event frequency. Respondent feedback revealed that 84% percent of respondents had *high interest* in doing business with others who had the same faith and

⁴ Current Chamber members are listed at http://www.miamiccc.org/member_list.htm.

⁵ SWOT Analysis is a commonly-used acronym for analysis of strategic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

values. Regarding event format, business networking events (59.9%) were preferred over biblical business seminars (41.2%), though both enjoyed strong interest. Respondents also strongly preferred evening events (64.7%) to morning (20.6%) or midday (20.6%) events. Regarding event frequency, most respondents favored monthly events (44.1%), some preferred bi-monthly events (23.5%), and a few suggested bi-monthly events (14.7%). As a result of this research, the Board validated that the current approach of having monthly evening events focused primarily on business networking was consistent with the needs and interests of the local business community.

In 2006, the Board shifted the event venue to The Waters of Life Café, close to Coral Gables. The venue offered a comfortable environment at a reduced cost to the Chamber. Member entry fees were waived, making this a free event. The café benefited by increased exposure during a relatively slow week night evening. The venue was extremely well-received by participants and encouraged the Board to attempt future events at similar locations throughout Miami-Dade County.

In 2006, the Chamber also had reached several other milestones. The Chamber became an official 501c-3 nonprofit organization, introduced a new Chamber phone number ending in MCCC⁶ (to aid radio spot recall), and began enhancing the Chamber database to facilitate improved e-mail communications and member renewals. In addition, several new and potential Board members were introduced to the Chamber. The standard for Board membership was raised to include agreement to a standard of core values as well as a minimal 75% annual participation in Board meetings and monthly Chamber events. Furthermore, new Board members were only formally admitted to the Board after serving faithfully for at least three months on a Board committee.

In late 2006, the Chamber accomplished the major goal of establishing six core committees, as well as the leadership for each committee (a Board members), clarified committee goals, and established monthly reporting measures for each committee. This organizational change resulted significantly more productive Board meetings as well as follow-through between meetings. Each Board member had a clearly defined role to play in moving the organization forward. In addition, the Chamber continues to be served by a volunteer who maintains the Chamber e-mail contact database and sends e-mails to groups within the database as well as a volunteer who provides specific services related to the website.

In early 2007, several changes were initiated by the Events Planning Committee. First, it was decided that there needed to be consistency in event format, timing, and location. The centrally located Miami Airport Sheraton-Mart hotel was selected to host the monthly networking event on the second Thursday of each month. The first event was held in January

⁶ *The new Chamber phone number, 786-293-6222 (MCCC) replaced the previous 305-569-5690 number.*

2007 and enjoyed a strong attendance of fifty-nine participants. This was largely the result of the support of several Christian radio ministries.

Similarly, a localized Business Development Group lunch was initiated at *Tony Romas* in Miami Lakes. The goal for this group was to pilot the concept of bi-weekly lunch gatherings between members of complementary businesses in order to promote business among and between those individuals. The goal for these groups is to develop closer relationships than would be possible in a larger networking group setting and develop business and/or referrals among and between members of each group. Longer term, it is hoped that such groups can be multiplied, perhaps into areas of Miami-Dade County where the Chambers presence has not been as strong (e.g. Northeast Dade). To-date, interest in such a group has been strong and the Chamber will continue to assess the success of this model.

Congruent with these events was a renewed emphasis on developing and expanding the Chamber's Christian business e-mail database, which in early 2007 stood at approximately 1,200 contacts.

As of the first quarter of 2007 the Chamber reached several other milestones and accomplishments.

- Increases membership base to 61 members, a significant increase from only 13 members in 2004⁷.
- A doubling of financial reserves, from \$1,488 (3Q 2006) to \$3,300 (1Q 2007).
- Renewed commitment, energy, and focus from a core group of Board Directors, as evidenced by numerous accomplishments at the committee-level as well as dramatically improved Board participation rates.
- Dramatic improvement of the Chamber's e-flyer, used in the promotion of monthly networking events.
- A Board of Advisors was formed, along with an Advisory Board Chair. This Board is to provide counsel to Chamber and facilitate introductions among and between Christian business leaders.
- Official Chamber payment privileges and responsibilities were formally delegated to the Chamber Treasurer.
- The Finance Committee Chair was provided with financial oversight (and no payment privileges), to ensure a long-term system of internal checks and balances and responsible administration of funds.
- The Chamber officially adopted the practice of giving at least 10% of all membership revenue to support local ministries which are impacting the community for Christ.
- A monthly marketing checklist was developed to add structure and consistency to the contact of local press and media regarding upcoming Chamber events.

⁷ As renewal efforts unfold, this number may decline slightly to account for non-renewals.

- A standard process was developed for processing both online and paper-based applications, ensuring timely processing and communication to new members via mail, e-mail, and phone.
- Biblically-based membership standards were clearly defined and integrated within the membership application process.
- By-laws created three years prior were reviewed and updated to reflect a Chamber which had changed greatly since its initial inception on paper.
- A disclaimer statement was created for inclusion on the website, to prevent and deter potential legal liabilities.
- A greatly improved process for communicating Chamber vision and mission as well as the benefits of Chamber membership and involvement during events.
- Official stationary letterhead and envelopes, which was promptly used to send out the first requests for membership renewals.
- A clear definition of the membership value proposition was developed and has been effectively utilized at membership and other events.

Heading into 2007, the Chamber is uniquely positioned to build on the achievements of the previous years. The primary goals going forward are to expand the involvement and participation level from members of the local Christian business community, develop a budget whereby a part-time Executive Director can support the operations of the Chamber, and continue to expand member benefits, particularly via the Chamber website. With sufficient finances and human capital, there is no limit to the impact the Miami Christian Chamber can have.

The Vision Statement:

“The vision of The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce is to be a central forum for Miami-Dade County Christian business representatives to network and do business together; while providing a testimony of integrity and professional excellence founded upon biblical principles.”

As the name implies, *The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce* is an organization formed to serve Christians in the Miami-Dade business community. The goal of the Chamber is to help facilitate *increased business interaction* among and between members of Christian business community while providing practical tools and resources which will help ensure that these interactions generate positive outcomes. The Chamber believes that business relationships should be rooted in a biblically-centered faith and transcend all social, geographic, ethnic, racial, and/or denominational boundaries⁸.

Of great importance to The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce is the testimony which Christian business representatives portray by their conduct to both those within and outside the body of Christ. Too frequently it has been said that Christians in the workplace have provided a testimony which does not meet biblical (or even worldly) standards of excellence and/or integrity. We believe that gap represents a missed opportunity to glorify the name of Christ and creates a hindrance to furthering the kingdom in the workplace.

Partnering with and supporting the local church, the Chamber seeks to offer education, tools, and resources which are designed to help equip business representatives with practical principles which can be directly applied to the marketplace. Specifically, the Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce seeks to heighten awareness regarding the responsibility of Christians to provide a testimony of excellence, integrity, and consistency towards employers, employees, customers, employees, government agencies, and other stakeholders, while simultaneously providing Biblical tools and resources towards this end. Our ultimate vision is that those bearing the name of Christ would be the *preferred* employers, employees, clients, and providers of goods and services in the local community, to both Christians and non-Christians alike.

⁸ Galatians 3:28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (NKJV)

The Mission Statement:

“The mission of the Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce is to connect Christians in business relationships; through networking events, workshops, and partnership with other organizations.”

The mission of The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce is straightforward. Our purpose is to facilitate business relationship-building among and between members of the Christian business community. The types of business, service, and personal relationships which we encourage may include the following:

- Businesses Supplier Relationships
- Business Client Relationships
- Employer – Employee Relationships
- Contractor Relationships
- Strategic Alliances Relationships
- Business Referral Relationships

What makes the Chamber *unique* among chambers is the implied level of *trust* which stems from a common faith and value system and is rooted in Biblical principles which apply directly to business. While other Chambers seek to promote business relationships among and between members based upon common geographical, ethnic, or industry relationships. There is no greater unifier in business than *trust*, and this stems from a common faith and value system. The Chamber thus places great emphasis on high-integrity conduct as well as professionalism, to ensure that this trust is well founded and the testimony of Christians in business is not reproached.

Another distinctive of The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce is that members are strongly encouraged to actively serve other chamber members rather than solely seek what they can gain⁹. This service may be expressed through direct business opportunities, referrals, hiring, and/or quality goods and services being provided at a fair and competitive price. At times, pro-bono services, local ministry contributions, the sharing of knowledge and expertise, and/or “in-kind” exchanges of goods and/or services may also be appropriate.

⁹ Based on the biblical found in *Philippians 2:4* and elsewhere.

The Core Values:

The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce operates under a set of core values which are central to the Chamber and should guide decision-making. These values are never to be compromised and are intended to endure through the life of this Chamber. To build trust among and between members, all members of the Chamber should agree to apply the following principles in their day-to-day business conduct¹⁰.

Biblical Standards: We value conducting business activities in a manner which is excellent and above reproach, applying biblical principles which exceed worldly and legal standards. Specifically, this includes but is not limited to the following values:

- **Fair Treatment and Professionalism:** We value the provision of goods and/or services which meet or exceed marketplace expectations for quality at a fair and competitive price as well as follow-through on all verbal and/or written commitments.
- **Business Relationships:** We value promoting and encouraging business relationships among and between members to strengthen and edify the body of Christ.
- **Giving:** We value biblical principles of stewardship, particularly giving financial and in-kind contributions to the local church as well as to local ministries.
- **Work-Faith Integration:** We value the integration of faith in all spheres of life, including the marketplace.
- **Accountability:** We value members holding of one another accountable for the application of these and other biblically centered values.

¹⁰ As of August 2006, new member applicants agree to the Statement of Faith as well as the Core Values as part of the application process.

The Statement of Faith:

As the name implies, The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce consists of Christian business representatives. While the Chamber is not to be considered a theological organization, Chamber members should agree to and believe in the following basic tenets of the Christian faith, as part of consideration for membership¹¹.

We believe that Jesus Christ, though fully God became a man for the suffering of death, that He is the promised Messiah spoken of in Scripture, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, provided for the atonement of our sins by His vicarious death on the Cross, was bodily resurrected by the power of the Holy Spirit, ascended back to the right hand of God the Father, and ever lives to make intercession for His body.

We believe in the inerrancy of Scripture, that the Bible, Old and New Testaments, in the original autographs, is the inspired, infallible Word of God, a complete written revelation of God.

We believe in one personal, transcendent, and holy God, the creator of all, Who is eternal and who manifests Himself in three separate persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We believe that all people are by nature separated from God and responsible for their own sin, but that salvation, redemption, and forgiveness are freely offered to all by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Organizational Slogan:

“Where Faith and Business Converge”

This slogan was developed in 2006 and was considered to more succinctly convey the high-level theme of the Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce than the previously utilized slogan, “A Different Kind of Chamber”. Ultimately, the Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce is about the complete integration of biblically-based faith in the workplace.

The Board of Directors/Executive Board:

The Board of Directors of the MCCC consists of a core group of individuals committed to ensuring the success of the Chamber. A working Board, this group not only establishes the direction and initiatives of the Chamber, but actively engages in the implementation of goals and objectives.

The Executive Board of Directors:

Mr. Mark Robledo, President: Mr. Robledo has served on the Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors as Vice-President from 2004-2006 and currently serves as President. Mr. Robledo is also the President and founder of The Crossroads Group, a management consulting firm. Mr. Robledo offers experience in strategic planning, organizational development, team facilitation, public speaking, and marketing. He has provided consulting services to several nonprofits, including the Florida Association of Nonprofit Organizations, American Bible Society, The YMCA, and The Latin Builders Association. Mr. Robledo is active in his church Calvary Chapel Kendall as a small group Crown Financial Ministries leader. He has been married for over five years and has two children. Mark can be contacted by telephone at Tel. 305-412-0160 or by e-mail at merobledo@crossroadsgroup.com.

Mr. Luis Alvarado, Vice-President: Mr. Alvarado became actively involved with the Chamber in early 2006 and was recently elected to the Board and subsequently as Executive Board Treasurer. Mr. Alvarado also serves as the Chair of the Membership Committee. Luis V. Alvarado, MBA has been in the financial services industry since 1995. He is employed and credentialed by AXA Advisors, LLC as a Financial Consultant specializing in retirement, business continuation, and estate planning. Luis also currently serves as a Trustee member and Ambassador for the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce. He is a member of the Education and non-profit committees of Chamber South. Luis and his wife Carol currently reside in Miramar, FL with their two children Hannah and Daniel. They currently attend New Testament Baptist Church. Luis can be contacted by telephone at Tel. (786) 423-1438 or by e-mail at luis.alvarado@axa-advisors.com.

Dr. Guillermo Luna, Executive Secretary: Mr. Luna has been involved with the Chamber since its early inception. A member of the Board of Directors since 2004, Mr. Luna currently functions as Executive Board Secretary and Chair of the Events Planning Committee. My Luna offers experience in public relations, public speaking, training, and strategic planning. He also sits on the board of Solidaridad y Esperanza and Liderazgo Juvenil. He also serves as Field Director for the nonprofit Esperanza USA, is a consultant with Buena Vision Consulting, and is actively involved with his church Coral Park Baptist Church. My Luna is married for forty years

and is the father of three children. He can be contacted by telephone at Tel. (305) 992-2045 or by e-mail at gluna@juno.com.

Mr. Lester Arana, Treasurer: Mr. Arana has served on the Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce since 2004 on the Executive Board as Chamber Secretary. Mr. Arana currently functions as acting Vice-President and Chair of the Marketing Committee. A veteran of the banking industry, he is an honors graduate from the Chapman School of Business with a concentration in finance. He is Senior Vice President and Group Leader in the Real Estate Department of Ocean Bank. He has more than a decade of applied experience in commercial real estate lending. He has worked for regional and local banks in South Florida prior to assuming his current position. Mr. Arana attends and serves in a non-denomination Christian Church. He is scheduled to graduate from the Alpha and Omega Bible Institute in the summer of 2007. Lester can be contacted by telephone at Tel. (305) 801-7069 or by e-mail at larana@oceanbank.com.

The Board of Directors:

Mr. Rene Hernandez (Former President): Mr. Hernandez is a founding board member of the MCCC and has been instrumental towards the realization of its existence. Subsequent to helping form the Chamber, Mr. Hernandez served as the Chamber's first president from 2004-2006. Mr. Hernandez currently functions as Chair of the Finance and Fundraising Committee, providing extensive financial and accounting expertise and integrity. Mr. Hernandez is also a Partner at Lancellata & Hernandez, P.A., a Certified Public Accounting firm serving South Florida since 1986. Rene can be contacted by telephone at (305) 670-4848 or by e-mail at Renecpa@bellsouth.net.

Mr. Louis Cuayo: Mr. Louis Cuayo has been a Board Director since early 2005. Mr. Cuayo also serves as the Chair of the Church Relations Committee. Professionally, Mr. Cuayo is a licensed service representative for Southeast Insurance Group, Inc. and has serviced a broad range of insurance products since 2002. Currently, Mr. Cuayo is Managing Director of Southeast Insurance Corporation, specializing in aviation and marine insurance. Louis also serves in his church Calvary Chapel Biscayne Bay and can be contacted by telephone at (305) 342-6620 or by e-mail at lcuayo@southeastinsure.com.

Ms. Jenette Mathai: Ms. Mathai joined the Board of Directors in 2006 after serving faithfully for several months in the Member Relations Committee. Currently Ms. Mathai is actively involved with the Marketing Committee, the Miami Lakes Networking Relationship lunch group, and provides legal counsel to the Executive Board. As co-founder of SolAmbit Law firm, Ms. Mathai has a passion for serving the small business community with excellence. Ms. Mathai

resides with her husband in Ft. Lauderdale and can be reached by telephone at (954) 627-6616 or by e-mail at jmathai@solambitlaw.com.

Mr. Luis Felipe Gonzalez: Mr. Gonzalez has served on the Board since 2004 and currently serves as co-Chair of the Events Planning Committee. Bringing a wealth of experience in several areas, Mr. Gonzalez excels as a public speaker, trainer, and facilitator, with extensive experience consulting in the nonprofit industry. Mr. Gonzalez is also known as a strategic planning and Board development expert. Mr. Gonzalez has also provided consulting services for organizations such as World Vision, Abriendo Puertas, and The American Bible Society. Mr. Gonzalez current serves in his church Iglesia Cristiana Amor and volunteers with HOPE Miami Beach and can be contacted by telephone at (305) 962-7756 or by e-mail at LUJE@msn.com.

Mr. Roger Perez: Mr. Perez has been involved with the Chamber since 2005. Combining passion with nonprofit event planning experience, Mr. Perez is a valuable member of the Board with sales, public relations, and public speaking experience. He also co-Chairs the Membership Committee. In addition to his role in the chamber, Mr. Perez also organizes the annual Miami-Dade youth outreach SonFest event impacting youth and supporting local nonprofit organizations. He has also provides a range of professional realty services at Best Investment Realty. Mr. Perez is actively involved in his church New Life Ministries. Roger is happily married and is the father of two children. Roger can be contacted by telephone at (786) 229-9165 or by e-mail at Rabb1074@aol.com.

Mr. Guillermo Garcia Jr.: Mr. Garcia became actively involved with the chamber in January of 2006 and is presently serving on the Events Committee. For over 30 years he was involved in the travel and hospitality industry. Today he is Development Officer for Florida Baptist Children's Homes, a non-profit child care agency. Willie and is wife Liana currently reside in Miami, FL with their children Amanda and Guillermo. They currently attend Iglesia Bautista Resurreccion. Willie can be contacted by telephone at 305-271-4121 or by e-mail at wgarcia@fbchomes.org.

Organizational Analysis:

Through a process of formal interviews with key stakeholders, key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the MCCC have been identified and are presented below. This SWOT Analysis provided critical insight which was utilized to formulate the strategic goals which are described in the following pages.

Strengths:

- The Lord and His gracious guiding hand upon this ministry¹².
- The distinction of being the only independent Christian Chamber of Commerce in a county which has expressed a strong interest in such a Chamber. ¹³
- A very minimal overhead expense. Financial proceeds are directed towards supporting Chamber events and mission.
- An expanding membership base.
- A highly competitive membership rate and value proposition relative to other Chambers.
- The high level of interest in the Christian Community in the concept of doing business among those who share common faith and values
- The preponderance of small and mid-sized businesses which are most inclined towards membership in a local Chamber.
- The dedication and sacrificial commitment of current board leadership.
- A professional website with a member directory, Chamber information, and an easy-to-use online membership application process
- A large and expanding database of over 1,200 local Christian business contacts
- Alliances with local media and ministries, which have a complementary mission and vision.

Weaknesses:

- Financial and staffing constraints. All work must be developed and administered by a Board of Directors and volunteers with limit time resources. No full or part time staff.
- Insufficient engagement with the membership base, including but not limited to event participation.
- Disproportionate membership among Southwest Dade County Hispanic businesses, with little representation from Northeast Dade County.
- The need for a broader level of engagement in committees, beyond Board Chairs.
- Lack of awareness of the Chamber in the local community.

¹² Romans 8:31b.

¹³ This interest level was validated in a 2006 online market research survey sent to local Christian business leaders. 84.4 indicated a high level of interest in doing business with others of a common faith.

- Lack of consistent and timely processes related to processing new members applications.
- Weak ties with the local church and pastoral community.
- Lack of continuity from one month to the next with regards to event attendees who are not Board members.
- Less than excellent community perception of Christians in business as related to quality of work and sometimes integrity.

Opportunities:

- A growing constituency of Christians both locally and nationally who seek to integrate their faith with their work.
- Strengthen ties with the Christian Hispanic media.
- Support the development of a credible reputation that MCCC members adhere to high standards and practice business in a manner which is above average in integrity, excellence, and follow-through on commitments
- Engage member base (consisting of those who have expressed a strong interest in Chamber and have paid dues) with committees and Board
- Expand into other segments of Miami-Dade County, particularly North Dade
- Form alliances with local Christian business and municipal leaders as well as other complementary Christian organizations which can provide value for members and help increase Chamber awareness.
- Increase the level of actual business conducted among and between members. Develop and communicate a record of such transactions to use as testimonial material.
- Provide training and workshops related to applied biblical principles in the workplace
- Provide a platform for local ministries to gain exposure to the local business community

Threats:

- Board leadership becoming too "spread thin" with regards to the continually expanding growth and development requirements of the Chamber.
- Financial shortfalls will limit the Chambers ability to effectively advertise via radio and/or other media
- Disengaged members not renewing upon expiration of membership.
- Poor "event retention" resulting from smaller than expected event turnout and participation
- Lack of defined membership value will hinder the ability of the Chamber to attract new members

Strategic Goals:

Miami-Dade County is a county in which the majority of businesses are classified as small businesses. To-date, the greatest response to the Christian Chamber of Commerce has been from representatives of this constituency. The top goals of the Miami-Christian Chamber of Commerce are to facilitate business exchanges between members of the local Christian community and to help equip local business representatives with biblically instruction which can be directly applied to the marketplace. These two goals are complementary and will help support one another. Businesses which operate according to biblical principles will find it easier to secure new business and be effective for the kingdom.

To support this mission, each of the Chamber Committees (chaired by a Board Director), has adopted key goals and functions. These are listed below under the committee which has been established to develop and implement these measurable goals¹⁴. Committees are led and organized by the committee Chair. Committee chair leadership if for a period of one year and involves the following responsibilities:

Committee Chair Responsibilities

- Coordinate and implement all committee-level activities
- Maintaining active committee member participation and work distribution
- Recruit prospective committee members from member base
- Reporting monthly to the Board of Directors on the status of initiatives and outcome measures

The President is responsible for calling Board meetings and preparing the agenda, with input from the Board prior to meetings. The Vice-President supports the President with general tasks and activities related to the Chamber and substitutes for the President as Chair of the Board if absent.

The goals and functions for each of the seven committees are listed in the following pages. Each committee is chartered with the task of continuously developing objectives and actions corresponding to the goals listed below. The impact of these actions is assessed through performance measure review as well as anecdotal evidence. Monthly Board minutes serve as a reference for specific committee-level supporting actions. Strategic measures and Board minutes as of March 2007 are provided in the appendix to this document.

¹⁴ Some functions would normally be managed by an Executive Director but have been adopted by Board committees to ensure continued forward momentum.

1. The Executive Committee & Functions

- Provide strategic direction for chamber.
- General administrative oversight of Chamber to ensure faithfulness to core values and successful implementation of goals and objectives.
- Invite new prospective Chamber leaders to Board meetings.
- Review and approve revisions to by-laws. Approve strategic initiatives.
- Provide support and/or coordination for committees and the Board as needed.
- Develop volunteer and staff resources.
- Provide support and counsel to other Chambers throughout the U.S. and Latin America.
- Interface directly with the Advisory Board.

Monthly Measure/Reporting:

- o Board participation and growth measures

2. The Fundraising and Finance Committee Goals & Functions

- Hold the Chamber Treasurer and President accountable for wise and judicious use of Chamber finances.
- Provide monthly financial statements to the Board.
- Identify and develop third-party fundraising and contribution sources

Monthly Measures/Reporting:

- o Monthly financial statements (Income and Balance statements)
- o Total funds raised

3. Marketing and Promotion Committee Goals & Functions

- Increase general *awareness* of the Chamber, primarily among Christian business representatives. Promote awareness of specific Chamber events.
- Develop and strengthen relationships with local media, particularly those serving the Christian community.
- Communicate with members prior to events and event participants immediately following events.
- Develop and maintain marketing materials (e-flyers, website announcements, etc)
- Develop and implement a monthly event promotional checklist.
- Develop a free registration section of the website where web browsers must register and maintain current contact information.
- Identify public relations opportunities and free press to communicate a unique concept and vision. (e.g. 700 Club, Local newspapers, etc.)
- Develop new ways to promote the Chamber, including but not limited to events participation, alliance relationships, television, internet, radio, e-mail, and telemarketing efforts.

- Increase the number of membership applications which are processed during events, while interest is highest.
- Continuously expand Chamber database. Leverage this database for promotional efforts.
- Develop system for providing rapid and adequate follow-up with those who have expressed interest in the MCCC.

Monthly Measures/Reporting:

- o Number of networking event participants
- o Number of membership applications
- o Number of total members
- o Number of database e-mail contacts

4. Member Relations Committee Goals & Functions

- Continually develop and enhance the membership value proposition.
- Maintain and update a current list of members with complete contact information, renewal dates, and membership status information.
- Develop a consistent process whereby member applications are processed and new members are fully engaged and integrated within the Chamber.
- Implement a Board-to-member mentoring process whereby each Board members is assigned members to contact, to answer questions, and to develop a relationship with.
- Solicit and respond to member satisfaction feedback

Monthly Measures/Reporting:

- o Number of members expiring
- o Number of members renewed
- o Renewal Rate (renewals/expirations)
- o Member Satisfaction (survey scores)

5. The Event Planning Committee Goals & Functions

- Organize and coordinate logistics for Chamber events and activities. Serve as primary liaison between The Chamber and the event venue and/or catering resources.
- Ensure timely payments to cover event expenses. Maintain receipts for all expenses.
- Develop and communicate event agendas prior to events.
- Register event attendees. Collect payments, record contact information, and assign name tags.
- Organize event volunteers.
- Continue to pilot Business Development Luncheon Concept.
- Coordinate with and schedule table sponsors.
- Coordinate Business Development Lunch activities.

Monthly Measures/Reporting:

- Event participation count (excluding volunteers and Board members)
- Event financial gain/loss statement
- Event Participant Satisfaction Survey

6. The Chamber Alliances Committee Goals & Functions

The goal of the Alliances Committee is to forge new mutually beneficially relationships with other organizations which can essentially be handed over to committees. Because resources are limited, other organizations may provide value to the Chamber and/or its members and thus enable the Chamber to avoid the duplication of resources. In coordination with the President and/or Vice-President, this committee develops alliances with local, national, and/or international organizations which are complementary and/or synergistic to the MCCC and typically based on quid pro quo (ie. "trade or in-kind") relationships.

Christian organizations which are approached for alliance relationships include those which fill a need which cannot be met with existing Chamber resources. Specific support may involve any combination of the following:

- Promotion of Chamber awareness or event awareness.
- Provision of Chamber member or community resources which support the mission of the Chamber.
- Cooperative event planning and/or event speakers.
- Financial and/or in-kind contributions and/or exchanges

The Alliances committee does not provide numerical measures to the Board, as relationships formed will directly impact measures for the other committees benefiting from alliance relationships. The Alliance Committee does report monthly a summary of the status of alliance relationships which are being pursued.

7. The Church Relations Committee Goals & Functions

- Increase awareness of Chamber among local church leaders
- Develop a database of local church leadership contacts
- Conduct a focus group consisting of Pastors from various denominations to gain insight into how the MCCC can better support the needs of the local church.
- Increase awareness regarding the Chamber and upcoming events among local church members

This committee does not provide numerical measures to the Board, as relationships formed will directly impact measures for the other committees being served through church relations.

The Church Relations Committee does report monthly a summary of the status of church relationships which are being pursued.

The Future of The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce

The future of the Miami Christian Chamber is bright but not without significant challenges which must be overcome in the mid-term. The Chamber would like to be much more than a place where Christians exchange business cards. Chamber leadership is convinced that this is a work which has been and will continue to be supported by the Lord, provided that the leadership is faithful to biblical principles and is diligent in execution¹⁵. The Chamber has enormous potential as Miami-Dade's primary Christian chamber of commerce. However, the more significant obstacle to overcome is getting to the "next level" in terms of ability to execute goals and objectives. In order to build incrementally on recent accomplishments, a high-caliber individual will be needed to serve in an Executive Director role and build the capacity of the Chamber to deliver on its mission. Similarly, financial resources are needed in order to improve the quality of events and programs, as well as the promotion of these events and programs via various media. A greater level of engagement is also needed from current Chamber members and former event participants.

The Miami Christian Chamber of Commerce will continue to integrate business development with biblically-based faith, maintaining both elements as central to the core values of the Chamber. Faithful leadership and execution, combined with the Lord's blessing, will result in a greatly strengthened Miami-Dade Christian business community, which will in turn provide an excellent testimony to both believers and non-believers alike. As a result, local ministries will receive increased support from businesses, Christians will be encouraged to integrate their faith in all areas, and non-Christians will be more receptive to the gospel message.

¹⁵ *Psalm 127:1*

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE BOARD OF DIRECTOR MINUTES



MIAMI CHRISTIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors January 30, 2007 Minutes

Call to Order

Chairman and President Mark Robledo called the meeting to order at 7:15 a.m.

Members of the Board of Directors present at the meeting: Mark Robledo, Luis Alvarado, Rene Hernandez, Guillermo Luna, Luis Cuayo, Willie Garcia, Juan Roberto DeAngulo, Jenette Mathai, Roger Perez, Luis Felipe Gonzalez, Lester Arana

Member of the Board of Directors absent at the meeting was: NONE

A quorum of the members of the Board of Directors was present.

Also attending at the meeting were: Victor Olivieri

Luis Alvarado opened the meeting with a prayer.

COMMITTEE ACTION PLANS, STRATEGIC MEASURES AND STATUS UPDATES

I. Election of New Directors

Mark Robledo initiated a formal motion to elect Willie Garcia and Juan DeAngulo as members of the Board of Directors of MCCC.

Motion: BE IT SO RESOLVED, the Board hereby recommends that Willie Garcia and Juan DeAngulo be formally elected as members of the Board of Directors of MCCC, to serve, subject to the provisions of the By-laws of MCCC, until the next election by the Board of Directors of MCCC and until the qualification of their successors.

The motion was unanimously seconded and approved.

II. Member Relations Committee

Luis Alvarado emphasized the importance of the mentoring program, where each Board member was assigned to a member of MCCC to mentor. Initial contact with such member would be through an interview form that would be used to gather information to put into the database for the benefit of all MCCC committees. Hard data received from the interview form would inform MCCC of the interest level of members in certain MCCC activities and future programs. Additionally, Luis Alvarado reported on the new renewal letter that will be sent to members needing to renew their MCCC membership, which will highlight the benefits of becoming/staying a member on the new MCCC stationary. The MCCC stationary would also be available to all Board members and committee members, for use in following up with new and potential members.

Luis Alvarado also reported on the continued progress of the Business Relationship Groups (with 16 attendees at the last event, 13 of which were guests), and introduced an agenda to be used as a model for these "cell groups", where business would be encouraged among Christians in a more informal setting. 90% of attendees at the last Business Relationship Group attended due to the announcement in the email blast.

Discussion Item: Increasing Membership

The Board of Directors discussed how new membership applications were to be brought at all MCCC events, so that people could immediately sign up for MCCC membership while the interest level at the event was high. It was discussed that a member application folder should be created, containing a membership application and a list of membership benefits.

The Board of Directors also discussed how to make the monthly networking events more effective for purposes of networking, and less as a means to promote a social gathering.

Action Item No. 1: Luis Alvarado is to make the following change to the interview form: ask a member for any potential referrals, or types of clients he or she would like to see from MCCC.

Action Item No. 2: Luis Alvarado will condense the renewal letter to one page only.

Action Item No. 3: Lester Arana will help to make a board/poster listing all of the concrete benefits in becoming a member of MCCC.

Action Item No. 4: Jenette Mathai will check with Dolphin Graphix about the cost of creating a membership application folder (with pockets).

Action Item No. 5: Luis Alvarado will add an "other" category to the list of professions invited to join a Business Relationship Group.

Action Item No. 6: Jenette Mathai will add a legal disclaimer regarding how MCCC does not endorse the work product, quality, actions or activities of individual members.

Action Item No. 7: Mark Robledo will contact Javier to improve the navigation of the website, and to create a separate page for each Business Relationship Group.

III. Marketing Committee

Lester Arana reported that 59 people showed up at the last monthly networking event, 23 of which were members. Participation in the last event doubled from previous events, and it appeared that the majority of people heard about the event through word of mouth, although WMCU certainly contributed to increased participation. It was reported that 2 new members joined at the last networking event.

Lester Arana and Jenette Mathai emphasized the importance of tracking how people heard of each event, and following up with individuals who attend these events. Board members were specifically encouraged to reach out to those they meet at the networking events to ensure potential members do not fall through the cracks.

Discussion Item: Membership Process

The Board discussed the importance of adhering to a tight process regarding membership--whether by online applications or paper applications. Both Rene Hernandez and Mark Robledo will help to process all online applications, while Rene will continue to process all paper applications. Rene will then process the check or the credit card number and forward the paper application to Mark. New members are then included on the MCCC website, where their contact information is listed, along with any member-to-member incentives they want to provide, and the date they became members of MCCC. New members are then sent follow-up letters on MCCC stationary, are assigned mentors and are tagged for renewal by Daisy Gongora. Luis Alvarado will contact such members as to when they would like to receive their new member certificates, and Rene Hernandez will arrange for the certificates to be created. The photographer can then be contacted to take the pictures of such new members for posting onto the Photo Gallery of the MCCC website.

Action Item No. 1: Mark Robledo will contact John Czeluzniak to make final modifications to the next event's flyer.

Action Item No. 2: Jenette Mathai will contact the Miami Herald and the Sun Sentinel to see how we can get free advertising in their print versions of the newspaper (and not just online versions).

Action Item No. 3: Juan Luis Felipe will answer calls from Spanish speakers inquiring about MCCC.

Action Item No. 4: Juan Luis Felipe will work with Al Otero regarding radio spots on FM 88.3 Paradiso.

Action Item No. 5: Lester Arana and Jenette Mathai will input email addresses from existing rolodexes into MCCC database, and Jenette Mathai will enter email addresses listed in Shepherd's Guide into the MCCC database.

IV. Event Planning Committee

Willie Garcia and Guillermo Luna reported that \$480 in revenue was generated from the last event, with expenses of \$312, and 59 total participants.

Discussion Item: Roundtable Networking/Display Tables

The Board of Directors discussed how to increase the networking aspects of the monthly events. It was suggested that 5 roundtables could be set up, where each person shares their business concept to other people at the table for 30-60 seconds, to create more solid business networking. Perhaps when MCCC grows in size, this concept of roundtable networking can be further developed. Currently, a member benefit is to allow a member to display their business promotional materials at a display table for free, one time per year and at a time to be selected randomly by MCCC. If members want to obtain a display table every month, they can do so for a fee of \$75. Products may be sold at tables, but no more than 5 tables should be allowed to be displayed. A sponsoring business can sponsor the entire MCCC event for approximately \$300 (to cover costs related to such event). The sponsoring business will be promoted in an email blast to all members announcing the sponsorship. A sponsor does not need to be a member, but a premium can be charged for non-members. All sponsors are to agree to MCCC's Statement of Faith and must complete a sponsorship application form.

Action Item No. 1: Mark Robledo will work to post the sponsorship requirements on the MCCC website.

Action Item No. 2: Luis Alvarado will provide Willie Garcia with an updated member list.

Action Item No. 3: Willie Garcia will ensure that MCCC has a dedicated table at each event, so visitors can learn more about MCCC.

Action Item No. 4: Willie Garcia will create ID tags for members and non-members, and a means to identify Board members.

Action Item No. 5: Willie Garcia will ensure a microphone is provided at the next event and WIFI (if possible).

Action Item No. 6: Food will be placed in the middle of the room for all future events, and all Board members are to actively greet people as they come into the event.

Action Item No. 7: Luis Alvarado will include in interview form if members are interested in display tables or event sponsorship.

Action Item No. 8: All members are to attend the next monthly event and be present at 5:30 for Board photographs.

V. Alliance Committee

Juan DeAngulo reported that 6 new organizations have been added since the last event, and are being contacted for possible strategic alliances.

Action Item No. 1: Juan DeAngulo will email the updated table to all Board members.

Action Item No. 2: Juan DeAngulo will look into a relationship with the International Business of God Fair.

Action Item No. 3: Juan DeAngulo will email the existing Alliance Agreement to Jenette Mathai for legal review.

Action Item No. 4: Juan DeAngulo and Luis Alvarado will discuss new members and updating strategic allies and partners.

VI. Church Development Committee

Louis Cuayo and Roger Perez reported on plans to provide an open invitation to pastors, where MCCC will be presented at a pastor's luncheon. Roger Perez is organizing a focus group of pastors, to determine how best to improve pastoral relationships with MCCC. MCCC could be brought into a church to provide stewardship/financial planning instruction.

Discussion Item: Gaining Pastor Trust

The Board of Directors discussed whether certificates should be presented to pastors and their congregations, but Pastor Robert Fountain suggested that such certificates may focus too much attention on the pastor.

Action Item: Louis Cuayo and Roger Perez will further define the pastor luncheon concept, create focus groups of pastors and meet with Pastor Robert Fountain to discuss ways of increasing pastoral involvement in MCCC.

VII. Finance Committee

Motion: BE IT SO RESOLVED, that: 1) Lester Arana will have check-writing authority with Mark Robledo, and shall hold the MCCC debit card; and 2) Rene Hernandez shall be charged with all internal auditing related to MCCC finances.

VIII. Advisory Committee

Victor Olivieri will work with Al Otero to develop relationships with pastors, high profile Christian businesspeople and Christian entertainers who can provide counsel to business

people to come up with "best practices" for practicing business with integrity, through website interviews and speaking engagements.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:50 a.m. after a devotional by Pastor Robert Fountain of Calvary Chapel Miami Beach, regarding integrating the concept of faith with business.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Robledo, President

APPENDIX B: NEWLY DEVELOPED BOARD REPORTING MEASURES (Through 1.31.07)

Finance & Fundraising Committee Measures	3Q 2006	Oct-06	Nov-06	Dec-06	Jan-07
Cash Balance	\$1,488	\$1,738	\$2,831	\$3,511	\$3,300
Total Revenue	\$125	\$1,360	\$1,065	\$1,063	\$1,555
Total Expenses	\$401	\$508	\$541	\$816	\$785
Total Surplus	(276.00)	852.00	\$524	\$247	\$770
Fundraising/Donor Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Marketing Committee Measures	Sep-06	Oct-06	Nov-06	Dec-06	Jan-07
Event Member Participants (Excluding Board and Volunteers)	NA	3	NA	2	16
Event Board Member Participants	NA	NA	NA	NA	10
Total Event Non-Member Participants (Excluding Board and Volunteers)	NA	21	NA	NA	23
Total Event Participants (Excluding Board and Volunteers)	NA	24	NA	23*	49
New Memberships (At Event)	NEW	2	NA	0	1
Total New Memberships	2	3	NA	NA	2

Membership Committee Measures	Sep-06	Oct-06	Nov-06	Dec-06	Jan-07
Total Member Expirations	NA	NA	NA	NA	32
Total Expirations Renewed Within 30 Days of Expiration Month	NA	NA	NA	NA	4
Member Retention Rate (Renewals/Expirations %)	NA	NA	NA	NA	13%

Event Planning Committee Measures	Sep-06	Oct-06	Nov-06	Dec-06	Jan-07
Event Count (Total)	New	New	New	New	59
Event Participant Count (Non-Board)	NA	24	NA	2	49
Event Revenue (Entry Fees Only)	\$0	\$275	NA	\$525	\$480
Direct Event Expenses (Including Promotion)	\$150	\$244	NA	\$694	\$312
Event Surplus/Deficit	(\$150)	\$31	NA	(\$169)	\$168