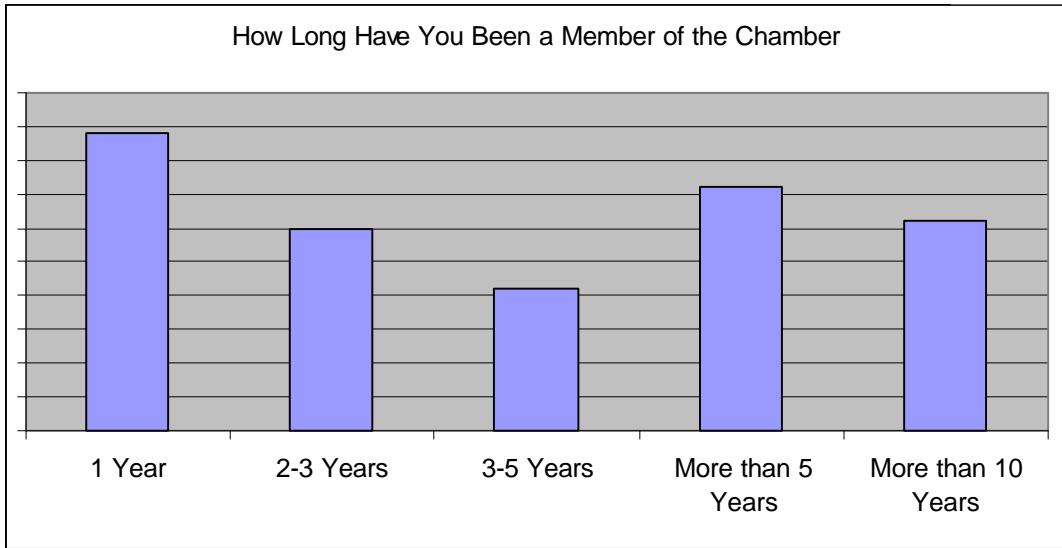




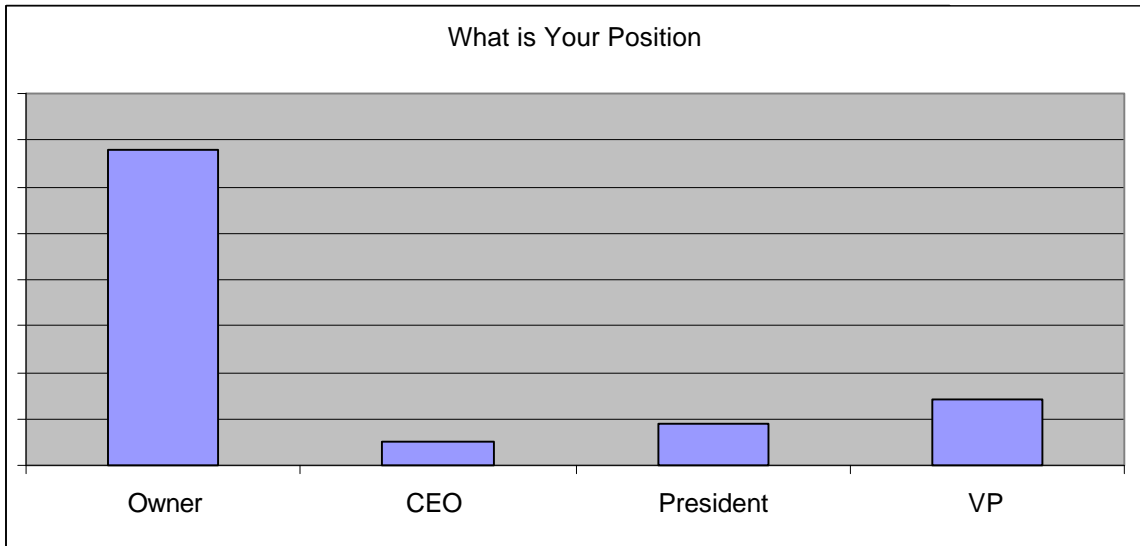
Greater Portsmouth
Chamber of Commerce
Membership Survey

June 2003

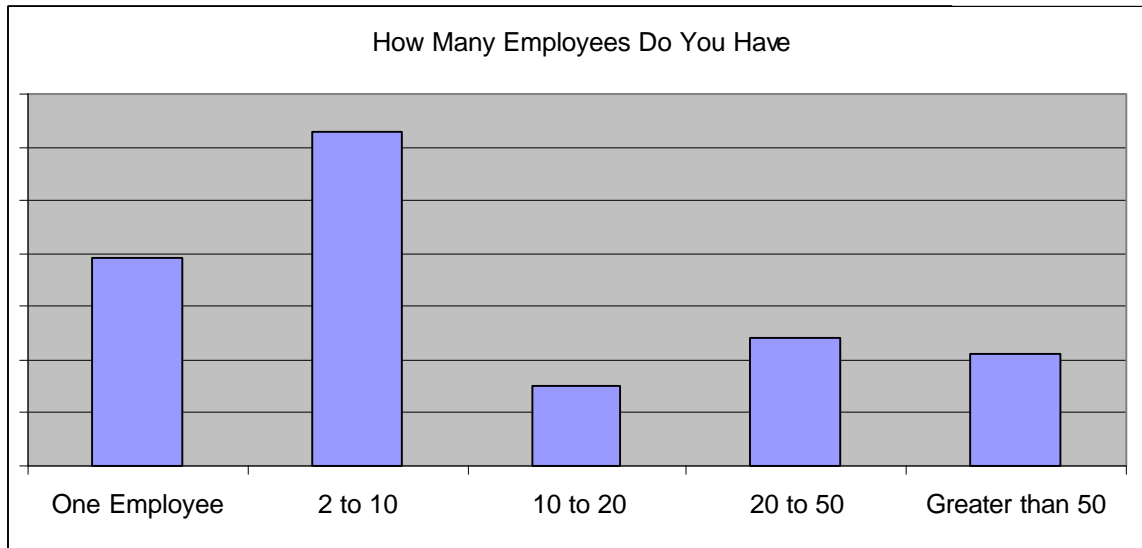
How long have you been a member of the Portsmouth Chamber?
1 year, 2-3 , 3-5, >5, >10



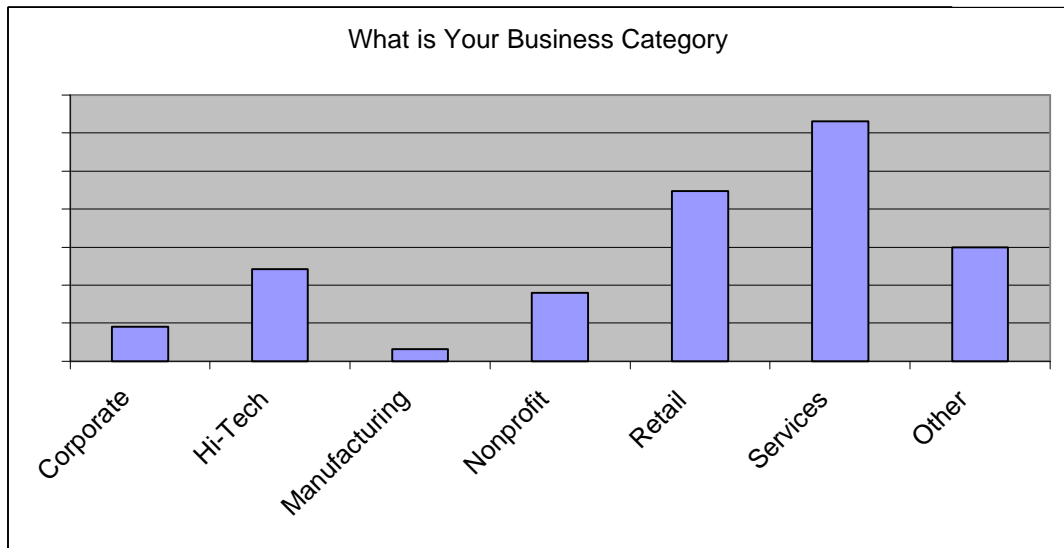
What is your position?



How many employees do you have?



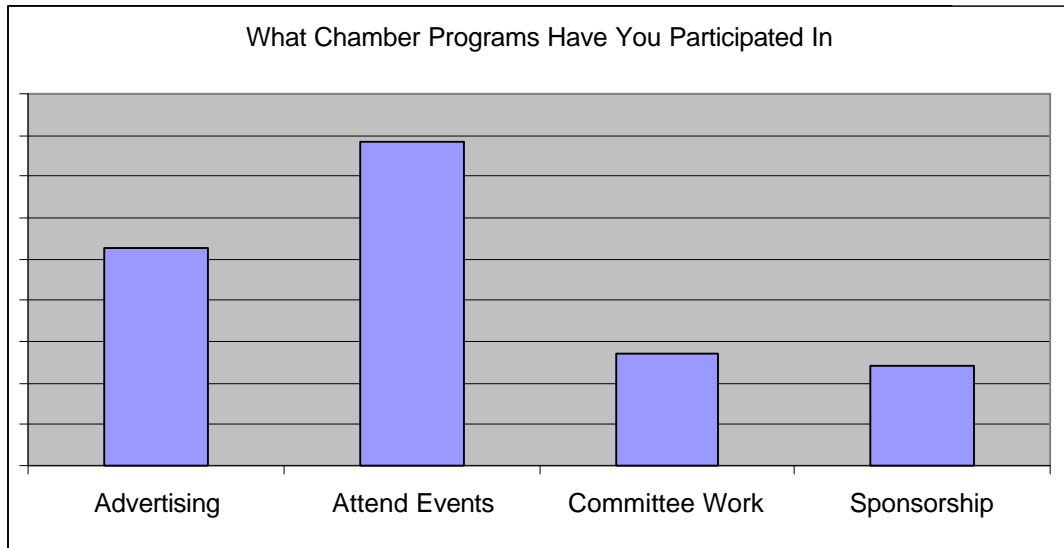
What is your business category?



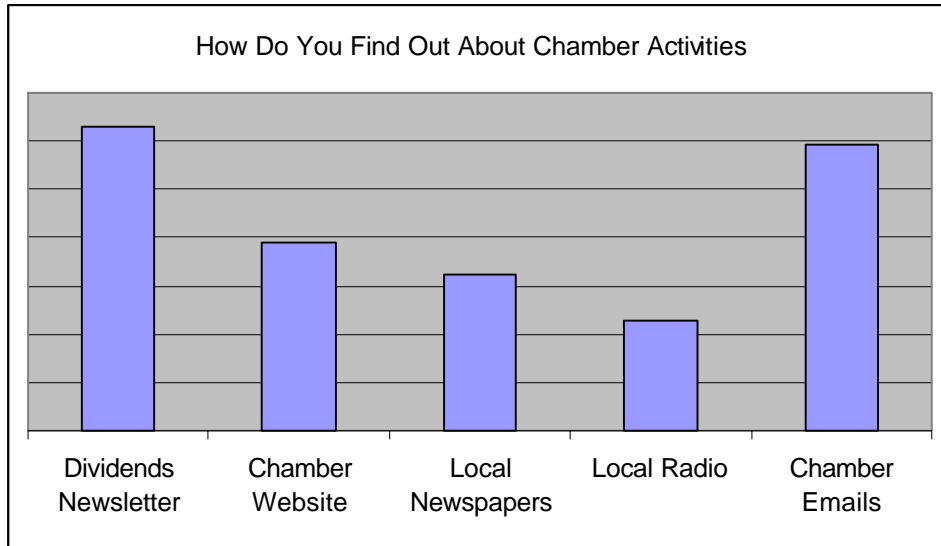
Where is your business located?



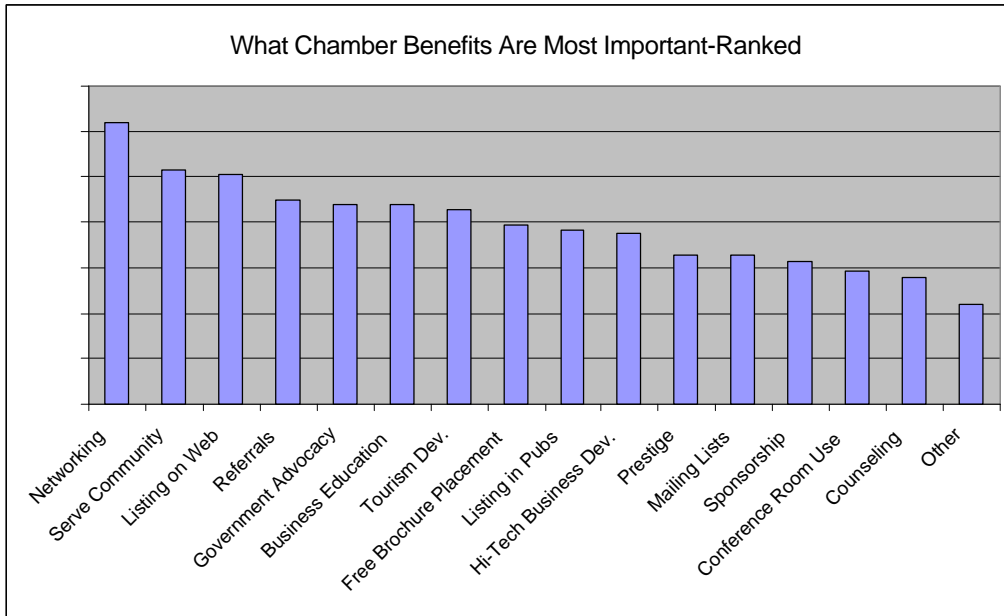
What Chamber activities, programs, or benefits have you taken advantage of?



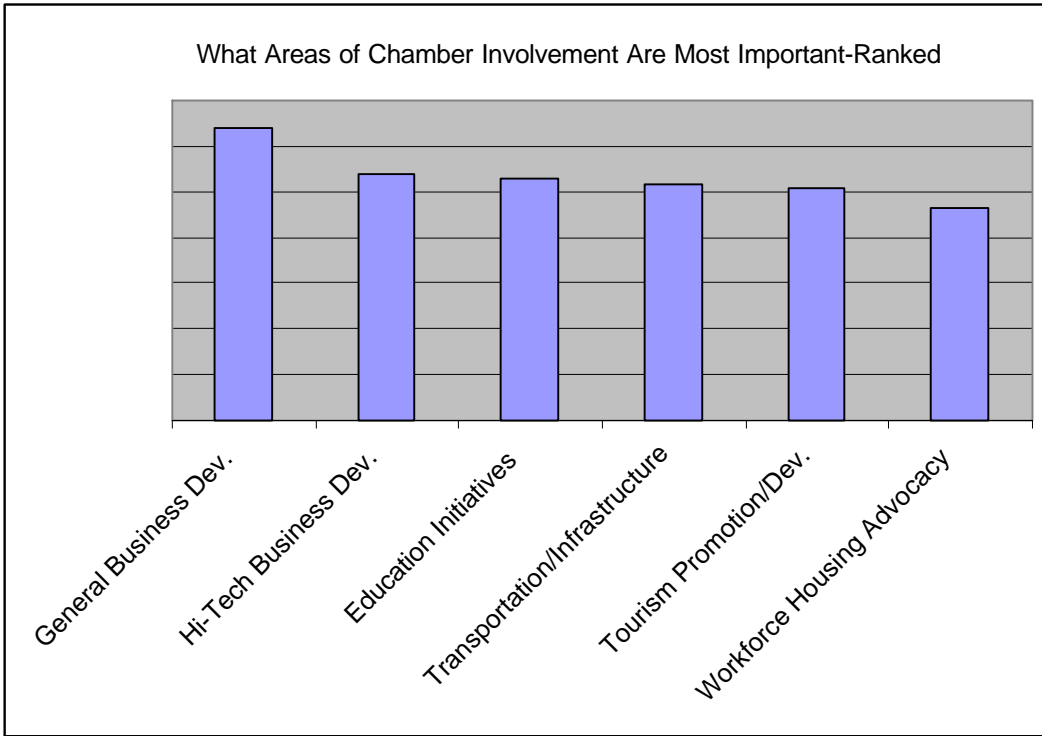
How do you find out about Chamber activities, programs and initiatives? Please rank from most used to least used. (5 is your most used medium, 1 is least important)



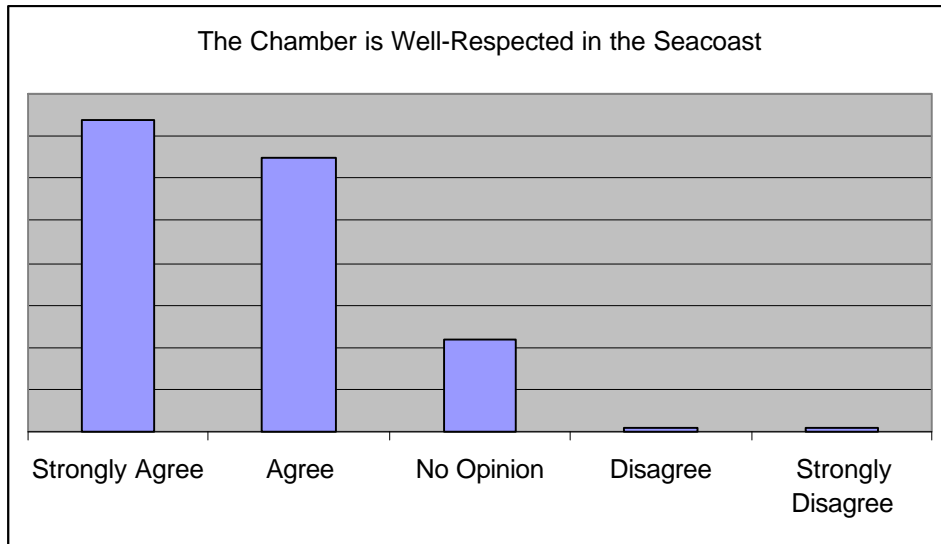
What Chamber benefits are most important to you?



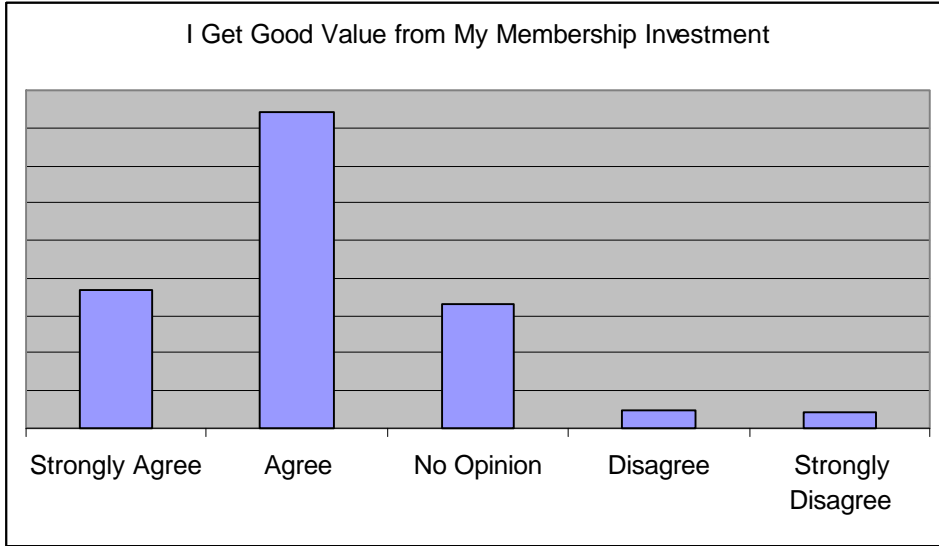
What areas of Chamber involvement do you feel are most important? Please rate each area in degree of importance.



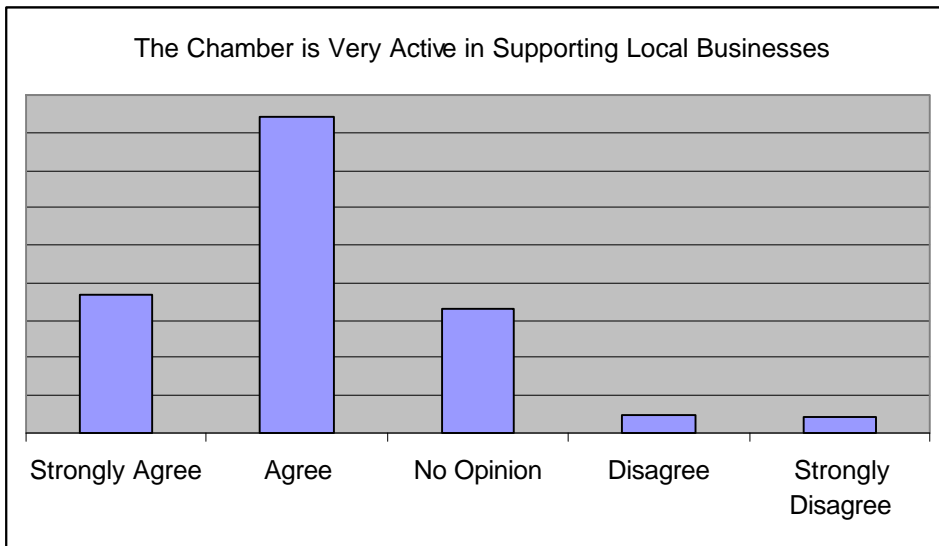
The Portsmouth Chamber is well-respected in the Seacoast Region.



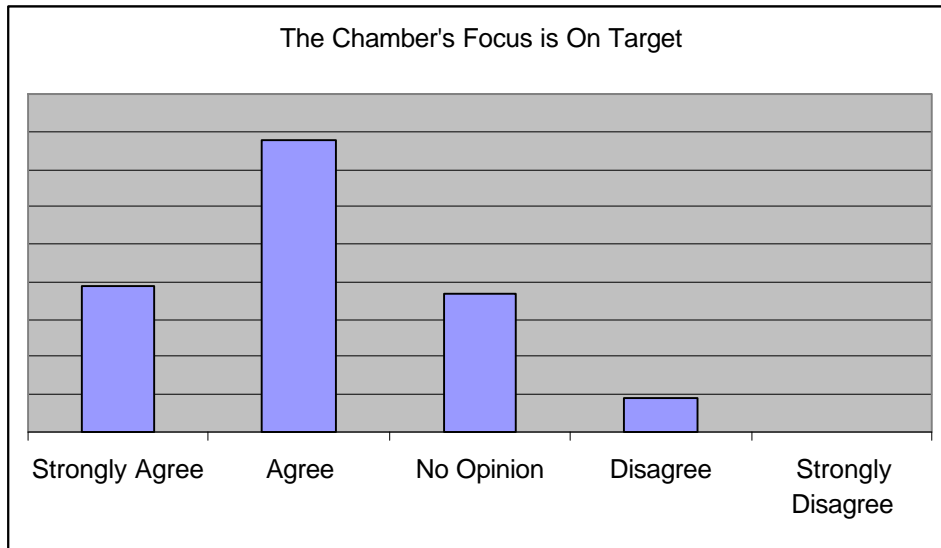
I get good value from my Portsmouth Chamber membership investment.



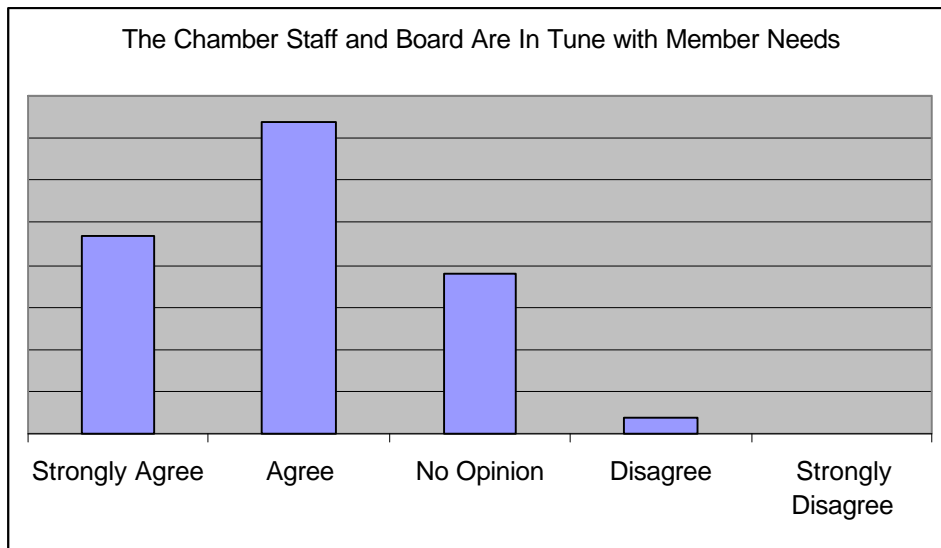
The Portsmouth Chamber is very active in supporting local businesses and the community.



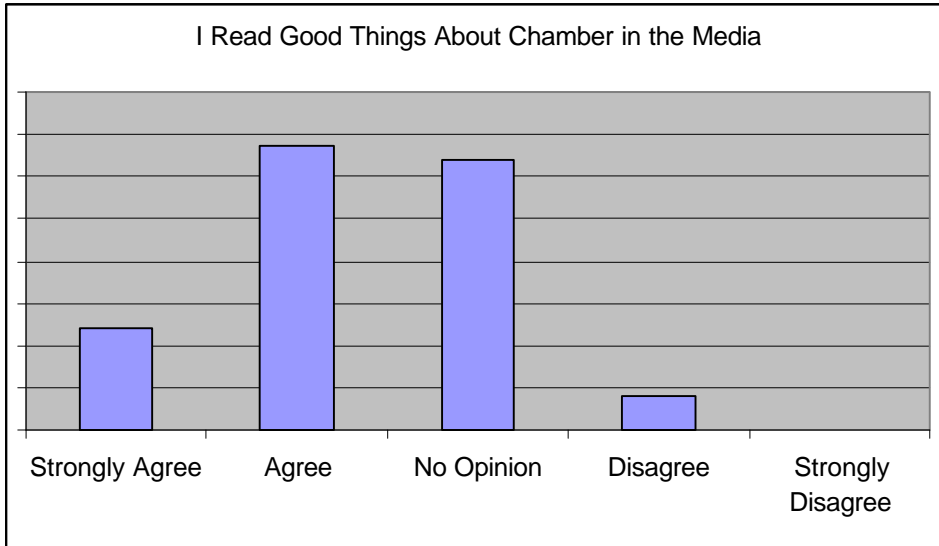
The Portsmouth Chamber's focus on improving quality of life through tourism and business development, and by solving housing, infrastructure and transportation issues is right on target.



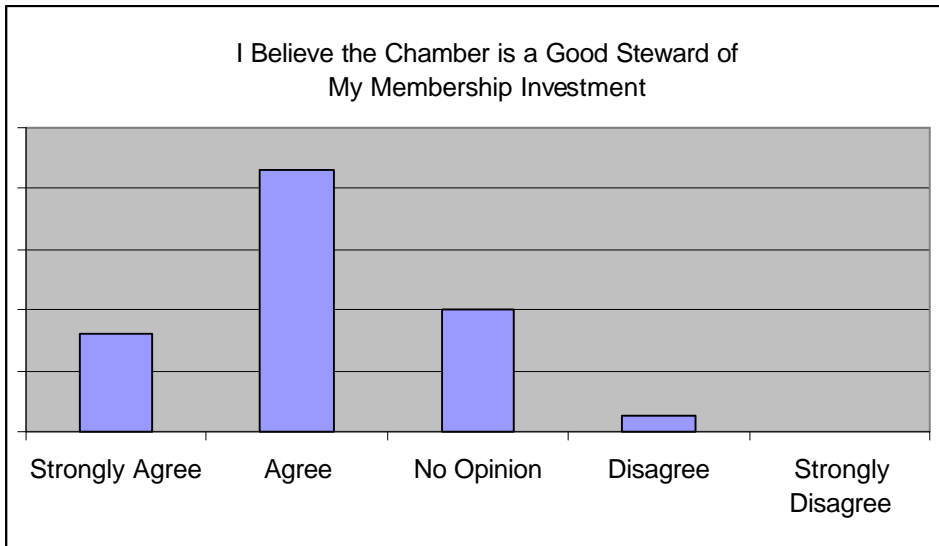
The Portsmouth Chamber staff and board is professional, responsive and in tune with member needs.



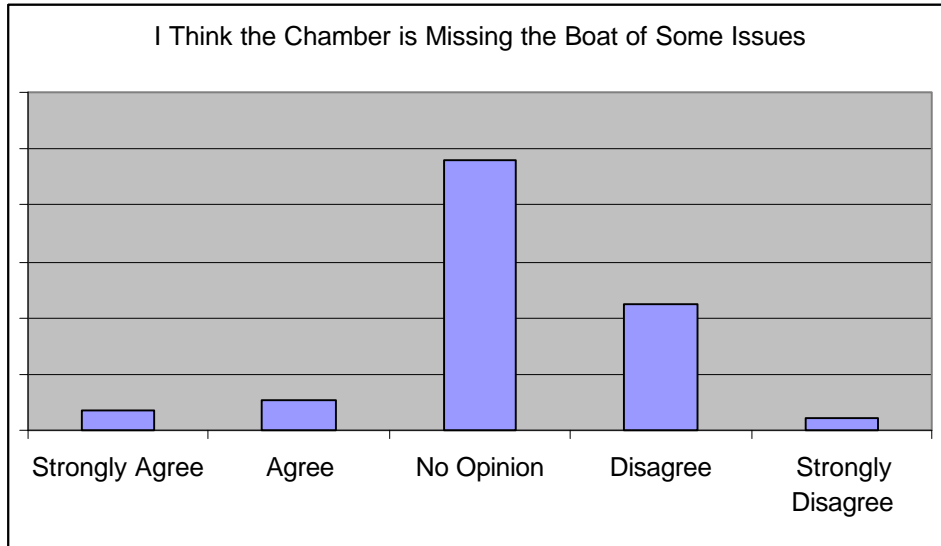
I read and hear a lot of good things about the Portsmouth Chamber in the local, regional and statewide media.



I believe the Portsmouth Chamber is a good steward of my membership investment.



I think the Portsmouth Chamber is missing the boat on some issues.



What other things should the Chamber be addressing:

Not aware of sufficient initiatives to attract business other than hi-tech to Portsmouth.
In the seven years I've been on the Seacoast, I've seen the Chamber of Commerce grow tremendously. I've been on the Tourism Committee for over five years and it used to be just about 6 or 7 of us [max] now it's hard to find a seat. Chamber involvement has grown in the past few years as well.
Possible formal network program. (just a thought) Social is great, maybe a semi annual networking event, that has you learn about other local businesses. So we can stay in breed and feed our own.
I would like to see the chamber include environmental issues on its agenda, especially with the presidential primary approaching, perhaps starting with an energy audit of its own headquarters, to identify areas of potential savings on the operational budget. This represents a great opportunity to help small businesses understand the potential cost savings from relatively earnest financial investments and the environmental benefit of taking action against global warming.
Providing more support of and attention to core businesses and not concentrating ("fawning") so much over the tech sector - the old line "bread and butter" businesses will be here long after the "flash in the pan" tech businesses have come and gone (hasn't this already happened?!). More representation and advocacy for member businesses who appear at local regulatory meetings (Planning Board, ZBA, HDC) - I can't remember the last time I heard the Chamber speak at one of these hearings in favor of a member's application (I used to go all the time when I was EVP and it won a lot of friends and membership renewals).
Smart Growth
While there are always issues to consider, I believe the Chamber addresses the important issues first, such as housing, transportation, and tourism, which are important to this city.
We have only been a member for a few months. Will form an opinion later in the relationship.
Employee parking in the downtown area. Good staffing is very hard due to the unreasonable amount of tickets issued by Wanda and her gang. Can't keep quality help if the city is going to rape and pillage their workers. This particular topic has been a sore spot for years and NEVER addressed.
Stronger support/results on tourism and new business development. Stronger support for members outside of Portsmouth
The business community should be more outspoken about the very negative effect of the huge amount of taxes that leaves our community because we are a donor town. The budget for the city is

being cut that could effect safety issues with the police and fire. The membership must become pro active and not just verbalize to each other.
I think much more time needs to be spent on helping small business stay alive and well. The chamber should also market and advertise it's services more to the community. I don't recall ever hearing chamber ads on local radio.
The issue of closing Market/Pleasant Streets will benefit a few businesses, but most Chamber members will not benefit, and some will be negatively affected. The City is doing a good job of addressing downtown parking, and I think the solution to increasing pedestrian traffic should be aimed more toward moving people in and out of the city from remote parking areas with clean reliable public/private transportation.
I believe that on a personal level, my business is put on the end of the list for those looking for lodging due to the fact that I am located out of the hub of Portsmouth. You don't even have my town listed in your question, "Where is your business located." That certainly sums it up doesn't it?
The Chamber needs to strengthen the business/education partnership which would then be beneficial for businesses, educational institutions in the area, the general population and the state.
In reference to the B2B expo....maybe open it up to the public w/o a fee. Promotes more entering the exhibits...the exhibitors might each pay a bit more for more exposure...
Non-profits are businesses too! We have a lot of small-medium cultural institutions and social service agencies that could benefit from Chamber membership, but are not on the radar screen (according to them).
I will not be joining the Chamber again. I think the people are fabulous. Your leadership is terrific but I am not a conservative republican. I do not like the Chamber's political stands. I find it particularly distressful that part of my membership supports the Chamber's lobbying efforts in Washington to defeat a raise in the minimum wage and seems to be fundamentally opposed to any issues that support the rights of employees. If I had known that my membership fee would have been used in part to produce and buy TV advertising supporting Republican candidates, I would not have joined. Too bad, I really like the Chamber and think your staff and leadership is the best. But in this day and age, I feel I cannot support it .
I think the dues are slightly overpriced. I can be a Boston, Mass chamber member for same price!
Support for keeping the state income and sales tax free.
Corporate volunteerism
Some good services, but largely the chamber exists to perpetuate its own existence. It is not a vital part of the community in the sense that it provides leadership, advocates for change, researches issues, influences voters, presents a strong vision or benefits the whole community. It largely favors its large members that provide the most income. It produces superb publications, but hardly anyone sees Coastline -- which is a masterpiece but not widely available. It is a good "meeting place" but not an important political force or agent for change in the community that it imagines itself to be. Other than advocating for a Burger King on the traffic circle, where has the chamber taken a stand? Since the chamber represents such a wide range of people, it really cannot advocate for much politically. What PSNH wants is usually not what a small store owner wants. What they both want may not be a benefit to the community as a whole. Other than promoting tourism, which the Chamber is finally beginning to do with some effectiveness (and would do more if had funds), what does the chamber do to make the community a better place? How would the community be impacted if it disappeared? It is not a philanthropic organization, but largely a social "club" and advocacy group for business owners. It had its place in the early 20th century, but with so many nonprofits and advocacy groups forming (1,000 in the Seacoast alone) it is unclear what the chamber can do well that smaller focused groups cannot. There are too many chambers in the region with territorial interests. Without outside funds -- depending on its membership for dues and advertising -- it must spend most of its time creating events that pay the bills.
Continued focus on workforce, training and business development is critical to tech businesses. Also looking at regional issues that include Maine and N.E. Mass. would be good.
In general, the chamber's role is 1)to find ways to keep the government out of our business, 2)to act as our (collective)research resouce for business knowledge, know how, regulation, the law and finance and 3) the arbiter of good conduct and business ethics

lack of parking @ chamber office, should have joint office w/Albacore Museum.

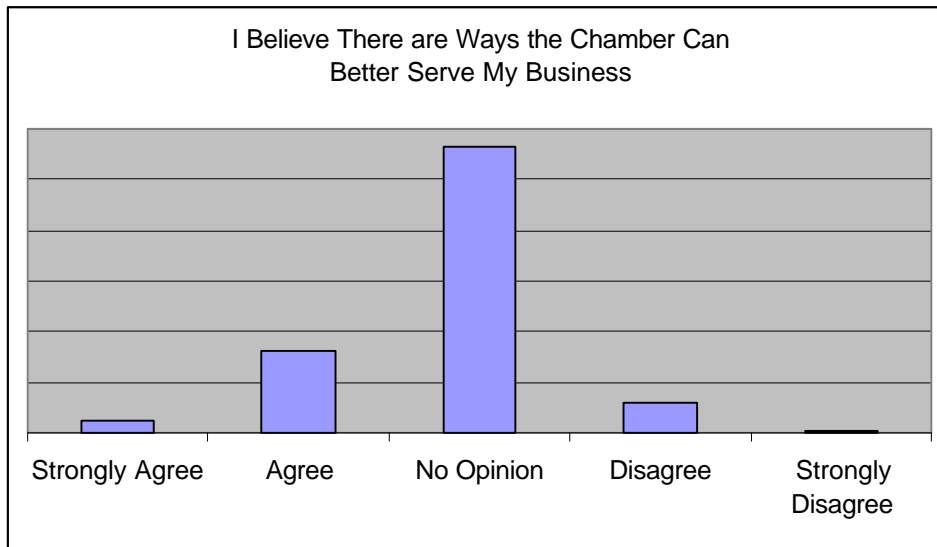
More involvement with new members and helping them get introduced to other members who they might benefit from meeting at chamber functions.

More focus on bringing groups and conferences to the area. We need a convention and visitor's bureau, especially now that Wentworth is open.

The chamber should make a concerted effort to contact small and medium sized businesses to see what issues are important to them. Too many times the chamber focuses on those businesses that make a big splash in the headlines as opposed to the smaller business that really make up the backbone of the NH business community.

Affordable health care for all--universal coverage, NOT dependent on a person's job, since jobs are so transitory--the chamber really needs to get behind this very political issue

I believe there are ways the Portsmouth Chamber can better serve my business.



Tell us what you think we can do better:

Be more aggressive in lobbying for healthcare reform -- perhaps offer group purchase programs to membership and/or provide information to help individual members who have lost coverage due to layoffs or cannot afford to provide coverage through their own businesses. 2. Offer more free Chamber events or bigger discounts (sliding scale?) on Chamber programs to members to provide more value for membership dollars. 3. Provide incentive program for new member referrals. 4. Focus on the unique needs of entrepreneurs in general.

An improved ambassador staff that reaches out to all of the members. Greater networking opportunities and events that focus on business to business introductions. And quite possibly a monthly random focus article or webzine (free) about a member business of the chamber of commerce.

As an educational org., we don't see any direct benefit from being a member. Costs are too high for us to participate in chamber events. The chamber needs to recognize the financial nature of the educational and non-profit sectors and structure events so that these types of organizations can participate and meet with for-profit businesses within the Chamber.

Being in the food service industry, I find the chamber always looking for freebies and giving nothing in return. I also feel the ala carte certificates should be discontinued due to the fact we have to pay a penalty for accepting them and customers are always expecting change back. Some businesses refuse to give it (Rosa's comes to mind), again a form of raping and pillaging, this time to the

customers we supposedly are trying to get. Things like this are ruining the seacoast area restaurants.
Call the member companies and engage with them. O
Check that listings are correct before they go to print and get your website updated more frequently.
Develop a referral policy for commercial real estate
Encourage Chamber members to participate in promotions by cable advertising..
Have members give informational seminars about their business.
Have non-profit round-table meetings
High-tech seems to be your focus, how about the low-tech businesses, i.e. retail, services, the arts.
I am self-employed, but my business is impacted by the positive "quality of life" reports that continually place the Seacoast area in top National groupings. The Chamber should "test" all initiatives with the quality of life question.
I wish the chamber could serve small businesses, but as a long-term member, don't see any real way that it can. Small businesspeople mistakenly think the chamber helps market its members and provide them with work. It doesn't, at least not in 15 years that I've seen. The problem is not so much with the chamber, which has its functions, but with the expectation of small businesses that mistake what a chamber does. Members should know from the outset that they are expected to work for the community through the chamber, much as in Rotary. It is less a service organization FOR members than a service organization FROM members who help the chamber with their money and time. That isn't bad, but it's not what many people think.
I'd like to see an inclusion of more businesses in the community - widening the reach and showing the benefits to non-traditional businesses or businesses that maybe have not heard the message yet. Definitely would like to see more new faces!
Less focus on High-tech & more focus on general business
Many efforts but with significant ongoing cost
More focus on general business & less on e-business
Offer more free seminars. Help to get these going!!
Our company became a member last spring. We became a member for the advertising benefit. Did not realize all the different additional benefits or programs that the Chamber offered. Have not gotten up to speed, but the e-mails that I receive really help.
H care coverage that follows the individual, no matter where they work
Send more travelers to our Inn.
Step up Government Affairs efforts. Work to influence State Lawmakers regarding business taxes, affordable healthcare, etc.
Thanks for the opportunity to give input via a survey.
The membership is so large, that I hardly feel the leadership staff takes time to get to know any of the new members. There is great communication via email and the newsletter, but most of the leadership wouldn't know me if we bounced into each other on the street. If there was a little more time asking members how we the chamber could help, just like this survey, I think it would better serve all members business
Without taking a direct role in each and every business, I think the Chamber's focus should remain the same and continue to press upon better public transportation in and out of Portsmouth, housing for those who need it and building Tourism for this area. Nice job by everyone.