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WELCOME TO 2015. We believe this is a year of exciting promise for both your company and the organization that represents you—the Global Cold Chain Alliance.

The association world is changing. Trade associations are evolving from just providing a set of defined benefits to becoming an extension of each of your companies to help meet *your* business objectives. We call it the new “association norm”—an environment and structure in which GCCA and its core partners can develop new ways to identify key business needs, share information, develop valuable programs and work together to achieve stronger business outcomes for all members.

A few months ago, the IARW Board of Directors met to discuss the results of a Member Impact Survey we commissioned that identified what keeps warehouse company members up at night. It was a way to identify new opportunities for IARW and GCCA to help them meet their business objectives.

Members told us things such as how important it is to present themselves as a total supply chain solution to customers, the challenge and cost of dealing with regulatory issues, the need to stay current with industry innovations, retaining talented employees, and the need to better market the services of third-party logistics providers to frozen and refrigerated food companies.

IARW Board members agreed that IARW member companies have unmatched expertise in providing a wide range of supply chain services in the temperature-controlled

marketplace. They also noted that we can do that more efficiently and cost-effectively than food companies can do themselves.

This leads us to a major opportunity to promote our industry more aggressively and better position ourselves as experts in the cold chain. We can provide enhanced awareness of who we are and what value we can provide.

This also speaks to the integrated nature of today's supply chain services and the ability that GCCA has to address all key service areas through its core partners—IARW, IRTA, IACSC, and WFLO.

I encourage you to read the article, “Major Survey Gauges Impact of Association Services,” on page 10 of this issue to learn more about the findings of this critical IARW member survey and the opportunities it identified not only for the future growth of IARW but also for WFLO, IRTA, IACSC and GCCA as a whole.

I also want to hear from as many of you as possible about your own views on how GCCA can become more relevant to your business needs. So please email me at crosenbusch@gcca.org and let's continue this dialogue. Thanks and I look forward to a great year together! ☺

COREY ROSEBUSCH
GCCA President and CEO

COLDFACTS

COLD FACTS magazine is published every other month by the **Global Cold Chain Alliance (GCCA)**, an organization that unites partners to be innovative leaders in the temperature-controlled products industry. The GCCA Core Partners are:

The **International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses (IARW)**, which promotes excellence in the global temperature-controlled warehouse and logistics industry.

The **World Food Logistics Organization (WFLO)**, which delivers education and research to the industry and empowers economic development by strengthening the global cold chain.

The **International Refrigerated Transportation Association (IRTA)**, which cultivates, fosters and develops commercial and trade relations between all those engaged in the transportation and logistics of temperature-controlled commodities.

The **International Association for Cold Storage Construction (IACSC)**, which provides a forum for innovative ideas, promotes standards of practice, and sponsors professional education programs for the cold storage construction industry.

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Precedes strategic planning activities that will drive members' business outcomes.



“We developed a strategic plan back in 2008 that served us well, but the world is changing, as is our industry, and we need to stop, take a look, and reflect on what we’re doing and where we’re going,” says Tom Poe, President, Crystal Distribution Services and Chairman of the International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses (IARW).

And that, says Poe, is why the IARW commissioned a survey that would identify the kind of impact the membership is looking for from its trade association. He says this is a far more strategic association membership survey than simply asking the membership whether it thinks the services its association is providing are good, bad or somewhere in between.

“Potomac Core Consulting, the company chosen by GCCA President & CEO Corey Rosenbusch and his team to conduct the survey, utilizes a survey vehicle that identifies what the membership’s key ‘up-at-night’ issues are,” explains Poe, “and what impact the association has on those issues.”

The “up-at-night” issues identified in the survey included new growth, market position and business development; external challenges

such as food safety compliance and cost pressures; operational planning and strategy; and human capital management such as employee recruitment and retention.

Dan Varroney, President and CEO of Potomac Core Consulting, says, “We asked the membership to define what kind of impact they’d like to have from their trade association, and they responded that they wanted to utilize their association as a strategic partner to achieve their business outcomes. They envision the association uniting the value chain (food manufacturers, retailers, distributors, and the entire cold chain) to collaborate in areas that impact everyone in the food supply chain.”

Varroney says survey respondents identified their desire to work with other segments of the food supply chain on solutions such

Top IARW Member “Up-At-Night” Issues Growth/Market Positioning

Identify New Business Development Opportunities

Capturing Additional Revenue from Current Customers

Optimizing Capacity

Increasing Market Penetration/Market Share

Increasing Company Identity/Visibility as a Total Supply Chain Solution

Knowledge of Potential Customer Needs/Strategies and Frequent Customer Interface

Increasing Customer Awareness of Cold Storage Solutions & Innovations

Top IARW Member “Up-At-Night” Issues Other External Opportunities/Challenges

Food Safety Regulations/Compliance/External Influences

Customers’ Pressure to Cut Costs

Staying on Top of Emerging Technologies/Innovations

Quality Standards (e.g. certification, testing standards, sustainability, etc.)

Customers’ Technology/Innovation Challenges

Top IARW Member “Up-At-Night” Issues Operational Opportunities & Challenges

Increase Profitability/Cost Controls

Strategic Business/Operational Planning

Cost, Availability, & Load Shedding of Electricity

Staying Current with Industry Innovations & Practices; Benchmarking

Workflow/Keeping Capacity Balanced (incl. Seasonal Variances)

Operational/Tactical Planning

Customer Service/Engagement/Retention

Regulatory Compliance

as streamlining regulations, elevating the visibility of the cold chain, understanding each other’s structures, cost and pricing models, and building a larger community with everyone moving forward together. “This is a new growth-focused, global model,” points out Varroney.

After the survey results were collected, the IARW board met to examine the results and identify the top five initiatives that the association can deliver that will have an impact

on members’ business outcomes and to rank those ideas in order of priority.

Both Rosenbusch and Varroney asked the board to react to the data in an exercise that lasted two days. Explains Varroney, “They were asked, on the basis of the survey results, what they thought the priorities and strategies of the association should be for the next three years.”

What Varroney observed from this strategic exercise is that the board’s top priorities matched the members’ perspectives in the

survey results. “The reason we engaged the board is because we’re trying to assure the association’s alignment with member business outcomes.”

“My company is very small so it came as somewhat of a surprise to me that everybody had such similar concerns—human capital, compliance, operational issues, identifying new ways the association can help us develop and grow our business,” observes Poe. “And these are not just regional concerns—international

Top IARW Member “Up-At-Night” Issues Staffing & Human Capital Management

Team Development

Staff Development - Mid-career/Mid-management

Family Ownership Challenges/Transitions/Succession

Recruiting Refrigeration Engineers

Staff Development - Early Career

Workforce Safety & OSHA Compliance

Staff Engagement/Talent Retention

Aging Workforce

members are thinking along the same lines as well.”

Poe says he assumed some of the bigger companies would have all these issues under control. “I figured they’re big, they must be doing it all right, but it just goes to show they still have the same challenges as us smaller companies.”

Poe adds that survey respondents depicted a true cross section of IARW members, represented both regional and international companies of all sizes, and held positions from CEO to warehouse manager.

An important observation from the survey results, reports Varroney, is that the members hold the association in very high regard, believe it is highly respected by others in the food supply chain, and see it as a providing an opportunity to learn from and share with each other.

“They see the IARW as the best resource to stay up to date with what’s happening in the industry. Because there is this strong foundation, members are saying they want to leverage the association even further to elevate the value they provide their customers and elevate the industry’s recognition,” observes Varroney.

He adds that the membership sees opportunities for IARW to help the broader food supply chain see the industry beyond cold storage as strategic components of a supply chain that can store and move product any-

where in the world.

Poe believes that as the vast majority of respondents hold the association in such high regard, determining how to develop that respect into something members can use to grow their business and find new opportunities is a fundamental challenge going forward. “We want our members to be able to say, ‘We’re part of a great organization that does things right, that’s cutting edge, and you should be looking for our IARW brand so we can help you grow and help you to help your customers grow.’”

Poe says the next step is to put a taskforce in place to work alongside association staff to draft a strategic plan that it will present to the board at the IARW-WFLO Convention & Expo in April 2015. “Then with the basic guidelines in place reflecting where the members want us to go, the taskforce will whittle that down and be ready to take it to the next step, which is to finalize a strategic plan for the association staff to implement in early 2016,” says Poe.

“The staff has a track record of doing an excellent job of reviewing and adhering to strategic plans,” remarks Poe. “With the previous strategic plan, they frequently reassessed their goals, as indicated by the plan, and whether those goals continued to reflect what the membership had charged them with accomplishing. Then they step back and regroup.” Poe adds, “We’ll give staff

guidance so they can do what they do best and they truly do a great job.”

Varroney says the more the association is focused on the members’ “up-at-night” issues and their business outcomes, the more successful the industry will become.

“It’s a major change to be talking about members’ business outcomes and how the association can help drive those outcomes,” says Varroney. “This is the new gold standard for forward-thinking associations like GCCA.”

“The membership should feel extremely confident that their concerns are being heard by the board, and a cadre of outstanding staff. Corey and his team are working on the membership’s behalf to build a plan that will help amplify the importance of the cold chain while it provides the industry the key resources it needs to accelerate its market presence in the global marketplace,” concludes Varroney. ☺

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