

BACKGROUND

The Team Finland Strategy was published in June 2014. The Finnish government is reconsidering the role of public bodies such as Finnish embassies, Finpro, Tekes and others to promote trade and investments. The official goal is to deliver better business-minded and customer-oriented services for entrepreneurs in Finland and abroad.

The role of FinnCham Network in the Team Finland concept is important. The Finnish government is underlining the needs to develop closer co-operation between Team Finland and different operators in the private sector. In particular, our FinnCham Network has been mentioned as one of the key private partners to promote trade and investments with Team Finland in the future.

Our mission is to develop co-operation within the FinnCham Network. We all know that the FinnCham Network is a global group of independent bilateral chambers of commerce, trade associations and trade guilds related to trade and investments with Finland. Each of us has different kinds of services and resources to promote trade and investments. Most of the services are meant only for FinnCham members. Together, however, we would be able to develop our services for current and potential members in Finland and abroad.

STUDY

Study on FinnCham Network Services. In order to gain a better understanding of FinnCham activities abroad and how to develop them in close co-operation with us, the Finnish Chambers of Commerce, a study on FinnCham Network Services was carried out by the FinnCham Team in Finland. The survey was conducted by sending the questionnaire to 76 respondents using the Digium system in June 2014 and the remainder in July 2014. 17 responses were received. The response rate was 22.

RESULTS

Which kinds of activities your chamber of commerce, trade association or trade guild can offer other FinnCham company members? Possibility to answer was not restricted to a certain number of activities.

Almost all respondents offered companies services related to business contacts (14), country information, participation of events and meetings with delegations (13). Meetings with individual businessmen, sharing information from other FinnChams among members (12) as well as contacts with authorities (11) were also popular ways of helping enterprises among respondents. Services related to arrangements for delegation visits (10) received less positive responses.

Consulting services and mentoring programs were also mentioned in the responses as services provided by the respondents. One respondent underlined that their

chambers focus on sharing their resources to serve their own paying members while possibilities to serve non-paying external stake-holders are limited.

Which kinds of activities your chamber of commerce, trade association or trade guild can offer companies which are not FinnCham company members

Many respondents offered companies participation of events (11), business contacts (10) and country information (9). Companies were provided by the respondents less activities related to contacts with authorities (7), meetings with individual businessmen and delegations as well as sharing information sent from other FinnChams among members (6) and arrangements for delegation visits (4).

Does your chamber of commerce, trade association or trade guild charge from these activities?

Seven respondents charged case by case FinnCham members and seven respondents charged case by case companies, not FinnCham members, for their services. Two respondents charged always FinnCham member for their services. One respondent charged always companies, not FinnCham members. Six respondents did not charge FinnCham members and three respondents companies, not FinnCham members.

In free comments respondents underlined that their aim is to serve free of charge their own members.

In which specific areas your FinnCham can provide services for FinnCham company members?

FinnCham network members provided most services related to communication and marketing (9). PR and head hunting (8) as well as HR (7) were ranked second popular areas where Finncham can provide services in the study. Services related to legislation and taxation were provided by 6 respondents and services related to administration by five respondents. Two FinnChams did not provided any services in the mentioned areas.

Some respondents forward these kinds of specific questions to third parties.

Differences in all answers were small.

Respondents:

The Finnish-American Chamber of Commerce Minnesota, The Finnish-American Chamber of Commerce in Florida, The Finnish-American Chamber of Commerce Washington, The Finnish-American Chamber of Commerce Washington DC, Finnish American Business Guild (Dallas), Belgian Finnish Business Association, Finnish Business Council Shanghai, Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry DCCI, Finnish-Estonian Chamber of Commerce, Finnish Business Council Singapore, Finland Australia Chamber of Commerce, Chambre de Commerce Finno Canadienne, Portugese-Finnish Chamber of Commerce, Finnisch-Deutsche Handelsgilde in Hamburg, Finnish Dutch Trade Guild, Scandinavian-Polish Chamber of Commerce, Finnish Chamber of Commerce Hong Kong.

CONCLUSIONS

The results show that FinnCham network is able provide their member companies with services and sometimes even to non-members despite of very limited resources.

Creating a common FinnCham website with people and/or companies website links by countries would increase demand for services in Finncham member companies in their operating countries and help Finnish companies to extend their business worldwide. Both sides would benefit from networking.

N.B.

It was difficult for the respondents to make a difference between FinnCham members, FinnCham member companies and non-FinnCham members and companies. In these questionnaire companies which are members of any FinnCham network chamber of commerce or association or guild were regarded as FinnCham member companies. FinnCham members are organizations members of the FinnCham network.

At first the questionnaire allowed only one answer in a row due to technical problems. The last questions were similar to the first ones owing to missing a word "non-members" for which we are very sorry.