

Where We Are and What's Ahead



By Patrick Hurley

ACG had a very good 2005, and all indications are 2006 will be another banner year. President and CEO Dan Varroney rang in this new year with his second CNBC appearance announcing ACG/Thomson Dealmakers Survey results for the 2006 outlook.

Each of us is generally aware of our home chapter activities and how they fared in 2005. Congratulations are in order for many ACG chapter leaders on their successes. ACG's record remains impressive. The unique balance of chapter independence and collective bargaining strength is very powerful.

Somewhat less obvious is the extent of the tremendous progress driven by individuals on special projects during 2005. Those activities ranged from implementing the decisions made in strategic planning, from the CEO selection to the governance overhaul and revisions to committee activities.

Most have a sense of how exceptionally well Dan has been received throughout ACG and how he has embraced the opportunity to shape the future. I would like you to know how instrumental Dan and others have been in positioning ACG to work better for you.

Peter Coffey's leadership during the year was extraordinary in many ways. ACG entered 2005 in a state of turmoil, but Peter skillfully charted a course resulting in our best year ever. Peter led the strategic planning, the CEO search effort and so much more. I cannot overstate how much he accomplished. He mended fences and inspired cooperation. He drew people into becoming vested in the solution.

Three others had outstanding impact as leaders in our most significant areas. Jeri Harman led the Governance Committee that put control into the hands of the chapters. Paul Stewart led the Finance

Committee and introduced a framework for financial accountability. Ardelle St. George led ACG InterGrowth to far exceed initial financial expectations.

Others had important roles in setting direction. Jim O'Donnell and Biff Bernard were relentless in forcing board discussions on tough issues. Harris Smith raised the bar in handling the responsibility of treasurer.

Ron Kerdasha expanded his role in programming to include an effort to deal with issues resulting from the success of Capital Connections. Jay Jester continued to guide expansion and best practices in that area. Ron also scored the coup of convincing Bev Landstreet to Chair the upcoming ACG InterGrowth.

Bev is teeing up a blockbuster ACG InterGrowth in 2006 and has an excellent working group — David Cohn, Bob Landis, Mark Jones, Rob Long, Bobby Blumenfeld, and others. Bill Padnos and Jim McCambridge are managing event and sponsorship efforts.

Rob Rubin and Dan are working with Jay Fountain, Jack Derby and Sid Jaffe on the technology front, which you will learn more about soon. Bill Haynes and Judy Iacuzzi brought you the ACG/Thomson relationship along with the media access that has increased media attention in dozens of chapters. Bill got Dan onto CNBC within days of becoming CEO, and Judy has done a great job with publisher Harry Nikpour of SourceMedia.

Jim Easterling worked tirelessly to complete the chapter incorporation initiative, which is of high value to all members of chapter boards and ACG as a whole. Gary Levenstein provided important insight and advice. Nancy Halwig upgraded the awards program. Chad Murrin weighed in with his refreshing

British humor to support his keen judgment.

Don Feldmann mentored successful new chapters in Arizona, Columbus, Louisiana, and Calgary. Cathy Shew brought a shrewd approach to strengthen the voice of corporate members. Bill Weirich restarted an ACG presence in Amsterdam and kindled an interest from Frankfurt. Michael Carr led the initiative by ACG Los Angeles to provide resources for expansion into Asia.

Jim Tucker absorbed the burden that I was responsible for creating with the branding program undertaken in 2004. The costly unfunded effort led to the initiation fee and many dramatic changes in 2005.

Many of the other members of the main board, various committees, and working groups have invested significant time and energy to help cause all this progress. Dan has covered a lot of ground very quickly and has put the headquarters infrastructure in place in record time. Please continue to give him your full support. The benefits will be readily apparent.

As a final word, I would like to extend warmest thanks to Carl Wangman for so much. Carl is a gentleman of the highest order, and he personally laid the foundation for much of the success ACG is now enjoying. Way to go Peter, Dan, Carl and everybody else who makes ACG the hot ticket it has become!

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