

## Website Award

### Purpose:

This award recognizes Chambers of Commerce that demonstrate excellence in website design, functionality, and content. Winning websites showcase professional branding, user-friendly navigation, timely and relevant information, and strong alignment with the Chamber's mission. The award also acknowledges effective use of search engine optimization (SEO) to ensure visibility and accessibility.

### Eligibility:

- Applicant must be a Chamber of Commerce (or similar local/regional chamber organization) within the W.A.C.E. membership region.
- Websites submitted must be actively maintained and accessible at the time of judging.
- Submissions must represent the Chamber's primary website (microsites or one-off landing pages are not eligible).
- Each Chamber may submit one entry.

### Award Presentation:

- Winners will be recognized at the W.A.C.E. Annual Conference.
- Winning websites will be spotlighted as examples of best practices in chamber digital strategy.

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## Application Elements

Applicants should provide the following as part of their submission:

Component	Description
<b>Chamber Information</b>	Chamber name, location, membership size, staff size, and primary contact person.
<b>Website URL</b>	Link to the Chamber's primary website.
<b>Overview</b>	Brief description of the website's purpose, primary audience(s), and any recent redesigns or updates (within the past 18 months).

<b>Component</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Design &amp; Navigation</b>	Description of design approach, branding elements, and navigational structure; explanation of how user experience was prioritized.
<b>Content Strategy</b>	Outline of content categories (events, advocacy, resources, membership, community, etc.); explanation of how content is kept current and relevant.
<b>Photography &amp; Media</b>	Examples of use of high-quality visuals, videos, or interactive features that support Chamber branding and storytelling.
<b>SEO &amp; Analytics</b>	Information on SEO strategies used (keywords, tagging, page titles, backlinks, etc.) and performance (Google ranking, website traffic, audience engagement).
<b>Technical Features</b>	Description of mobile responsiveness, accessibility features, integration with CRM/event systems, or other tools.
<b>Supporting Materials</b>	Screenshots, analytics reports, testimonials, or other documentation supporting website effectiveness.

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### **Judging Criteria**

Entries will be evaluated by a panel of communications, digital marketing, and web design professionals (or W.A.C.E. members with relevant expertise). Judges will use the following weighted criteria:

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>What Judges Will Look For</b>
<b>Overall Design &amp; Branding</b>	35%	Visual appeal, consistency with Chamber brand, layout, photography, ease of use and navigation, and overall impression.
<b>Content Quality &amp; Relevance</b>	35%	Timeliness and accuracy of information; clarity and readability; grammar and professionalism; addressing primary audience needs; balance of content types.

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>What Judges Will Look For</b>
<b>Search Engine Optimization (SEO)</b>	20%	Visibility on major search engines (Google, Bing, etc.); keyword integration; meta descriptions; evidence that the website appears on the first page of relevant search results.
<b>Functionality &amp; Features</b>	10%	Mobile responsiveness, accessibility, interactivity, and integration of features (member login, event registration, directories, etc.).