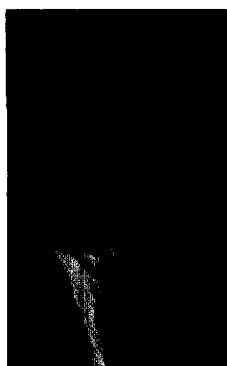


PERSPECTIVES

A BRIDGE FOR THE LIBRARY MEMBERS



Last month, I talked with you about the role of local chapters in our "Bridge to the Future." The majority of our members no longer participate regularly in a chapter. However, I feel very strongly that chapters provide the best possible opportunity for IMA members to associate with a local peer group. Therefore, I hope we do whatever is necessary to ensure their future health.

The question that immediately follows is what about the majority of our members who are not participating in a local chapter—the people we sometimes refer to as "library members?" What value does IMA provide for their membership dues' dollars? This month I want to talk with you about the role of "library" members in our "Bridge to the Future."

For most of our history, we have tended to feel that something was wrong when people did not participate regularly in a local chapter. Now there is considerable willingness to accept the reality that it is OK for a member to select the level of chapter involvement desired—even if that level is zero. I wish I had a better term than "library" member to describe this growing segment of our membership. Please be assured that the term carries no negative connotation—all IMA members are important.

In my opinion, we must examine the service provided to those members in the "library" segment. For this reason, I asked Clair Raubenstine to chair a special Ad-Hoc Committee on Member Services during the 1994-95 year. Clair is an Appointed Member of the Executive Committee and National President-elect nominee. His group is a cross-functional team with members drawn from most of IMA's standing committees. The basic charge is to ensure that members—especially those in the "library" group—receive value for their dues.

The IMA could consider use of some aspect of the organizational structure of the American Accounting Association. The AAA uses both regions and special interest sections with differential dues based on level of participation. Our regional councils might evolve into something comparable to AAA's regions, which have annual meetings that are much less costly to attend than an annual national conference. Our Member Interest Groups (MIGs) are similar in concept to the AAA's sections. An expansion of our MIGs or creation of multiple sections could possibly provide an appropriate vehicle for providing value to the large segment of library members. Other approaches include flexible membership packages of educational programs and publications. The annual dues would vary with the content of the package selected.

It may be that many of our library members are content with the value now being received from their membership. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING® is a very good publication. The IMA provides the CMA program and quality education for its members. Our group insurance programs are available at unusually good rates. We are working hard to bring about needed change in the collegiate education of future accountants. We provide useful research and influence accounting standard setting within the U.S. and internationally.

If you have any thoughts about the way we provide value to the segment of our membership that does not regularly participate in chapter activities, Clair's committee would like to hear from you. We want to make certain there are "Bridges to the Future" for all IMA members.

Keith Bryant, Jr.

KEITH BRYANT, JR., CMA
President, 1994-95



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