



OSAWATOMIE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Think Local. Shop Local. Keep it Local.

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Hey, Howdy & Hello!

Let me start by saying that there is just no opening greeting that won't sound like I'm trying to sell you something, so how about I start by introducing myself and telling you a little bit about the benefits of becoming a member of the Osawatomie Chamber of Commerce instead?

My name is Hitomi Lamirande and I took over as the Director for the Osawatomie Chamber of Commerce almost 2 years ago. It's been interesting to say the least and there is still much to learn. What I have learned is that Osawatomie is a FANTABULOUS community to be a part of, both as a business owner and as an individual. The people in this Community are some of the best you'll ever meet! And if that's not enough, how about a little bit about what the Chamber can do for you?

The Chamber works to strengthen and retain existing businesses, as well as attracting new businesses to the Osawatomie area. The Chamber offers a variety of ways to assist you in **marketing your business** as well as providing you with **FREE business resources** that can help you in your daily operations. The avenues in which the Chamber works with your business to reach these goals are as follows:

- The Chamber communicates news about upcoming chamber and community events through weekly e-mail blasts, Facebook and on-going communication with the Miami County Republic. We are happy to help you celebrate your Grand Opening or important anniversaries and milestones with a ribbon cutting, open house, or event of similar nature.
- The Chamber has developed a "**shop at home**" marketing campaign in the past several years to educate and encourage our residents to shop here and support you, the local businesses, that put your livelihoods on the line every day to support our community.
- The Chamber works closely with Miami County Economic Development, the Kansas Small Business Development Center and Kansas Department of Commerce. This provides a great opportunity to connect local businesses with services to assist them in their daily operating needs. Through these contacts, you can get personalized answers to questions and advice on growing your business. We also strive to keep you up to date on training opportunities offered throughout the year on a variety of topics to assist you in your day to day operations.
- The Osawatomie community and **businesses are promoted by the Chamber** in numerous ways including the Osawatomie Chamber Website, Friday's Weekly E-mail Blast, Facebook, Welcome Packets for New Residents, the Annual Home & Business Expo, the Chamber Buck

Program, the Osawatomie Small Town Christmas, the Annual Spook Parade, Special Events, and several other marketing events held throughout the year!

- A number of informal activities provide members the opportunity to exchange information and **network**. These events include Chamber Coffees, Multi-Chamber After Hours events, the Annual Membership Dinner, along with other get-togethers throughout the year.
- Members receive a **Chamber Plaque** to display with pride in their business designed to encourage citizens to shop locally and support **your** business.
- Members are included on the **Chamber Website** and can be linked to their business website as a marketing tool. This is vital in the age of technology. Many people search the internet prior to picking up a phone book.
- Members are encouraged to submit information, announcements, and special offers to the Chamber to be included in the **weekly e-mail blast**.
- Members can keep promotional items, flyers, business cards etc. in the Visitor's Information Center located just outside of the Chamber Office. These marketing tools can be used in the Welcome Packets and can be given to visitors at the Chamber.
- Members can feature their business as the "Business Spotlight" for the month and host a coffee at their place of business or at the Chamber Office (if you are unable to have a coffee at your place of business). This type of **networking** helps you get acquainted with other members while bringing **publicity to your business**.

Our dues structure is very straightforward and has remained steady for several years. Members are provided with several payment options including quarterly and monthly payment plans and a 5% discount if paid in full by December 1st of each year. Our fiscal year runs November 1st through October 31st. For local businesses with less than five full time employees, membership works out to **less than \$15 per month!** First year dues may also be pro-rated to reflect the remaining months of the year. **The Chamber is also offering any new members in 2019 HALF OFF their first-year dues – so be sure to take advantage of that this year!**

I welcome the opportunity to speak with you about Chamber membership at your convenience. The Chamber continues to grow and strengthen with every new member, and we would love to have YOU involved. We're all in this together. Standing together as a community will only make us stronger.

Please feel free to contact me anytime with questions you may have. I look forward to speaking with you about the possibility of working together in the future.

Respectfully,

Hitomi Lamirande
Executive Director, Osawatomie Chamber of Commerce