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The \$175 Question | by Kim R. Wallin, CMA, CFM, CPA

“When I pay my IMA dues every year, just what do I get for my \$175?” This is a question I often hear from members. I believe IMA offers value many times greater than the dollars-and-cents price of the dues. Though

the rewards of your membership are many and varied, we can put them into three general categories: member discounts for goods and services, certification, and professional development opportunities. This month and in upcoming columns I will consider each in turn.

Right now, let’s just get the dollars and cents out of the way to show that even if you use only a fraction of the discounted goods and services available, you just can’t lose. So many members don’t realize how easily they can recoup the cost of membership and go on to save some real money. For example, come to this year’s Annual Conference, and you will get your \$175 back when you pay the member vs. the nonmember price. If you want to rent a car while you’re in Chicago, get the special IMA rate from Hertz or Alamo.

Visit the Lifelong Learning Center. You can buy Surgent’s Essential CPE Collection, a \$3,000 value, for \$189.95. Nonmembers pay \$395. How much do you spend for insurance every year? IMA has put together a comprehensive package of plans and benefits with a variety of carriers, and I’ll bet you could save significantly by using just a couple of them. We have auto and homeowners’ insurance and small business plans. Medical plans include cancer, disability, long-term care, excess major medical, high-limit accident, in-hospital plan, and a Medicare supplement insurance plan. There is also a plan that discounts prescription drugs, and our term life insurance

rates are comparable to those offered by the AICPA.

You can also save money at the office with discounts from UPS and Airborne for shipping services and from Penny Wise Office Products for supplies. For your personal finances, MBNA offers a special rate on its credit cards, CDs, and money market accounts. If you find yourself in the job market, you can help yourself to the free services of the IMA Job Bank.



KIM R. WALLIN

I encourage you to learn about the benefits to which you are entitled and to make use of them. You will benefit, and it shows vendors that we are a group worth catering to. For the details and a complete list of goods and services offered, consult our website at www.imanet.org. And check back now and then because we are always finding more

benefits for our members.

As you can see, in terms of the dollars-and-cents cost of membership, you get more than your money’s worth. But, as professionals, we aren’t here to save money. We are here to enhance the value of ourselves and our profession. The real rewards of IMA membership are found in certification, education, professional development, networking, chapters and councils, and in having a voice in your profession. In upcoming articles, I will examine how all of these provide real value beyond the price of membership.

As always, I can be reached at kwallin@imanet.org. Keep in touch. ■