



Message from the Chair



IMA Moves to Become More International

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In June 2004, IMA received a great influx of international members who were interested in using the old format of our examination in their quest to become Certified Management Accountants (CMAs). We received more than 10,000 applications for membership during that month. Now, a year later, we continue to deal with the issues associated with becoming more international.

Among them (and this is similar to our domestic situation) is how to retain our international membership and attract even more members. In the United States, we have a chapter and council system that helps bring the IMA message to the local level. Overseas, we have no such structures in place. In fact, our strongest connection with our international IMA members is over the Internet.

As our international membership grows, we need to be able to provide additional services for them. This could include offering translations of our products, such as the CMA exam and *Strategic Finance*. And we could offer educational programming or products similar to those we have in the United States. We are

taking a few of these steps now to gain some experience in the marketplace. As part of our strategic planning process, we are holding our first international conference, which will be in Dubai, UAE, on May 7-11, 2006, at the J.W. Marriott. If this first one is successful, we will continue to hold similar conferences at least annually in various locations around the globe.

In addition to these plans, two members of the IMA staff spent about three weeks in China recently, talking with various members and governmental representatives to begin the process of establishing a more formal relationship with our members in China. This includes exploring the possibility of establishing

an IMA chapter in a major city in China. We still have to negotiate some governmental barriers to this, but we are hopeful there will be a satisfactory agreement soon.

There are many IMA members who believe we should concentrate on our domestic markets only. While I am a product of the chapter and council system, I know that we can't look at a solely domestic market if IMA is to become the thought leader on management accounting issues on an international scale. To me this is an important value proposition for all of our members—domestic, international, certified, or not. It is through this recognition that IMA will grow.

To this end, IMA recently hired Steve Townsend as our vice-president of Member Services. Steve has an extensive background of 20 years of service in the association arena. He has worked with chapters and members domestically and internationally. If you have an idea that you think might be of value, please let Steve know. His e-mail address is stowndsend@imanet.org.

If you have any comments you would like to share with me, please contact me at csmith@imanet.org. ■