



Sharing Some Global Perspectives

IMA® is growing globally, and the CMA® continues to gain more worldwide recognition. But it's also good to recognize that even as our world expands, it's also contracting as we become a more close-knit community.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of belonging to this remarkable association is the opportunity to interact with other members from around the globe. IMA's global membership base has changed dramatically in recent years, with nearly 30% of our members now residing outside North America. As IMA Chair, I'm acutely aware of how important it is to understand our global growth and what it means strategically for all aspects of the organization and the CMA (Certified Management Accountant) certification. I consider any chance to gain perspective through dialogue and interactions with our members from different nationalities and cultures among my most valuable—and insightful—leadership experiences.

Through IMA's online communities, it's easy to reach out to members from many regions of the world on a daily basis if we so choose, but nothing replaces face-to-face interaction and personal

conversation. A few years ago, I was able to participate in IMA's Global Conference in Dubai, where professionals from the Middle East, Asia, and Africa gathered to exchange ideas and learn more about management accounting. That experience opened my eyes in many ways and helped me see various ways our members view IMA and the CMA certification.

Just this past November, I spent several days in Europe and met with long-term, new, and potential members. I particularly enjoyed meeting with the chapters in Germany, Switzerland, and Turkey and hearing about their plans and their successes in attracting new members and new CMAs. (There's been a lot of success in our European CMA candidate pool, with Europeans receiving five of the nine recent CMA medals for high exam scores.) During my visit, I also met with several potential new business partners that are interested in learning more about our CMA certification, as well as existing university partners that offer CMA review courses.

Although we've seen a great deal of global growth in just the past few years, IMA has been a global organization for a long time. As many multinational

corporations work diligently to understand expanding worldwide markets, IMA must do the same. My recent travel experiences reinforced my belief that, despite cultural and language differences, many of the challenges faced by management accounting professionals around the world remain the same. Whether it's in the United States, Europe, the Middle East, or China, growing organizations need accounting professionals to understand how critical management accounting information is to their key business decisions. Any multinational organization will benefit from accounting professionals who can think strategically and beyond the local viewpoint to a more global perspective. Our CMA certification is a definitive way to demonstrate that ability because it provides a key differentiator for accounting professionals who are ready to work in an international setting.

For example, during my recent European trip, the members I talked with were very clear that they view the CMA as a business passport that validates that they have the skills to work across cultural boundaries. We consistently receive the same feedback from

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our members in North America and Asia. The European members I met with clearly articulated that becoming a CMA also demonstrates a mastery of English, particularly the ability to communicate accounting and finance information in English. These members were very clear about how highly that is viewed in the workplace—both in terms of potential and in direct correlation with higher salaries. They also highly value their chapter meetings as a way to receive continuing professional education in English and as an opportunity to network with other global-minded colleagues.

IMA recognizes the strategic importance of our presence in major regions of the world, particularly those that recognize the value of a global certification such as the CMA. The cachet of the CMA continues to deepen, providing us with pride in our accomplishments and an awareness that considerably more opportunities still await.

As always, I welcome your comments at srichtermeier@imanet.org. **SF**