

By Jeffrey C. Thomson, CMA



IMA's Strategic Plan: "Bold and Beautiful"

Delivering value for members is one of the key aspects of IMA's strategic plan for 2012-2015.

Whether it's more products and services, increased membership, or more CMAs, everyone has a stake in the plan.

Dear IMA Member:

You may think that I'm writing about a daytime TV drama, but I'm addressing the strategic plan approved in June by the IMA® Global Board of Directors. In his Perspectives column (see p. 6), IMA Chair Brian McGuire describes the robust and collaborative business process we go through to develop our rolling four-year (2012-2015) strategic plan, which commences this month at the start of fiscal year 2012. He also references IMA's three primary strategic goals: to create superior member value, to increase the penetration of the CMA® (Certified Management Accountant) exam, and to grow membership.

IMA has taken a portfolio approach to achieving its strategic goals. The "portfolio" consists of IMA's four global regions, each of which includes a representative/physical office with staff: the Americas (office: Montvale, N.J.), Europe (office: Zurich, Switzerland), Middle East (office: Dubai, UAE), and Asia/Pacific (office: Beijing, China).

This approach simply means that, based on competitive conditions, risks, and opportunities, investments are made to optimize short- and long-term returns. It allows for healthy conversations about how best to manage the portfolio to deliver "returns" that benefit members and the profession.

IMA's strategic plan is bold because it invests aggressively in future growth and helps address marketplace risks (e.g., the recently announced joint venture between the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) in the U.K. to launch a new international management accounting designation). I'll talk about member value in just a moment. But why should the "average" member care about more CMAs and/or more members? More CMAs—trusted business advisors—means that investors are better protected with enhanced organizational capabilities to deliver sustainable value in the areas of financial planning and analysis, risk management and internal controls, strategic costing, and more. More CMAs also increases the level of recognition in the market and hence the value of the certification. More members

means that IMA has a louder collective voice on campus, in companies, and in advocating for positions important to our profession, such as small business taxation and convergence of global financial reporting standards. Additionally, membership dues help fund value-adding products, services, and solutions for all members.

IMA's strategic plan invests heavily in delivering value: free monthly webinars providing CPE for live events ranging from technical courses to leadership development courses offered by the IMA Leadership Academy; more than 300 relevant courses that offer flexible and affordable online CPE; SMAs (Statements on Management Accounting), practical resource guides on topics such as sustainability, risk management, supply chain, costing, and much more; a growing array of significant member discounts through our affinity programs; access to local services such as educational programs through a growing number of chapters and virtual communities around the globe; and more. We recently launched new chapters in Moscow and Abu Dhabi and a student chapter at Pace University in New York City.

continued on page 61

Top Line

continued from page 8

IMA's strategic plan is beautiful because it ensures continued financial health while investing aggressively to secure and sustain our growth trajectory as the world's leading association focused exclusively on advancing the profession of management accounting. Is that not "beauty" in the eyes of a management accountant? IMA's staff takes seriously its duty to be responsible stewards of monies paid by members to create sustainable value. IMA's four-year strategic plan ensures continued financial health as measured by the strength of its balance sheet, reserves, and cash flow. We are leveraging three consecutive years of operating surpluses despite a very tough global economy.

With its collaborative and focused group of staff and volunteers at the local and global levels, IMA has a unique opportunity to enrich careers, organizations, economies, and societies. This plan delivers on that opportunity.

You'll be hearing more about IMA's strategic plan over the next few months. As always, I welcome your thoughts, questions, or comments. You can e-mail me at jthomson@imanet.org.

Sincerely, Jeff Thomson, CMA
IMA President and CEO