

By Jeffrey C. Thomson, CMA, CAE



IMA's Strategic Plan: What's In It for Members?

Where do you see yourself in the next few years? It's a question that many professionals should continuously ask themselves and one that IMA® takes very seriously.

Dear IMA members,

With your help, IMA has had a successful string of years with strong growth in all areas, which has created a solid launch pad for the future. We are one of the fastest-growing accounting associations, the CMA® (Certified Management Accountant) credential is the leading management accounting certification in the world, and we have expanded globally, solidified relationships with more partners, and have a strong balance sheet and reserves. But while these successes sound promising, why should you care if IMA is financially healthy and growing in membership, respect, and influence around the world?

A Financially Healthy Organization Creates Opportunities

Financial discipline leads to great things for all stakeholders, especially our members. Being financially stable and growing means that we can provide more tangible value to enrich your career with innovative products and services.

Let's look at some examples. A recent IMA educational survey found that financial planning and analysis (FP&A) is one of the most in-demand subjects. In response, IMA developed three courses: FP&A Strategic Planning, Strategic Budgeting, and Forecasting Techniques. For those who couldn't make it to IMA's Annual Conference & Exposition in Minneapolis, Minn., this year, we recently launched a new online program called IMA Live so you can view the professional development and accounting sessions that took place there. In addition to its annual ethics course, IMA leveraged a case study from the *IMA Educational Case Journal* and created an engaging ethics course for a different view on this important topic.

Also, we can provide many products and services free as a membership benefit. IMA's Leadership Academy, for example, builds and enhances members' leadership skills through relevant live, online webinars and programs delivered in person at chapter and council events (both offer NASBA-approved CPE), a mentoring program, and a leadership recognition program. *Strategic Finance* PowerPacks, a combination of articles, webinars, and other resources on

topics such as IT skills and software, internal controls, strategic planning, and risk management, are free for IMA members. We also are able to provide thousands of dollars in scholarships and grant programs each year to help accounting students, doctoral students, and educators pursue the CMA, fund their advanced education, and/or develop research that creates stronger organizations and serves the public interest.

Linking Future Strategy and Execution

IMA's vision is to be *the* resource for developing, certifying, connecting, and supporting the world's best accountants and financial professionals within business. We carry out our vision by living our global core values: respect for the individual, passion for serving members, highest standards of integrity and trust, teaming to achieve, and innovation and continuous improvement. In conjunction with our vision, our goals are to create superior member value, increase the penetration of the CMA exam, and grow membership. Executing these goals flawlessly will result from an unwavering focus on the needs of

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our members, supported by strong internal processes and our capacity to learn and grow.

We will do our best to “walk in your shoes” and continue to be an advocate for issues close to you and your organization. One way is through the contributions of our technical committees to influence standard or guidance setters such as the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB), the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB), the Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and others.

As a leader on the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO), we’ll continue to provide thought leadership by helping develop frameworks and guidance on enterprise risk management, internal control, and fraud deterrence.

And we will promote the management accounting curriculum through programs such as IMA’s Higher Education Endorsement Program, which recognizes schools whose business curricula meet the quality educational standards required to prepare students for the CMA exam. During the past year, we’ve endorsed 16 undergraduate accounting programs globally, including large universities and smaller private schools. These schools are bringing the content of the CMA exam directly to their students by shaping their curriculum to align with the areas tested on the exam, so this program is helping mold the future of the management accounting profession. IMA has more than 10,000 student members globally, so the

potential of reaching them is great.

Where will IMA be in the next few years? We see ourselves growing with confidence and integrity, never wavering from our core values, and keeping our members’ needs—your needs—top of mind. We look forward to our journey ahead with you.

I always welcome your thoughts. Please e-mail me at jthomson@imanet.org. **SF**

Sincerely,
Jeffrey C. Thomson, CMA, CAE
President and CEO

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