



8430 West Bryn Mawr Avenue
Suite 1000
Chicago, IL 60631 USA
Tel: (773) 867-1777
(800) 444-2742
Fax: (773) 639-3000
apics.org

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From: Eric Schaudt, CPIM, CSCP, Chair-Elect
To: Channel Partner Agreement Taskforce

As we move toward year-end I am grateful for your efforts during the past months. On various occasions I have been asked about the Channel Partner Agreements (CPAs) so I thought it would be appropriate to share some thoughts with you.

What is best for APICS?

The Board of Directors is responsible for evaluating the best direction for APICS and exists for that purpose. We are charged with ensuring that APICS stakeholders are being served in a high quality and meaningful manner. Every year through the strategic planning process, we endeavor to set direction and develop plans and strategies to guide the association to achieve its mission. Our objective is to deliver compelling value to the APICS community, members, affiliates and customers. We cannot do it alone. There are many members, channel partners, affiliates, and customers in North America, and internationally who play a role. The CPAs play into this because they enable us to engage in a discussion of how to best deliver value and commit to delivering it across markets and geographies.

How can the association deliver a consistent, meaningful and quality experience?

To continue growing, providing thought leadership and delivering high quality experiences, services and products, we have to think differently about how we run the business of APICS. APICS will celebrate 54 years in 2011. The longevity of the association is an accomplishment and a testament to our APICS predecessors. How are we going to survive another 50 years? What got us through the first 50 is not, in my opinion, going to get us through the second 50. We need to evolve to meet the needs of the market.

We have already started down this path by changing many things in significant ways. We used to be an educational society but now we are a professional association. We changed our name. We hired a new CEO and charged him with running the association like a corporation. We moved our headquarters and have completely re-staffed the organization. We reorganized the volunteer structure (regions to districts, district directors and managers). These are significant changes that have taken place in less than five years. The change process is ongoing; we have improved APICS, but to meet the market need for the next 50 years, we will have to do more.

So what path must we take? What will get us there?

In my mind the CPAs are a vehicle. They are not the only method but they are an important one. APICS needs to strengthen the delivery and service channels to our members, affiliates and customers. The CPAs help us do that by ensuring consistency of service, setting standards for operations, and protecting the brand.

The CPAs are the way to build infrastructure with the chapters. By formalizing the relationships we will build a strong partnership between the chapters and APICS corporate.

How will the CPAs help us achieve our goals?

The CPAs will ensure to all parties that nothing or anyone is taken for granted, and that there will be no assumptions or unrealistic expectations. They will help us identify and establish mutual values, intentions and expectations. We all share a vision; to ensure our stakeholder's needs and wants are realized. I think you may agree the Chapter Minimum Standards are not enough to help us achieve our goal.

As incoming chair I will be responsible for this process in 2011 and will work hard to ensure it is open and transparent as well as collaborative. We can ensure mutual goals and outcomes are achieved. This will work.