



Where Business Grows and Community Rises.

COLORADO CHAMBER ALLIANCE ANNUAL CONFERENCE • CONFLUENCE • GRAND JUNCTION

40 IDEAS IN 40 MINUTES

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Here are 10 concise, chamber-specific ideas designed for a one-minute-per-idea rapid-fire format. Alternate ideas appear on the final page and could be substituted if a different angle is preferred, or overlap with the other presenters.

IDEA #1

**STOP RUNNING A CHAMBER.
START BUILDING A PLATFORM.**

Think beyond events and membership transactions. Build a platform where business, nonprofits, government, tourism, workforce, leadership development, and community initiatives can connect and move forward together.

TAKE-HOME: Ask: *What can happen through our chamber that could not happen as easily without us?*

IDEA #2

YOUR BUILDING CAN BE A PROGRAM.

In Canon City, the Gateway Depot is more than RGCA office space - it is a visitor center, business hub, meeting venue, coworking and incubator space, event site, and community gathering place. The larger lesson is to rethink every asset you already control or think of assets you could control.

TAKE-HOME: Do not just inventory your assets. Ask what else they could become.

IDEA #3

QUIT SELLING LOGOS. CREATE EXPERIENCES.

Move sponsorship beyond passive logo placement. Give businesses ways to interact, host, activate, entertain, demonstrate personality, and become part of the participant experience.

TAKE-HOME: The best sponsorship inventory is often interaction, not signage.

IDEA #4

**MAKE THE CHAMBER THE PLACE WHERE THINGS
COLLIDE.**

Some of the chamber's greatest value comes from engineered collisions: the business owner who meets a nonprofit leader, the employer who meets a workforce partner, or the entrepreneur who meets the resource they did not know existed.

TAKE-HOME: Measure some success by connections created, not only events held.

IDEAS 5-10

IDEA #5

**IF IT DOESN'T HAVE A WHY,
IT SHOULDN'T HAVE A DATE.**

Chambers inherit programs and events because “we have always done it.” Evaluate each one by mission alignment, staff and volunteer capacity, member value, and financial sustainability - not attendance alone.

TAKE-HOME: *A full calendar is not the same thing as a strong strategy.*

IDEA #6

BUILD A LADDER, NOT A MENU.

Create intentional pathways into deeper engagement: attend, join, participate, volunteer, lead, sponsor, govern. Programs become more valuable when each naturally points members toward a meaningful next step.

TAKE-HOME: *Every chamber activity should have a logical “what's next?”*

IDEA #7

**LET YOUR VOLUNTEERS AND MEMBERS DO
SOME OF THE SELLING.**

Chamber staff will never equal the combined relationship network of a board, committees, Ambassadors, and engaged members. Give volunteers small, specific asks and ready-to-use tools so advocacy and recruitment become a shared effort.

TAKE-HOME: *A tiny ask multiplied across a strong network can produce a big result.*

IDEA #8

**SMALL MARKET DOESN'T MEAN SMALL
THINKING.**

A smaller chamber can still pursue ambitious facilities, leadership programs, technology, regional partnerships, signature events, and new revenue models. Scale the execution to your resources - not the ambition to your population.

TAKE-HOME: *Constraints can force better partnerships and sharper innovation.*

IDEA #9

**BRAND THE IDEA BEFORE YOU BUILD THE
PROGRAM.**

Strong names and clear identities help people understand, remember, sponsor, join, and advocate for an initiative. Branding is not decoration; done well, it forces clarity about what the program is and why it matters.

TAKE-HOME: *If your own board cannot explain the program in one sentence, the community probably cannot either.*

IDEA #10

BUILD SOMETHING PEOPLE WOULD MISS.

The strongest measure of relevance is whether businesses and the community would genuinely notice if the chamber disappeared. Build useful connections, services, spaces, programs, and leadership that become part of how the community functions.

TAKE-HOME: *Do not just build a chamber people belong to. Build one the community cannot imagine being without.*



ALTERNATE IDEAS

You can use these as swaps if another presenter has similar material, or if you prefer a different balance of governance, strategy, innovation, and collaboration.

ALTERNATIVE #1

DON'T COMPETE FOR THE CREDIT - COMPETE FOR THE OUTCOME. The chamber can be most effective when it convenes, connects, and advances the work without needing to own every idea or receive every headline.

ALTERNATIVE #2

TURN EXPENSES INTO ASSETS. Look for ways to convert recurring costs, underused space, staff capacity, or existing programs into resources that generate mission impact, revenue, or both.

ALTERNATIVE #3

DESIGN FOR THE PEOPLE WHO AREN'T SHOWING UP. When the same people attend every program, ask who is missing and why. Adjust format, timing, price, location, or experience to lower the barriers to participation.

ALTERNATIVE #4

REGIONAL PROBLEMS REQUIRE REGIONAL TABLES. Workforce, housing, tourism, infrastructure, and economic development rarely stop at municipal boundaries. Chambers can create neutral tables where multiple communities work on shared challenges.

ALTERNATIVE #5

DON'T ADD A PROGRAM UNTIL YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'LL STOP DOING. Innovation without subtraction creates staff burnout and diluted impact. New initiatives should come with an explicit capacity decision.

ALTERNATIVE #6

YOUR CHAMBER SHOULD LOOK DIFFERENT FIVE YEARS FROM NOW. A chamber that serves a changing economy should evolve with it. Build systems, governance, revenue, technology, and programming with enough flexibility to keep changing.

PRESENTATION READY HEADLINES

1. STOP RUNNING A CHAMBER. START BUILDING A PLATFORM.
2. YOUR BUILDING CAN BE A PROGRAM.
3. QUIT SELLING LOGOS. CREATE EXPERIENCES.
4. MAKE THE CHAMBER THE PLACE WHERE THINGS COLLIDE.
5. IF IT DOESN'T HAVE A WHY, IT SHOULDN'T HAVE A DATE.
6. BUILD A LADDER, NOT A MENU.
7. LET YOUR MEMBERS DO SOME OF THE SELLING.
8. SMALL MARKET DOESN'T MEAN SMALL THINKING.
9. BRAND THE IDEA BEFORE YOU BUILD THE PROGRAM.
10. BUILD SOMETHING PEOPLE WOULD MISS.