

Page: Entry Information

Chapter

CAI Central Virginia Chapter

Chapter Size

Large (511-760)

Category

Membership Engagement

Program Name

Coffee with the Chapter

If this was a joint program with another chapter, please list the chapter.

Each question is worth 20 points and will be scored using the following rubric:

(1-5) Poor Didn't effectively answer the question

(6-1) Fair Answered the question

(11-15) Good Answered the question with more detail

(16-20) Excellent Went above and beyond with proven results and visible data

Describe the program and why it fits the category. (20pts)

The chapter's Membership Committee launched Coffee with the Chapter, a casual coffee and conversation meet-up designed to foster meaningful connections and provide an approachable introduction to CAI.

Recognizing that traditional networking or educational events can feel intimidating to newcomers, the committee intentionally designed this program to be relaxed, informal, and pressure-free. The goal was to create a space where prospective members could learn about CAI without the expectations often associated with formal industry gatherings.

The chapter encompasses a larger geographic area, so meet-ups are rotated across different parts of the region to ensure accessibility and reduce travel barriers. Events are intentionally not sponsored to maintain a neutral, information-focused environment free from outside marketing influences. This ensures attendees experience an unbiased and welcoming atmosphere where they feel comfortable asking questions and participating in conversation.

Each event is attended by multiple chapter leaders, including representatives from the Board and various committees, who are available to answer questions and provide insight into the value of membership. Attendance is tracked through a complimentary registration system, allowing the Membership Committee to follow up with attendees after the event and guide them through the membership process. Guests are also offered the opportunity to join during the meet-up if they prefer to complete registration in the moment.

The program has proven to be highly cost effective, with the most expensive event costing just \$74 to host.

How did this program meet the mission and vision of the chapter and CAI as a whole including fostering an inclusive environment that reflects and serves our diverse community? (20pts)

Coffee with the Chapter advances CAI's mission by removing barriers to entry and creating a welcoming environment for volunteer leaders, managers, business partners, and those simply curious about the industry.

By intentionally avoiding sponsorships and keeping the format informal, the program ensures that participants feel supported rather than marketed to. The atmosphere is designed to minimize pressure and encourage open dialogue, particularly for those attending their first Chapter-related event.

Rotating locations throughout the region promotes geographic inclusivity, while outreach beyond the industry has expanded visibility. Events are submitted to local free-event listings and shared with area real estate companies, increasing awareness among community stakeholders who may not yet be connected to CAI.

This approach has allowed the Chapter to reflect and serve a broader and more diverse audience while fostering meaningful connections rooted in education and engagement rather than promotion.

What was the impact on the chapter and its members after completing the program? (Growth of membership, financially, public awareness, membership value, better chapter/member relationship, chapter operations, etc.) (20 pts)

Since launching the program in 2024, Coffee with the Chapter has hosted four meet-ups with a total of 61 attendees and an average attendance of 15 to 20 participants per event.

Most notably, the program has achieved a 100 percent conversion rate among non-member attendees. Of the individuals who attended and were not already members, every participant chose to join CAI following the event. In total, 20 new members have joined as a direct result of the program, including four community association boards.

Beyond membership growth, the initiative has strengthened connections among existing members, created opportunities for mentorship, and increased participation from individuals who may not have otherwise engaged with the chapter. We have also seen an increase in committee volunteerism and recruitment, strengthening the established committees and creating opportunities for new ideas.

Provide quantifiable data supporting the rationale for success. Include why this data is significant. (20pts)

To date, four Coffee with the Chapter events have been hosted with a total of 61 attendees and an average participation of 15 to 20 individuals per event. The program has resulted in 20 new members joining, including four community association board memberships, and has achieved a 100 percent conversion rate among non-member attendees.

With a maximum event cost of just \$74, the initiative has proven to be exceptionally cost effective. In addition to these measurable outcomes, the program has expanded outreach beyond the industry through public event listings and partnerships with local real estate companies, provided structured follow-up to guide attendees through the membership process, and established a low-cost, high-impact recruitment model that strengthens overall engagement.

What are your plans to maintain the momentum of this program moving forward? (20 pts)

Coffee with the Chapter will continue as an ongoing initiative supported by the Membership Committee, a permanent part of the chapter's business plan.

Future plans include continuing to rotate locations throughout the region, expanding outreach beyond industry channels, and maintaining the program's intentionally informal and unbiased structure.

Given its proven success and exceptional return on investment, Coffee with the Chapter is positioned to remain a cornerstone of the chapter's membership engagement strategy while continuing to grow participation and expand community awareness.

Supporting documents including flyers, postcards, pictures, videos etc. can be uploaded below. While they aren't required for your submission we certainly encourage it.

Would you like to upload additional documents?

No

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Would you like to share a link?