

L'EXCLUSIF

FCCQ Member Newsletter - Annual Report 2008-2009

Day-to-day FCCQ

The FCCQ is headed by a Board of Directors composed of the major Chambers of Commerce and the representatives of all economic sectors. It is endowed with a secretariat of about 20 people. In order to increase the relevance of the positions it holds, the Federation has created multi-sector committees, formed of both business representatives and chambers of commerce.

THE 2008 CONVENTION

Discussions and tributes

On October 3-6, 2008, the FCCQ held its annual Convention in the National Capital, in cooperation with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. More than 600 delegates were present, including 350 from Québec. Throughout the weekend, the conventioners participated in a multitude of workshops dealing directly with their interests, notably on competition, fiscal matters, manpower, and challenges to SMEs and the manufacturing sector. The FCCQ emphasized the exceptional contribution of both the permanent and volunteer members in its vast network by awarding several prizes to them.

Chamber of commerce of the year



Chamber of commerce and industry of the South-Shore
From left to right: Richard Côté, FCCQ Past-Chair; Lise Caza, President of CCIRS; Madeleine Ste-Marie, CEO; Bernard Grandmont, Treasurer; Michel Labbé, Chair of the Board.

Mercuriades Contest

The Mercuriades contest is a prestigious Québec contest destined at recognizing the know-how of Québec businesses. The Mercuriades turned a new leaf this year by reviewing the number and categories of prizes. Five companies were rewarded on the occasion of their gala evening in front of more than 650 Québec business people.

Prize winner for "Entreprise de l'année"



SME - Bleu Lavande inc. (Eastern Townships)



Large business - Artopex inc. (Eastern Townships)

Our main publications for 2008-2009

- 53 press releases
- 23 open letters
- 13 briefs and studies
- 3 L'Exclusif bulletins
- 5 websites
- 26 FCCQeXpress newsletter
- 80 Radio spots on the CORUS Radio Network
- 30 TV Spots on Canal Argnt
- 2 editions of L'Indicateur FCCQ (regional and sectional)
- The highlights from the majority of our events
- Several documents and brochures for our 100th anniversary

Rendez-vous politiques

The political meetings allow participants to hear our political leaders present their views on the Québec economy and to exchange perspectives with them. The FCCQ had the honour of welcoming both federal and provincial political leaders. Over the year, 400 persons participated in six Political Meetings during the year.



WWW.FCCQ.CA WWW.QUEBECENAVANT.CA WWW.MERCURIADES.COM WWW.FORMATIONFCCQ.CA WWW.LEPANTHEON.CA

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555 René-Lévesque Blvd West, 19th floor
Montréal, QC H2Z 1B1
Tel.: 514 844-9571 Fax: 514 844-0226
Toll-free line: 1 800 361-5019
Email: info@fccq.ca

With its wide network of 158 chambers of commerce, the FCCQ represents more than 40,000 businesses and 100,000 business people involved in all sectors of the economy throughout Québec. The FCCQ strongly supports its members' interests in matters of public policy, thus promoting an innovative and competitive business environment.



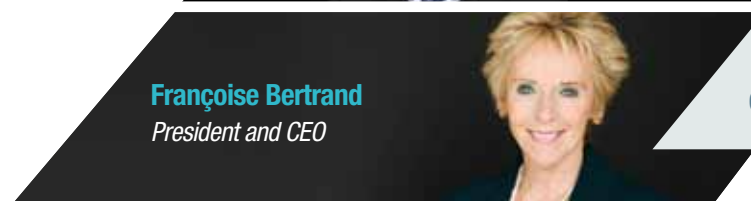
Roch L. Dubé
Chair of the board
2008-2009

Vision

Be a major influencing player to promote a successful, competitive and innovative Québec that addresses worldwide expanding opportunities.

Mission

Defend the interests of businesses in all influential forums by counting on the network of Chambers of Commerce, in order to sustain their growth and increase Québec's collective wealth.



Françoise Bertrand
President and CEO

Our members

If the FCCQ was able to achieve the notoriety and credibility that characterizes it today, it is because it is representative of a wide variety of businesses and activity sectors. The FCCQ is also characterized by its presence, via its network of Chambers of Commerce, in all regions of Québec, which no other organisation can claim. The Chambers and corporate members work actively, in their community, within committees, working groups or FCCQ Board of Directors. That is what provides the Federation with a constant and precious guiding light on the reality that business owners/entrepreneurs experience and on their prospects for development.

The Chambers of Commerce of Québec

The 158 Chambers of Commerce of Québec are at the heart of economic development for Québec and its regions. In local communities, the Chambers act as the business community spokesperson and translate their members' interests into action. They get involved within their community in order to promote an economic development that benefits everyone.

The Chambers of Commerce can be accredited when they meet the high standards of quality service and governance. In Québec, 33 Chambers are accredited. Four new Chambers have been accredited this year.

Chambers of Commerce accredited with distinction 08-09:



Accredited Chambers of Commerce 08-09:



The Federation is 100 years old !

Over 100 years ago, business people from all over Québec came up with the idea of uniting their forces to help each other and better defend their business community interests to influence the public authorities. They were mainly interested in improving the lives of their fellow citizens and the economic progress. Today, the same spirit drives the Chambers of Commerce and the members of the Federation.

After 100 years of existence, we must continue to be vigilant and to mobilise. That is the price we have to pay to make sure the builders' point of view is heard, that their projects will be evaluated at their fair value and that Québec will progress, in a balanced environment where entrepreneurs can contribute to the creation of wealth.

Let's be proud of our contribution to Québec's prosperity---not only for the past 100 years, but for a long time to come.

Corporate members

The businesses that are members companies of FCCQ contribute to our events, to the thematic committee and to the Federation's policy statements. The most active are grouped within the Circle of Partners and the Business Forum. Numerous commercial advantages are offered to them, as well as Influence Market Places (eight this year) which are rare opportunities to meet with leaders of the business world.

Four major issues

In view of the main guidelines adopted in the economic vision Building a successful Québec, the FCCQ set aside four issues on which it is focusing its actions, which are productivity and innovation, manpower, internationalisation and sustainable development.

These vital issues have led the Federation to be more present than ever in the public marketplace, and to intervene on numerous occasions to represent the business community's perspective and to support the growth and economic development imperatives. We have participated in several parliamentary commissions, multiplied the appeals to the governments, been involved in various forums, operated within business groups and taken part in numerous partnership and co-development exercises with the government, and economic, social and community partners.

The FCCQ has indicated its intention to become a compelling organisation in terms of economic development. That challenge has been met. Today, in addition to being present in the media, particularly on the CORUS network and Canal Argent, the FCCQ is a stakeholder in all economic issues that are being debated in Québec. The Québec government consults the FCCQ almost systematically concerning any project that may affect businesses. The FCCQ perspective is valuable and influences its decisions.

1- The growth of enterprises through productivity and innovation

In a joint declaration signed in October 2009, all Chambers of Commerce of Canada asked governments and business people to focus on productivity in order to ensure the growth of the Canadian economy. According to the chambers, the country can be a leader in the global economy, but it is necessary to act now in order to improve its competitiveness and to ensure a strong and profitable economic environment that will benefit all Canadians.

Québec en avant !

In Québec, like in all other national economies, the major economic development projects create wealth and grow the economy. We have often deplored it when public debate has been monopolized by organisations that have a tendency to oppose many development projects. The FCCQ continues to advocate a better balance of information processing for the driving or buoyant projects. The economic perspective must be presented and defended competently.

Launched in December 2008, the www.quebecenavant.ca portal is an information, reference, monitoring and pressure tool; it focuses on the achievement schedule for the major structural projects in each region of Québec and on the true economic benefit. With nearly 2500 individual visitors per month and about 30 projects identified to date, the portal has become an essential tool.

Rendez-vous des gens d'affaires sur les pénuries de main-d'oeuvre qualifiée

In November 2008, the Federation launched an initiative in Montreal that attempted to address the question of qualified manpower shortages in Québec in the form of a seminar bringing together business people as well as representatives from the educational world and government. Since then, a regional tour has been launched in order to feel the pulse of the regions.



2- Manpower

With the aging of the population, the baby-boomers that are beginning to retire and the arrival of workers from all origins, labour issues are crucial for our businesses. Moreover, in a survey it commissioned at the end of 2008, the FCCQ observed that 84% of businesses either already have qualified manpower shortage problems or expect to have some in the near future.

During 2008-2009, the FCCQ continued and often intensified its participation in organisations such as the Commission des normes du travail (CNT), the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail (CMPT) or the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CSST). The Federation did in fact play a major role for the purpose of limiting the increase in the employer contributions that have become necessary due to the poor financial returns from the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec.

By its political interventions, the FCCQ estimates that it has succeeded in making our governments take into account the employers' concerns, particularly in terms of pay equity. The FCCQ also contributed greatly to the conclusion of a three-party agreement (government- businesses - unions), relating to the financing of privately-funded pension funds.



3- Internationalisation

Encouraged by its mandate to promote an innovative and competitive business environment, the FCCQ has been working for several years to develop sustainable business relationships with the United States and Canada.

The United States is our main business partner. About two thirds of exports from Québec are destined for the Northeast and Midwest states. In 2008, exports from Québec represented 51.3% of the gross domestic product.

Trade corridors

Given its small population, exporting is often one of the growth paths for Québec businesses. That is why Trade corridors have been created, particularly in the states of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire. The Québec-Ontario Corridor was created on March 19, 2008.

It is, for example, with these trade corridor partners that the FCCQ has participated in a pressure campaign on the American government in order to have them modify the Buy American Act. The US and the Canadian Chambers of Commerce were at the heart of this movement.

The Québec - New York summit

On November 17, 2008, the fourth Québec - New York Summit took place in Montreal under the Green Corridor theme. The transition towards a green economy, with a low carbon emission, presents business opportunities that this summit was able to bring into the light. In total, 330 persons have registered. Three international agreements were signed at this summit.

Ontario Trade Corridor

An agreement signed in 2008 between the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the FCCQ is aimed at encouraging commercial trade between the provinces, to reduce tariff barriers and to harmonise regulations. Throughout the year, our partnership has allowed us to enlighten our respective governments, particularly with the help of a survey performed among the Chambers of commerce in both provinces. This information proved valuable during the negotiation of the Québec-Ontario Commercial Agreement signed in September 2009.

New Canada-Europe partnership

Since 2005, when Premier Jean Charest started up the idea of creating a new economic area for Québec, of which a significant portion involved the establishment of a new Canada-Europe economic partnership, the FCCQ strongly supported the project. It continues to do so through many activities.

4- Sustainable Development

We will thoroughly address environment and sustainable development in 2010 in the National Assembly and the House of Commons.

Sustainable development is one that meets today's needs, without compromising the capacity of future generations of meeting theirs. Sustainable development is supported by a long-term vision that takes into account the inseparable character of the environmental, social and economic dimensions of development activities.

In order to be well equipped and to intervene adequately on all fronts, the administrative committee has reviewed the Sustainable Development Committee mandate. It is already in progress. The Committee will be the promoter of the economic dimension of the development. One of its specific tasks is to defend the economic interests of businesses while taking the environment and social responsibilities into account; and to be actively in favour of self-regulation rather than coercion. It will also need to analyse the appropriateness and relevance of harmonising with international standards, particularly when the competitiveness of an industrial sector or its exports are at stake.