FRENCH-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HOUSTON

FALL - WINTER 2019

TOTAL'S U.S. AMBITION

VINCENT STOQUART

President & CEO of Total Petrochemicals & Refining USA



HOUSTON TURNING INTO A SMART CITY

BRIDGING FRENCH & TEXAN TECH ECOSYSTEM

FRENCH LIFESTYLE IN HOUSTON

PRODUCED BY THE FRENCH-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HOUSTON

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THE FRENCH AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HAS A NEW PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

I'm deeply honored to give this foreword as the new President of the Chamber of Commerce. I am very thrilled to join your amazing and very dynamic community. The quality of the members, the history of the FACC, and its very successful events are truly impressive and make French savoir-faire and art de vivre shine brightly in Houston. Having settled in Houston in early 2019, I have discovered that this city is rich of huge, business-friendly assets and is far more than the cliché of the energy capital of the world and the NASA Space Center.

Its vibrant economy with a plethora of multinational companies and hundreds of tech startups, its can-do spirit, and Texan hospitality are qualities that deserve to be more well-known. In addition, current initiatives in Houston in the fields of new energies and clean tech, smart city, digital technologies and AI offer great new opportunities to promote French expertise.

You can fully rely upon me to continue the tremendous work performed by President Geoffroy Petit, Constance Bost and the team and to leverage my experience and my contacts in France to help develop new projects in line with your expectations and with Houston's ambition to be a world-class, 21st century megacity.

Franck Avice
President, FACC Houston

French-American Chamber of Commerce

60	5,000+	10
Events a year	Houstonians in our network	Services to support companies

CONTENTS

HOUSTON & SMART CITY

03 HOUSTON'S AMBITION

05 ION, THE TECH HUB

07 NEW WAY OF LIGHTING

08 A BETTER WORLD WITH JLL

FRENCH-TEXAN BRIDGE

11 LAND OF OPPORTUNITIES

13 FRENCH-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

14 FRENCH & TEXAN TECH ECOSYSTEMS

15 FRENCH FOREIGN TRADE ADVISORS

17 EVOLEN'S LEARNING EXPEDITION

19 LOCAL FRENCH EDUCATION

ENERGY

22 TOTAL'S U.S. AMBITION

24 AN AUSSIE STARTUP

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

27 LUNCHEON SERIES

28 TRANSFORMATION IN LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

30 PHYGITAL CHALLENGES

ART DE VIVRE

33 BEAUJOLAIS FESTIVAL

35 FRENCH WINE IN THE U.S MARKET

36 THE TEXAS WINE VALLEY

37 THE MAGIC OF FRANCE WITHOUT LEAVING HOME

38 STORIES OF LOCAL BUSINESSES



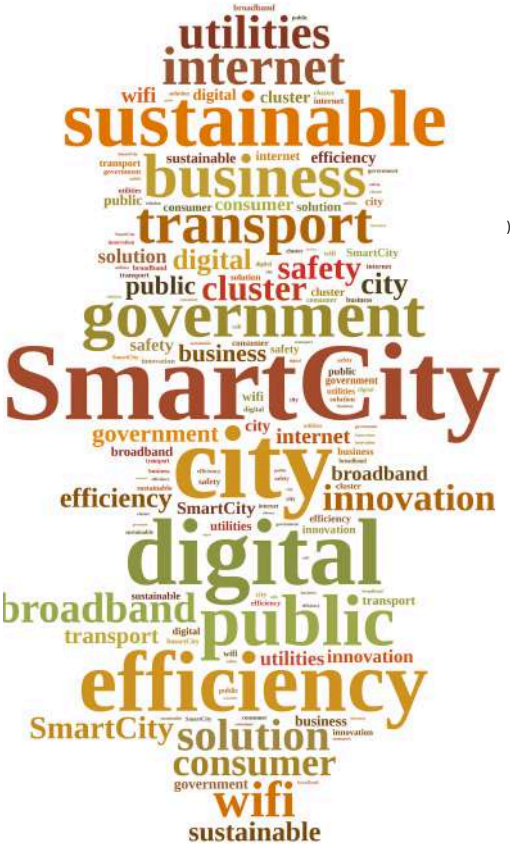
Houston invests in Smart City

HOUSTON'S AMBITION: BECOMING A SMART CITY

INVESTING IN INNOVATION TO TACKLE THE CHALLENGES OF A GROWING CITY

The booming economy and growing population of Houston comes with its challenges: traffic, pollution, flood mitigation, jobs, etc. The city invests in innovative technology to improve the quality of life and safety of H-town.

Houston is one of many cities in the United States with the ambition to convert into a Smart City. Houston uses data and emerging tech to share information with the public, drive economic growth and build a more inclusive society. The challenge remains massive: Houston is becoming more and more populated, which is causing the streets to get busier and parking has become almost impossible. Not to mention the growing risks of natural disasters.



"We must leap, not stroll into the future.We must sprint, not jog. It will be this city that will be the Smart City of the world."

Mayor Sylvester Turner

Houston's government plans to use smart technology to work on 4 major areas, listed below with examples:

- **Transportation**

Intelligent Transportation System, which helps manage Houston traffic in real time and parking analytics will work together to create a more cohesive management of Houston parking and traffic.

- **Public Safety**

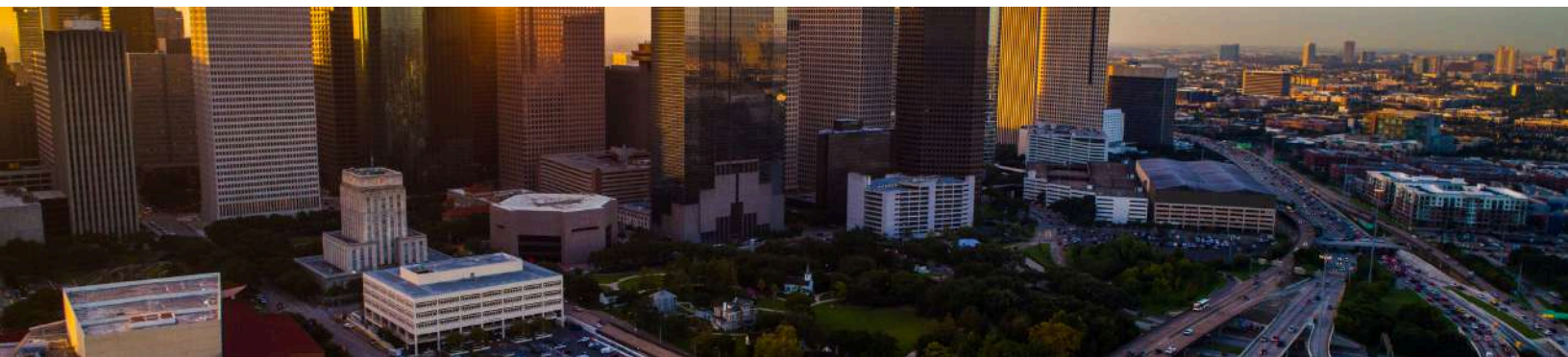
Firefighting drones enables to better assess conditions and identify hazards to support the firefighters.

- **Resilience & Sustainability**

Flood warning system, filtration system and air monitor to ensure a clean air.

- **Citizen engagement**

The city works on several tools to facilitate the access to information and connexions with citizens, as the 311 Chatbot available 24/7.




The Ion

THE ION, THE TECH HUB TO TRANSFORM HOUSTON

Houston's tech ecosystem is growing fast. In just 2019, the city has seen several major incubators open, including The Ion Smart Cities Accelerator, dedicated to transforming H-town.

The Ion Smart Cities Accelerator program, counting tech giants Microsoft and Intel among its primary partners, kicked off in September 2019 in Houston. With a first cohort of 10 startups, the accelerator is aimed at assisting "internet of things" technologies that can be used in cities to improve transportation issues, natural disaster response, and to transform the lives of Houstonians for the better.



The first Smart City cohort of startups has started the Ion program in September 2019

Christine Galib, Director of The Ion Smart Cities Accelerator, explains how the program will support the startups and implement their technology in Houston:

"*Startups in the first cohort will leverage the Ion program, as they tackle transportation, resiliency, and other needs, such as smart regulation of traffic lights, traffic flow, and crosswalk safety, by having the opportunity to develop digital and technology-related products and pilot initiatives in the City of Houston and the Mayor's Complete Community Initiatives.*"

The Ion Smart Cities Accelerator will address the needs of Houstonians by deploying technology into the infrastructure, complementing the Mayor's efforts to connect ideas, people, and communities and making our ecosystem more robust."

COHORT 2019

Aatonomy: promoting safer, smarter driving to reduce pedestrian deaths by building the world's first self-driving city.
AeoShape: providing smarter, faster intelligent big data platform for smart cities, smart campus and smart factories empowered by AI and data fusion.
BlocPower: rapidly greening American cities by increasing buildings' profitability with a modern heating and cooling system.
Gokid: offering an award-winning, parent-driven technology that makes scheduling and tracking rideshares to school, sports, and other activities easy and secure.
Kriterion: generating actionable intelligence predictively to manage and maintain infrastructural and machine assets.
Reality IMT: leveraging machine learning to document, digitize, and display a city's infrastructure assets.
Sensytec: monitoring and analyzing cement to provide actionable intelligence for design, placement, performance, and maintenance.
SlideX: offering a ticketless, secure, and convenient parking solution.
Umanity: applying technology to coordinate and connect citizens and communities in real time to maximize philanthropic impact and resiliency.
Wyzerr: making surveys more like a game and less like a chore to better enable organizations and cities to track KPIs and progress.

NEW WAY OF LIGHTING

HOUSTON WELCOMES CITELUM

Citelum transforms places with an artistic and green approach, enlightening the most prestigious cities and monuments, as the Tower Bridge in London.





Innovative and greener urban equipment lighting

The French American Chamber of Commerce is thrilled to welcome Citelum in Houston! **The innovative company is dedicated to changing the world through lighting and smart technology to create greener, smarter and more beautiful spaces.** Their services for private customers are focused on four areas: experience and placemaking, communications, value-added urban equipment, and consulting services. Citelum doesn't provide just any lighting: their offer consists of turnkey solutions that combine sustainable, affordable lighting with smart technology to transforms spaces. Citelum has worked with corporate offices, industrial sites, retail spaces, hotels, municipalities, and more.

They allow their customers to convert outdoor environments such as plazas, parks, streets and facades into safe, walkable and interesting spaces. Using lighting and projection techniques as a project's backbone, Citelum integrates technologies that respond to their customer's specific goals. These range from illuminated signage and connectivity solutions to electric vehicle charging stations and renewable energy.

The company has worked hard to provide 30 million people with light and services over 3 million streetlights around the world. This goes to show how Citelum is slowly, but surely, transforming the world. Founded in France in 1993, the company has expanded internationally with references in all the continents. From citywide lighting in the metropolis of Dijon, France, to the London Tower Bridge and the BBVA Bancomer Tower in Mexico City, their lighting services convert cities and their spaces into artwork that both visitors and residents can enjoy. These contracts are just some examples of Citelum's international references which include projects in Paris, Prague, Barcelona, Santiago de Chile and Salvador de Bahia. In the US, Citelum has worked (or is currently working) with governments and private customers in New Mexico, Florida, Virginia, Maryland, and Washington DC, among others.



JLL: BUILDING A BETTER TOMORROW FOR THE REAL ESTATE WORLD

BRUCE RUTHERFORD,
INTERNATIONAL MANAGING DIRECTOR - JLL



JLL is a world leader in real estate services, powered by an entrepreneurial spirit. What does JLL do? JLL buys, builds, occupies and invests in a variety of assets including industrial, commercial, retail, residential and hotel real estate. From tech startups to global firms, JLL's clients span industries including banking, energy, healthcare, law, life sciences, manufacturing and technology.

Bruce Rutherford is an authority on the energy industry as he leads JLL's Global Energy Practice Group. His expertise includes tenant representation, lease restructuring, real estate master planning, monetization of real estate and purchase to lease transactions. He applies his knowledge in tenant representation, lease restructuring, and offshoring across insurance, banking, law, energy, energy services and telecom industries.

It is a real honor to interview you today as you've been an active supporter of the FACC for so many years. JLL is a world leader in real estate services. What is your overview of the current Houstonian market?

Bruce Rutherford: The Houston office market is currently 23 to 24 percent vacant. Since 2014 the market has been negatively affected by an abundance of sublease space primarily from the energy industry.

Until recently, Houston had more sublease space than any other city, and only recently passed that superlative on to New York City, whose office market is many times larger than ours.

Houston is once again experiencing positive absorption of office space. JLL research indicates the amount of sublease space should return to normal levels by mid to late 2020, and we expect normal absorption of vacant space to continue, driven by the excellent economy in Houston, in Texas, and across the U.S.

You specialize in the Energy portfolio. Who are your main clients, and how do you assist and advice them?

BR: Our clients ask that we hold their names in confidence, but the majority of companies in the energy industry are clients of JLL nationally and globally. Our client list includes some of the largest companies and ranges to the smallest, including exploration and production, midstream, downstream, and renewable energy companies. Our services range from real estate strategy and transaction management, to facility management, project and construction management and everything in between.

The FACC organized on November 12th a Smart city conference, and you were part of it. How does JLL implement its own smart tools and strategy? What are your best practices and initiaves?

BR: To the world JLL identifies itself as a technology company specializing in real estate. We invest hundreds of millions of dollars each year in new technology to the benefit of our clients and to improve our own efficiency.

A major focus of that investment is on making buildings more intelligent in supporting the tenants' use of the space to achieve their business goals, and intelligent management of energy demand and supplies is a big part of that. We sometimes partner with other firms specializing in energy management technology to deliver solutions in this area to our clients. We literally have hundreds of initiatives that deliver smart solutions for clients, such as our recently-announced JiLL app, which provides a user-friendly smart phone app that allows tenants to manage lighting, heating & cooling and other typical office functions, and will also book a conference room for you. Another example is power over ethernet technology for lighting which has applications to accurately measure real-time occupancy in a building, providing information needed for more effective management and sustainability.

Do you think Houston is becoming a more responsible city with its "clean energy" ambition?

BR: We have seen in JLL's Houston clients a growing commitment to sustainable business and energy solutions. I believe this trend within our client base is representative of society as a whole, and I believe the City of Houston will likely follow that trend, and are aware of certain specific initiatives that certainly reflect that.

JLL was honored with a platinum award by the National Business Group on Health for providing one of the best workforce health and employee well-being organizational initiatives in the nation. What special programs did you implement?

BR: JLL received the award for its progressive and holistic well-being strategy with proven results. Our well-being programs include a proven diabetes reversal initiative that helps employees with weight management and lifestyle changes to improve or eliminate their condition. They also include a Health Champion network of more than 250 volunteers that host a wide range of activities including meditation courses, flu shot events, subsidized running events, health education classes and more. The firm's Health Rewards Program awards employees up to $725 per year for meeting biometric screening targets, attending an annual preventative doctor visit and completing a fitness challenge, among other activities. JLL also provides gym discounts, standing desks and several other well-being workplace benefits.

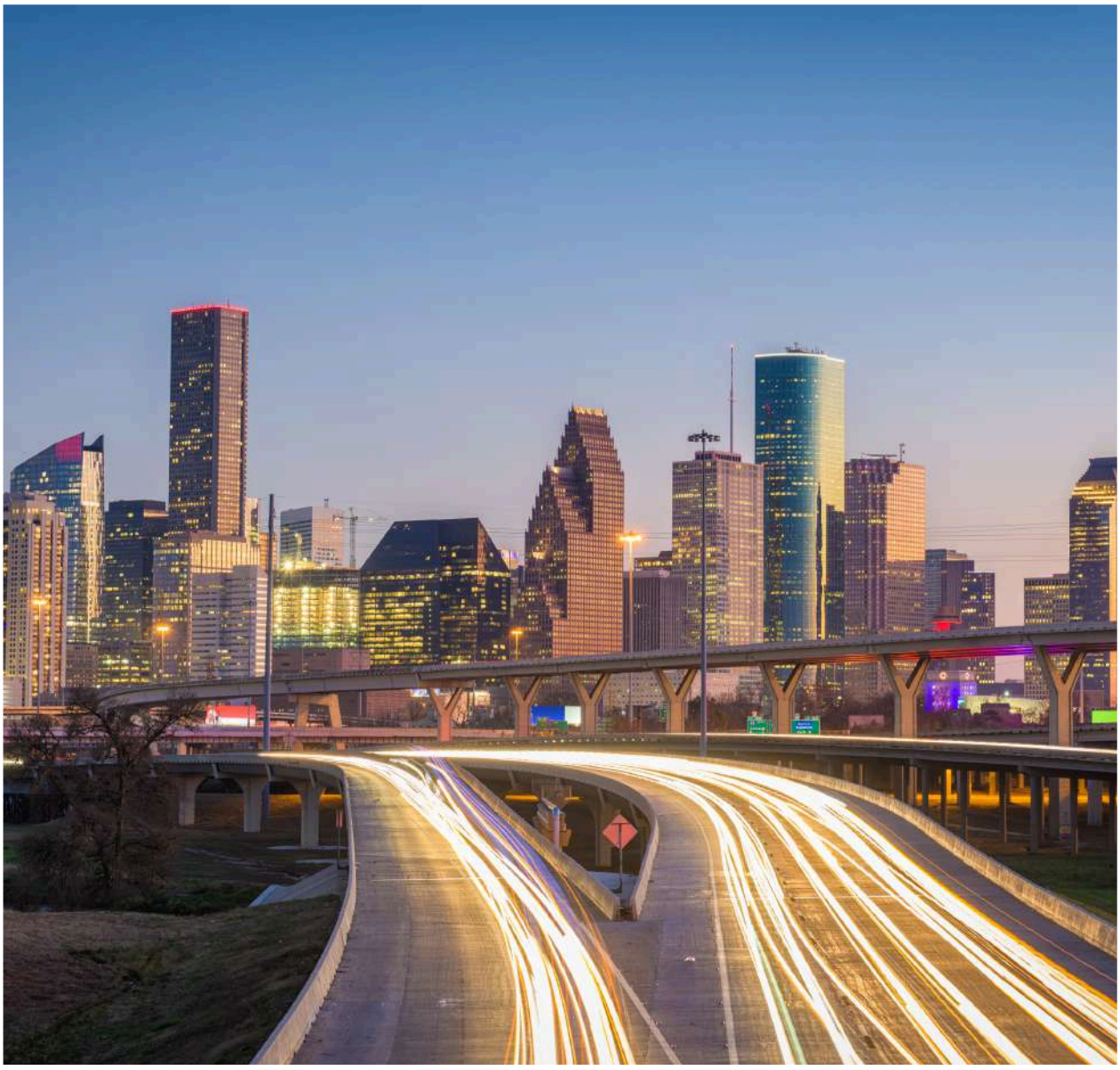


What are the biggest challenges for JLL in the next five years?

BR: The real estate industry continues to consolidate into a smaller and smaller number of larger and larger firms. JLL is a world leader in this industry, and as we grow larger, now over 93,000 employees globally, we work hard to use technology to maintain a responsiveness to our clients and a nimbleness in the marketplace that is more characteristic of a smaller company. Continuing to innovate and to maintain an advantage over our competitors is a constant challenge. The only thing constant is change.

Finally, tell us more about how JLL supports the FACC. Does this partnership help you grow your business in Texas and in France?

BR: We strive to contribute thought leadership from those areas in which we have unique expertise or perspective, and we provide research support in those areas from our extremely large global research organization. Also, of course, as sponsors we continue to financially support the mission of the FACC, which we value and embrace.



French-Texan Bridge

TEXAS, LAND OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR FRENCH COMPANIES

OVERVIEW BY PASCAL HELWASER

The French economy is well represented in Texas with major French companies having established their US headquarters here (Total, Air Liquide, Vallourec, and Engie to name a few). With over 60,000 employees, French companies are the second largest foreign employer in Texas. However, opportunities for French entrepreneurs and companies in Texas are still underestimated back in France.

The Texas economy is the second largest in the US (its GDP represents 8.7% of the national GDP) and if it were a sovereign country, it would be the 10th largest economy in the world by GDP ($1.775 trillion), ahead of Canada.

The Texas economy has two major specificities: the strength of its natural riches which represent over 10% of the state's wealth and the vitality of the manufacturing industry which contributes to 13% of the state's GDP. Today more than ever, Texas is the leading oil producer with close to 5,0 MBOED (which is a higher production level than Iraq or Kuwait). In the last 15 years, with the Shale Revolution, the production of crude oil has almost quintupled. Today, Texas represents 41% of the national oil production and hosts 30% of US refineries. It is also the first producer of natural gas with close to 27% of the national production and thriving growth prospects. 75% of the petrochemical industry is based in Texas because of its natural resources. Since 2010, over $200 billion in investments have been made in the chemical industry, mostly in Texas, stimulated by the abundance and low prices of natural gas.



Pascal Helwaser
Economic Counselor in Houston
Regional Delegate for the Economic Department of the French Embassy

The state of Texas is not just a gigantic drilling field but also a truly diversified industrial power. It concentrates 9% of the national production of manufactured goods and produces more than Ohio and Michigan combined, two states that are renowned for their industrial strength. In addition to activities related to the energy industry – with 24.2 GW of installed wind capacity as of 2019, Texas is by far the largest producer of wind power in the US. The strengths of Texas are the high-tech companies like Dell, Texas Instruments, AT&T (all have their headquarters located in Texas), as well as the transportation and logistics industry, which is based in Texas due to its central geographic position (for example, the headquarters of American Airlines is located in Dallas).

Texas is also at the forefront of the medical industry. The Texas Medical Center (TMC) in Houston is the largest medical complex in the U.S with over 20 hospitals and dozens of world-class research centers in the fields of cancer and neurology. Despite the growth of the oil and gas industry in the last decade, the Texan economy has never been so diversified: in the 1980s, 20% of the GDP and 5% of jobs were based on the energy sector, compared to only 2,5% today. Thanks to these various strengths, Texas is the largest state exporter of goods and therefore an economic zone that is open to international business.

Although the economy of Texas used to be cyclical – the 1986 recession was an aftershock of the oil crisis – it is now defined by its long-term dynamism.

Since 2000, Texas' economy has grown 2.9%, compared to 1.9% for the US and has only been surpassed by North Dakota's and Utah's growth rates. The growth of Texas' economy has even increased since 2010 to 3.2% annually, consistently 1 point higher than the national growth rate. Nevertheless, the vitality of the Texan economy is still closely correlated with the price of energy, which has a ripple effect on all things, both positively and negatively. According to a study by the Federal Reserve of Dallas, 1/10th of US growth can be linked to the development of shale oil, which is rooted in Texas.

In the short term, the outlook seems positive for the Texan economy. After a significant increase in 2018 – the growth rate was 3.2% and the job creation rate grew 2.3% – the economic activity continues to be favorable despite some constraints from the job market. The unemployment rate is at a historical low (3.4% in July 2019), and companies often face a talent shortage which ultimately hampers their growth. Nonetheless, in the first quarter of 2019, Texas GDP grew 5.2% (annualized), driven by record production of raw materials. The employment rate is expected to grow 2.6% in 2019, still at a rate well above its long-term trend.

The French economy is well represented in Texas with major French companies having established their US headquarters here (Total, Air Liquide, Vallourec, and Engie to name a few). With over 60,000 employees, French companies are the second largest foreign employer in Texas. Given the potential of the Texan economy and its 28 million inhabitants, there is no doubt we can do better!



The French American Chamber of Commerce is a member driven non-profit organization that fosters strong economic relations between Houston and French companies through high-level networking, knowledge sharing and commercial services.

FRENCH-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

SERVICES SUPPORTING OUR MISSION

How we support our members

TAILORED BUSINESS SERVICES

We provide services to support our members in their business endeavors in Texas and in France, fostering companies' implantation and growth in both markets, and helping to navigate in the local business community. Our team proposes tailored services to meet each member's needs.

Services:

- Market research
- Set-up support
- Business development
- Recruiting services
- Marketing and advertising

KNOWLEDGE & INNOVATION

Through our network, our members gain access to sources of business knowledge by exchanging views with the best professionals in industry. Our conferences and targeted networking events give access to experts and provide industry trends and benchmarks.

Services:

- Conferences, workshops and forums
- Learning expeditions
- Access to startup ecosystem
- Targeted networking

OPPORTUNITIES FRANCE-TEXAS

We foster business opportunities in France and in Texas, highlighting Texan business opportunities in France, supporting partnerships, and supporting Texan companies going to France.

Services:

-Communication on Texas in France

-French-Texan partnerships with clusters and incubators

-Events showcasing French business strengths and opportunities

- Support for Texan companies in their business endeavors in France

Any questions, reach out!

contact@facchouston.org

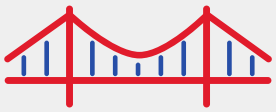
Our Ambition for our members



Be your best partner to start or grow a business in Texas



Provide targeted networking opportunities and some of the best conferences



Be a Bridge between France and Texas

FRENCH TECH HOUSTON

BRIDGING THE FRENCH AND TEXAN TECH ECOSYSTEMS

Marc Garbey, President of French Tech Houston, leads the creation of an entrepreneurship program dedicated to French entrepreneurs which will launch in 2020.

A program dedicated to accelerating growth!

A selection of 10 to 15 French startups will join the French Tech Houston program and discover the Houston ecosystem through 3 major industries: Medtech, Smartcities and Digital & Security.

The goal is to provide an efficient immersion experience in the heart of the innovation hub of Houston, help them understand the American business model, and develop potential contacts with incubators and industries.

Partners such as Station Houston, Rice University and University of St Thomas will take part in the program and will provide a series of mentorship opportunities as well as workshops and site visits.

This initiative, sponsored by the French government and locally by industrials such as TechnipFMC and Corys, and institutions such as CCEF, will bring real value to local industries which are looking to meet startups and discover what they have to offer.



Marc Garbey is the current President of French Tech Houston and founder of Orintel. Marc is a Professor of Surgery, Institute for Academic Medicine. His projects currently include real-time operating room intelligence systems to improve efficiency and trainee competency.

French Tech Team in Houston



Constance Bost, along with Marc Garbey, fosters the development of the local community and develops dynamic opportunities in Texas for our French startup champions.

A strong team of entrepreneurs and experts leading the initiative:

Marc Garbey, founder Orintel
Charles Rosmorduc, CEO Corys
Céline Tranquillin, IoT expert
Jean Maynier, co-founder Kpler
Marie-Hélène Ben Samoun, Partner BCG, leader in digital O&G
Jacques Cinqualbre, founder HOPI Médical
Michel Izygon, CTO Tietronix

Community lead:

Aurore Ladeveze

Startup Ecosystem in Houston at a glance

TMCx
RAISED ACROSS 77 KNOWN INNOVATION INSTITUTES NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BUSINESS ACCELERATOR PROGRAMS IN THE US

Mass Challenge
LAUNCHED IN 2010, EXPANDED INTO HOUSTON AS OF 2019

UH
LAUNCHES $2M FACULTY RESEARCH FUND WHICH WILL PROVIDE GRANTS TO DEVELOP AND TEST INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY PROTOTYPES

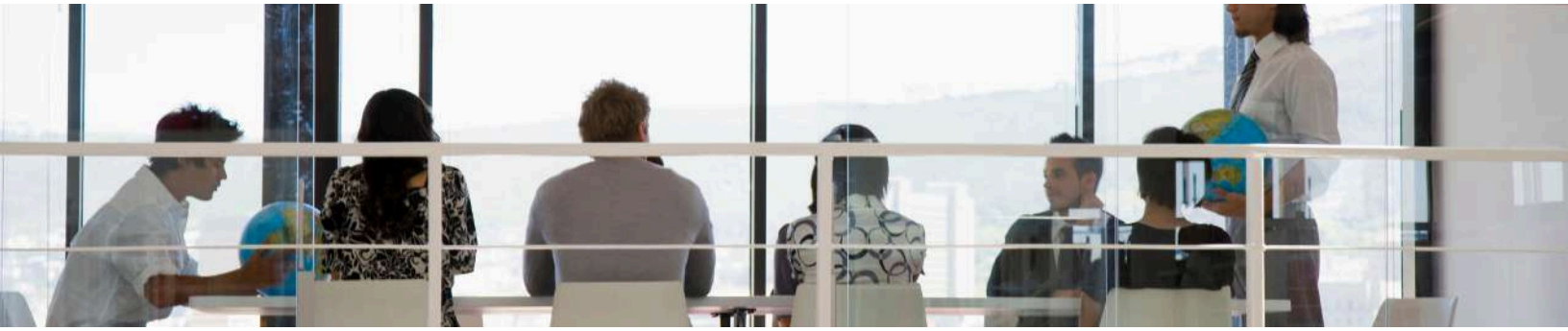
Amazon
BRINGS 25,000 SQ FT AND 150 NEW JOBS IN HOUSTON.

$250.8 m
RAISED BY HOUSTON IN VENTURE CAPITAL FOR Q2

+150%
INCREASE IN STARTUP ACTIVITY SINCE 2008.

FRENCH FOREIGN TRADE ADVISORS

EXECUTIVES SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURS



For more than 120 years, 4,500 business people and experts in the international domain have been promoting France's development abroad. Present in every region of France and in more than 150 countries, the Conseillers du Commerce Extérieur de la France (French Foreign Trade Advisors or CCEs) voluntarily share their experience working for the development of France. They carry out concrete actions on a daily basis in partnership with public and private players who have a role in promoting and supporting the internationalisation of French companies. Appointed by the Prime Minister, CCEs are vested with four missions by the public authorities. Florence Kosmala is the President of the US Southern Chapter.

THEIR MISSIONS

ADVISING PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

CCEs inform decisions made by public authorities through their regular participation in strategic council meetings of the government and regions and with foreign embassies to which they send their analyses, opinions and recommendations on international trade or specific market issues.

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES

CCEs support businesses in their international development through the long-term monitoring of structured projects or in a more limited fashion through operational advice or by facilitating relationships. CCEs also contribute to the modernisation of the support mechanism for foreign trade.

TRAINING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

CCEs raise young people's international awareness by sharing their experiences at higher education institutions or by imparting know-how in the context of specific actions.

PROMOTING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF FRANCE

CCEs promote France's assets and facilitate investment decisions across France through contacts they enjoy with business leaders and economic authorities in the countries where they operate.

150
COUNTRIES

4500
CCES WORLDWIDE

150
MENTORING LEAD CONSULTANTS WORLDWIDE

290
PARTNERING EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHENTS

THE BEST OF FRENCH ENERGY TECH IN HOUSTON

The French American Chamber of Commerce and EVOLEN are partnering to connect innovative French companies with Houstonian firms, meeting their needs for new technical solutions.

EVOLEN promotes the technological and industrial excellence of the French hydrocarbons and new energies industry across the world.

TECHNICAL MISSION TO PRESENT INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

EVOLEN, French Energy Network

EVOLEN network brings together some 1,260 members. Their areas of expertise cover the entire oil and gas sector (exploration, production, storage, refining and distribution) and renewables (offshore wind, geothermal, MRE, CO2 storage, biomass...).

Through its committees, commissions, working groups, events, regional and international actions, EVOLEN promotes the association and its members and supports the dissemination of scientific and technical knowledge and innovation.

EVOLEN promotes its corporate members to foster their industrial and commercial development all over the world. It acts as an enhanced back-up force that supports the international development of its corporate members. The annual turnover of the energy sector in France is estimated at 30 billion euros. This industrial sector involves approximately 1,000 companies and organizations in France. These companies have both maritime settlement and in-land premises, plants or laboratories. Currently 90% of the turnover of this industry is created by export activities.



Partnering with the French American Chamber of Commerce

The technical mission in Houston aims to develop and enhance cooperation with key international companies, either IOC, NOC or engineering firms. The main goal will be to exchange ideas in order to build partnerships with major stakeholders of Oil & Gas and renewable energies.

As a major city in the energy sector and a strong innovation hub, Houston is the perfect place to do so.

The expected result is the exchange of information about ongoing projects and, hopefully, strong cooperation between EVOLEN's members and Houston-based companies. EVOLEN's primary aspiration is to create powerful and long-lasting links.

For this technical mission EVOLEN is planning to meet with actors in charge of downstream, mid-stream and upstream projects such as Chevron (Tahiti deepwater), Shell (Perdido ultra deepwater) or BP (Mad Dog deepwater).

www.evolen.org

Learn more about the mission: contact@facchouston.org



GEORGES MOSDITCHIAN leads the mission for Evolen

Georges graduated from IFP School, French Petroleum High education Institute, Paris 1975, Geosciences-Geophysics degree, with honors. In 1976, he joined IFP School. In 1980, he was promoted to professor, educating 260 managers, working around the world. In 1984, he was assigned to ELF Aquitaine Company as expert geophysicist. He was then assigned to the Oil & Gas Ministerial Directorate, for engineering projects, covering the whole chain of E&P.

In 1989, he was the French National representative to the European Commission for Marine Science and Technologies. In 1995, he was seconded to GERTH (Elf Aquitaine, Total and IFPEN), as Financial and Administrative VP, where he oversaw 15 European E&P projects within 16 European countries annually. In 1998, he was European Manager, and 2 years later he was International Affairs Manager in IFPEN. In 2011, he joined Evolen, as Delegate for International Affairs.



EDUCATION:
AWTY AT THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY

WELCOME TO PIERRE PUGET, NEW DEPUTY HEAD AND PROVISEUR



As the only school in Houston with both the French Baccalauréat (BAC) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, as well as being accredited by the French Ministry of Education, The Awty International School is one of a kind and plays a key role in our community. Pierre Puget shares his vision, aligned with Awty's traditions of diversity and excellent academic programs.

Originally from Corsica, Mr. Puget has had a versatile, international career working as a Mechanical Engineering instructor, French Navy instructor, and Head of School for three academic institutions. Mr. Puget's perspective provides a fresh outlook on Awty's interculturality and educational system. "It was an easy decision to come to one of the best schools in the world," Mr. Puget said.

"In January, I took a tour with some student ambassadors. One is talking to me in French, the other in Spanish, another in English, and they say they're working on Korean, Russian, and Dutch. It was clear they wanted to be multilingual. We are all different; we are all in the same school, in the same family. For me, that's our big strength: our school's family spirit."

Despite Awty's two programs (French and International), Mr. Puget felt a strong sense of united community, especially now that Awty has made strides toward its one-school initiative. "I'm a part of this adventure to build that one school" stated Mr. Puget. 'We are the only school in North America, in the world, with these two programs in that kind of one-school situation. It was really important to me to be a part of this adventure."



The Awty International School
Houston

Part of the adventure has included the BAC's recent reform to include more flexibility. There are fewer exams, and the three streams of Literature, Social Sciences, and Science have been eliminated. Before their final year, students will choose two majors and two minors. The final BAC grade will not be fully dependent on exams, but will also incorporate academic results from their last two years in high school. "It's going to be easier for students to choose the way they want to study because it's more open," added Mr. Puget. "It will allow students to have more choice and will allow us to be closer with the two programs."

Mr. Puget believes Awty's BAC, IB, and French Ministry accreditations serve as the perfect basis to build and improve upon the school's educational system. In 2019, 100% of Awty graduates passed the BAC, and 94% passed the IB. By taking advantage of this combination, Mr. Puget hopes to select valuable aspects from each program and create an ideal model unique to Awty's diverse student body and interdisciplinary framework.

From Mr. Puget's newcomer perspective, it is clear Awty's cultivation of culture and education encompasses the school's spirit. With many factors that distinguish Awty from other schools (diversity, rigorous academic programs, and celebrated traditions), Awty truly stands out. The welcoming atmosphere brings together students from around the globe and sends them out to change the world, carrying the spirit of Awty with them.









Energy

VINCENT STOQUART

PRESIDENT AND CEO OF TOTAL PETROCHEMICALS & REFINING USA
COUNTRY CHAIR FOR TOTAL IN THE UNITED STATES



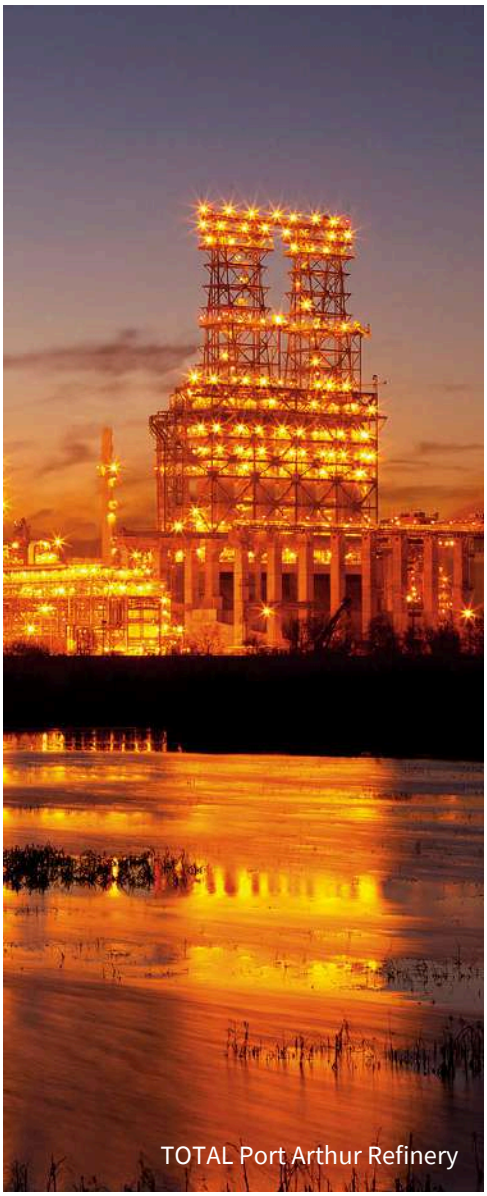
Total has made a series of ambitious investments in the Houston region – most recently with the purchase of Woodlands-based Anadarko's African LNG assets from Oxy and the construction with partners of two new petrochemical units.
Vincent Stoquart, a Belgian native who joined Total 21 years ago, recently arrived in Houston to take the helm of Total Petrochemicals & Refining USA, Inc.
He is also Country Chair of Total in the United States. He is therefore the face of the French global energy major, which is present across the entire energy value chain and has clear ambitions to take advantage of favorable market conditions and a strong pool of local talent to further grow its business.

You very recently moved to Houston to become Country Chair of Total in the U.S. What are your first impressions of the city?

Vincent Stoquart: I moved to Houston in August so I am still in the discovery stage, but I would say I have been struck by how welcome people make you feel here. Another first impression is the constant buzz in the city. It is a very dynamic and growing business environment. Things move at a fast pace. You see it in the energy industry and of course in the rest of the city with home construction and all types of road works everywhere. On a more personal note, it's been a great relocation for my family. I am happy to offer my kids the possibility to live in a truly multicultural environment and attend a school that will give them the best of the American culture while keeping a connection with our francophone roots. I am a Belgian working for a French company in the United States, so this diverse background is important to me.

Total has been very active in the United States in recent years with a series of acquisitions and big projects. What is Total's strategy in the United States?

V.S: It's a very exciting time for Total in the U.S. Our company has been present in this country since the 1950s, but we have substantially increased our investments in the last four years.
We made acquisitions in cleaner energy fuels and in liquefied natural gas (LNG). We are on track to become the largest exporter of U.S. LNG by end 2020. Upstream, we took the operatorship of our Barnett shale gas asset, and we have several projects in the Gulf of Mexico. Downstream, we are expanding our petrochemicals business in Texas with two important projects built with partners in Port Arthur and Pasadena.
We now also have representative offices in Washington D.C. and San Francisco. With a footprint in more than 20 states, we can truly say that we are present from sea to shining sea!



TOTAL Port Arthur Refinery

Total says it wants to become the responsible energy major in the world. How do you translate this ambition in Texas and the rest of the country?

V.S: Our ambition is to provide reliable and clean energy to as many people as possible, and this focus on climate concerns is integral to our global strategy. Here in the U.S., we are growing our business in natural gas – the lowest-carbon fossil fuel. We expanded our LNG portfolio in the Gulf Coast region and invested in Clean Energy as part of our drive to develop new uses for natural gas. We believe that plastics recycling also offers new opportunities for Total's future. We have a Technology Center just outside Houston, in La Porte, where our engineers contribute to a worldwide innovation effort to produce thinner and stronger plastics to extend the lifetime of the products made with them. Hutchinson, a Total affiliate with a dozen lab and manufacturing sites across the United States, makes high-performance plastics for our customers in the auto and aerospace industry. By using lighter-weight plastic, we can help them reduce fuel consumption and, by extension, their carbon footprint.

As a major oil and gas employer, with a large footprint across the country, how do you drive your efforts regarding societal commitment?

V.S: At Total, we believe that growth can only be sustainable if it is shared. So, we strive to be a responsible employer for our 7,000 U.S. workforce. Many of our employees are based in or around Houston, and some of them have been with the company for more than 40 years. We see them as our greatest strength and genuinely care about them – through the good and the bad times, such as industry downturns or events like Harvey. We also help support the communities our employees work and live in. Right after I moved to Houston this summer, I joined 80 Total employees for a volunteering shift at the Houston Food Bank. We filled bags of food that at-risk kids receive in school to take home for the weekend. I was very impressed by their state-of-the-art facility, which is huge, modern and organized like clockwork. This is one of several local organizations that we want to support because they make a real impact in the lives of Houstonians.

TOTAL DAY OF ACTION:
Every September, Total employees in Houston celebrate ***Total Day*** by taking time from work to volunteer before meeting up for a big BBQ lunch at Sam Houston Park in downtown. This year, more than 150 staff gave time to fill 2,000 bags for the Houston Food Bank's Backpack Buddy program and read to students of a local elementary school. They also helped clean up the Buffalo Bayou Park, and re-potted 800 trees through Trees for Houston.





THE ALLIANCE TO END PLASTIC WASTE
Total is a founding member of the Alliance to End Plastic Waste, which was established in early 2019 by a number of companies from across the plastics and consumer goods value chain. The Alliance's goal is to offer solutions to eliminate plastic waste in the environment, particularly in oceans, and promote the recycling of plastics as part of a circular economy.

At the FACC, our mission is to help French SMEs and startups to develop their businesses in Texas. How do you work with these small businesses?

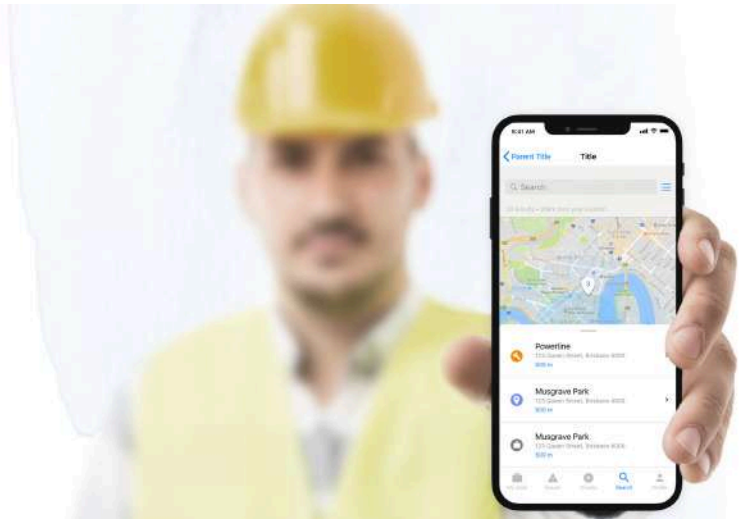
V.S: This is another aspect of our societal commitment. Our operations in the U.S. support small businesses near our facilities and create thousands of direct and indirect jobs. One of Total's core values is Pioneer Spirit, so we support innovative businesses in several ways. Total Carbon Neutral Ventures, our venture capital arm in San Francisco, invests in start-ups developing innovative technologies and solutions that help companies reduce their energy consumption or the carbon intensity of their activities.

In Houston, we recently sponsored the Disruptive Energy Program, organized by Business France and start-up incubator The Cannon. Total typically supports these kinds of programs that strengthen French-American business relations and foster the development of applications and services around energy – leveraging Artificial Intelligence, modeling, machine learning and digitalization.

STARTUP SUCCESS STORY

REDEYE: SCALING UP IN THE US WITH A WEB SAAS SOLUTION





RedEye is an Australian scale-up, making waves in the global asset management space with cloud and web SaaS solutions, RedEyeDMS and RedEyeWFM.

In 2012, the founders of RedEye were working as engineers on a mining site in Queensland, Australia.

They faced a problem that frustrates engineers around the globe: they couldn't find or validate the correct data to complete work. Proprietary software restrictions, technological constraints, antiquated process and legacy licensing agreements made it nearly impossible for asset owners and operators to collaborate with a "single-source of truth".

This sparked the idea for the world's first purpose-built cloud-based drawing management solution for asset Operations & Maintenance. RedEyeDMS was developed with their first client, global resources company BHP Billiton, providing control and visibility over their engineering data and drawings to improve safety and productivity.

In 2015, the world's largest asset owner, Macquarie Capital, invested $4M in RedEye's growth. Backed by an amazing team of investors, partners, and clients around the world, RedEye has gone from local to global, and start-up to scale up.

RedEye clients include Snowy Hydro, BHP, Alinta Energy, SA Power Networks, Transurban, Queensland Children's Hospital, New Plymouth District Council, as well as Southern Nevada Water Authority, which controls the Hoover Dam. Together with their clients, RedEye manage over $200 billion of the world's assets.



Shaun joined RedEye in 2018 to lead the North American Energy expansion and set up a Houston office. For over a decade he has been working to bring innovation to the industry, having worked with companies such as Devon, TECO, BHP, Hess and Accenture. While in an innovation role at BHP in 2015, Shaun worked on a "Connected Operations" project where he piloted the use of new innovations to redesign traditional processes for field operations and engineering.

RedEye was one of those tools. After a few years of setting up a global PMO and IT consulting, Shaun was excited by the opportunity to join RedEye full-time and lead their energy practice in North America.

More info: https://redeye.co/



Career Development

BOOST YOUR SKILLS, GROW YOUR NETWORK.



CAREER & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT LUNCHEON SERIES

THE FRENCH-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ORGANIZES MONTHLY LUNCH & LEARN WORKSHOPS ON VARIOUS TOPICS. HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES. JOIN OUR NETWORK TO ATTEND!



How to thrive in uncertainty: Building an unshakable success mindset
Véronique Eberhart
Personal Development & Success Coach at JoyousLiving



Build your Brand and Start your Business in the USA
Jean-François Bonneté
Owner & President at BCI



Develop your communication skills & Deliver difficult messages
Marie Maitre
Communications Advisor at Total



Career Coaching
Lilian Davenport
SHRM- SCP, SPHR, Managing partner at EndView Solutions



How to pitch anything to anyone
Chris Westfall
Keynote Speaker, Author and Business Coach



Diverse, Disruptive and Digital Leadership Fernando Sanchez-Arias
Business and People Strategy Executive, Author, Advisor, and Coach



From Chaos to Clarity: Decision Framing for Project Management
Decision Analysis Expert and President of Decision Frameworks



Create a killer Linkedin Profile
Nicole Van Den Heuvel
Director of Center for Career Development at Rice University



How to reach potential customers without feeling pushy & intrusive
Catherine Brown
VP Sales at Extrabold



Hire the best candidate & Retain talents
Frédéric Fehner
Managing Director USA at Anotech Energy



Manage Performance with Objective and Key Results (OKR)
Paula Sacks
SVP Communications & CSR Officer ENGIE



Organizational Change Management: implement a successful program
Maggy Wooden
IT Organizational Change Management Manager



Developping your Business Plan
Arlene Hernandez
BBVA Advisor

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THE TRANSFORMATION IN LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: THE TAILORED EXPERIENCE

BY CHRIS WESTFALL

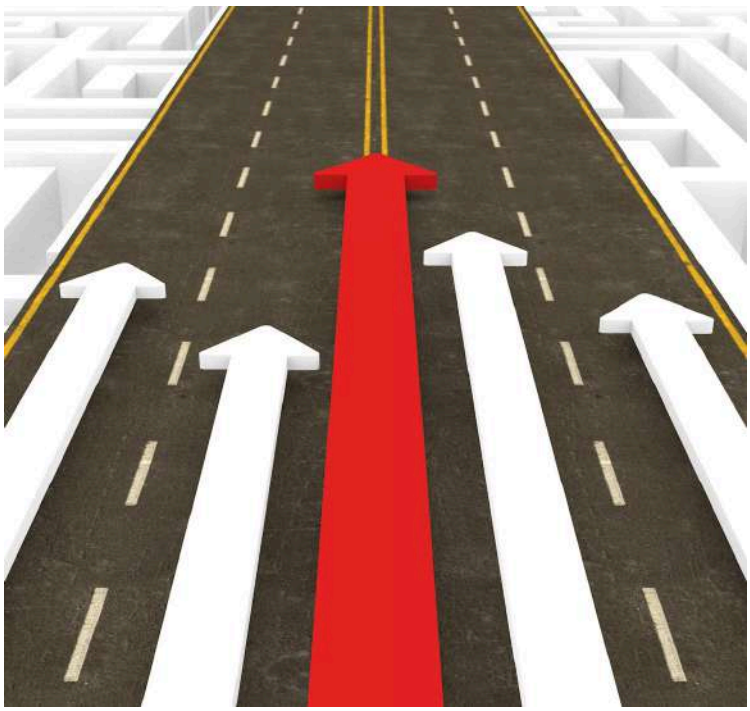
Powerful and personalized leadership training is becoming the new currency for attracting and retaining employees. A culture of career growth now matters more than money: Glassdoor says that 65% of Millennials consider culture over salary, and The Ladders echoes this trend: 61% of employees prioritize career growth over pay.

In the current economy, finding the right people is job #1. Keeping them requires inventive learning and development solutions (in L&D, "development" is really short for "career development"). Creating a total experience package, from on-boarding to the C-suite, is the new focus for savvy HR departments.

Employees are demanding a culture that fosters growth - and top employers are delivering bespoke development experiences as the differentiator that matters more than the paycheck.

While your software firm may not compete for customers with the engineering company across town, you are both competing for the same high-tech talent. Your leadership training, culture and compassion are under consideration in a tight job market. And the need to differentiate, based on leadership growth, is creating a transformation across multiple industries.

Employees are hungry for the leadership coaching that can advance careers, influence cultures and impact customers. Experiential learning is the only way to really get that done. Because information on leadership is everywhere - but studying leadership isn't the same as delivering it. WDHB has run offsite leadership events for 30 years, primarily in Europe, and they've recently been expanding in the U.S. They have pioneered "Learning Expeditions" - tailored and curated events that bring together a diverse group of leaders, offering experiential learning opportunities to global organizations.



One Size That Doesn't Fit

"Taking an online e-course called 'Leadership Jazz,' isn't necessarily going to get you into the C-suite. Or keep you there," says Alana Vaughn-Phillips, an executive with WDHB in Denver. Not that online training is bad - she's making a careful distinction between leadership experience and skills-based training. Annemie Ress, a former Global HR Director at Skype and founder of Purple Beach, agrees. "New generations aren't into what is proposed in terms of e-learning, by most learning management systems (LMS)."

"We deliver programs in a shared way," Alana explains, "where leaders see that their company cares about career growth firsthand." By bringing diverse employees together in unique, bespoke environments, the company facilitates a new experience around leadership. A big part of the learning, according to Alana, is peer to peer collaboration. At WDHB, camaraderie and connection is central to the overall experience.

Employees With Options

But what about learning and development expense, when employees take that experience and go elsewhere? According to Gallup, 72% of Millennials report greater engagement when clear performance goals are established. Those goals need to include what the organization is doing, as well as what the employee is doing, regarding advancement. A career path has to be a two-way street.

"When you create a unique shared experience, that's what drives loyalty," according to Vaughn-Phillips, "even among employees who leave. Because, when you create powerful and unique leadership development experiences, often those employees come back. Your chances are higher [for retention] when you deliver programs that inspire evangelists within your organization. These employees build your brand and your reputation - regardless of where their career might take them.

Chris Westfall



Chris writes about the changing nature of the leadership conversation, and how communication creates the connections that matter. Recognized as the U.S. National Elevator Pitch champion, he's an international coach to businesses and entrepreneurs around the globe. He's helped raise over $100 Million in capital, launching dozens of businesses and coaching my clients onto Shark Tank, Dragons Den and Shark Tank - Australia. As a keynote speaker, his clients include Fortune 500 giants, international non-profits, technology, real estate, financial institutions and hundreds of high-growth businesses worldwide. The publisher of seven books, his latest is called Leadership Language (Wiley) - the follow-up to the international best-seller, The NEW Elevator Pitch.

"Industry leaders like Google and Heinz offer exceptional experiences - from onsite massages to wellness training to free food. But you don't have to be a famous-name company in order to attract the best and brightest. Investing in innovative programs for experiential learning is easier than you might think - and facilitating these retreats can be the first step to elevate your team members.

Are You Experienced?

Leadership is something that must be experienced in order to be delivered - that's why most online leadership training programs don't work. The key is to create a tailored program for your employees - one that's not designed around an online curriculum, but one that focuses on the individual team members.

Top companies realize that leadership training isn't about the guru at the front of the room. If you want to know if your leadership development program is working, don't look at the sage on the stage. Look at what the participants are experiencing. And measure your progress.

Survey the teams that work for these leaders. Track participant's promotions and responsibilities. Show the organization that there is a path that works for people who perform. Let current and prospective employees know that you have a plan for their growth. Because leadership development is the new paycheck. Make sure you're ready to trade in that currency.

PHYGITAL CHALLENGES

BY FERNANDO SANCHEZ - ARIAS

Those of us who are committed to our personal and professional evolution, seek to be up-to-date, having the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that allow us to quickly and effectively adapt to volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous conditions. Not being up to date, not being skilled at handling the new or being flexible to learn is an easy and direct recipe for personal and professional failure.

One of today's biggest challenges is the digitization of our physical reality. Robotics, and the Internet of Things (IOT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR), among many other technologies, are quickly transforming the way we think, learn, feel, act, work, interact, and enjoy life. Are these technologies not also transforming the way we lead our teams and organizations no matter the business we are in?

Many of us are increasingly exposed to a digital dimension. We've gone from turning a phone's disc to making a call pressing buttons, and from there to tapping the screens of smartphones that follow our instructions to make our life easier. Today, the interaction with the electronic and digital equipment that surrounds us at home and at work is no longer through the touch of our fingers, leaving room for voice command. We are already no longer "touching", but instead "talking" to give instructions to the digital equipment around us such as smartphones, tablets, home appliances, and vehicles. Google Home, Alexa, and Siri are just a few of many interfaces that allow frictionless human-to-technological interaction.

Our social interaction is affected by electronic devices that have been setting the pace of conversations and actions among friends, family members, colleagues, and clients. Faced with this, it is vital to know how to balance the so-called "phygital" reality, a word we use inspired by the term "phygital"used by experts in digital marketing to reflect the combination of the customer's physical and tangible dimension in stores and in the use of their products with the digital and virtual dimension through websites or apps accessible through their devices.

This "phygital" reality comes with challenges for those who are not open to learning and leading team using new technologies. Even those recognized as connoisseurs and early users are challenged, given the speed of the digital transformation.



How can you cope with the changes in this digital transformation?

Here we share three simple but powerful actions that, without distinction of age, profession, occupation or industry, can help to successfully face the challenges of the "phygital" reality:

- **Learn and try avidly:**

Read passionately, subscribe to blogs like Seth Godin's (seths.blog) and digital magazines about the impact of changes on work and social services such as Wired (www.wired.com) and MIT Technology Review (www.technologyreview.com). They allow us to know what is emerging. Daring to go to stores or fairs to test and use the new equipment and applications helps not only to know what exists but how we can effectively use it.

- **Receive and give reverse and cross-generational mentoring:**

People of one generation can learn a lot from those of other generations. Each generation has something to contribute and something to learn from other generations. Being a mentor to one or more people from other generations and being mentored by a person of another generation helps you keep up with changes and at the same time value and capitalize on the experiences that each person has.

- **Join networks and associations:**

Being part of professional update networks and groups such as the Junior Chamber International (www.jci.cc), LinkedIn groups, chambers of commerce such as the French-American Chamber of Commerce (www.facchouston.org), professional associations such as AMA (www.amanet.org), and ATD (www.td.org), helps us to have access to what is happening locally and globally.

In times of change, our humility to learn and our courage to change is essential to successfully face the phygital challenges, mastering new technologies while maintaining the humanity of our interactions.

Fernando Sanchez-Arias



As a business and people strategy executive, author, advisor, and coach, Fernando has more than 20 years of experience leading, designing and facilitating learning experiences in cultural and cognitive diversity, digital leadership, cultural intelligence, innovation, learning, and national/organizational culture; for Fortune 100 companies, large national and multi-national enterprises, universities, chambers of commerce, and professional associations.

He has built business alliances, conducted keynotes, and facilitated learning sessions and coaching interactions in more than 70 nations for more than 10,000 people from more than 100 countries.

Currently serving as Chief People Officer and Head of Learning, Diversity and Innovation of CLICK Institute, a Washington DC-based think tank, Fernando was the Chief People Officer of The Home Depot's Global Custom Commerce, an e-commerce division and digital innovation hub of the major multibillionaire retailer. Fernando was part of the Work-based Learning Leadership Executive Program offered by the Wharton School and the Graduate School of Education of the University of Pennsylvania, where he obtained a Master of Science in Education and is currently writing his doctoral dissertation. He is a former board member of the Association of Talent Development (ATD) and a former world president of Junior Chamber International (JCI).

He is the author of "Learning to be a Dolphin in a Sea of Sharks", a personal and professional leadership book



Art de Vivre

BEAUJOLAIS 2019

RENDEZ-VOUS AT THE UNION STATION ON NOVEMBER 21



Come strike out at the best French Food and Wine Festival in town! The Beaujolais Nouveau Festival is an evening dedicated to celebrating and experiencing the French culture and its delicacies. Step into the shoes of a Frenchman, taste premium French wine and true French cuisine from more than 30 of the best local restaurants , and enjoy delightful entertainment all night long!

Beaujolais Wine: Its Secrets

Do you know the secrets behind Beaujolais Wine? Beaujolais nouveau wine was initially created in 1951 in the Beaujolais region, north of Lyon, France.

This French wine is unique in its production. It is bottled and sold within a year of harvesting the grapes, hence the term nouveau. The wine is made with Gamay grapes and is fermented for a few weeks only. The resulting wine is fresh and fruity, creating a delightful taste.

Today the wine is enjoyed all around the world, from here in the United States to as far as Japan. Different traditions accompany Beaujolais depending on where it is most popular. In Japan, they love the wine so much that they bathe in it! Here in Houston, we have our own traditions, no baths involved. Instead we host our annual French gourmet Food and Wine Festival!

A French Food & Wine Festival in Houston

After two successful Beaujolais Nouveau editions at the Astorian with “Speakeasy in Paris” in 2017 and “La Vie en Rose" in 2019, we decided to play bigger!

2019 will inaugurate the famous Union Station at Minute Maid Park! Immerse yourself in the French culture and lifestyle "à la française". Bid on over 100 amazing auction items, hit the dance floor with our dance performers and enjoy a fashion show with Neiman Marcus showcasing the best of French designers for the occasion!





FRENCH WINE IN THE U.S MARKET

BY SEBASTIEN RAMUSCELLO

The wine market and wine industry are growing exponentially in Texas along with a flourishing restaurant and food endeavor. In Houston, for instance, the culinary scene has been fueled by a great level of eclecticism and diversity in the population (Houston is ethnically very cosmopolitan), attracting great wine professionals and Chefs from all over the U.S and the world to implement wine programs and menus that have been held in the highest regards and rewarded with nationally recognized awards.

French wines are a big part and have always had a big presence in the market with internationally recognized regions such as Bordeaux, Burgundy, Champagne to cite the most notorious. We have already seen however, a growing interest in less recognizable, but equally fascinating wine regions such as the Loire Valley, Jura, Savoie and Roussillon, just to mention a few. There is a definite generational shift in the approach to buying and making wine. The new trends lean towards more artisanal, smaller productions with a concerted effort in implementing sustainable farming without the use of any synthetic products while intervening less in the cellar with chemicals and additives, in essence a more natural approach.

We are in the midst of exciting growth and substantial changes in the wine industry, facing challenges that are multi faceted. Climate change has had a big impact in the approach in terms of agriculture and adjustments that need to be made along the way. The latest economical challenge has been the recent application of high import tariffs on French wines to the U.S market that has created a good level of anxiety and skepticism on many levels in the industry.

Lastly, I would like to say that I am very grateful to be part of this endeavor, as I was born and grew up in France and have lived in the U.S for the past 25 years. It is an immense opportunity to represent French wines abroad as wine encompasses so many aspects of life beyond the transactional core of its commerce.

Sebastien Ramuscello works with Serendipity Wines, which represents wines from around the USA and the world and distributes them to specialty markets, wine shops and restaurants throughout Texas.
We emphasize terroir-based wines that reflect the winemaker's dedication to quality and uniqueness, chosen with care from the old world and the new. Serendipity Wines' vision is to build a business that allows our customers, suppliers and employees to explore cultures, share stories and better connect through a thoughtfully curated portfolio of wines and spirits from across the globe.
Serendipity cultivates and maintains lasting partnerships by providing an elevated customer service experience. We are dedicated to bringing the world closer by delivering great terroir to your table.







Sebastien Ramuscello
Portfolio Specialist - Serendipity Wines

THE TEXAS WINE VALLEY

When you hear the words "wine country", you might immediately think of California. However, Texas has its own reputable wine country as well!

In the heart of Texas, in Hill Country, you can find over 50 wineries that make up the Texas Wine Valley. Spanning an area over Fredericksburg, Austin, and San Antonio, Texas Wine Valley has enough space for both the grazing cattle iconic to the region, and for the best wineries Texas has to offer. The beautiful countryside covers an area that exceeds 9,000,000 acres.

The Texas Hill Country Wineries is a group of wineries that have come together to ensure that both visitors and the wineries themselves have a great experience. Established in 1999, the group began with 8 and has slowly grown to over 50 wineries in Texas Hill Country. They have created 5 wine trails, guaranteeing an amazing wine tasting experience.

Today, visitors can visit 4 of the trails: Wine Lovers Celebration, Wine & Wildflower Journey, Texas Wine Month Passport, and the Christmas Wine Affair. So how does one get to enjoy the fruits of Texas Wine Valley?

If you live outside of Texas, the first thing is to get on a plane to Austin, Texas. Once in Austin, rent a car (or take your own) and start planning your trip. Look at wineries closest to you or with your favorite wines or follow a pre-planned trail. Mark them on a map and get driving! If you are coming as a family, do not worry. Certain wineries are kid-friendly, including but not limited to: Messina Hof Hill Country, Sister Creek Vineyards, and Blue Lotus Winery.

The Texas Wine Valley is another feature that makes Texas so great, so make sure to add it to your bucket list. Before you know, Texas wines will rival those of California and maybe even France!







FRENCH COUNTRY WINES

EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF FRANCE WITHOUT LEAVING HOME

For over 10 years, the wine importer French Country Wines has developed relationships with winemakers throughout France, from small family-owned and artisanal wineries known in France as "Vignerons Independants who are truly involved in sustainable agriculture.

Can you tell us more about you and your background?

Jean-Philippe Guy: I was born and raised in the restaurant industry. My parents have always owned restaurants in France and here in Houston. I'm originally from Clermont-Ferrand in Auvergne, but I've been calling Houston home for close to 38 years. After working in the restaurant industry for 25 years, working with French wines seemed like a natural progression. About 7 years ago, I was approached by original owners Tim & Phyllis Smith to help them develop the wholesale side of French Country Wines. After a successful partnership with them, I bought them out in March of 2018, and I became the sole owner.

What is your opinion of the French Wine market (US and Texas)?

JPG: There has always been a very large demand for French wines in the US and notably in Texas. Houston is home to a diverse crowd that is well travelled. French wines means of course, Bordeaux and Burgundy, but in the last few years, more more wines of smaller appellations in the Languedoc and Rhone Valley have proved to offer very good values at a price point that appeals to consumers. Over the last few years, rosé wines, especially from Provence, have gained a lot of popularity in Houston. Rosé is easily one of the most popular - it pairs very well with different ethnic foods and, of course, the weather. It is no longer a summer drink, and it is now enjoyed year long.

What do you like about your job? What are your ambitions?

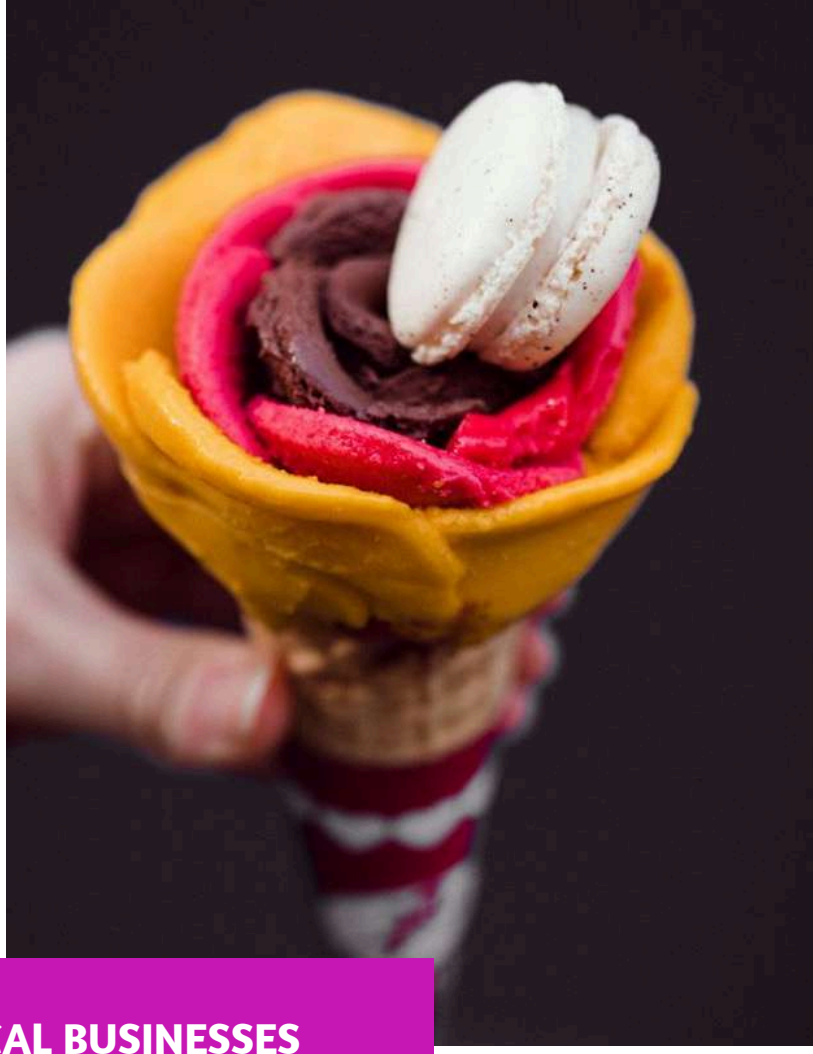
JPG: I'm extremely fortunate to have a job I love and happy to go to every morning. I meet people of all walks of life, from the small vineyard owners to the high-end executives. Best of all, I give a voice to passionate small vineyard owners who would not have one without my help.



What is your favorite wine region? What is the Best wine that you would recommend ?

JPG: I really favor the Rhone Valley- so many different styles in such a small area. Wines can be fruitforward, barnyardy, or sometime even austere, but they're always so terroir-driven. You can just look at the vineyard to see what's growing, and most certainly find it deep in the bottle. Domaine Rouge Bleu in the southern Rhone Valley in Sainte Cécile makes a small batch of 100% old wine Grenache- called Lunatique. The wines are on average 100 years old, and they only produce about 1200 bottles each vintage. Yields permitted in the area are about 45hl/h, but the vines are so old it gives them about 15hl/h- so only about 1/3. The name has a double meaning- first you have to be a complete Lunatique to even consider making wines at such small yields, and then the wine is made based on the lunar calendar; therefore cutting, harvesting and vinifying by the phases of the moon. This red is full of dark berries, licorice, and pepper. It would pair wonderfully with roasted lamb and even barbecued meat.
Learn more: www.frenchcountrywines.com





STORIES OF LOCAL BUSINESSES

Flo Paris Bakery, Amorino, H Consulting





FLO PARIS: THE ROMANTIC STORY BEHIND

A FRENCH CAFE AND BAKERY IN HOUSTON

This is the story of an immigrant Lebanese family in love with French Food. Love at first sight exists, Samih and Dolly Baaklini confirmed. When they first stepped into Flo Paris Bakery in 2015, they embarked in an entrepreneurial adventure.

Born and raised in Dhour El Choueir, Lebanon, Samih and Dolly Baaklini are the proud owners of FLO PARIS BAKERIES.

With four Houston locations—including Downtown, Rice Village, Rice University, and the original flagship bakery West of the Galleria—FLO PARIS is Houston's own ode to Paris where French cuisine lovers meet, work, eat, and relax.

The Baaklinis acquired FLO in 2015. From the moment they walked through the doors, it has had a special place in their hearts. From Chef George's award-winning macarons, pastries, and exquisitely designed cakes to the bakery's artisan interior and lively atmosphere, FLO's sights, smells, and tastes transport Houstonians to their very own corner of Paris. FLO can also bring Paris to you with their elegant, high quality catering.

"While FLO is a successful business, it is not just a place we own to secure a financial future. It is our chance to add something special to Houston, Texas, the most diverse city in the world," says Samih. "We are proud of our vibrant menu, our courteous staff, and simply providing a place for conversation. There is no place in Houston quite like FLO." say Samih and Dolly.

Having immigrated to the United States in 1976, Samih landed in New York and Indiana to obtain a degree in architecture. In 1995 he moved to Houston, Texas, and established McKinney Construction, an active contracting vendor and partner for the City of Houston. Dolly acquired a degree in Finances and Accounting. The Baaklinis are the proud parents of their son Albert and their daughter Eliane.

For more information about FLO PARIS BAKERIES, including hours of operation, menu, and locations, visit www.floparisbakery.com









AMORINO: THE ROSE-SHAPED ICE CREAM SUCCESS

TASTE OF THE AMERICAN DREAM

Both French and experienced business people, Nathalie and Sebastien Debouzzi decided to leave France to live their American Dream in Houston with their family. They opened Amorino franchise in August 2016. An entrepreneurial mindset, passion and eagerness to success are the three ingredients of their American adventure.

Before opening Amorino in 2016, did you both have different backgrounds leading you to this entrepreneurial adventure?

Sebastien: I started 20 years ago in the commerce industry in France, first as a vendor and then as a multi-franchisee manager in Paris. This background gave me the opportunity to build solid skills regarding franchise management, and it was natural for me to open a business as a franchisee in a new country.

Nathalie: On my end, I was raised as a grandchild of a French baker and pastry Chef. My mother had her own business in Paris as the owner of a French brasserie for more than 40 years. I took my first steps as a kid in this place...I guess this is where everything started. Honoring my legacy as a food business owner was an obvious path.
Today, my husband and I manage a famous ice cream franchise, Amorino. We are in charge of the American network as official trainers for all new franchisees. Our store, located in the River Oak District Mall, welcomes, hosts and trains new Amorino US staff.

Can you tell us more about the advantages and downsides of opening a franchise within the USA?

Nathalie: Settling and living in the USA has always been my dream since I was a teenager. Sebastien helped me realize this dream by bringing up the Amorino idea. In the past, he worked with one of the founders and maintained good relationship with him. The main advantage of Amorino as a franchise is that the concept already exists, and the brand has a good reputation and recognized high quality products. On the other hand, we faced financial difficulties, cultural issues, unexpected expenses, high store rental fees, a totally new legal system to learn, and we were surprised by the lack of "fond de commerce"







What are the main differences between owning a business in the USA and in France?

Sebastien: In the US, people consume more products and have this habit of eating out or grabbing a snack or coffee. It's totally different from France but good for our business! Another major difference is the tax system: taxes in Texas are pretty low compared to France where most businesses struggle. I would also say that the climate in Houston is advantageous for regular ice cream yearning, it is almost summer all the time. Lastly, we own the Amorino exclusivity on the entire Texas territory which is a big competitive advantage. In France we would have to compete with other shops.
Enjoy the Amorino experience: 4444 Westheimer Rd C150, Houston, TX 77027



FOOD INDUSTRY TRENDS

A BRIEF OVERVIEW BY HENRI DE FINANCE



The food industry in Houston is moving fast: what are the trends for today and tomorrow?

The East and West Coast duality is often referred to as the two unique influencers of the new trends, but don't you think the South, and Houston in particular, have a major role to play in this area?

With more than 70 culinary nationalities and 10,000 restaurants, Houston has all the assets to become a world capital of Food Industry. Can you imagine... looking at the Houston population compared to the number of restaurants, almost all of the city can sit at the same time for dinner! But what do we want on our plate?



As Director of Operations of a bakery chain in New York, I was able to observe the trends and developments of this industry. First of all, consumers are constantly looking for new taste experiences and are more demanding and concerned to know what they're eating. Is such a pastry or bread good for their health, low in sugar, rich in proteins and fibers, vegan or gluten free? Then Bakery & Coffee shops are also adopting an eco-friendly approach by reducing paper and plastic consumables among other initiatives. Adopting green practices can also have a positive effect on customer satisfaction! And finally, these businesses are socially committed to supporting local actions in areas as diverse as health, the environment, education, etc ...





Having freshly arrived in Houston with my family, one trend has particularly attracted my attention: more quality, less quantity! I like to remember the following anecdote: I was in a bakery witnessing a customer biting into a croissant, telling the barista: "Oh my God, it's awesome, incredible, you made my day." I understood at this minute that with quality you are offering much more than satiety! This quality mindset follows other current trends: promoting local industry in the supply of raw materials, tracking the quality of the ingredients, developing a qualified workforce and know-how, and most importantly offering customer experience. New stores in Houston are taking this quality direction; let's promote the amazing job they are doing!

Henri de Finance has optimized operations in various businesses over his 12-year career by developing sales, managing production, and controlling costs to continually build profitable organizations. His last experience as As Director of Operations with Choc O Pain Bakery & Café in New York City led him to create his own food industry consulting company, H Consulting, specializing in operations services.



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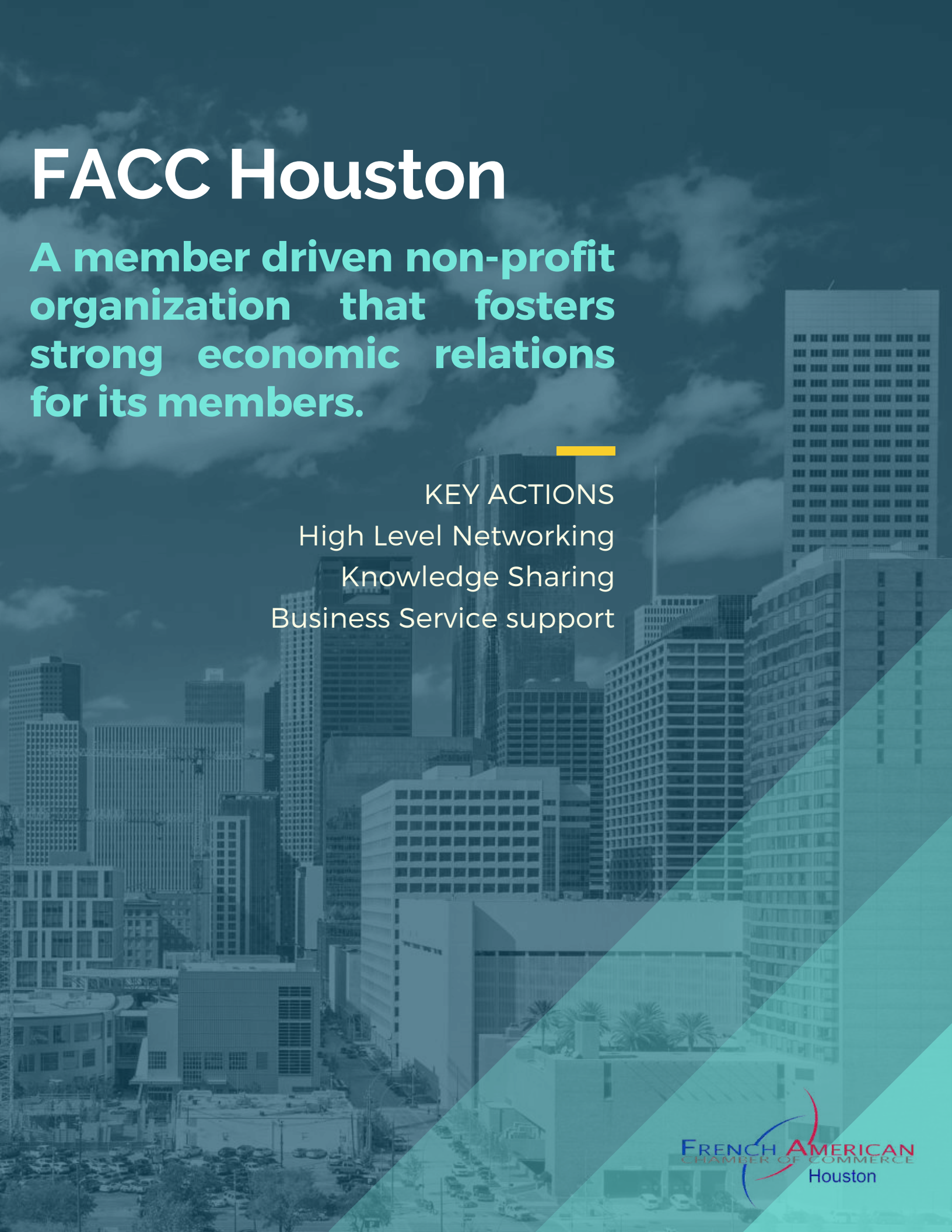
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KEY ACTIONS

High Level Networking

Knowledge Sharing

Business Service support



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