



# 2010 Study: The Relationship Between Chamber Membership and Business Credit Ratings

*Sponsored by the American Chamber of  
Commerce Executives*

**Cortera, Inc.  
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## Executive Summary

Credit and risk have become synonymous with the Great Recession and its tepid recovery. While businesses of all sizes face capital challenges due to the sudden shortage of credit and shrinking demand, small local businesses – the proverbial Main Street – have fallen on particularly harsh times. One predictable side effect of the economic crisis is a slowing of payments between trading partners, as businesses look to hold onto much needed cash to finance their operations. This, in turn, creates additional stress on cash flow. And it has had an adverse effect on the credit scores of these companies, since payment behavior is a primary factor in calculating such scores. The result? Many companies are inadvertently putting themselves in a less favorable credit position at a time when lenders and trading partners have taken on increasingly risk adverse positions.

To better understand the impact of such behavior on their members, the [American Chamber of Commerce Executives](#) commissioned [Cortera](#), a community-based commercial credit bureau, to produce a study on the businesses that make up ten regional chambers of commerce. The detailed findings reveal that, while not immune to such stress, **chamber members consistently pay their bills in a more timely manner resulting in better credit scores (629 vs. 557) than U.S. businesses, as a whole.**

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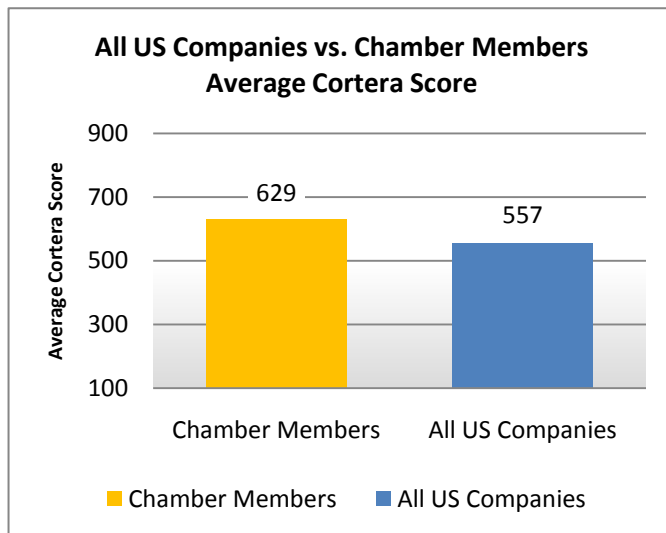
This study details both the aggregate findings, as well as the individual commercial credit scores for a sampling of members of the Greater Boca Raton (FL) Chamber of Commerce; Bowling Green (KY) Area Chamber of Commerce; Greater Durham (NC) Chamber of Commerce; Helena (MT) Area Chamber of Commerce; Lake Champlain (VT) Regional Chamber of Commerce; Lubbock (TX) Chamber of Commerce; Greater Omaha (NE) Chamber of Commerce; Salem (OR) Area Chamber of Commerce; San Diego (CA) Regional Chamber of Commerce; and Tulsa (OK) Metro Chamber.

## Summary of 10 Chambers of Commerce Payment Behavior Analysis

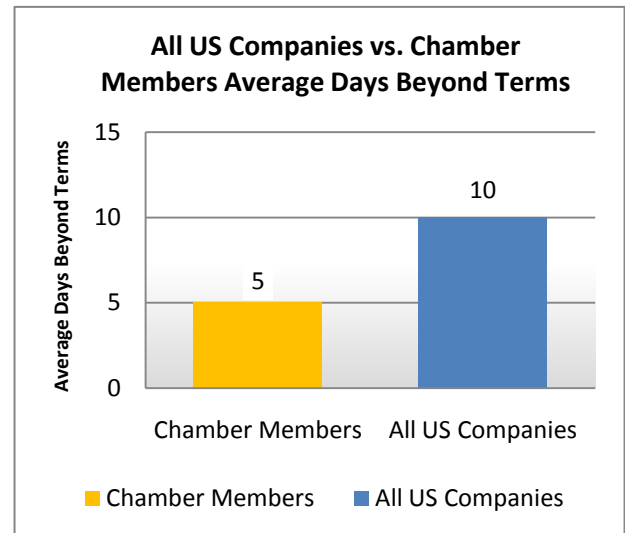
The study sampled 10 chambers of commerce and approximately 10,000 companies spread across 10 states throughout the country. A variety of regions were selected to include a diverse population of companies in a variety of economic regions.

### Commercial Credit Scores and DBT

Commercial credit scores are calculated in a manner similar to consumer credit scores. A Cortera score of 600 or greater is considered favorable. One of the key factors in determining such scores is payment behavior, which is often measured in average days beyond term (DBT) or how many days past due is an invoice. Scores that are 600 or greater have a corresponding average days beyond terms (DBT) of less than 5 days. A score of less than 300 is low and is considered poor or risky. Scores of 300 or less have a corresponding average days beyond terms (DBT) of more than 45 days.



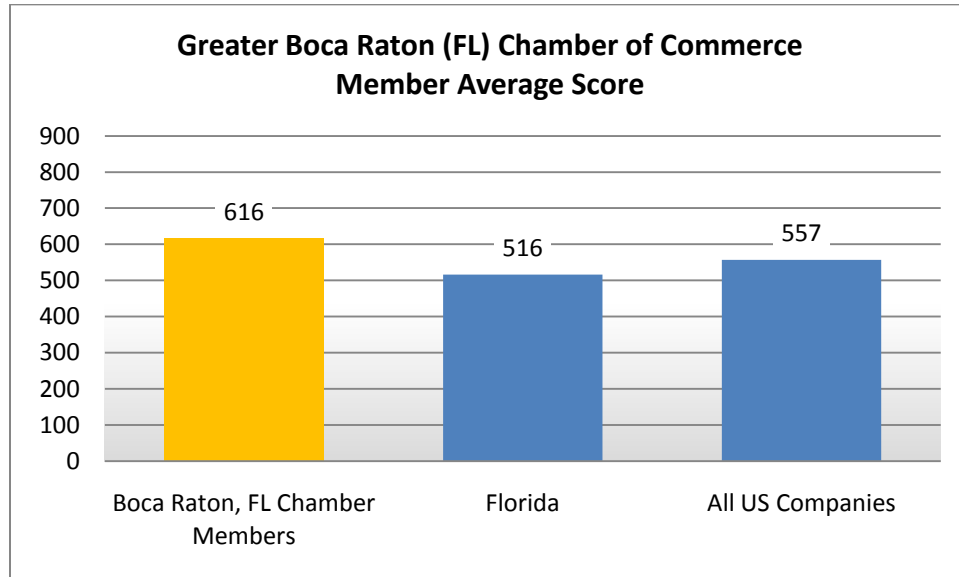
*On average, sampled chamber members score 13% higher than the U.S. average.*



*On average, sampled chamber members pay 5 to 10 days faster than the U.S. average.*

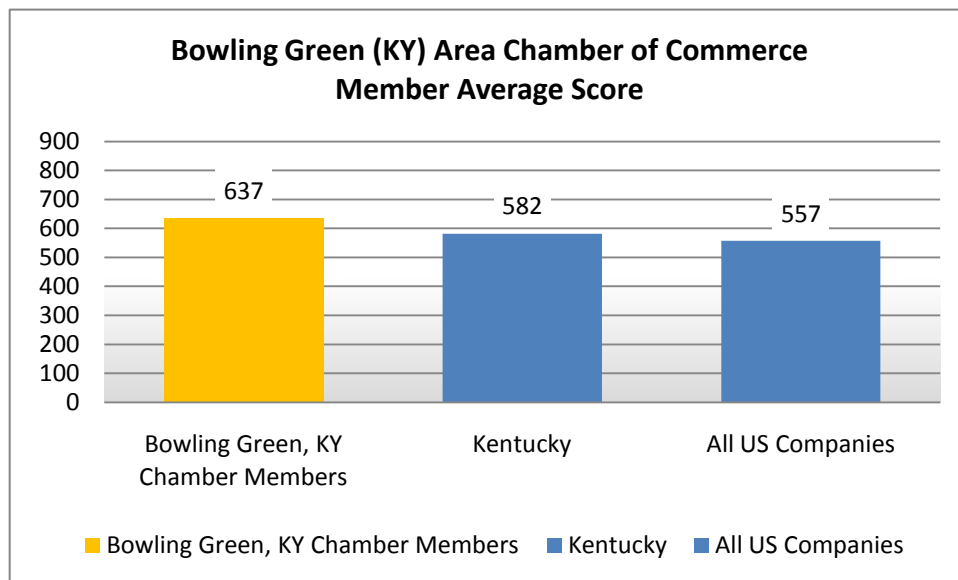
Chamber of Commerce	Average Cortera Score
Greater Boca Raton (FL) Chamber of Commerce	616
Bowling Green (KY) Area Chamber of Commerce	637
Greater Durham (NC) Chamber of Commerce	612
Helena (MT) Area Chamber of Commerce	635
Lake Champlain (VT) Regional Chamber of Commerce	620
Lubbock (TX) Chamber of Commerce	642
Greater Omaha (NE) Chamber of Commerce	631
Salem (OR) Area Chamber of Commerce	627
San Diego (CA) Regional Chamber of Commerce	608
Tulsa (OK) Metro Chamber	624

Greater Boca Raton (FL) Chamber of Commerce



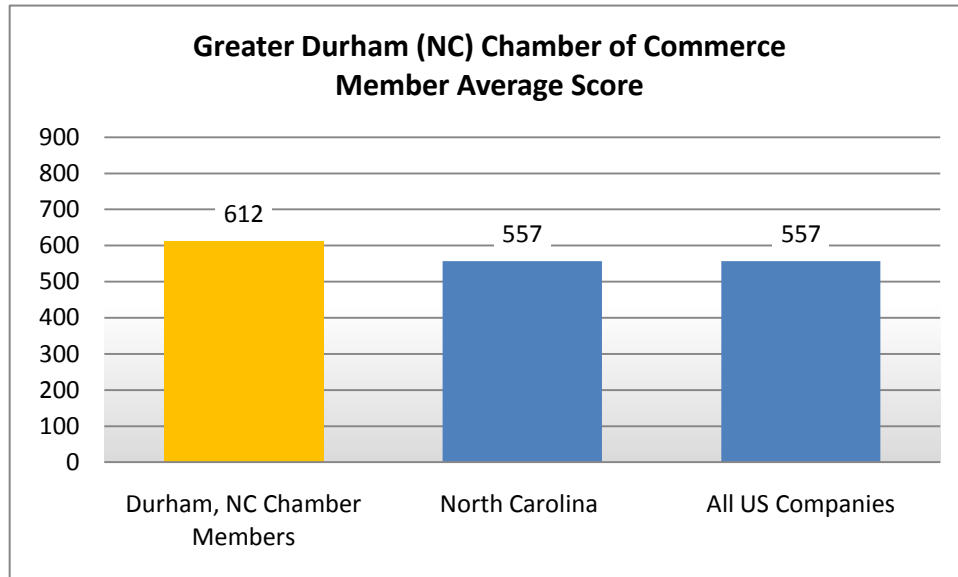
On average, Greater Boca Raton (FL) Chamber of Commerce members scored 10.6% higher than the U.S. payment score average and 19.4% higher than the average payment score for the state of Florida.

Bowling Green (KY) Area Chamber of Commerce



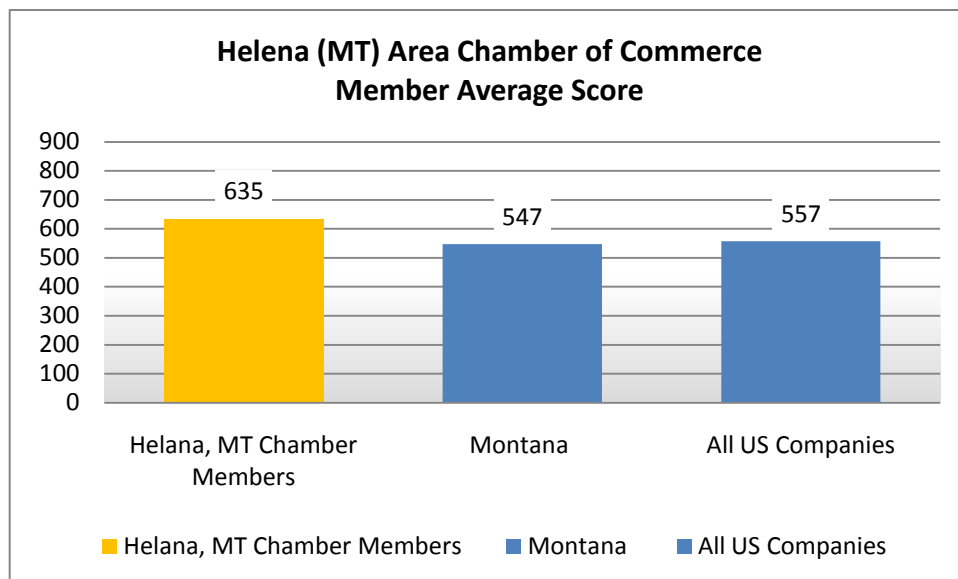
On average, Bowling Green (KY) Area Chamber of Commerce members scored 14.4% higher than the U.S. payment score average and 9.5% higher than the average payment score for the state of Kentucky.

Greater Durham (NC) Chamber of Commerce



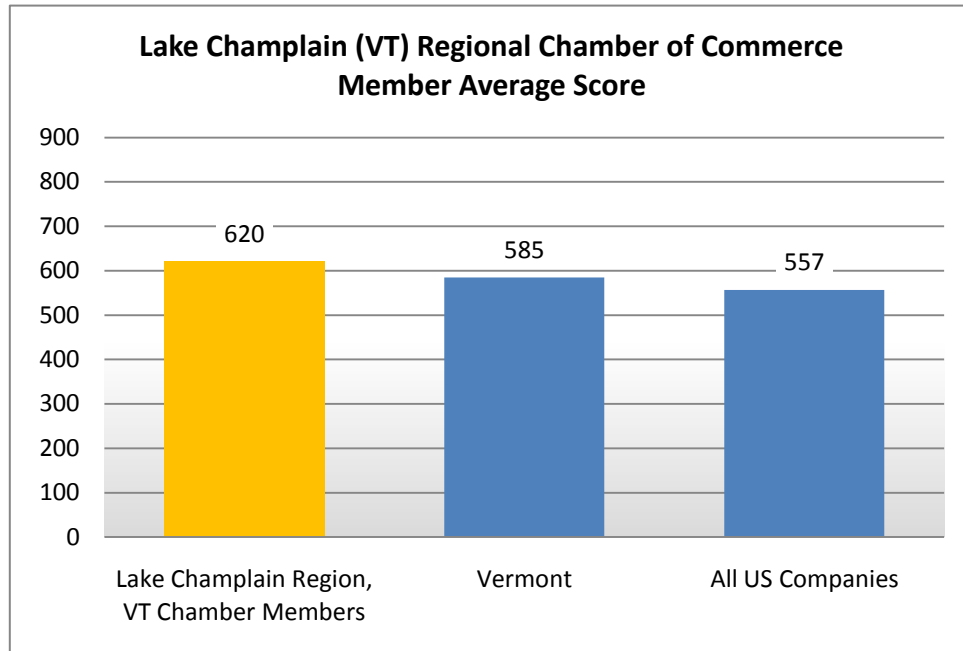
On average, Greater Durham (NC) Chamber of Commerce members scored 9.87% higher than the U.S. payment score average and 9.87% higher than the average payment score for the state of North Carolina.

Helena (MT) Area Chamber of Commerce



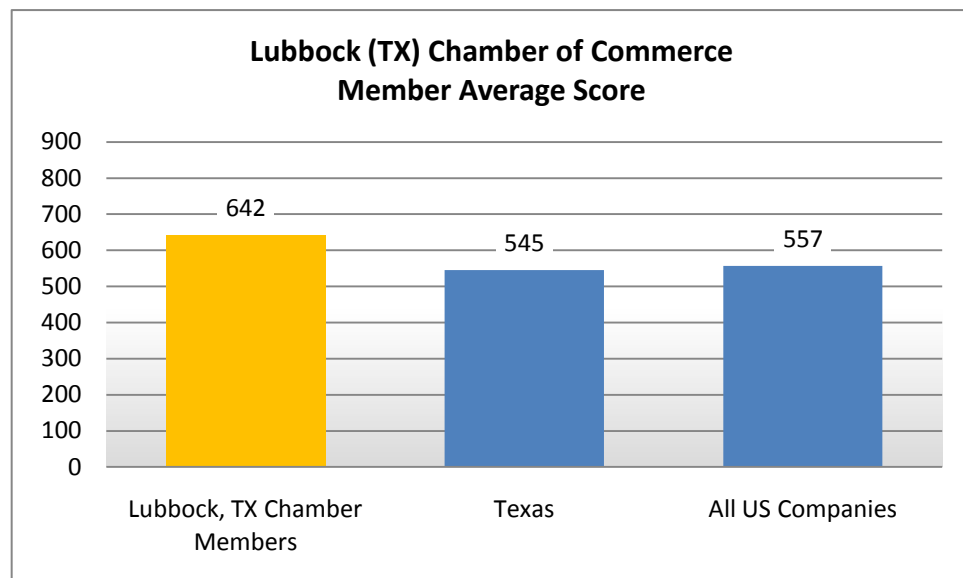
On average, Helena (MT) Area Chamber of Commerce members scored 14% higher than the U.S. payment score average and 16.1% higher than the average payment score for the state of Montana.

Lake Champlain (VT) Regional Chamber of Commerce



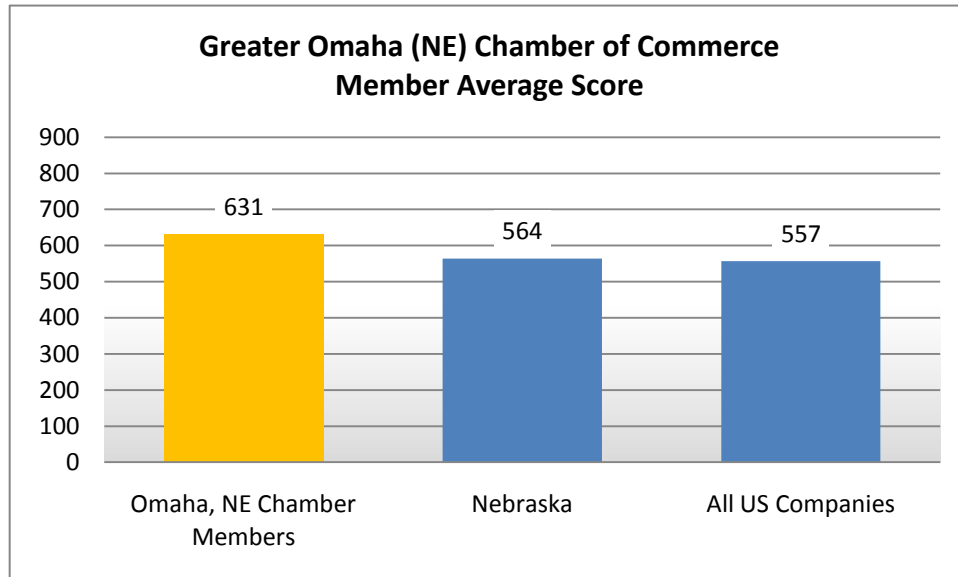
On average, Lake Champlain (VT) Regional Chamber of Commerce members scored 11.3% higher than the U.S. payment score average and 6% higher than the average payment score for the state of Vermont.

Lubbock (TX) Chamber of Commerce



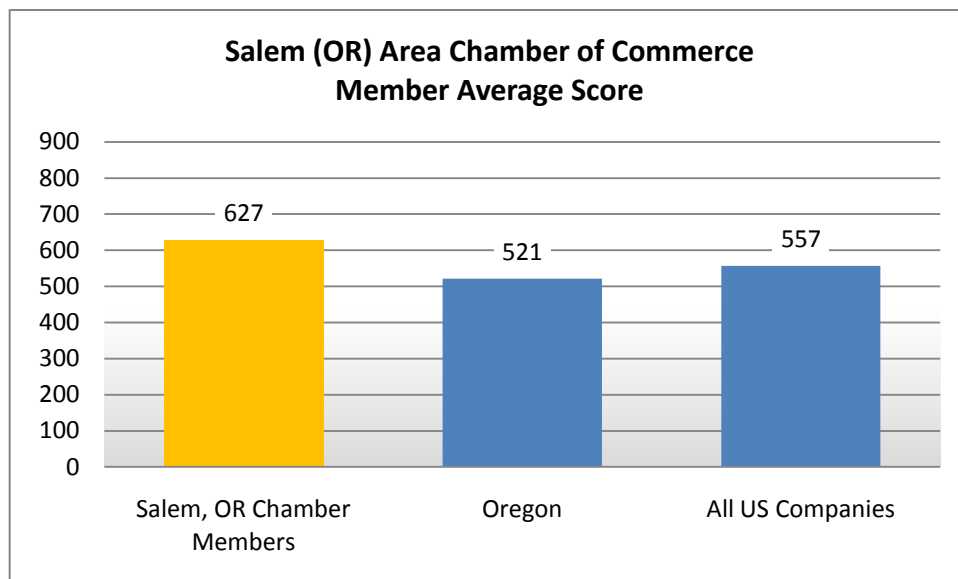
On average, Lubbock (TX) Chamber of Commerce members scored 15.3% higher than the U.S. payment score average and 17.8% higher than the average payment score for the state of Texas.

Greater Omaha (NE) Chamber of Commerce



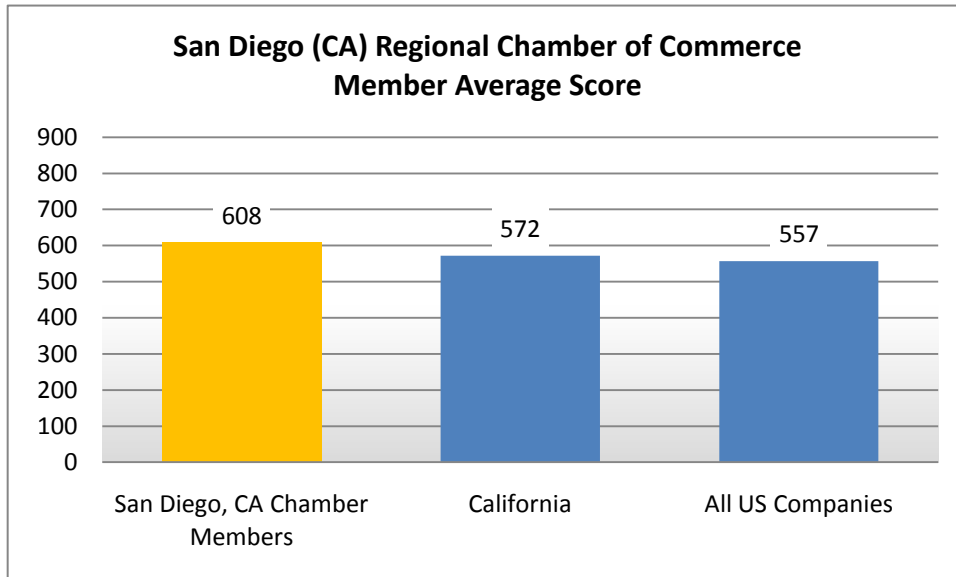
On average, Greater Omaha (NE) Chamber of Commerce members scored 13.3% higher than the U.S. payment score average and 11.9% higher than the average payment score for the state of Nebraska.

Salem (OR) Area Chamber of Commerce



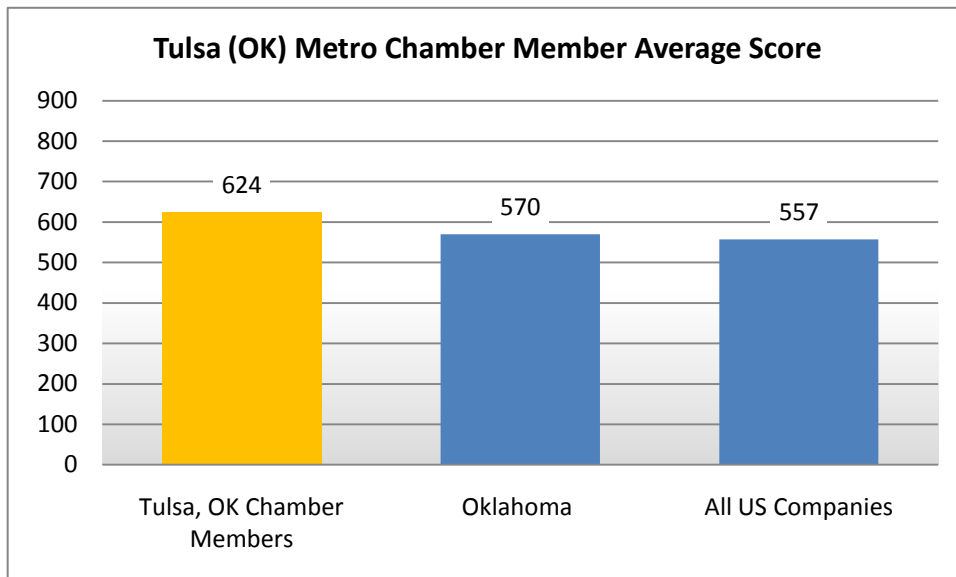
On average, Salem (OR) Area Chamber of Commerce members scored 12.6% higher than the U.S. payment score average and 20.3% higher than the average payment score for the state of Oregon.

San Diego (CA) Regional Chamber of Commerce



On average, San Diego (CA) Regional Chamber of Commerce members scored 9.2% higher than the U.S. payment score average and 6.3% higher than the average payment score for the state of California.

Tulsa (OK) Metro Chamber



On average, Tulsa (OK) Metro Chamber members scored 12% higher than the U.S. payment score average and 9.5% higher than the average payment score for the state of Oklahoma.

### Methodology

Cortera maintains payment information on over 20 million business locations as part of the company's overall commercial credit database. To create the study, Cortera calculated the credit scores for all US businesses and then segmented the data for specific businesses and locations that make up each of the 10 chambers of commerce covered in the report. Credit scores for each business location were calculated and then all members of each specific chamber were aggregated and averaged to determine chamber-specific scores.

### Additional information

For additional information on Cortera, please visit: <http://www.cortera.com/about-cortera/> or contact Alex Coté at [acote@cortera.com](mailto:acote@cortera.com) or call (857) 403-1370.

For additional information on the ACCE, please visit: <http://www.acce.org/> or contact Chris Mead at [cmead@acce.org](mailto:cmead@acce.org) or call (703) 998-3545.

American Chamber of Commerce Executives  
4875 Eisenhower Avenue, Suite 250  
Alexandria, VA 22304  
[www.acce.org](http://www.acce.org)

For additional information on the participating chambers, please visit:

[Bowling Green \(KY\) Area Chamber of Commerce](#)

Jessica Thompson, [jessica@bgchamber.com](mailto:jessica@bgchamber.com), (270) 901-4611

[Greater Boca Raton \(FL\) Chamber of Commerce](#)

Troy McLellan, [tmclellan@bocaratonchamber.com](mailto:tmclellan@bocaratonchamber.com), (561) 395-4433 x 223

[Greater Durham \(NC\) Chamber of Commerce](#)

Casey Steinbacher, [csteinbacher@durhamchamber.org](mailto:csteinbacher@durhamchamber.org), (919) 682-2133 x 224

[Greater Omaha \(NE\) Chamber of Commerce](#)

David Brown, [dbrown@omahachamber.org](mailto:dbrown@omahachamber.org), (402) 346-5000

[Helena \(MT\) Chamber of Commerce](#)

Cathy Burwell, [cburwell@helenachamber.com](mailto:cburwell@helenachamber.com), (406) 442-4120

[Lake Champlain \(VT\) Regional Chamber of Commerce](#)

Gen Burnell, [gen@vermont.org](mailto:gen@vermont.org), (802) 863-3489

[Lubbock \(TX\) Chamber of Commerce](#)

Eddie McBride, [eddie.mcbride@lubbockbiz.org](mailto:eddie.mcbride@lubbockbiz.org), (806) 761-7000

[Salem \(OR\) Area Chamber of Commerce](#)

Michael T. McLaran, [mike@salemchamber.org](mailto:mike@salemchamber.org), (503) 581-1466

[San Diego \(CA\) Regional Chamber of Commerce](#)

Doug Holman, [dholman@sdchamber.org](mailto:dholman@sdchamber.org), (619) 544-1300

[Tulsa \(OK\) Metro Chamber](#)

Matt Pivarnik, [mattpivarnik@tulsachamber.com](mailto:mattpivarnik@tulsachamber.com), (918) 585-1201 x 0208

### About American Chamber of Commerce Executives

Established in 1914, ACCE is the only national association serving the professional development needs of chamber professionals throughout the United States and Canada. Representing more than 7,300 individuals, ACCE enhances the knowledge, leadership skills, and management effectiveness of chamber executives and their staff through education, benefits programs, trend analysis, benchmarking, and network development. ACCE promotes the highest standards of professional excellence and integrity within the chamber profession

### About Cortera

In a sea of business information providers, Cortera is different. With over 15 years of experience serving finance professionals, Cortera combines premium business information and innovative tools with a fresh community approach to commercial credit. It represents the first community for small business credit reporting and a fundamentally new way to capture the collective insight of millions of financial transactions. As a result, small businesses can make smarter, informed decisions to ensure optimal cash flow while attracting more favorable payment terms from existing and potential business partners. Free credit reports on millions of businesses are available at <http://www.cortera.com>.

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