

FemCity Des Moines is a supportive community of positive women in business. Much like a Chamber of Commerce, FemCity hosts events, educational opportunities, and other connection activities for entrepreneurial women in the metro.

While the initial response to something like a “networking group” may not immediately strike one as innovative, we strongly believe that innovating the way in which both men and women network and build their businesses is essential to the future of our city.

Traditional networking often involves attending a structured event, ensuring your pockets or purses are filled with business cards, and a pressured environment to woo potential clients. The model exists to ensure people are “getting” something out of the experience.

FemCity Des Moines has flipped the model and created events and spaces to ensure people are focused on “giving” rather than “getting.” Fems (as we call them) are posturing themselves to offer value; they are listening to one another and asking how they can help and who they can connect another Fem to.

The environment is all about gratitude, confidence, and positivity, something that can be seen and felt right [here](#) in this video.

The group took on new leadership in November 2016, leading to significant growth. In one year alone, paying business members increased from 3 to 150, a 4900% growth.

### **Why was there such explosive growth in 2017?**

#### **1. We choose to be innovative in a way other networking or Chamber groups are not.**

FemCity Des Moines has a Facebook Group with over 1600 women to date. Some of these are business members, some are community members (our complimentary membership), and some hop in to see what we’re all about. We offer business members the chance to post in the group as a value-add to their membership of \$150 per year.

Our posts in the group are all incredibly positive. From inviting women to give gratitude shoutouts to asking them questions about topics they want to learn more about and connecting them within the group, it’s a dynamic support system unlike anything else in Des Moines. In 2018, we’ll be launching Q&A events in the Facebook Group so people who are unable to attend all events can still gain value and learn something new.

We’re also choosing to meet people where they’re at. We host events at interesting and meaningful locations, giving our sponsors the opportunity to promote their business. From wineries to a lingerie store owned by a female entrepreneur, we know this is where women want to spend their time.

## **2. We are changing the way women connect with another.**

As mentioned previously, our focus is “giving” as opposed to “getting.” Of course, many people join networking groups like FemCity to grow their businesses, but in return, we are teaching them incredible skills to take to grow their businesses simply by following a model that more closely resonates with women.

As a result, women are growing their businesses, telling their friends about FemCity and creating a snowball effect of women who then join and continue supporting one another.

Our “abundance” viewpoint of business helps us teach women that there is more than enough business to go around! This is why we see two women from different real estate agencies grabbing coffee and figuring out how they can support one another. It’s why health coaches co-host events together. We believe that “confidence has no competition” and we want all women who encounter FemCity to believe the same.

## **3. A physical newspaper print created by women for women.**

In September 2017, FemCity Des Moines launched a physical newspaper full of 100+ Fems in Des Moines. It can feel challenging to get press or local coverage of a new business or new service, especially if there’s no previous connection, so we opened the door for women to showcase who they are and what they do. You can find our publication [here](#).

The event entailed a cocktail party at Noce, where men were also invited to come and learn about FemCity Des Moines and how they can support more women in business. With 2500+ copies printed, our group distributed them around the community, giving more women the chance to connect with our innovative approaches to connecting and growing businesses.

## **Pride, Possibility, and Growth**

FemCity Des Moines is instilling pride, possibility, and growth in an innovative way that we believe will change the trajectory for women in business in our community. Instead of being ranked 44th of businesses owned by women in Iowa, we know we can move the needle through the model we have created.

Changing the way people think and act is one of the most important ways to be innovative. When someone can see possibilities in areas they never knew or dreamed possible, they can pop the bubble of limitation they once believed and take up more space with their ideas, words, and actions.

FemCity Des Moines is the fastest growing chapter in the country and continues to see women join every single day. Thank you for the opportunity to share this important work!