



Inside LEAD: Building Systems for Growth and Member Success

By Stacy Romero, Executive Director

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If you've been following LEAD's journey over the past several months, you've seen us grow from foundational work to future-focused action. We've engaged legislators, expanded our membership, and hosted impactful professional development opportunities, but what's happening behind the scenes is just as important. We've spent the past few months focused on building the infrastructure to help you and your community thrive.

As we close out the third quarter of 2025, I want to take you behind the curtain to show how LEAD is intentionally strengthening internal operations so that everything we do moving forward is smarter, smoother, and more member focused.

Why Strong Systems Matter

Strong systems are what allow any organization to scale sustainably. For LEAD, that means tightening up internal operations, improving how we track engagement, and making it easier for members and sponsors to interact with us.

This quarter, we've focused on:

- **Finalizing LEAD's internal policies and procedures manual** to ensure clarity, consistency, and accountability across everything we do from governance to financials to program planning.
- **Preparing to launch GrowthZone**, a powerful new membership platform that will streamline your member experience, making it easier to update your contact info, register for events, and connect with fellow members. Once it goes live in Q4, members will have easier access to resources and one another through a searchable member directory and personalized portal.
- **Gathering real-time insights and forecasting growth** to ensure our 2026 budget aligns with evolving goals, member needs, and a sustainable funding strategy.

These accomplishments are essential building blocks. They create the stability and efficiency we need to focus on what truly matters: delivering exceptional value to our members and advancing economic development across Louisiana.

Staying Member-Focused

Everything we're doing behind the scenes is designed to support you and your goals. Whether you're a long-time member or considering joining for the first time, we're working to ensure your experience with LEAD feels valuable, relevant, and rewarding.



Here's what that looks like in action. We're:

- Inviting new and prospective members to upcoming events so they can see LEAD's impact firsthand.
- Offering a fourth professional development course to round out our 2025 series.
- Preparing early membership renewal options for 2026 and ensuring a smooth onboarding experience through our new database system.

Laying the Groundwork for What's Next

The changes we're making now, upgrading systems, strengthening processes, and expanding our communications, are about more than streamlining tasks. They're about delivering more *value* to you.

When we can track member activity, analyze engagement data, and automate reminders, it gives us room to build better programming, respond more quickly to your needs, and tell a stronger story to potential funders and policymakers.

This groundwork sets us up not just for a great 2025 finish, but for an even bolder 2026.

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