



WHAT'S INSIDE



**LOAN SUPPORT BUILDS SOLID FOUNDATION FOR RETAIL SUCCESS**

Learn how a B.C. entrepreneur expanded her national reach

PAGE 2



**BUILDING EXPORT EXPERTISE**

An Alberta-based company's fly fishing products go global

PAGE 6



**RURAL MANUFACTURER COVERS THE NORTH AMERICAN MARKET**

Saskatchewan rural outfit expands its market reach

PAGE 4



**TRADE MISSION NETS INTERNATIONAL SALES**

Discover how a trip to France made a big difference for a Manitoba company

PAGE 5

# BUSINESS SERVICES FOR YOU

## Western Canada Business Service Network



### Entrepreneurs: The Heart of the New West

In 2005, the partners in WD's Western Canada Business Service Network:

**RESPONDED** to 530,000 requests for information

**PROVIDED** 130,258 advisory services

**TRAINED** 44,328 clients



The West's small business owners are the heart of today's western economy, the

lifeblood that keeps jobs and opportunities flowing to the region.

Even in the West, starting a new business is a challenge. From obtaining start-up financing to creating a business plan, there are a multitude of obstacles that can make or break a young venture.

Western Economic

Diversification Canada helps westerners meet the challenges of entrepreneurship by supporting the Western Canada Business Service Network, a group of community-based organizations that provide

*"many entrepreneurs are broadening their horizons well beyond their traditional local markets"*

small business owners with the answers they need to start and run successful ventures.

Today, some of the biggest questions entrepreneurs want answered relate to accessing export

markets. With new technologies opening the doors to international markets for even the smallest and most remote businesses, many entrepreneurs are broadening their horizons well beyond their traditional local markets.

Here, too, the Western Canada Business Service Network can help. I invite you to read on to discover how it is strengthening the western economy, one small business at a time.

*The Honourable Carol Skelton, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of National Revenue and  
Minister of Western Economic  
Diversification*

### Helping entrepreneurs succeed

In the West, small business is big: there are 40 per cent more small businesses in Western Canada than in the rest of the country, and they create nearly 80 per cent of all new jobs in the region.

As the federal department established to help the western economy grow and diversify, Western Economic Diversification

Canada (WD) supports small business through its Western Canada Business Service Network (WCBSN). A unique partnership of several independent organizations, the network provides entrepreneurs with the resources they need to start, grow and expand their businesses. This network has more than 100 offices across the West.

Discover how our Business Service offices can assist you with starting or growing a business.

[www.wd.gc.ca](http://www.wd.gc.ca)  
[www.canadabusiness.gc.ca](http://www.canadabusiness.gc.ca)  
1 888 338-WEST (9378)





# BRITISH COLUMBIA EXPANDING INTO GLOBAL MARKETS

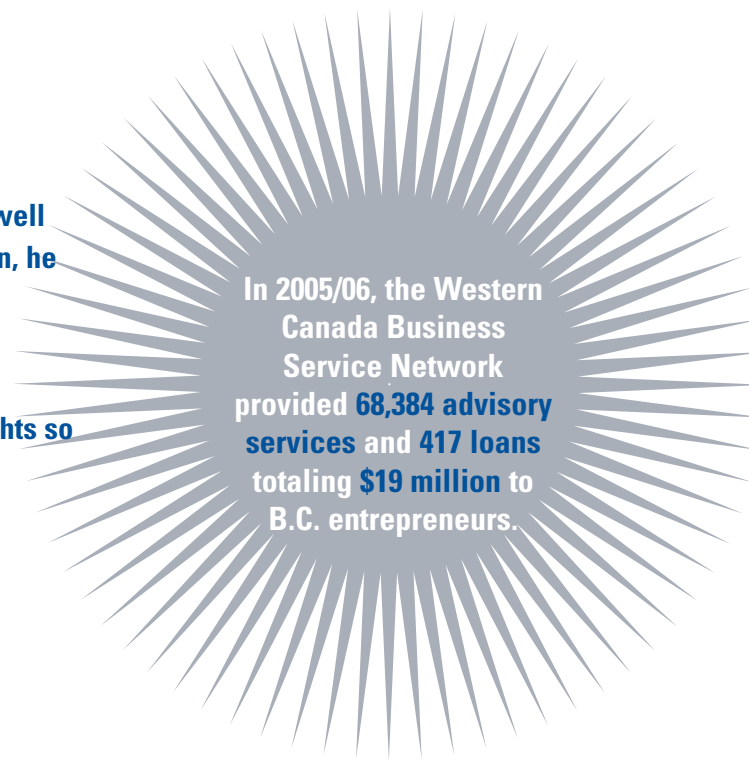
## B.C. company earns world-wide sales

*Rural businesses competing in international markets*

● Humidity Control Systems ● Powell River, British Columbia ● [www.humidhouse.com](http://www.humidhouse.com)

**W**hen Wayne Walsh started Humidity Control Systems, he had a single goal—to succeed. The B.C. entrepreneur spent a lot of time working with the Community Futures Development Corporation of Powell River, and today his service area has expanded to include B.C., Alberta and Saskatchewan. In addition, he now sells around the world through his website.

Walsh's search for a method to reduce humidity in his own house led him to the humidex system, manufactured by Air Tech of New Brunswick. The system worked so well he obtained distribution rights so he could share the technology with other homeowners.



In 2005/06, the Western Canada Business Service Network provided **68,384 advisory services** and **417 loans** totaling **\$19 million** to B.C. entrepreneurs.

## B.C. skateboarding success aims to go 'down under'

Rayne Longboards  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
[www.raynelongboards.com](http://www.raynelongboards.com)

**S**ince opening Rayne Longboards in 2004, whenever Graham Buksa needs business or exporting advice, he heads straight to Small Business BC. The Vancouver-area entrepreneur, who calls the organization "a wealth of resources" has used its services regularly.

With products now available in Canada, the U.S., Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the U.K., Japan and Sweden, the young entrepreneur shows no sign of slowing down. The company's 2006 sales more than doubled its total 2005 sales



*Rayne Longboards are growing in popularity among skateboard enthusiasts in Vancouver and numerous international markets.*

and Buksa hopes to maintain the momentum by targeting new markets in the warmer U.S. states, Australia and New Zealand.

## Loan builds solid foundation for retail success

sweet LeiLani  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
[www.sweetleilani.com](http://www.sweetleilani.com)

**S**weet LeiLani cosmetics is moving steadily toward a national retail presence. Two years ago, when LeiLani Kopp needed financing to navigate a critical growth stage in her company's life, she turned to the Women's Enterprise Centre for help.

Despite a successful career as a hair and makeup artist, it was Kopp's volunteer work with cancer patients that set her on the path to entrepreneurship. Unable to find a makeup gentle enough for extremely sensitive skin, she developed Studio Cover Stick, which can be used to cover severe bruising, scarring and burns. The company donates 15 per cent from the sales of the cover stick to the B.C. professional firefighters' burn fund.

## Support helps business expand

House of Himwitsa Ltd.  
Tofino, British Columbia  
[www.himwitsa.com](http://www.himwitsa.com)

**L**ewis and Cathy George had to re-mortgage their home when they opened the Himwitsa Native Art Gallery in 1991. It took a lot of hard work, but the gamble paid off with \$30,000 in sales the first year. Now, with support from the Aboriginal Business Service Network, their business also includes a restaurant and lodge,

and gross earnings exceed \$1 million a year.

The couple, members of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth First Nation, lives in Tofino, B.C., one of the world's most popular tourist destinations. Their gallery, which sells masks, carvings and jewelry created by some of the area's finest First Nations artists, attracts visitors from around the world.



# ALBERTA

## GROWING A HEALTHY ECONOMY

### Healthcare tracking invention soon to be available in the U.S.

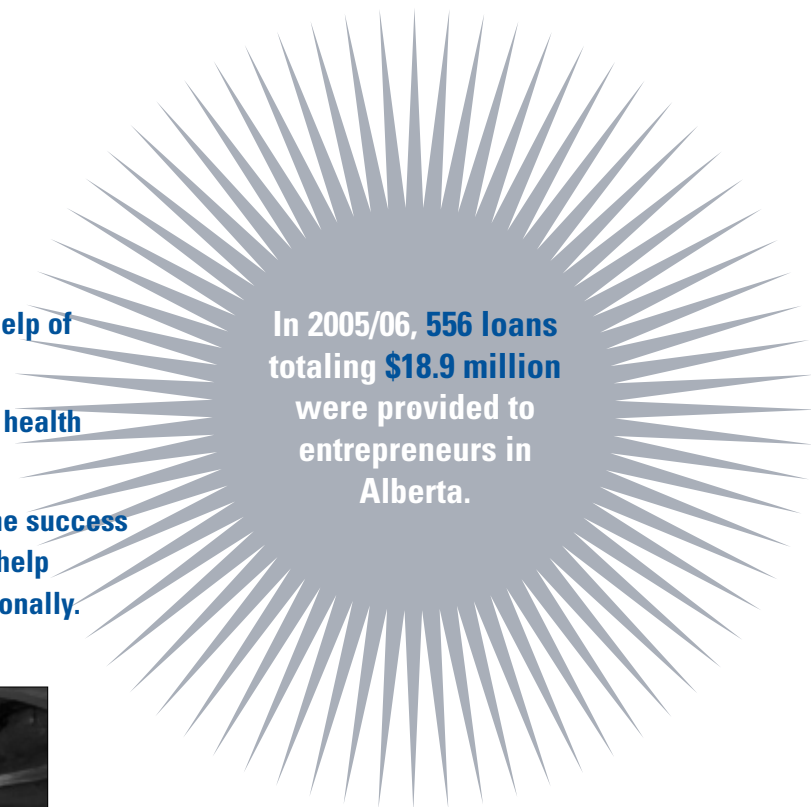
#### Demonstrating women's entrepreneurial success

● b.l.i.s. (because life is special) inc. ● Calgary, Alberta ● [www.healthpod.ca](http://www.healthpod.ca)

Three Calgary women have turned an innovative idea into a thriving small business, with the help of Alberta Women Entrepreneurs (AWE).

Marci Andrews, Nancy Scott and Jana Sinclair are the creators of HealthPod Baby, a portable health organizer that brings all a child's vital health records together in one place.

The three entrepreneurs say AWE's business planning and marketing advice were critical to the success of their company's launch this spring and, now that AWE has conditionally approved a loan to help finance their second round of manufacturing, they are ready to expand nationally and internationally.



In 2005/06, 556 loans totaling \$18.9 million were provided to entrepreneurs in Alberta.

### Support for new Canadian entrepreneurs

Chipmunk R.V. Ltd.  
Sherwood Park, Alberta  
[www.chipmunkrv.com](http://www.chipmunkrv.com)

Two new Canadians are now welcoming international visitors to Alberta, thanks to the guidance of La Chambre économique de l'Alberta (LACEA).

Jean-Claude Bonjour and Liliane Vallotton Bonjour had come from their native Switzerland to holiday in Alberta every summer for 14 years. Their dream was to make a permanent move and start a business that would allow them to share their love of the province with other French-



Jean-Claude Bonjour and Liliane Vallotton Bonjour, founders of Chipmunk R.V.

speaking Europeans. For guidance they approached LACEA, which provided advice throughout the lengthy process.

The Bonjours' patience paid off with the founding of Chipmunk R.V., a recreational vehicle rental company.

### Canadian invention in 40 international markets

The Litebook Company Ltd.  
Medicine Hat, Alberta  
[www.litebook.com](http://www.litebook.com)

North Americans and Europeans suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) now have access to The Litebook®, a Canadian invention, thanks to the advice and support of Entre-Corp Business Development Centre. The portable light therapy device provides effective relief for a host of ailments, including sleep disorders, fatigue and jet lag.

Larry Pederson founded The Litebook Company Ltd. in 1999. He says working with Entre-Corp helped him make a successful foray into international markets and soon the company will submit the product to a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) trial, which could make it the first light device cleared for use as a medical device.

### Guided tours attract overseas tourists

Mahikan Trails  
Canmore, Alberta  
[www.mahikan.com](http://www.mahikan.com)

Mahikan Trails' guided tours through the Rocky Mountains became a success with marketing assistance and advice from the Aboriginal Business Service Network (ABSNS). Today, company owner, Brenda Holder, says growing interest from European tourists—particularly from the U.K. and Germany—has her seeking more ABSNS advice to learn how to effectively manage the company's growth.

The guiding company offers hikes, snowshoe trips and ice walks, as well as exceptional programs in corporate team building and hands-on experiential programs that highlight Métis lifestyle, traditions and culture.



# SASKATCHEWAN

## A WEB OF BUSINESS SUCCESSES

### Website helps rural businesses reach larger market

*Improving opportunities for francophone entrepreneurs*

● Francoboutique.ca ● Regina, Saskatchewan ● [www.francoboutique.ca](http://www.francoboutique.ca)



In 2005/06, the Western Canada Business Service Network provided **31,804 information services** and **267 loans** totaling **\$11 million** to Saskatchewan entrepreneurs.

### Cyber Café creates e-learning opportunities on-reserve

**Ochapowace Cyber Café**  
**Ochapowace First Nation, Saskatchewan**

The Ochapowace First Nation never imagined its cyber café business venture would contribute to the creation of southern Saskatchewan's first on-reserve e-learning centre. They approached the Aboriginal Business Service Network (ABSN) in 2004 with a small plan and it grew.

The relationship with ABSN led to a partnership that is benefiting the entire community. The partnership—between the Ochapowace Adult Learning Program, Marieval Enterprise Centre Inc. and Carlton Trail Regional College—created an e-learning centre that uses the café's high-speed Internet connection to provide access to a variety of certification programs.

Francophone entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan can now sell their products anywhere in the world, thanks to a company that had guidance from the Conseil de la Coopération de la Saskatchewan (CCS).

Francoboutique.ca, launched by CCS in August 2005, is a uniquely Canadian website that enables entrepreneurs to market their products globally in French, English or Spanish.

Saskatchewan's only French bookstore, the Bouquinerie Gravel Bookstore in Gravelbourg is one of more than 70 businesses whose products have been made available to a much wider market through francoboutique.ca.

### Successful web-based firm opens complementary retail outlet

**Kinnaird Bagpipes & Reeds**  
**Saskatoon, Saskatchewan**  
[www.kinnairdbagpipes.com](http://www.kinnairdbagpipes.com)

Rauncie and Rob Kinnaird built one of Saskatoon's more unique web-based businesses. It moved to a new level, opening its first retail outlet in October 2006 with expert advice from Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan (WE).

Kinnaird Bagpipes & Reeds Inc.—a retail and wholesale pipe band supply company—began when Rob, an avid piper with a mechanical engineering degree, had trouble keeping a cane bagpipe reed moist in Saskatchewan's dry

climate. The Piper's Pal was his innovative solution, and that product has been followed by about 60 more.

Today, more than half of Kinnaird's products are sold in the United States and the United Kingdom.



*The Kinnairds sell more than 60 different pipe band supply products to international markets.*

### Rural manufacturer covers the North American market

**Cornerstone Coatings International Inc.**  
**Bruno, Saskatchewan**  
[www.cornerstonecoatings.com](http://www.cornerstonecoatings.com)

Over the past seven years, Saskatchewan entrepreneur Murray LeComte increased his product line from four, to nearly 10 times that number. Despite his rural location, he now sells in markets across Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. Having the Sagehill Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC) just a mile down the road has been a bonus for him.

The company, Cornerstone Coatings International Inc., manufactures and wholesales coatings for concrete, stucco, gypsum and decorative concrete. LeComte says the market research support provided by the local CFDC has been essential in finding market niches where the company can successfully compete.



# MANITOBA

## A BLUEPRINT FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

### Laser company increases sales

*Showcasing the entrepreneurial spirit of Aboriginals*

● Innovative Laser Works ● Winnipeg, Manitoba ● [www.innovativelaserworks.com](http://www.innovativelaserworks.com)

Alice and Malcolm Taylor got even more help than they bargained for when they used the Aboriginal Business Service Network (ABSN) to help develop a business plan for the expansion of their home-based business in 2004. The pair won an ABSN business plan competition, and used the award money to open a 2,000 square foot storefront location in Winnipeg. Within the first year, sales had nearly doubled and a second laser had to be purchased to meet the demand.

The Taylors' company, Innovative Laser Works, engraves highly detailed graphic images onto any flat surface—including granite, acrylic, glass or wood—to create products such as memorial plaques, monuments and promotional items.



*Alice Taylor of Innovative Laser Works busy at work. Sales nearly doubled after a storefront location opened in Winnipeg.*

The Western Canada Business Service Network provided **4,440 training services** and **157 loans** totaling **\$4.9 million** to Manitoba entrepreneurs in 2005/06.

### Sales grow in new rural location

**Aquatic Life Ltd.**  
**Pinawa, Manitoba**  
[www.aquaticlife.ca](http://www.aquaticlife.ca)

When Jeff Simpson decided to move from Winnipeg to nearby Pinawa, he worked with the Winnipeg River Brokenhead Community Futures Development Corporation to ensure the change would not be detrimental to his business. With its advice and assistance, the company experienced a 30 per cent increase in sales the following year, despite the new rural location.

Aquatic Life Ltd. is a distributor of environmental testing products, with clients that include utilities, municipalities, government agencies and general industries across Canada. The company also exports monitoring equipment to countries around the world, including Oman, Korea, Bolivia and Mexico.

### Manitoba-made backpack an international success

**Onyx Group International Inc.**  
**Stony Mountain, Manitoba**  
[www.babysherpa.com](http://www.babysherpa.com)

With the help of Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre, Heather Campbell-Dewar is selling her unique backpacks in Canada, the U.S., Britain and Australia.

Her signature product, the Baby Sherpa™, is a multifunctional, ergonomically designed diaper backpack with compartments for everything babies and their parents need.

To research the industry, Campbell-Dewar went to Canada Business. "I used the library for information and attended seminars on exporting. The centre also directed me towards a trade mission in Chicago that resulted in new accounts." Those accounts grew to the point where a U.S. sales office was opened to handle more than 150 stores carrying Baby Sherpa.

### Trade mission nets international sales

**Keystone Western Inc.**  
**Ile des Chenes, Manitoba**  
[www.keystonewestern.com](http://www.keystonewestern.com)

Thanks to his participation in a trade mission to Strasbourg, France, in February 2005, entrepreneur Mario Boily's trucking company, Keystone Western, won its first major contract with a foreign company. The mission, organized by the Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba

(CDEM), enabled Keystone Western to win a million-dollar contract with a major manufacturer.

The spin-offs from Strasbourg don't stop there—he is currently finalizing another contract, this time for \$2 million. Boily says he is grateful to CDEM for convincing him to take part in such a fruitful trade mission.

# CELEBRATING WESTERN ENTREPRENEURS

## Micro roaster creates a sustainable niche

**Aroma Specialty Coffee Roasters**  
Quathiaski Cove, British Columbia  
[www.aromacoffees.ca](http://www.aromacoffees.ca)

**H**élène Arsenault developed a business niche that offers steady, sustainable growth, despite a small-market location. She worked closely with the Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique since 2002 to overcome the challenges her location presented.

Since that time, Arsenault's sales volume has

doubled and her products can now be found at 15 outlets in nearby communities like Campbell River and Courtenay.

Aroma Specialty Coffee Roasters is a micro roaster that slow roasts small batches of coffee to enhance and preserve the complex flavours of some of the finest beans from around the world.

## Botanical papers a growing business

**Botanical PaperWorks**  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
[www.botanicalpaperworks.com](http://www.botanicalpaperworks.com)

**W**hen Heidi Reimer-Epp wanted to expand her successful papermaking business, she turned to the Women's Enterprise Centre for the loan she needed to make it possible. "The support from the Women's Centre allowed us to produce new designs and do our market research," said Reimer-Epp. "They were really great to work with."

Today, Botanical PaperWorks advertises its products in magazines like Martha Stewart Weddings and In Style Weddings, attracting



*More than 90 per cent of Botanical PaperWorks products are exported.*

international buyers to the company's online store. The company exports about 90 per cent of what it manufactures, the majority of that to the United States.

manufacturer and distributor of fly fishing related products.

Now, with three years experience in partnership with her U.S. distributor, Superstein is building on her export success by taking on a bigger piece of the American retail market. Currently, she's finalizing a contract with a large retail chain that will dramatically increase her export sales.

## Building export expertise

**Superfly International Inc.**  
Edmonton, Alberta  
[www.superfly.ca](http://www.superfly.ca)

**J**anna Superstein decided it was time to extend her company's reach to include markets south of the border. She approached The Business Link to help make it happen. Based on its advice, she engaged a distributor that has made exports a significant portion of her sales.

The company, Superfly International Inc., began as a home-based business more than 25 years ago and has become Canada's leading

Canada Business offices fielded more than **1.4 million western inquiries** in the past seven years.

## Advice has entrepreneur coming back for more

**Lee's Goldfish**  
Hobbyist Aquarium / Martdirect Consulting  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
[www.aquariumcanada.ca](http://www.aquariumcanada.ca) /  
[www.martdirectconsulting.com](http://www.martdirectconsulting.com)

**T**he advice Gang Lee and Rebecca Dong received from Canada-Saskatchewan Business Service Centre not only helped their business succeed; it inspired Rebecca to create a second venture.

The pair originally sought research assistance and marketing advice for Lee's Goldfish Hobbyist Aquarium, which imports and breeds goldfish and tropical fish from China. Less than a year after opening, product capacity and sales volumes have doubled.

Rebecca was so impressed with the results, she approached Canada Business a second time, for help launching her own consulting business. Martdirect Consulting helps Canadian companies establish distributorships and locate suppliers in China, and provides advice to companies seeking export business in China.

Discover how our Business Service offices can assist you with starting or growing a business.

[www.wd.gc.ca](http://www.wd.gc.ca)  
[www.canadabusiness.gc.ca](http://www.canadabusiness.gc.ca)  
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