

Access Alberta

Small Business Week, October 22 – 28, 2000

Western Economic Diversification is proud to be a major sponsor of Small Business Week, again, this year in Edmonton and Calgary. Community leaders, along with business owners and promoters use this opportunity to celebrate the economic impact small business has on the national economy and the importance of entrepreneurship as a career choice.

Important elements of the week's activities are business seminar topics based on feedback received from previous attendees.

Session* highlights:

Edmonton

Opening Event – Monday evening, keynote speaker, Evan Chrapko Alberta success story from Two Hills.
Breakfast for Success – Tuesday through Friday, speakers will present their success stories, each morning will have a new topic matter and speaker.

Seminar sessions* are at the Library Theatre and Seminar Room (7 Sir Winston Churchill Square). Breakfast sessions* will be held at the Westin Hotel (10135-100 Street).
For registration information or to receive a registration form, please contact Jennifer at (780) 426-4620 ext. 230, Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, or go to the Web site www.sbw.edmonton.ab.ca.

Calgary

Each day's sessions* have a central theme.
Monday – Starting a Business / Home-Based Business Day
Tuesday – Marketing / Advertising / Sales Day
Wednesday – International Business Day
Thursday – Financing Business / Human Resources Day
Friday – E-business Day
Participants can pay one low fee to attend an entire day of sessions. Value prices are as follows:
Attend the entire day of seminars:
Chamber of Commerce members - \$35
Non-members - \$40

Participants can also choose to attend single sessions and pay the reasonably low fee of:
Chamber of Commerce members - \$15
Non-members - \$20

To register for the Small Business Week 2000 Educational Seminars, call Mount Royal College ticketmaster at (403) 240-7770. For information regarding seminar content call the Mount Royal College Small Business Training Centre at (403) 240-5524.

This year's Small Business Week seminars promise to be the best ever. Five exciting and dynamic theme days have been planned. Organizers expect to break record attendance set last year with this exciting line up of seminars, so avoid disappointment and register early.

As Small Business Week is a national celebration, many cities and towns across Alberta will be celebrating locally. For activities occurring in your community, please contact your local Chamber of Commerce.

*Sessions that do not meet minimum attendance requirements may be cancelled, and sessions do have maximum capacity limitations. Register early to reserve your seat.

Other events held in conjunction with Small Business Week:

InReach: Rendez-vous

Canada Place
Main floor, 9700 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, October 23 - 27

Are you interested in selling your products/services to federal government departments?

InReach: Rendez-vous, a tradeshow sponsored by the Government of Canada, gives small and medium-sized businesses the opportunity to promote their products/services at Canada Place (Edmonton). This event gives entrepreneurs a chance to meet with government purchasing officers in a cost- and time-efficient manner.

For further information, contact Noreen Gallagher at (780) 495-6434 or call toll-free 1-888-338-WEST (9378).

Open-house, The Business Link (Edmonton)

#100, 10237 – 104 Street
Edmonton
Wednesday, October 25 – 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Do you plan to be a business survivor?

An entrepreneur needs to be innovative, develop and implement a strategic plan, make decisions and create alliances to survive in the business world. Attend The Business Link's Open House to find out what you need to be a business survivor.

For further information, contact Linda Chorney at (780) 422-7788 or call toll-free 1-800-272-9675.

Youth Entrepreneur is One Of A



Interview with Travis Doherty, Founder of TerraDelta Corporation.

Questions and editing by Quinn A.C. Nicholson

In July of this year, it was my pleasure to interview (electronically, of course) a rising star in Alberta's e-business field. Hailing from Lethbridge, Alberta, 16-year old Travis Doherty divides his time between the worlds of high school academia and high-powered business. His growing company, **TerraDelta Corporation**, now does business locally and globally, boasting contracts on every major continent.

Not bad for a business that started out as a high school project.

Q: What specifically does your business do?

A: TerraDelta provides professional e-business solutions. Our main lines of business are web hosting and domain name registrations. We complete web development and consulting, along with custom software development. Our goal is to stay with our customer and help them to grow, the larger our customers are the higher our customer base quality is.

Q: How long have you been involved with computers?

A: Personally, I have been involved for over four years. I picked up on things in September of 1996, and started programming commercially by July of 1997. My first Internet sale was made in June of 1998, and from there the business has grown to where it is today.

Q: What sparked your interest in computers and e-business? When and why did you begin to see a business potential with computers?

A: A computer was brought to me on loan from a family friend; from that point, I gained great interest in 'the thing' as it was then known. The 'thing' seemed to be able to complete work for me far faster than I could.

The e-business idea was sparked from a combination of Internet access at a friend's house and my childhood of always trying to sell things. I can remember times where I would 'pretend' to run a business selling hockey cards, one of my hobbies back then. I was always trying to make an honest dollar, or penny in those years.

In my early teens, the introduction of the Internet leveled the playing field. So even though I was only a teenager, I could compete with a multi-million dollar company. I decided things looked like they could work out, I had nothing to lose but time (which I had a lot of back then) and a few dollars a month in Internet fees.

Q: What are your thoughts about e-business and the changing face of the business world?

A: The Internet and e-business front is changing the face of business and industry to an extent comparable to the industrial revolution. Extreme changes are being seen in every aspect of the commercial and industrial worlds. Changes can even be seen in everyday social life. Changes to this degree are forcing businesses to pioneer their industry on the Internet as a method of making themselves an industry leader.

Alberta's E-business Rising Stars



Q: Where did you find the support to start forming your business? How did the local Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC) help contribute to creating and sustaining your business?

A: The Business Development Bank of Canada, BDC, offered a Youth Business Loans Program which gave me the help I needed to get things rolling. From there the business grew and I was able to pay the loan off. Eventually, I decided it was time to go big or go home. The choice to go big was made. Employees were hired and the business was moved into downtown offices. Current capital was quickly exhausted with all of the changes while accounts receivable were not being collected very well.

Capital was realized through the Lethbridge and District Community Futures Development Corporation, which allowed us to pull through the final stages of this growth and carry through with the business and collect much of the outstanding accounts receivable. Help was mostly from the CFDC, with some from the BDC at the start. The local CFDC gave a loan of \$20,000.

Q: Who do you think CFDCs can help the most in your community?

A: The CFDCs can help any business get started and many others grow in size. The CFDC is a key component in the community; Lethbridge has a very high-tech and rapidly growing commercial sector. Much of this would not be possible without the existence of our local CFDC and its employees.

Q: What main challenges have you come across with using e-business for your enterprise?

A: Our enterprise is an e-business enterprise, the structure of our business was formed around e-business. Many businesses form around a "bricks-and-mortar" structure already in existence, which doesn't allow the hierarchy required for a complete e-business implementation. In

our case, there were no bricks-and-mortar to form around, and therefore the primary challenge that most businesses face never really crossed our path. The main problem we had (and are still having, though not nearly to the same degree) is collecting on accounts. Many people do not feel they should pay a business that they have never seen, and often times disappear without paying for the services they have used. This is still a problem, although we have cut back on it about 90 % by implementing a few specialized solutions.

Q: What advice do you have for future entrepreneurs who would like to follow in your footsteps?

A: Wear the right shoes. If you don't come to the market prepared, you're going to get your feet burned. Trial and error can work when used at the right time and place – the e-business frontier is not a good place to get started using that method.

You need to do a lot of research on your competitors and potential customers when you are considering a local market; when on the Internet, your potential market is now anyone in the world, and you are competing with everyone else in the world. Extensive research is required to succeed. Expect to spend most of your time learning the industry, and keeping up with it – it changes every second of every day, or, as we count time in my industry, every millisecond.

Q: Where do you see TerraDelta in 5 years? 10 years?

A: Being a customer-oriented business this is an extremely hard question to answer. If our web-hosting customers start to demand that they can have servers in their own home and run them via their own high-speed Internet connection, we will be there to provide the hardware, software, and support for them to do it. If they decide they want their fridge to keep inventory and order their groceries, we'll be there to program the software to run the system.

Our main goals, which we uphold and will continue to uphold, are the reliability of our customer support and the quality of our products and services. These are key points to surviving on the Internet where anyone can compete. On-line customers will often disregard small price differences and base purchasing decisions solely on quality.

New Study Aligns Quality of Life with the Values of Alberta Households



Western Economic Diversification (WD) and the Pembina Institute's Green Economic team have piloted an ambitious research and development project to establish indicators and measure the genuine well-being and sustainability of the values Albertans consider most important to the quality of their lives.

Measuring intangibles has been a plight of the '90s, e.g. how to value intellectual property and performance measures. The importance of measuring intangibles is accepted. It's the manner in which indicators are measured and reported to stakeholders that is challenging, both for accountants (the measurement scientists) and business people (who need to quantify the importance of their intangible activities).

This challenge of valuing intangibles continues as business and government move toward building frameworks to measure progress in societal and environmental terms as well as economic terms.

Traditional measures of economic progress, like the GDP (gross domestic product), simply consider the monetary transactions in our economy. The GDP tells us little about the genuine well-being of our households or of nature. For example, environmental and social costs, such as the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the Montreal ice storm, and building more prisons, actually contribute to a rise in GDP as money changes hands. Environmental and social costs are ignored in the GDP, as is the depreciation costs of depleting oil, gas and forest resources. As Robert Kennedy once remarked, "The GDP measures everything except that which makes life worthwhile."

Once values are assigned to quality of life issues, indicators will measure how Albertans rank each in terms of importance, and monitor changes in ranking as they occur.

As with traditional accounting functions, there is an element of assets vs. liabilities. These Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI) accounts will create a set of "economic books" to show the monetary value of Alberta's most important assets and liabilities along with an analysis of the full costs and benefits associated with those values that make life worthwhile.

Through this initiative, WD and the Pembina Institute expect to advance previous measurements to a new level by constructing a balance sheet and income statement for human, social, environmental and economic, or produced capital (wealth). "For example, we plan to examine a wide range of factors that contribute to or detract from the well-being of individuals, society and the environment. Such things as the value of volunteer time, the costs of crime, family breakdown, sustainable forest use and air pollution are currently ignored in the provincial GDP figures," says Mark Anielski, Director of the Pembina Institute's Green Economics Program.

The project team's goal is to develop a system of accounting for sustainability and quality of life that aligns with the values of Alberta households and is consistent with how people experience life. The result of this project will be a set of GPI accounts for Alberta that will show the overall "state" (in terms of physical and monetary aspects) of our human, social, environmental (natural) and produced (built, financial) capital.

WD expects this pilot project to be the precursor to broader initiatives that measure "genuine progress," throughout the Western region and across the country. Access Alberta will keep readers informed as this project develops.

