

ACCESS WEST

WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION CANADA

April - June 2001

YOU KNOW THE NAME, BUT DO YOU KNOW WHAT WD IS REALLY ALL ABOUT?

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) plays an innovative and responsive role on behalf of the Government of Canada in providing western Canadians with policies, programs and services that promote economic opportunity. While WD's mandate has not changed since it was created in 1987, how WD fulfills its mandate has evolved to address changes in the western, Canadian and global economies.

WD was ahead of the times and, based on the needs of business in the West, for many years provided direct loans to business. At that time, similar government departments in other regions of Canada offered grants to spur on economic development, and not loans.

In 1995, WD changed its direction and discontinued direct loans to business. Instead, WD focused on other areas — loan funds targeted at high-growth sectors in cooperation with financial institutions; working in partnership with provincial governments and industry associations on a variety of initiatives; one-stop access to information on how business can access government programs and services; expanding community economic development activities; and advancing the interests of the West in our nation's capital.

To more effectively address the challenges and pursue opportunities of the new knowledge-based economy, WD has again refocused its programs and services. Many of our existing programs currently available to small and medium-sized

business fall into the Business Development and Entrepreneurship or Innovation areas.

If you are a small businessperson working in the dark and need someone to help shed a little light on those important things a small business owner needs to know, WD is here to help...and we're just a phone call or a click of the mouse away. We'll help you move into the e-business world, assist you with business planning, provide information on financing options, exporting and selling to government markets, and explain how to attract a recent post-secondary graduate for an international marketing initiative or to improve your science or technology capabilities in order to stay competitive.

We've worked with financial institutions to set up loan programs for targeted sectors, some targeted at small business and some at specific high-growth sectors of the economy.

But WD doesn't stop there! WD formed the Western Canada Business Service Network. The network not only includes WD offices, but also Canada Business Service Centres, offices of the Women's Enterprise Initiative, Community Futures Development Corporations and Francophone economic development organizations across the West — over 100 points of service.

WD has developed strategic initiatives in areas important to the West, and has federal

continued on page 4



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Canada

www.wd.gc.ca

1-888-338-WEST

Access West

April - June 2001

Access West is published quarterly
by Western Economic Diversification
Canada.

WD Offices:

British Columbia

Suite 700, Price Waterhouse Bldg.
601 West Hastings Street
Vancouver BC V6B 5G9
(604) 666-6256

Alberta

Suite 1500, Canada Place
9700 Jasper Avenue NW
Edmonton AB T5J 4H7
(780) 495-4164

Suite 400, Standard Life Bldg.
639 - 5 Avenue SW
Calgary AB T2P 0M9
(403) 292-5458

Saskatchewan

Suite 601, S.J. Cohen Bldg.
119 - 4th Avenue South
Saskatoon SK S7K 3S7
(306) 975-4373

1925 Rose Street
Regina SK S4P 3P1
(306) 780-8080

Manitoba

Suite 712, The Cargill Bldg.
240 Graham Avenue
Winnipeg MB R3C 2L4
(204) 983-0697

Access West Editor:
Barb Steele - (780) 495-4982

Disponible aussi en français

*Canadian Publication Mail
Agreement No. 1472429*

A MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE *Ron J. Duhamel*



*Ron J. Duhamel
Minister of Veterans Affairs
and Secretary of State
(Western Economic
Diversification)
(Francophonie)*

Western Canada is a vibrant part of our country and a vital player in the global economy. To prosper in this new economy, western Canadians are now relying less on the region's natural resources and more on knowledge, entrepreneurship and innovation.

In this changing environment, Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) is providing programs and services that take advantage of new opportunities. Our objectives are to encourage development and diversification, add influence for the West in national decision-making, enhance services to western entrepreneurs and facilitate federal-provincial cooperation.

WD's long-term planning has now been defined within four service lines: Innovation, Partnership and Coordination, Business Development and Entrepreneurship, and Economic Research and Analysis. WD also takes a lead role in coordinating efforts by other federal departments to deliver national programs and other initiatives, such as economic and disaster assistance when needed.

All WD programs and strategies fulfill the Government of Canada's commitment to provide citizen-centred services and to deliver an increasing number of these services on-line.

WD is strongly committed to meeting the needs of ALL entrepreneurs, including services for women, Aboriginal entrepreneurs, persons with disabilities, youth and the Francophone community. In activating and energizing the economic potential of the West, the opportunities that are created and the prosperity that is generated must be readily accessible to all.

This inclusive approach to opportunities is a fundamental part of the way that my Department does business — working together with western Canadians. ♣

MAKING YOUR TRADE SHOW \$\$ PAY OFF

Marketing your products and services can be timely and costly, so it is vital to make the most of your dollar by exhibiting at events that meet your business' objectives. Depending on the nature of your business, objectives can range from promoting company awareness to taking orders, generating sales leads to introducing new products or services, entering new markets to networking.

No matter your objective, ensure that you define your target audience and focus on only those events that will put you in touch with your potential clients. There are many trade show and exhibition directories available that will help you to determine which events are best for you.

Quality Leads Key to Generating Sales

A true measure of success at a show is putting qualified leads into the hands of people in your company who will convert them to business. Research indicates that 80 per cent of all show leads are not handled properly, 43 per cent of prospective buyers receive materials after they have already made a buying decision with another vendor, and 18 per cent report never receiving materials at all.

Many big trade show organizers are now offering tools like lead tracking systems that are laser-scanning systems. Basic information about pre-registered attendees is input into a computer database. Exhibitors run a scanner over a barcode-type symbol on the name tags of attendees' that enter their booth to add information into an exhibitor-specific database. While these systems are handy and provide you with printed and diskette copies of this information, it is not able to incorporate other qualifying information that may be important to you as you follow up on the leads.

On-site show promotion can take on various forms.

- Brochures are useful, but don't have too many — mark a brochure “booth copy” and mail it after you get a lead.
- Draws provide lots of names, but not qualified leads. Instead, make the prize relate to your product or service to generate quality leads. Have attendees fill in a ballot that includes a couple of marketing questions.



- If you plan to use giveaways, do not leave them out on the table. Offer the giveaway at the lead of your sales pitch to give value to the item.

Lead Cards are a tremendous tool. While you can tailor your own lead card to suit your business needs, here are a few ideas about the information you will need to help you remember everything about your potential client.

1. *Authority* – are they a decision maker or in a position of influence?
2. *Cash* – can they afford to do business?
3. *Time* – when do they need it? – prioritize leads.
4. *Identity* - name, position, name of company, address, and telephone and fax numbers.
5. *Obstacles* – reasons you can't do business?
6. *Need* – what is their need?

Remember to note the promised follow-up and any other comments that may assist you later. To save time, staple their business card in the identity area of the card.

When the show has ended, you now have good quality lead information that can be sorted in order of priority. Have follow-up letters ready in advance, and be sure to fulfill any promises made at the show and have a plan in place for on-going contacts.

Obviously, good products or services, and excellent customer service, are needed to make clients happy, but the use of a lead card at trade shows will improve the quality of leads generated and improve the rate of sale of your product or service. Not to mention, save you time chasing dead ends.

Courses are available through various organizations and colleges that can help you develop your display, and train your booth staff on how to break the ice or disengage from visitors. ♣

LEAD CARD	
Name of Event:	
Date:	
Action:	
Cash:	
Identity:	Name:
	Position:
	Organization:
	Address:
	Phone No.:
	Fax No.:
Obstacles:	
Need:	
Promised Follow-Up:	
Comments:	

YOU KNOW THE NAME, BUT DO YOU KNOW WHAT WD IS REALLY ALL ABOUT?

continued from page 1

responsibility for such programs as the Infrastructure Canada Program and Western Economic Partnership Agreements. Add to this the resources to handle federal initiatives such as the restructuring of salmon fisheries on the West Coast and managing rehabilitation efforts for natural tragedies such as the Manitoba floods, to name just two, and you can see how truly diverse WD really needs to be to meet the needs of the West.

WD is easily accessible, with offices in the major centres, a 1-800 number that directs you to the closest WD office — 1-888-338-WEST (9378), and our Web site — www.wd.gc.ca — is constantly being improved to provide our programs and services on-line.

Look for more information about our four lines of business programs and services inside this issue to find out more about the direction in which WD is moving and the services available to western Canadians. ♣

WD'S PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) has developed a strategy to ensure it is able to respond to new economic and policy challenges and priorities facing western Canadians. Four core service lines have been established that will allow us to respond effectively to the needs of Western Canada and western Canadian business: Business Development and Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Partnership and Coordination, and Economic Research and Analysis.

The service lines will provide a framework for WD to develop new programs and services to assist western Canadian entrepreneurs to succeed and promote economic development and growth in Western Canada. As new programs or services become available, Access West will keep you up-to-date on developments.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

WD actively supports business growth and development in Western Canada through innovative, cost-effective programs and services that facilitate small business success. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are critical to the economy of the West. Small and micro businesses account for about 50 per cent of all jobs in Western Canada – approximately five per cent higher than the rest of Canada. In order to grow and be successful in today's global economy, SMEs require business and management information, access to capital, assistance in adapting new technology and information on exporting, selling to government and e-commerce.

WD currently provides a number of programs and services to SMEs through its Western Canada Business Service Network which, in addition to WD, includes offices of the Women's Enterprise Initiative, Canada Business Service Centres, Community Futures Development Corporations and Francophone economic development organizations across the West – over 100 points of services. WD and its network partners will:

- offer information and business counselling services to SMEs and entrepreneurs in order to improve business management capabilities;
- improve access to high-risk capital to SMEs through specialized loan funds in targeted sectors, and pathfinding services and referrals to alternate sources on financing;
- promote increased awareness and adoption of e-commerce by SMEs through seminars and counselling services;
- help western SMEs improve their export readiness by

offering skills development and export counselling services;

- deliver the **International Trade Personnel Program (ITPP)** – a program that matches recent graduates and SMEs seeking new marketing and export skills; and
- provide information to SMEs about selling to government, and assist them to identify and take advantage of opportunities to participate in major federal procurement contracts that include regional benefits for the West.

Entering new markets can be costly. WD's **International Trade Personnel Program (ITPP)** assists small and medium-sized companies to take advantage of the tremendous worldwide growth in international trade by helping them hire recent graduates to work on international market development projects. Graduates can identify international markets and characteristics, plan and implement export market strategies, prepare export promotional materials or their translation, modify packaging to meet specific market demands, or direct product promotion to export markets.

The ITPP will provide up to \$37,500 in salary support over a three-year period. For complete details regarding criteria for this program, contact WD or visit our Web site at: <http://www.wd.gc.ca/eng/export/xitpp.html>.

WD provides a variety of **programs and services to ensure business opportunities are available to ALL entrepreneurs**. In cooperation with network partners and other organizations, WD programs are available for small and medium-sized businesses, including programs for women entrepreneurs, persons with disabilities, youth, Aboriginal entrepreneurs and the Francophone community. Community Futures Development Corporations are located in the smaller centres and rural areas of Western Canada and offer general investment programs and the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program. Offices of the Women's Enterprise Initiative offer programs specifically targeted at the special needs of women. Francophone and Aboriginal economic development organizations provide services to their areas. For more information about WD's programs, contact WD or visit our Web Site, Economic and Community Development section, which provide links to our partners who offer these programs.

WD has established **loan fund programs** with a number of financial institutions across the West to increase the amount of capital available to businesses in sectors that are typically considered "high risk," such as advanced technologies, information technology and telecommunications, and agricultural value-added processing. WD has also supported the creation of numerous micro loan programs for small business, including one specifically designed for Aboriginal entrepreneurs. Through its loan fund programs, WD has leveraged private sector investment in higher risk, emerging and export-oriented small business. WD provides business planning advice and screens applicants, but final loan decisions are made by the financial institutions on a commercial basis under this program. For information about the various WD loan funds, contact WD or visit our Web site at: <http://www.wd.gc.ca/eng/finance/xnetwork.html>.

INNOVATION

Because of its mandate to promote diversification, WD, from its inception, has made investments in innovation using existing programs, as well as various strategic initiatives and Western Economic Partnership Agreements to lever matching funds from provincial governments. WD has invested approximately \$440 million in over 2,500 innovation projects since 1988. Over the past several years alone, the Department has supported over 100 strategic initiatives in areas such as: life sciences, new media, fuels cells,

ocean sciences, medical research and the Canadian Light Source synchrotron program.

WD's objectives in the area of innovation include:

- making strategic investments in key technologies to increase western Canadian innovation capacity, strengthen technology clusters and increase the amount of research and technology commercialization;
- developing and implementing programs and services to support SMEs in adopting innovative processes and technology;
- delivering the **First Jobs in Science and Technology Program** to support recent graduates and SMEs; and
- working with federal, provincial, university and industry officials to encourage a mutually supportive and strategic approach to building an innovative, knowledge-based economy in Western Canada.

WD's investments in innovation will take into account both provincial and pan-western opportunities and

The service lines will provide a framework for WD to develop new programs and services to assist western Canadian entrepreneurs to succeed and promote economic development and growth in Western Canada.

WD's PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

continued from page 5

priorities. We will also work to promote linkages between western and national research organizations and initiatives to ensure activities are coordinated and build on existing regional strengths and national priorities.

The First Jobs in Science and Technology Program provides small and medium-sized businesses in Western Canada with the opportunity to hire recent graduates of science, technology and engineering programs. The program helps ensure that western SMEs can hire the people needed to keep competitive and profitable in today's marketplace. While helping business acquire the skills and expertise they need to excel, it provides graduates with valuable experience in their chosen field.

The First Jobs program will provide up to \$37,500 in salary support over a three-year period. For complete details regarding criteria for this program, contact WD or visit our Web site at: <http://www.wd.gc.ca/eng/finance/programs/xfirstjb.html>.

PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION

WD plays an important role in Western Canada in forging partnerships with provincial governments in the West and advocating on behalf of westerners within the Government of Canada. These activities are important for ensuring inter-governmental cooperation and joint action in areas of mutual interest. As a key part of our long-term strategy, the Department will continue to engage in strategic partnerships and seek new opportunities to provide leadership and coordination to deliver economic programs and services to western Canadians.

WD has been instrumental in promoting economic growth and employment opportunities in the West through cooperative arrangements with other orders of government. Examples of our activities include urban development agreements and **Western Economic Partnership Agreements (WEPAs)**.

Formal urban development agreements in Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver have brought together WD with other federal departments, and provincial and municipal governments, to jointly plan and coordinate activities that address urban development issues. As part of our plan for the future, WD will be working with its federal, provincial and municipal government partners and key community stakeholders to identify new opportunities for cooperation and joint action.

Beginning in 1997, WD entered into WEPA agreements with the four western provinces. The current WEPAs, which expire in 2002, will result in an investment of up to \$160 million by WD and the four western provinces over the five-year period of these agreements.

Over the coming months, WD will be consulting with each provincial government to determine the level of interest in renewing the WEPA agreements and discuss potential areas for joint action. WD also participates in a number of forums with the four western provincial governments which address a range of economic development and other issues.

As part of our long-term strategic priorities, WD will work to:

- continue to develop closer working relationships with provincial governments in order to strengthen federal-provincial cooperation, reduce duplication of efforts and encourage broader participation by westerners in the benefits of economic growth;
- explore opportunities for joint action by federal and provincial governments to address specific regional economic development challenges and priorities in areas such as community innovation, community adjustment, and urban and rural development issues; and
- participate in and facilitate federal and intergovernmental forums to develop a cooperative approach to address key federal priorities in horizontal issues that will forge partnerships with other levels of government, other federal departments and the private sector to implement federal strategies in areas such as a renewed approach to Aboriginal economic development.

ECONOMIC RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

As part of its strategy for the future, WD will increase its capacity to provide economic research and analysis on Western Canada. In carrying out this work, WD will work closely with other research groups and government organizations to encourage increased attention to, and analysis of, the western Canadian issues and trends. These activities will ensure policy makers in the West have access to relevant research on western issues, and be able to share research findings on issues of concern to the region.

The results of this work will improve the ability of WD to provide advice to federal policy and decision makers on western Canadian issues, promote greater understanding of the western Canadian economy, and help WD and other federal departments design programs and services that address western Canadian needs and priorities. ❁

PUT YOUR BUSINESS CARD TO WORK FOR YOU!

If you're looking for an inexpensive marketing tool, look no further than your business card!

A business card provides your client with the first impression of your company, so whether you're just starting out or you've been around for years, there are a few simple things to remember.

The business card can't tell the whole story about your company, so don't cram too much information onto the card – keep it simple. Include your name, title, company name and logo (the logo should be the largest element on the card), address, phone and fax numbers, and your E-mail address. Ensure the typeface you choose is easily

readable. And, don't make the card an unusual shape that makes it difficult to put in a business card file.

Colour, wording and texture of your business card will determine the appeal and its ability to convey your company's image. The type of business you run will help determine the design. For instance, a consulting business should have a business card that conveys professionalism and reliability – a traditional looking card with black printing on a white, grey or beige background would probably be the best choice. Whereas, a children's entertainment centre might want to try a brightly coloured card with words written in a child's script. ♣

Use your business card as a marketing tool...

- Always carry extra business cards in your wallet.
- Provide your satisfied clients with extra copies of your card and ask them to pass along to potential customers.
- Use your card as an ad in any publications that have a business card classified section – these ads are usually very affordable.
- Always leave your card when you have an appointment with your doctor, dentist, mechanic, hair salon, etc., and ask the owners to refer people to you.
- When you send mail or pay bills, enclose your card.
- Leave your business card in libraries, and tack them up on community bulletin boards or in the centre of supermarket or school bulletin boards.
- Exchange cards with friends and at social gatherings.
- Join organizations, clubs or associations and make sure the members get your card.
- If you belong to a health club, ask the receptionist if you can leave your cards on the counter or on a bulletin board.



YOUR FEEDBACK COUNTS!

Access West is undergoing a revitalization and we're interested in your opinion of the new look!

The "Innovation" graphic design not only provides a visible connection to WD's Innovation business service line, but also provides a consistent look with a number of the Department's other products – exhibit graphics, report covers, kit folders and bookmarks. The vivid, eye-catching design of these other products, and the positive response by

the public and WD staff, was the incentive for incorporating this look into Access West.

If you have any comments about the new pilot design – good or bad, please drop us a line at access.west@wd.gc.ca or contact me at (780) 495-4982. ♣

Barb Steele
Editor

If undeliverable please return to:

Western Economic Diversification Canada
Suite 1500, Canada Place
9700 Jasper Avenue NW
Edmonton AB T5J 4H7

ACCESS WEST GOES ON-LINE!



Canada's commitment to offer citizens and businesses faster, more convenient and seamless access to services and programs. WD has met the Tier One objectives, ensuring that information on all key the Department's programs and commonly used forms are available on-line.

Access West has been available in a PDF format for some time now on the WD Web site but, as part of the GOL initiative, we are working to improve access by providing the newsletter in a HTML format that improves accessibility to all readers. It may take a little time to fully utilize this feature, but it's a goal we hope to reach shortly.

As a reader, you have two options – you can receive the newsletter by regular mail services or you can subscribe to the on-line version.

Subscription is Quick and Easy

Subscribing to Access West has never been easier! Visit the WD Web site at www.wd.gc.ca, enter the Media Centre and check out our Access West Subscription Services.

- New subscriptions – choice of on-line subscription or print copy will be available, and in both official languages.
- Update your current mailing address or e-mail address to ensure the most accurate information is always in our database.
- Convert your subscription from print copy to the on-line version by indicating you are updating your subscription.
- Readers can also request to be removed from our database if you no longer wish to receive the newsletter.

As each issue goes on-line, you'll receive an e-mail notice with a direct link to the newest issue of Access West, complete with an index of topics available in the current issue. You can then check out the newsletter at your convenience, and in the process help cut down on paper waste and work together with WD in its sustainable development efforts.

We're always looking for ways to improve, so if you have any questions or comments, or would like to learn more about Access West, please don't hesitate to contact Barb Steele at (780) 495-4982 or access.west@wd.gc.ca. ♣

Reaching a greater audience and keeping up with the times means taking advantage of the Internet. Not everyone has access to it, but more and more businesses and homes are utilizing this exciting window to sources of information we've never dreamed of or previously had at our fingertips.

The Government of Canada made a strong commitment that: By 2004, *our goal is to be known around the world as the government most connected to its citizens, with Canadians able to access all government information and services on-line at the time and place of their choosing.* This commitment was reconfirmed in the January 2001 Speech from the Throne – *The Government will continue to work toward putting its services on-line by 2004, to better connect with citizens.*

The October Speech from the Throne underlined that the **Government On-Line (GOL) Initiative** is the Government of