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BUSINESS SERVICES FOR YOU



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Helping the West's small businesses succeed

The face of small business in Western Canada is changing. Once primarily associated with small retail operations serving defined local markets, more and more of today's small businesses are taking their innovative products and services out to national and international markets.

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD), a Government of Canada department, works with westerners to develop and diversify the western economy and supports small business through its

Business Service Network. The Network partners – *Canada Business, the Women's Enterprise Initiative, Francophone Economic Development Organizations* and *Community Futures* – provide more than 100 points of service where small business owners can access invaluable resources to help them succeed.

Across the West, WD is there, working with and for western Canadians to increase the number, size and success of small businesses.

In 2006-07, the members in WD's Western Canada Business Service Network

Responded to over **535,000** requests for information

Provided over **47,000** advisory services

Received more than **3.3 million** self-service interactions (automated telephone services and web site visits)



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie
de l'Ouest Canada

Canada

Entrepreneurs: the new western pioneers



*The Honourable Rona Ambrose
President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada,
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and
Minister of Western Economic Diversification*

The pioneer spirit that built the West has found a new frontier – small business ownership. There are 40 per cent more small businesses per capita in the West than in the rest of Canada and they create nearly 80 per cent of all new jobs in the region.

Western Economic Diversification Canada supports this invaluable driver of economic growth through its Western Canada Business Service Network. The Network is there, in your community, delivering the advice and information small business owners need

to start and grow successful businesses. From creating business and marketing plans, to accessing financing or expanding into export and e-business markets, Network staff can help make it happen.

I invite you to read on to discover how our Western Canada Business Service Network partners are making a difference in communities, large and small, across the West. In building a stronger West, we are building a stronger Canada.

CONTRIBUTING TO WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS

The Women's Enterprise Initiative (WEI), with offices in each of the four western provinces, fosters women's entrepreneurial spirit by providing business loans, advice and information, as well as networking and mentoring opportunities.

Throughout the West, WEI helps women seize new niche opportunities and capitalize on markets across Canada and around the world.

Since 1994, WEI has

Provided over **1,400 loans** totalling more than **\$41.5 million** to western businesses led by women, which have created or maintained more than **3,750 jobs** in western communities

WOMEN'S ENTERPRISE INITIATIVE

Karen Murphy started Express Gift Baskets in 1997, making baskets for local businesses to send to their clients. With sales from across Canada and the United States, the business outgrew her home office within a year, so Murphy approached the Women's Enterprise Centre of B.C. for a loan, returning in 2002 for help in growing her thriving business.

EXPRESS GIFT BASKETS INC.
www.expressgiftbaskets.net

Canada and the U.S. express targets for Kelowna business

Now in her tenth year of business, Murphy has launched a new division, Cookie Express, which delivers gourmet cookies in decorative tins and boxes. Murphy says the Internet has been key to her success, and accounts for about 85 per cent of sales.



Karen Murphy proudly displays products from her latest venture, Cookie Express.

Calgary company brings communications to remote locations

IMMERSE COMMUNICATIONS INC.
www.immersecoms.com

A job in the South Seas made Shannon O'Connor recognize the challenges faced in remote locations without high-speed Internet and cell signals. She envisaged mobile offices, disaster command centres and heli-portable communications units that could be placed on top of a mountain.

On her return to Canada, she visited Alberta Women Entrepreneurs for assistance, and opened Immerse Communications in 2005. Today, the company provides customized, wireless trailers that can go anywhere in the world where better communications are needed. In Alberta, the trailers are being tested as a means of improving communications at forest fire sites and as command centres for tracking and monitoring the Mountain Pine Beetle infestation.

Shannon O'Connor is connecting remote locations with mobile work offices.

Wireless communication trailers can go anywhere in the world where better communications are needed.

Winnipeg retail clothing line takes the Cake across Canada

CAKE CLOTHING
www.cakeclothing.ca

When Rebecca McCormack decided to create her own private label of exclusive dresses, she turned to the Women's Enterprise Centre of Manitoba for financing.

It's been full speed ahead ever since. With the success of her retail-clothing store, Cake Clothing, McCormack has turned her attention to designing luxurious ready-to-wear dresses. Over the last year, she has engaged a manufacturer in China and agents in Canada to promote the line. In business for four years, Cake Clothing also wholesales the unique line of fashions to select stores across the country with private label dresses available this fall.

Regina nutraceuticals company serves international markets

**HEMP MANAGEMENT GROUP (HMG)
 SALES AND MARKETING INC.**
www.hempmanagement.com

Martine Carlina believes in the healing properties of industrial hemp so much she founded HMG Sales and Marketing Inc. and developed Mum's Original, a line of certified organic wholefood products for the natural products market. When it proved popular, she turned to Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan Inc. for financing to bridge the gap between supply and demand.

Carlina continues to move ahead. She has launched Carlina's Cucina, a gourmet line of organic olive oil imported from Italy, and is working on adding value to domestic oilseeds. The company produces its own brands and private labels for both domestic and international markets.

*Martine Carlina, president of HMG Sales and Marketing Inc. is making hempseed wholefood products readily available across the country.
 Photo credit: MJ Deans*

Carlina's Cucina, a gourmet line of organic olive oil imported from Italy.



PROVIDING A CENTRAL RESOURCE FOR CANADIAN BUSINESS INFORMATION

Canada Business (CB) provides a single, seamless source of information on federal and provincial government services, programs and regulatory requirements for business. It also offers a wide range of seminars, online business products and information guides, and serves as the referral point for the Aboriginal Business Service Network. Located in the West's major urban centres, a broad network of regional access sites extends services into rural and northern communities.

Wherever you live, CB is nearby to answer your questions about starting a new business or improving an existing one.

Since 1999, Canada Business has

Handled more than
1.55 million
in-person and
telephone inquiries

And, in the past three years,
have received over
3 million
website visits annually

CANADA BUSINESS

Edmonton entrepreneurs on the leading edge of training

It has been an action-packed five years since Chris LaBossiere and Don Riep started Leading Edge Technology Inc. with the assistance of The Business Link. The company, which operates as ProTraining.com, delivers online training and testing to nearly 150 corporate clients in a wide range of industries. In 2006, it won the VenturePrize and was

identified as Alberta's 10th fastest-growing company under \$20 million in sales.

This year, ProTraining added some notable world-class companies to its client list, including Research in Motion, Snap-on Tools, Moen Inc., Eaton Corporation and GreatWest Healthcare.

PROTRAINING.COM
www.protraining.com



Leading Edge Technology Inc. co-founders Chris LaBossiere (left) and Don Riep at ProTraining.com headquarters in Edmonton.

ProTraining was identified as one of Alberta's 10th fastest-growing companies under \$20 million in sales.

*"do what
you love
and the money
will follow."*

CANDOR
books music apparel gifts

CANDOR BOOKS AND MUSIC
www.myspace.com/candorshop

Amanda Darnley and Jules Adolphe of St. Boniface are betting on the saying "do what you love and the money will follow." In January 2007, the Métis music enthusiasts opened Candor Books and Music, which carries a diverse selection of blues, jazz, folk and roots, complemented by a range of books, handmade clothing and gifts, with an emphasis on local talent.

Young Manitoba entrepreneurs tune into business

The hard work is paying off with steady and growing demand that will soon require them to expand their staff. To help ensure their success, the pair used Canada Business's online tools and attended several seminars.

Passion for vines grows gourmet B.C. business

ONCE UPON A VINE
www.onceuponavine.com

In 2002, Darlene Neilson of Maple Ridge wanted to create a business based on her passion for gourmet foods and fine wines. After a visit to Small Business B.C. for guidance, Once Upon a Vine – where wine enthusiasts learn how to make and bottle their own wine, and how to pair the perfect wine with any meal – was born.

Neilson soon recognized another opportunity and began offering cooking classes, along with gourmet products and wine-related gift items. Today, Once Upon a Vine is expanding with a full demonstration kitchen, cookware and a revamped website with a bridal registry.

Where wine enthusiasts learn how to make and bottle their own wine.



Darlene Neilson (left) and her team teach wine enthusiasts the essentials of winemaking.

The **Aboriginal Business Service Network** provides relevant and accessible business information to Aboriginal entrepreneurs with a strong focus on providing online business information. ABSN offices can be accessed through Canada Business and Aboriginal Community Futures offices across the West, with resources tailored to meet the unique requirements of Aboriginal clients.

Aboriginal Business Service Network



Saskatoon business more than just fun and games

Tammy McCumber and Paula Woodhouse, owners of The Giggle Factory, share a giggle at their store in Saskatoon.

Playmobil is just one of many brands of toys carried at The Giggle Factory.



Tammy McCumber and Paula Woodhouse began making and selling toys from home in 2002. Nine months later, with the help of Canada Business, the pair had written their first business plan and opened The Giggle Factory in downtown Saskatoon. Along with their flagship line, Playmobil, the company offers science-based, educational, mechanical and build-it-yourself toys and crafts.

Soon the entrepreneurs began offering special event services, including customized birthdays in a box and giant game rentals, and they recently opened a specialized candy store, The Giggle Factory Belly Treats.

THE GIGGLE FACTORY
www.gigglefactory.ca

HELPING RURAL BUSINESSES COMPETE

Community Futures (CFs) help foster rural entrepreneurship by providing business development loans, technical support, training and information. CFs help communities in their region to develop their economic potential, and provide assistance to individuals who are interested in self-employment or in expanding their business.

Business by business, town by town, Western Canada's 90 CFs are creating new opportunities and new prosperity.

Since 1995, CFs have

Provided **19,800 loans** totalling **\$560 million** to rural western businesses that have created or maintained over **60,000 jobs** in western communities

COMMUNITY FUTURES

Saskatchewan company sure-footed in international markets

SAFETY SEVEN MANUFACTURING INC.
www.safetyseven.com

With advice and a loan from South Central CF, Moose Jaw entrepreneurs Shelly and Ben Dombowsky's business has grown into an international success. Founded in 2001, Safety Seven manufactures and distributes ergonomic strap-on safety footwear. Products for static control and wet or icy conditions will soon join the original products – TracMates, with anti-slip soles to reduce the risk of slips and falls, and ErgoMates, which reduce fatigue.



ErgoMates are the world's first and only mobile anti-fatigue matting solution that goes everywhere you go.

Safety Seven's customers include Toyota, Ford, Boeing, Bombardier, the United States Postal Service and the U.S. Air Force. With sales to distributors in Australia and Europe, the company is now expanding into overseas markets.

Safety Seven's ErgoMates are used by major companies to reduce the fatigue their workers experience when standing or walking on hard surfaces.

B.C. entrepreneur opens new international markets for renewable fuel

When John Swaan of Prince George wanted to expand Pellet Flame in 2001, he turned to Fraser Fort George CF for help. Wood pellets were quite new when Swann started the company in 1994, but growing international sales required additional plant capacity. The pellets, made from compressed waste-wood, provide an efficient, carbon-neutral source of heat that is renewable and substantially less expensive than fossil fuels.

Swann has moved on to become the Executive Director of the Wood Pellet Association of Canada, but the company he founded – now known as Pacific Bioenergy Corporation – continues to expand sales throughout Europe and North America.

PACIFIC BIOENERGY CORPORATION,
FORMERLY PELLET FLAME INC.
www.pacificbioenergy.ca

Company creates jobs and opportunity in rural Manitoba

LAKESIDEDIGITAL
www.lakesidedigital.com

What do you do when your computer breaks down and the nearest repair shop is two hours away? If you're Andrew Kalteck, Charles Plett and Roger Plett, you start your own business.

The trio opened Lakesidedigital in Riverton in 2002, but were soon ready to expand. East Interlake CF helped with a business plan and loan for two new locations. Their product line has also grown. In addition to computer sales and service, the company has introduced wireless Internet services to the region. With eight employees, Lakesidedigital has been a welcome addition to the rural Interlake Region.



Charles Plett (left) and Roger Plett in front of their retail store in Gimli, one of three Lakesidedigital locations in Manitoba.

Alberta company keeps North American resource industries on track



After 15 years as a logging contractor, Mike Meagher of Hinton was confident there was a market for a computer program to track costs and operating data. He was right. Since turning to West Yellowhead CF for support and launching ALDATA Software in 1991, the company has become a leader in log management software with customers across Canada and in the U.S.

Meagher isn't done yet. His new product, TAGASIS – an on-board computer that captures and reports key information about the operation of heavy equipment, even in remote locations – will open new markets in oil and gas, agriculture and mining.

**ALDATA SOFTWARE
MANAGEMENT INC.**
www.aldatasoftware.com

TAGASIS is a small unit with a big payback, giving fleet managers better control over their mobile-equipment moves – and their associated costs – by creating a complete picture of the location and activity of each piece of equipment.

FRANCOPHONE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FRANCOPHONE ENTREPRENEURS

Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs) in each of the four western provinces provide a range of services customized for francophone entrepreneurs, including training, business and community economic development, access to capital, information services, marketing advice, networking opportunities and mentoring.

FEDOs enhance the vitality of official languages minority communities in Western Canada and strengthen economic opportunities for francophone businesses, at home and abroad.



Since their inception in 2001, FEDOs have

Responded to over **37,500** requests for information

Delivered over **7,000** technical and advisory services

Provided over **4,900** training and skills development services

Cover story

PAREGO MEDIA INC.
www.parego.com



Yann Boissonneault and Philippe Beaudry have earned a solid reputation in the publishing business.

Friendship – the basis for Winnipeg publishing success

After 18 years, Philippe Beaudry and Yann Boissonneault are still having fun. In 2003, the childhood friends founded custom-publisher Parego, and their creative marketing solutions have earned them a solid reputation in the industry.

Boissonneault says the Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba, which provided a loan and advice, has

been a significant factor in the growth of the company. Sales have more than doubled every year.

Parego has now expanded its offerings to include electronic media, corporate identities and advertising strategies, and is developing a new niche in healthcare by producing publications to help patients stay informed.

Calgary's French bookstore expanding in Canadian and U.S. markets

LIBRAIRIE MONETTE
www.librairiemonette.com

Librairie Monette has grown since sisters Brigitte and Claudette Monette opened it in 1999. With marketing assistance from La Chambre économique de l'Alberta, the French bookstore recently expanded its product line to include Spanish language books, a move that has helped boost its profile and market.

Librairie Monette works with various Alberta Francophone associations and participates in WordFest, Calgary's popular annual literacy festival. In addition to its retail business, the company sells to 13 western Canadian school boards, the Yukon Department of Education and clients in the U.S.

Beginning this November, sisters Claudette and Brigitte Monette (third and fourth from left) will expand Librairie Monette's market by offering French and Spanish books through their website.



Rural Saskatchewan business flexes its muscles

When your town has a population of only 322, succeeding in business takes both creativity and hard work. Simone Chrusch of Vonda has demonstrated both since starting her business in 1998. The Foot Path offers reflexology and aesthetics services, but to extend her market Chrusch has formed strategic partnerships with other service professionals – including a hair artist,

chiropractor and massage therapist – who rent space in the building she owns.

Chrusch recently won the Entrepreneur of the Year award from the Conseil de la Coopération de la Saskatchewan and will compete in the national competition this fall.

**THE FOOT PATH
TO REFLEXOLOGY**
www.thefootpath.net



Simone Chrusch of Saskatchewan has built her business through partnerships with other service professionals.

LA BAGUETTE & L'ÉCHALOTE
www.labaguette.ca

Mario Armitano and Louise Turgeon made such an impression when they went to the Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique for help with their website, they also got nominated for a national Francophone business award. The couple owns La Baguette & L'Échalote, a Granville Island bakery that offers fresh baked goods, baguette sandwiches and imported delicacies.

Vancouver bakery still serving up fresh ideas after 25 years

Their products are also distributed throughout the Lower Mainland and featured at many of Vancouver's fine restaurants. The bakery has been chosen as the sole distributor for the Hudson Group café in the new terminal at the Vancouver airport.

Mario Armitano and Louise Turgeon are spicing up Granville Island's Public Market with their baked goods.

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

www.wd.gc.ca
www.canadabusiness.gc.ca
1-888-338-WEST (9378)



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Canada