



SOUNDING BOARD



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GREATER VANCOUVER BOARD OF TRADE AND ITS MEMBERS | OCTOBER 2018 | VOLUME 58 / ISSUE 9 | BOARDOFTRADE.COM

Regional priorities take centre stage in Local Elections

ADVOCACY | Business groups host an economic briefing for candidates from across the Lower Mainland

BY IAIN BLACK

Last month, business groups from across Greater Vancouver came together to host a briefing to equip candidates for the upcoming local elections with a good understanding of key issues that affect our region's quality of life.

Nearly 100 candidates from across the Lower Mainland attended the half-day event to hear from business leaders, academics, and industry experts about what they can do to effectively address key issues facing our region, such as health, human capital, and housing. This included presentations by Mary Ackenhusen, President and CEO of Vancouver Coastal Health, Dr. Kevin Wainwright, Associate Dean of Broadcast Communications in the School of Business at BCIT, and Eric Bond, Principal Market Analyst at the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.



Evi Mustel, Anna Lilly, and Iain Black discuss results from the VoteLocal survey during a candidate briefing on Sept. 5 in New Westminster. The event was co-hosted by eight Lower Mainland business groups. | CHUNG CHOW

In addition, candidates also learned about the priorities and challenges facing regional organizations that contribute to the economic and social prosperity of our economy. This

included presentations by Kevin Desmond, CEO of TransLink, Robyn Crisanti, Director of Public Affairs for the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, and Anne Murray, Vice President of

Business and Development and Public Affairs for the Vancouver Airport Authority.

The event concluded with the unveiling of results from our VoteLocal survey, which polled the business community, general public, and politicians on what they believe are the top priorities in the upcoming local elections. (For a deep dive into the survey's findings, turn to page 3 or visit votelocalbc.ca.)

When we first began planning this event in the summer, we reached out to chambers and business groups across the region to gauge their interest in collaborating. We are so pleased that so many organizations helped host this event, including the New Westminster Chamber of Commerce, Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce, Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce, South Surrey and White Rock Chamber of Commerce, Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce, West Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, and

the Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association.

The convergence of candidates, chambers, and regional organizations at the event highlights the growing importance of regional collaboration and engagement across municipal borders as the mechanism for ensuring a high quality of life and the prosperity of the region.

Overall, the event was a great success. Candidates left with a greater knowledge of the region's key issues, voters' local election priorities, and what they can do to effectively address them.

We would like to thank our presenters and event partners, without whom this briefing would not have been possible. SB

Iain Black is President and CEO of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade.

For more information, including copies of our speakers' presentations, results from the VoteLocal survey, and more, visit boardoftrade.com/localelections.



Future of mobility

Deloitte's Simon Dixon sets the stage for his keynote address later this month at Transportation Forum 2018

2

The survey says...

A deep dive into the results of the VoteLocal survey, which polled residents, business owners, and candidates

3



Small Business Month

Q&As with two B.C. businesses who have completed the Trade Accelerator Program and are tapping into new markets

7

Chair Lori Mathison on the importance of democratic engagement

Photo highlights from recent events and activities

4
6

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TRANSPORTATION | Booming ridership

TransLink CEO to discuss transit growth in his third annual GVBOT address



Kevin Desmond will give his annual update to our region's business community on Nov. 8.

Something special is happening in our region: transit ridership is growing faster than any other region in Canada or the United States.

This growth comes hot off the heels of major transportation investment identified in the Mayors' Council 10-Year Vision. Demand for more services is surging at a time when many other metropolitan areas are experiencing steep declines in ridership.

There is an insatiable demand for more transit services in the region and TransLink has a \$7.3-billion investment plan to address it. Funding for the next round of expansion was approved earlier this year, allowing for the increase in even more transit services. In addition, major infrastructure projects like the Millennium Line

Broadway Extension and Surrey-Newton-Guildford Light Rail Transit have received the green light.

As the region continues to grow, so too will the demand for affordable, accessible, and sustainable transportation choices. Starting this year, TransLink will begin updating the Regional Transportation Strategy, our region's 30-year roadmap for transit and transportation planning.

On Nov. 8, TransLink CEO Kevin Desmond will return to the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade to share his thoughts on the current state of transit in our region and next steps on delivering major projects. **SB**



Tickets for this event are on sale now at boardoftrade.com/translink2018.

TRANSPORTATION | Future of mobility

Deloitte's Simon Dixon on innovation, technology, and interconnected transportation

BY SIMON DIXON

Efficient. Connected. Sustainable. It is the foundation of successful transportation systems — an interconnected network that plays an essential role in a city's economic prosperity.

Cities that use innovative technology to enhance the movement their citizens in a seamless and integrated, multi-modal way are poised to be the most productive, livable and flexible.

The changes realised in the next 10 years will vastly surpass those of the previous hundred. Today, real-time data can be collected, analyzed and used to improve transport outcomes for everyone, replacing old-school questionnaires and surveys that once identified people's needs. To address this, Deloitte has developed the Deloitte City Mobility Index which offers a new and better way for city officials to gauge the health of their mobility network and their readiness to embrace the rapid changes occurring in the way people and goods move about.

The index is based on performance and resilience, vision and leadership and service and inclusion. Higher scores are given to cities with a wider range of mobility options and a cohesive integration of different modes like walking, biking, trains, cars and buses. Success in the new mobility ecosystem will not be measured



Simon Dixon

in additional subways and roads, but in the connectivity between transit modes and the way people use them.

Rapidly-evolving technologies now offer the opportunity to develop and deploy new solutions to improve the efficiency and sustainability of interconnected transportation. The innovation is revolutionary. The possibilities are limitless. The time is now. **SB**

Simon Dixon is the Global Transportation Sector Leader for Deloitte.



Simon Dixon will deliver the keynote address at the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade's 2018 Transportation Forum on Oct. 16. Learn more at boardoftrade.com/mobility.

UPCOMING EVENTS

See our full events calendar at boardoftrade.com/events

Is there a speaker you'd like to hear from or topic you'd like explored? Make a suggestion at boardoftrade.com/suggest

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2018

Women's Leadership Circle

Leadership Lessons from Women in Politics

7 – 9 a.m.

Four Seasons Hotel
791 West Georgia Street

KEYNOTE:

Hon. Christy Clark

Former Premier of British Columbia (2011-17)
Senior Advisor, Bennett Jones LLP

PANELLISTS

Hon. Hedy Fry

MP, Vancouver Centre
Parliament of Canada

Nicole Read

Mayor
Maple Ridge

MODERATOR:

Pamela Martin

Former CTV News at Six Anchor

Gold Program Partner: British Columbia Securities Commission

Silver Program Partners: TELUS, Pacific Blue Cross

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2018

Work + Wellness Forum

Presented by Pacific Blue Cross

The shift towards an employee-centric workplace

7:30 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Fairmont Waterfront Vancouver
— Waterfront Ballroom
900 Canada Place

Title Sponsor: Pacific Blue Cross

Elite Sponsors: TELUS, Copeman Healthcare

Event Partners: Fairmont Waterfront, Air Canada

Marketing Partner: CPHR BC & Yukon

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2018

Transportation Forum 2018: Moving people around our region

7:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Fairmont Hotel Vancouver
— Pacific Ballroom
900 W Georgia Street

Presenting Sponsor: Deloitte

Community Sponsor: Downtown Surrey BIA

MONDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2018

Business Preparedness:

Cyber-attacks and natural disasters

Understanding threats and proactive measures

7:30 – 10 a.m.

Scotiabank Theatre Vancouver
900 Burrard Street

PANELLISTS

Erik Berg

Partner Advisory Services, Risk Consulting
KPMG LLP

Kimberley Nemrava

Vice President, British Columbia & Yukon
Canadian Red Cross

Presenting Sponsor: KPMG

Community Sponsor: Insurance Bureau of Canada



Friday, October 19, 2018

Rogers Arena | Doors open at 6 p.m.
ellen@boardoftrade.com for tickets



2-day workshop, October 25 & 26, 2018
999 Canada Place | 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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Deadline to apply is October 4, 2018

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ADVOCACY | Voters anxious about housing, transportation: survey

Mustel Group, FleishmanHillard HighRoad, and GVBOT collaborate on new three-part VoteLocal survey

As voters prepare to head to the polls on Oct. 20 in communities across Greater Vancouver, almost half the region's residents and over a third of its businesses say they have recently considered moving away from the region due to affordability concerns.

That is a key finding of the VoteLocal survey, a unique research project exploring the views of the public, businesses and politicians conducted by Mustel Group and Fleishman-Hillard HighRoad, in partnership with the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. Findings of the survey were presented last month at a briefing for current civic politicians and election candidates hosted by the Board of Trade, Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association and Chambers of Commerce from around the region.

The survey shows that the 2018 Local Elections will take place against a backdrop of significant concern and anxiety among voters, businesses and politicians in the region. A clear majority of residents (67%), businesses (75%), and political candidates (82%) believe quality of life and affordability in the region have declined in the last five years. The results are consistent in municipalities across the region. What's more, residents and business owners expect things to get worse. Politicians are more optimistic than the general public, even though they do not feel municipal governments have much control over affordability.

With more than half of the region's mayors retiring, this is shaping up to be the most interesting civic election in recent memory, with much at stake for the region.

"Metro Vancouver has long enjoyed a reputation for excellent quality of life, but residents and businesses seem to be falling out of love with the place we call home," said Anna Lilly, Senior Vice President and Partner with FleishmanHillard HighRoad. "Our survey suggests that affordable housing, the pace of growth and development, and transportation are likely to dominate discussion in the lead up to October 20, and while voters want action on housing, many are concerned about overdevelopment in their communities."

Topping the list of key concerns among all three groups surveyed is the issue of housing affordability. Residents are reporting stronger support for action to dampen demand for housing and less support for expediting permitting for new housing, compared to businesses and politicians. Candidates will need to

take a strategic approach to how they address housing policy solutions and development issues in the campaign.

There is also strong demand for action to improve transportation across the region, with residents, businesses and politicians all expressing strong support for improvements to the region's roads and public transit. Local road maintenance and traffic management tops the list of potential municipal government investments among all three respondent categories.

The three groups are split about other investment priorities. Residents want money spent on social housing and poverty reduction as well as city service improvements. Businesses would like to see a more regional approach to economic development and expedited permitting for new housing supply. For their part, politicians agree with residents on social housing and poverty reduction, and with businesses on permitting for development.

"Metro Vancouver residents are divided as to whether they think their municipality is on the right track or wrong track," said Evi Mustel, Principal of the Mustel Group. "Residents in the Northeast (Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows), Southeast (Surrey/Langley) and City of Vancouver are most likely to say their city council is on the wrong track, which suggests these will be the communities to watch for significant changes in the make-up of city councils on election day."

"These survey results confirm what our Members and local business leaders have been telling us for a long time — that concern and frustration is growing across our region over affordability, traffic congestion, planning and permitting delays, and the lack of a cohesive region-wide strategy for economic development," said Hon. Iain Black, President and CEO of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade.

"It has never been more crucial for our region to work collaboratively, given that the challenges facing our region cut across municipal boundaries. We hope that the 2018 Local Elections will be a turning point for Greater Vancouver, and that the VoteLocal survey results will help candidates make informed public policy commitments throughout the election campaign — and beyond."

The VoteLocal survey, completed online from July 9 to August 23, included three different groups: a random sample of Metro Vancouver adults, 18 years of age or over, Members of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, and current mayors, councillors, and candidates in the upcoming election.

VoteLocal is a research and education initiative of FleishmanHillard HighRoad, Mustel Group and the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, with the goal of encouraging awareness and participation in the 2018 municipal election in Metro Vancouver and across British Columbia. **SB**

See the full survey results and read the VoteLocal report at votelocalbc.ca.



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SOUNDING BOARD

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ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

Sounding Board is the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade's official publication, distributed to all its Members, as well as all subscribers of Business in Vancouver newspaper. Sounding Board is published 11 times per year by Business in Vancouver Media Group in partnership with the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. The newspaper is read by business leaders and elected officials across B.C. and beyond, with a conservatively estimated total readership of 37,500.

ABOUT THE BOARD OF TRADE

The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade is Western Canada's most active and influential business association. We accelerate business success through our advocacy and public policy initiatives, our four Signature Programs for professional development, and our 100+ events each year, which educate and connect our region's business community. We engage with decision-makers to develop our region as a vibrant hub for commerce, trade, travel, and free enterprise. And we've been doing it with tangible results, for more than 130 years.

MISSION STATEMENT

OUR PURPOSE is to support sustainable prosperity throughout the Greater Vancouver region.
OUR VISION is to be an active, innovative, trusted, credible business organization, known for influencing decision-makers, and educating, connecting with, and engaging our communities.
OUR MISSION is to provide leadership, information and connections, and public policy support that help ensure the Greater Vancouver region is competitive and the preferred Pacific Gateway for trade, commerce, and travel.
WE ARE informed, respectful, principled, collaborative, and professional.

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LEADERSHIP | The importance of democratic engagement

Chair Lori Mathison on this month's Local Elections and the upcoming referendum on electoral reform

BY LORI MATHISON

By the time this issue of *Sounding Board* hits the streets, the 2018 General Local Elections will be less than three weeks away.

Voter cards are now arriving in mailboxes across B.C., while community centres throughout our region are preparing to open their doors for advance voting in the lead up to Election Day.

As we enter the heart of the campaign period, I think it is worthwhile for all of us to reflect on the important role that we play as citizens in promoting and sustaining a healthy democracy.

When I first assumed the role of Chair of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade in June, I identified democratic engagement as one of the three priorities for my term. I did so knowing that we would be facing not only the Local Elections on October 20, but also the 2018 B.C. Referendum on Electoral Reform, which will take place by mail-in ballot between October 22 and November 2.

Throughout its 131-year history, the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade has been a staunchly non-partisan organization. This means that we do not endorse parties or candidates in elections, and that we resolve to work with governments at all levels, of all political stripes, on behalf of our region's business community. That will never change.

However, a part of our commitment to you, our Members, is to ensure that you are informed and engaged with respect to important decisions — particularly ones that could impact our region and province for generations to come.

With that in mind, we launched our 2018 Local Elections Dashboard in early September. This



Lori Mathison

online portal provides measured and thoughtful analysis on four key regional issues identified in the *Greater Vancouver Economic Scorecard 2018* and, more recently, the *VoteLocal* survey. Those four key focus areas include housing affordability, transit and transportation, regional coordination and governance, and addressing the financial situation (see page 3 for the full survey findings).

The Dashboard was launched on September 5 — the same day we joined forces with seven other Chambers and business groups across the region to host a briefing for approximately 100 candidates (see page 1 for details).

In addition to our own analysis, the Dashboard includes a "Member Voices" section with guest blog posts and links to important resources to help inform business owners of who is running in their municipality, how they can register to vote, and much more.

Former U.S. Senator and Attorney General Robert Kennedy once famously said that "elections remind us not only of the rights, but the responsibilities of citizenship in a democracy." I believe this to be true, and I also believe it is incumbent on those of us in leadership positions to

encourage others to learn about the issues and enable them to engage in the democratic process.

One of the surest ways to drive up civic engagement is through education — whether it be in the local elections or the very important Referendum on Electoral Reform. When citizens are aware of what's at stake, they are motivated to head to the polls and help effect change in their community.

If you have not already done so, I urge you to visit our 2018 Local Elections Dashboard (boardoftrade.com/localelections) and review the analyses and recommendations.

Next, head over to the Elections BC website (elections.bc.ca) and become familiar with the candidates running for mayor and council in your community. Visit their websites, read their platforms, and determine how their priorities align with your own — and how they plan to address some of the key issues that impact your business, your family, and your quality of life.

While you're on the Elections BC website, also be sure to read up on the upcoming referendum and the fundamental change to our voting system that is being proposed.

Finally, share what you've learned with your friends, your family, and your colleagues. Start a dialogue about local politics, why civic elections matter, and your thoughts are on electoral reform and the upcoming referendum.

Talk about not only the challenges facing our region, but more importantly, about possible solutions. Most importantly, be sure to get out and vote. **SB**

Lori Mathison is 2018-19 Chair of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. She also serves as President and CEO of the Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia.



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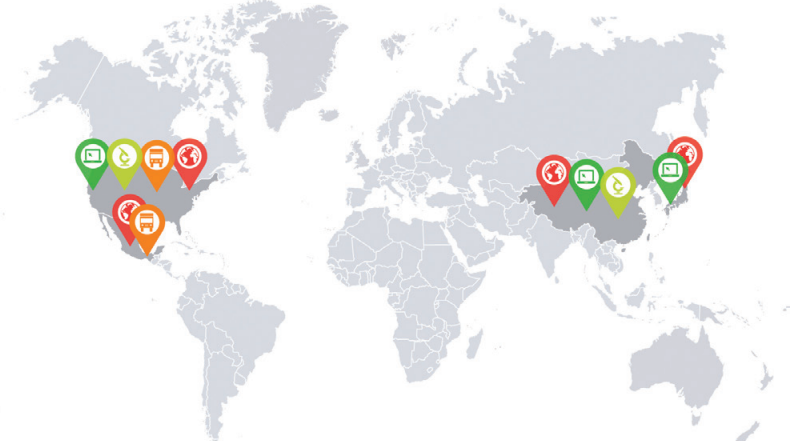
TRADE | Identifying opportunities to enhance international trade

Greater Vancouver Regional Export Framework unveiled at NASCO Continental Reunion



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 -  Professional, Scientific, Technical, & Other Business Services
 -  Transportation
 -  Computer & Information Services
- * Opportunities for Indigenous Businesses in BC



World Trade Centre Vancouver has released new research on our region's economy and key export markets around the world for Greater Vancouver's products and services.

Developed in partnership with the Conference Board of Canada over the past year, the *Greater Vancouver Regional Export Framework* offers a comprehensive analysis of our regional economy and identifies opportunities for growth on the horizon.

"We are very excited to unveil the Regional Export Framework, a unique piece of research that provides a forward-looking perspective for our priority markets, sectors, and opportunities to enhance international trade, including for Indigenous businesses," said Austin Nairn, Executive Director of World Trade Centre Vancouver. "We anticipate that this research will serve as a useful reference point for local exporters who are looking at where next to sell their products and services abroad."

"The Regional Export Framework underscores the economic importance of our region's role as Canada's Pacific Gateway, which presents immense opportunities for businesses in Greater Vancouver," added Robin Dhir, Chair of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade's World Trade Centre Advisory Committee. "These findings are particularly relevant in light of evolving trade agreements, such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, which gives businesses in our region access to burgeoning markets, notably in the Asia-Pacific region."

The new framework was unveiled at a special event on Sept. 27, 2018, held in conjunction with the 14th annual NASCO Continental Reunion in Vancouver — a North America-wide conference with business leaders from Canada, the United States and Mexico in attendance.

The Honourable Bruce Ralston, B.C.'s Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology, provided welcoming remarks at the event on behalf of

the Government of British Columbia and presented awards for the Top Export Plan of the Year to two deserving alumni of the Trade Accelerator Program. (Learn more on page 7.)
The Regional Export Framework

was conducted by World Trade Centre Vancouver, which is a part of the World Trade Centers Association, an international ecosystem of global connections and integrated trade services made up of 318 World

Trade Center locations in 90 countries, representing over 750,000 businesses globally. wtcref.ca

To review the preliminary findings of the Regional Export Framework, visit wtcref.ca.



Transportation Forum 2018: Moving people around our region

Tuesday, October 16, 2018 | 7:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. | 900 West Georgia Street, Vancouver

As we approach the B.C. Local Elections on October 20, transit and transportation rank among the top issues on the minds of Greater Vancouver businesses and voters. Just days before residents head to the polls, Transportation Forum 2018 will focus on the most pressing issues related to efficiently moving people around the Lower Mainland.

Presenting Sponsor:



Community Sponsor:



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Opening Keynote



The future of mobility: How innovation is building the foundation

Simon Dixon
Global Transportation Sector Leader, Deloitte

Session 1: State and Future of Greater Vancouver

Our city regions are expanding to accommodate population growth, housing pressures, emerging industries, and jobs. How are regional and provincial governments tackling the challenges of managing mobility and commuting?

Session 2: Technology

As technology disrupts the way in which we travel, new inter-modal ecosystems of personal mobility are being created. This panel will discuss emerging trends in transportation technology; MaaS, EV, Autonomous Vehicles, ridesharing and the next big conversations.

Session 3: Transit Authority Experiences

The growth and evolution of regions around North America establish transferrable transportation and transit best practices. This panel will bring together leaders of North American transit authorities to discuss the issues and future of transit in their regions and to share best practices that these jurisdictions can learn from each other.

IN FOCUS | Photos from recent events and activities at the Board of Trade



BC Hydro's new President and Chief Operating Officer, Chris O'Riley, takes part in an audience Q&A following his first annual address to the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade on Sept. 14, 2018. The Q&A was moderated by the Board of Trade's 2018-19 Chair, Lori Mathison, and covered topics from the electrification of vehicles, to renewable energy development, to women in leadership. | MATT BORCK



Vail Resorts CEO Rob Katz (left) visited Vancouver on Sept. 11 to speak with local business and tourism leaders about his company's acquisition of Whistler Blackcomb resort. | VAIL RESORTS



The Honourable Melanie Joly, Canada's Minister of Tourism, delivers special remarks during an Aug. 21 event on B.C.'s tourism sector. | MATT BORCK



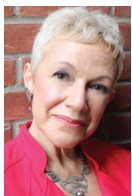
Work + Wellness Forum Presented by Pacific Blue Cross

The shift towards an employee-centric workplace

Friday, October 12, 2018 | 7:30 - 2:15 p.m.

Fairmont Waterfront Vancouver
900 Canada Place, Vancouver

Breakfast Keynote



Advocate for mental health at the workplace

Rona Maynard
Mental Health Advocate and Author

Morning Keynote



The price of ignoring employees' mental health

Dr. Andrew Miki, R. Psych
Founder and Chief Executive Officer,
Starling Minds Incorporated

Luncheon Keynote



Removing barriers and unleashing potential

Rick Hansen, C.C., O.B.C.
Founder and Chief Executive Officer,
Rick Hansen Foundation

Closing Keynote



Healthy body, healthy mind

Tommy Europe
Award Winning Fitness Coach, TV Host,
Grey Cup Champion, Best Selling Author

Panel Sessions

1

The importance of investing in employee well-being

2

Designing and implementing a health and wellness policy

3

Staying ahead: A changing workforce and the future of work

Title Sponsor:



Elite Sponsors:



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Marketing Partner:



2018 TAP EXPORT PLAN AWARDS

It has been nearly one year since World Trade Centre Vancouver launched its Trade Accelerator Program (TAP), which helps small and medium-sized B.C. businesses increase their export capacity. On Sept. 27, two companies that recently completed the program were presented with awards, including Whistler Water (Greater Vancouver Export Plan of the Year) and FreshWorks Studio Inc. (Regional Export Plan of the Year). Apply for the program today at tapbc.ca.



Whistler Water

TAP is essential for any small to medium-sized business looking to expand outside of their domestic market.

Peter App
Sales Manager, North America
Whistler Water Inc.
Established 1991

Give us your elevator pitch. Describe your business in 25 words or less.

Whistler Water – glacial spring water that travels through granite fissures into a natural aquifer. It collects nature's minerals and elements making it perfectly balanced.

What was your biggest challenge in terms of business growth and exporting before you joined TAP?

Understanding the international market dynamics and having key representatives to assist in

the business development. The excitement of exporting can easily disappear after one hits unexpected hurdles such as customs and political policies.

Where do you currently export?
USA, China, Australia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Europe, Taiwan.

What did your team learn from TAP?
You don't have to figure everything out on your own. TAP provides a network of professionals to assist in the expansion plans and can save a company both time and money.

What have been the key outputs for you and your company since graduating TAP?

Key outputs include a variety of business contacts and new business opportunities in both our U.S. and Asian markets.

What do the next 18-24 months look like for you and your business?
Rapid global expansion with a



primary focus on the U.S. Even though there are potential duty issues, the U.S. still provides an incredible opportunity. We are looking at furthering our development by hiring sales representatives in identified key target markets. The Asian market continues to thrive as the demand

for Canadian water continues. New distributors and customer inquiries are on the rise.

What is the next international market you would like to tap into, and why?

Australia is a market of high interest. The new CPTPP agreement

provides a gateway to this market. The Canadian awareness is high in Australia, including our brand recognition.

Who do you think could benefit most from participating in TAP?

Any company that has a small team and wants to expand into international markets. TAP can assist in the process. There is help available at both the provincial and federal levels of government.

What is your overall impression of the Trade Accelerator Program?

The Trade Accelerator Program is essential for any small to medium-sized business looking to expand outside of their domestic market. TAP provides the tools to assist in the formulation of an export plan which forms the guidelines and a road map for new international markets. It also connects you to other like-minded companies and key contacts that can assist in your execution plan. **SB**



FreshWorks Studio

Regardless of what you sell, TAP will provide all the tools and information you need in order to kick start a successful export plan.

Desmond Brisbin
Sales and Marketing Manager
FreshWorks Studio Inc.
Established in 2014

Give us your elevator pitch. Describe your business in 25 words or less.

FreshWorks Studio has a team of over 50 Canadians and specializes in designing and developing elegant and highly functional mobile, web, and blockchain apps.

What was your biggest challenge in terms of business growth and exporting before you joined TAP?

Before joining TAP our challenge with exporting was that we didn't know where to begin. We had a valuable service to offer that



was well received locally but we needed to know what the steps were in order to bring that service to new markets. As we grew, our potential growth was beginning to be limited. As our operations scaled up the pool of qualified opportunities in our local market was shrinking.

What did your team learn from TAP?

We learned a lot, but some important items were strategies for managing liability and locations of resources for financial and operational risk mitigation that was market and industry-specific. EDC and BDC had

programs built to help businesses succeed in foreign markets that needed detailed explanation. We relearned the importance of hedging against foreign currency fluctuations for long-term contracts, and where to turn to for assistance in many relevant activities such as crafting sales or marketing plans for export markets or insuring foreign contracts.

Where do you currently export?

We are exporting to the Pacific Northwestern U.S. This includes Washington and Oregon in an area that's been called the Cascadia Innovation Corridor.

What is the next international market you would like to tap into, and why?

We will be continuing penetration into the U.S. moving south towards San Francisco and the bay area as that is a hub for tech companies that we would like to work with. We will also be looking at either Boston or New York as another market to approach because of the density

of potential enterprise clients as well as tech companies.

What have been the key outputs for you and your company since graduating TAP?

Our key output so far has been a sizeable network of contacts in the Seattle area. Using the resources and contacts from TAP we were able to get introduced to a number of valuable community leaders in the area and leverage their network to introduce ourselves.

Who do you think could benefit most from participating in TAP?

From what we've seen I think any business (literally ANY business) can benefit from TAP if you intend to sell into foreign markets. The program is not specific to any one industry or one type of company. If you are a product-based company you probably stand to benefit a little more than a service company but regardless of what you sell, TAP will provide all the tools and information you need in order to kick start a successful export plan. **SB**

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