

BUSINESS VIEW

November 2003

Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce

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Publication Agreement # 40052085

Saskatoon: The Ideal Hub for Gourmet Teas Beautifully Packaged

From caretaker to CEO in just over a decade - not a bad leap for self-styled entrepreneur Sanjay Gupta. While caretaking is not a bad job, says Gupta, he knew he wanted to do something more than the unplugging of toilets and collecting of overdue rent which financed his graduate school. Hungry for freedom and intellectual stimulation, the caretaker gladly swapped his utility belt for a corporate nameplate - Connexions Trading International Incorporated.

As Gupta and his newly-formed company waded in and out of ventures ranging from network marketing to commodity brokering to e-commerce to import-export management, he quickly discovered that some could be lucrative, others a money pit. But Gupta never feared trying something new because he knew each venture, successful or not, would provide that invaluable resource - experience.

Ever on the lookout for innovative opportunities, Gupta made several forays into India to research the tea market. Four years of research and development paid off. In India, he made two very attractive discoveries. The first, a beautiful young woman named Suruchi would soon become his wife and business partner. The second, Gourmet Teas Beautifully Packaged would soon become his business. And so began **Tea Connexions** - www.teaconnexions.com in 1997.

The entrepreneur immediately recognized the enormous market potential of Gourmet Teas Beautifully Packaged. He learned that only India grows Darjeeling, the world's finest tea, but that Darjeeling comprises less than 1% of the world's tea harvest. He knew he could profit from increased market demand for high quality teas.

Gupta soon realized his product could be marketed worldwide by the growing sector of home-preneurs. And so began the "Opportunity is Brewing" program in August 2001. From new moms to nightshift workers to retired accountants to doctors and lawyers, the response was overwhelming. People rushed to take advantage of the products' three dis-



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Photo Courtesy of Stuart Kasdorf Photographics Inc.



The President's View

by Dan Anderson

Democracy is a cornerstone of Canadian society. But, like so many other things that are important to life as we know it – our standard of living, clean air and water, and freedom – we have a tendency to take it for granted.

Democracy first emerged in ancient Athens as a means to involve her citizens directly in making decisions about the affairs of state. The system was participatory. Each citizen who had the right to vote had one vote that could be exercised on every major decision affecting the state. There can be no doubt that alliances were formed to manage the process, sometimes along ideological lines, sometimes with more practical considerations in mind. Still, there was a right to vote on every motion, and those voting were not tied to any particular platform.

Our current representative system of government recognizes the impractical nature of direct democracy in modern society. We vote for an individual or a party to represent us, and expect that our representatives will make decisions that are consistent with the interests of their constituency and the party platform. Ideally, a party will have been elected on the merits of its platform, but this is not always the case. We live in a very complex society, in which elections are too often being fought over single issues. Other important issues must then be addressed through reference to the governing party's ideology, and this will not always be consistent with the will of the majority.

It is important for a governing party holding only a slim majority of seats or less than a majority of the popular vote to consider their policies carefully. This is especially so when there has been a single issue election. Many would argue that our current provincial government was elected on a single issue campaign, leaving many other pressing issues largely unaddressed.

We at the Saskatoon Chamber believe that the most important step forward that our government can take is to make Saskatchewan more friendly to business. We must be more tax competitive with other jurisdictions and our labour laws and standards must better balance the interests of management and labour. Government must for-

mulate and then implement sound policies that will truly encourage and support a strong private sector economy, and this must be transparent to those entrepreneurs who are viewing us from outside our borders. If we continue to move in these directions, we will be better able to retain those businesses we have in our province and to attract others.

Only business can generate real wealth and prosperity for our people. Only with a strong economy fuelled by successful private enterprise can we afford to enlarge our social programs in the manner our government desires. Otherwise we will continue to mortgage our province's future to pay for these programs, leaving our children with a legacy of debt and frustration. We must all work hard to ensure that this does not happen.

I hope that your businesses are going well, and that as we move into the busy Christmas season you find time to enjoy the very fine city that we live in and all that it has to offer us.

What is your newsletter saying about you?

An effective newsletter does more than simply provide information. When done correctly, it can be the most powerful influencing tool your business or organization has ever had access to.

Your newsletter is a potential relationship builder that can increase sales, raise awareness, generate financial support, build loyalty, or foster enthusiasm among employees.

To find out how to get more value from your newsletter, give us a call. We Do Newsletters has the expertise and experience to help you identify your needs and develop effective and compelling newsletters.

We Do Newsletters
 ph 306-343-8519
 fax 306-477-5418
 email about.newsletters@shaw.ca

If you would like to subscribe to our free e-newsletter, *About Newsletters*, simply email us your contact information.

tinct marketing channels: gift, health and tea sectors. These (now) tea-preneurs discovered a bonus – residual income generated by repeat business for the high quality consumable. Says Gupta, more than 50% have already reordered product to replenish their sold-out start-up inventory. To date, more than 200 Distributors are marketing these teas in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Latin America.

With so much tea marketing experience behind him, Gupta relishes helping his tea-preneurs achieve their dreams. To encourage their success, Gupta limits membership in the buying group, offers free customer referrals, below wholesale pricing, personalized turn-key e-commerce websites, drop shipping and private labeling. To further ensure their success, he also provides marketing and business guidance including extensive permission-marketing training.

Gupta is very excited about the future and the results that this program has generated. Recently, Tea Connexions completed their first conference with distributors from California, Delaware, Florida, and Texas. In 2004, Tea Connexions plans to launch their Master Distributor program to further enhance services. The new alliance with UK based, Shangers Ltd., bringing the world of entertainment to the tea experience, enables Tea Connexions to offer an acces-



sory line, children’s entertainment, and gourmet foods, exclusively through their distribution channel.

According to Gupta, their secret to success has been their commitment to customer service and their use of *guerrilla marketing* and

permission marketing to maximize sales and marketing efforts. Gupta also points out that Saskatoon serves as an ideal place to run this type of business because of lower overhead costs, a skilled and eager workforce, and Saskatoon’s central North American location serves as an ideal shipping point to service US customers. He is especially proud of Tea Connexions’ search engine ratings which have not been paid for. For instance, he points out that on Google.Ca, their website www.tea4free.com is ranked #2 out of 400,000 sites for the key word “tea”.

Residents of Saskatoon have the opportunity to sample fine teas. Each month Tea Connexions holds free tea tastings at 515-45th St. W (across from Saskatoon Fast Print). The next tea tasting is Thursday, November 20th from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The products are ideally suited for gift giving and corporate gifts. Chamber Members are guaranteed a 20% discount. To learn more or request a catalog, call their gift specialist, Daisy Lieu at 244-4206, or stop by their office.

Economist Intelligence Unit Ranks Canada as Best Place to Do Business

Canada will be the best country in the world in which to conduct business over the next five years, according to the latest business environment rankings from the Economist Intelligence Unit, Canada assumes the top position for the first time and displaces the Netherlands, which had previously headed the rankings.

Canada scores well across the whole range of business environment categories (10 in all). In particular, the country achieves very high scores for the quality of its infrastructure, its open regime for foreign trade and capital, and favorable market opportunities. Canada stands to benefit from improvements to its tax regime and its political environment. Despite pressure on public finances, the Canadian government will be able to implement the remaining elements of a tax-cutting package. The defeat of separatists in Quebec’s provincial election in April should end speculation about a third referendum on independence and signal the start of a new era for the territory’s relations with the rest of Canada.

The Netherlands, which previously occupied top spot in the rankings, remains an attractive business location,

ranking second globally. However, while the Netherlands is expected to make modest progress at reducing its tax burden and reforming its labour markets, these improvements will be offset by a deterioration in the macroeconomic environment, reflecting weaker GDP growth and public finances. The UK will also remain an attractive business location, even through it is one of only five countries out of the 60 covered by the Economist Intelligence Unit’s rankings that registers a decline in its overall score for the 2003-7 forecast period, compared with the previous five years. The fall in the UK’s score reflects the country’s increased exposure to international terrorism, weaker GDP growth and deteriorating public finances.

	1998-2002		2003-2007		Change in	
	Total Score	Rank	Total Score	Rank	Total Score	Rank
Canada	8.58	4	8.65	1	0.07	3
Netherlands	8.62	2	8.64	2	0.02	0
Finland	8.36	8	8.58	3	0.22	5
UK	8.61	3	8.54	4	-0.07	-1
USA	8.62	1	8.47	5	-0.15	-4

Source: The Economist, July 2003



Food for Thought

by C.M. (Red) Williams

Meat Consumers are always Right

We have been witnessing one of the most unusual consumer responses in that they heard of the one BSE cow in Alberta, and instead of drawing back from beef went on an unprecedented beef buying and eating binge. But make no mistake, consumers can and have responded negatively if there are questions of the safety of their meat supply.

The signals are out there for anyone wanting to read them that the modern consumer has a rapidly decreasing tolerance for any suggestion that there is a food safety problem. We have had massive meat recalls when beef, pork or poultry was possibly contaminated. The retailers are paranoid about being tagged with a tainted product and so the remainder of the meat value chains needs to recognize that they are as culpable.

The technology to assure low risk poultry, swine and beef animals leaving the production units is increasing. This leads to such question as the wisdom of removing antibiotics from poultry and piglet rations. But putting out a good product means more than new methods of reducing risk, it means that each producer must be following the most careful management practices so that meat quality starts with healthy animals.

A Quality Assurance program has all but been completely instituted in the pork industry that has inspections of facilities and agreed upon health and management protocols that is a credit to those producers. There are elements of a similar program developing for cattle which will make Saskatchewan beef more marketable when widely adopted. It may seem like "gilding the lily" for some, but it will eventually be standard.

Congratulations to the 2003 Saskatchewan ABEX Winners

It was an exciting evening to recognize and honour business excellence in our province. With over 650 people in attendance, the 2003 Achievement in Business Excellence Awards (ABEX) took place Friday October 24th at the Centennial Auditorium in Saskatoon. We would like to extend our congratulations to all those nominated and awarded. It is a prestigious achievement, and we appreciate the work and dedication that these businesses brings to our city and the Province of Saskatchewan.

This years *Business of the Year* was awarded to Bioriginal Food & Science Corp of Saskatoon. They were also a finalist in the "Innovative Work Systems", "Marketing", and "Physical Environment" categories, and were a winner in the "Exports" category as well. The Business of the Year is awarded to the business demonstrating performance that is particularly outstanding and deserving of praise. Bioriginal grew their export sales to more than three quarters of total corporate sales.

The majority of winners were from the Saskatoon area and they are as follows: Pavement Scientific International was awarded in the "New Saskatchewan Product" category for their development of a method of strengthening roads more effectively at lower costs. "Physical Environment" was awarded to ERCO Worldwide for their development of a program to burn hydrogen instead of natural gas to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and utilize an otherwise unused by-product. Independent Medical Rehabilitation (from Saskatoon and Moose Jaw), was the winner in the "Community Involvement" category for the implementation of an impressive program of community support. Superior Millworks was the winner in the "Job Creation" category for the creation of a substantial number of new full-time jobs yearly with the continued growth of the company. Siemens Laserworks Inc was the winner in the "Investment" category for investing millions in robotics and automated toll technologies. The "Innovative Work System" winner was Yanke Group of Companies for utilizing employee empowerment, reward systems, profit sharing, customer service bonuses, and service awards to achieve corporate objectives.

Winners from outside Saskatoon are as follows: "New Venture" was awarded to Saskcan Pulse Trading Inc. of Regina, "Marketing" was awarded to Pine View all Natural Meats Inc of Osler, and Diamonds of Detroit from Humbolt was the winner in the "Service Industry" category.

Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce - Board of Directors



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U of S and Partners Celebrate Grand Opening of \$17.8 M VIDO Expansion

Canada's capacity to fight human and animal disease and address food safety challenges received a boost with the opening of a new \$17.8-million expansion of the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO) at the University of Saskatchewan in October.

A global leader in vaccine and infectious disease research, VIDO has added 50,000 square feet of state-of-the-art lab space and equipment, as well as new office space. Since the expansion was announced two years ago, VIDO has recruited more than 50 research scientists and technicians, bringing its staff to more than 135, and will continue to grow.



The new labs and world-class scientific staff will enable VIDO to probe the molecular processes involved in infection and development of immunity, ultimately leading to new vaccines that will protect the health of humans and animals. The expansion will greatly extend VIDO's resources for genomics and proteomics research, both areas with significant application to human health. As well, VIDO's aggressive pursuit of new needle-free vaccine delivery systems, such as oral and intra-nasal delivery, and its food safety vaccine initiative best exemplified by an E. coli vaccine being developed for cattle, will be bolstered by the expansion.

"This stunning expansion is a testament to the vision of VIDO director Lorne Babiuk and our funding partners who have recognized the enormous value of building research capacity on our campus," said U of S President Peter MacKinnon. *"The expansion of this internationally recognized institute will attract more top minds in infectious disease research to the U of S and build on our already impressive infrastructure for world-class research and graduate training."*

"With these new labs and an expanded scientific staff, we are well-equipped to undertake ground-breaking research that will define the next generation of products for both animal and human health," said VIDO director Lorne Babiuk, a U of S Canada Research Chair in Vaccinology and Biotechnology. His multidisciplinary team includes immunologists, epidemiologists, virologists, veterinarians and clinicians, biochemists, molecular biologists, biomedical engineers, and pharmacists.

VIDO is renowned for the research, development and commercialization of products used by producers in the food animal industry. It is credited with five "world firsts" in animal vaccine research, including the world's first genetically engineered vaccine to combat shipping fever in cattle. VIDO currently holds more than 50 biotechnology patents and has 27 pending. It collaborates with research institutes around the world and with more than 30 commercial companies.

More information is available at www.vido.org

2004 City Of Saskatoon Map Advertising Opportunity

The Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce produces a City of Saskatoon map each year with a detailed street map and index. The information is updated each year by the municipalities to ensure the most current information. The map we produce has two features other maps do not. These are:

- University of Saskatchewan Campus
- Innovation Place

NEW for 2004 is the addition of a listing for your business on our **City of Saskatoon Interactive Business Directory / Map** at www.saskmap.com. The directory will list your business under its appropriate category, and provide you with a link to a mini profile which features an exterior photo and a 25 word description of your business. It will also show your fiscal location on a map of Saskatoon.

For advertising rates or more information please contact:

Jim Zaiachkowski

Project Director

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E-mail: jzach@eboardoftrade.com

OR

Jeff Sharp

Membership Director

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E-mail: jsharp@eboardoftrade.com

Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce - Board of Directors



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News From Our Committees

Submitted by We Do Newsletters

In keeping with the mission statement of the Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce, our committees are actively building the best business climate in Canada, thereby creating a city of opportunity. Here's what the Government Affairs Committee has been doing:

Government Affairs Committee

The Committee had one of its busiest months of the year dealing with elections at several levels.

October began with the education property tax seminar, which explained how the property tax system works, the problems with it and the alternatives to it. School board candidates, as well as civic and provincial candidates, attended the seminar, along with Chamber members.

The Committee held a luncheon and forum for mayoral candidates on Oct. 3, which drew over 200 members. The Committee co-chairs wish to thank those who turned out for this event.

On the same day, the Committee held a one-hour ward candidates school, during which Kent Smith-Windsor presented to candidates the Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce's business plan. Co-Chair Coni Evans made a presentation on civic productivity and Co-Chair Jack Brodsky made a presentation on the Chamber's Business Friendliness Survey and the City of Saskatoon's stated commitment that, "By 2006 Saskatoon and region will be the Business Friendliest City in Canada, which nurtures excellence, innovation and creativity." Candidates were given a questionnaire and their responses were posted on the Chamber website.

During the week of Oct. 20 Dan Anderson, President of the Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce, and Coni Evans, representing the Government Affairs Committee, led meetings with provincial election candidates

to present information on election topics that the Committee had been working on. Kevin Wilson presented a report on the current Labour Laws of Saskatchewan and the changes the Chamber would like to see while Blair Knippel presented on education property taxes and government competition with private business.

The Health Opportunities Committee's Co-Chair Vlatka Tustonic made a presentation at each of the meetings on expanding health sectors in our province by encouraging health industry spin-offs and aggressively marketing the province's health industry around the globe.

They met with the Liberal Party on Oct. 20, the Saskatchewan Party on Oct. 23 and the New Democratic Party on Oct. 24. At each meeting candidates were given a questionnaire, and responses were received from the Saskatchewan Party and the NDP.

The Government Affairs Committee met on Nov. 13 with Ray Boughen who is writing the interim report for the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education. Mr. Boughen, who attended the Oct. 1 education property tax seminar, reported on what he had discovered so far in his hearings.

Looking back on the hectic October, Co-Chair Evans said, "We built good relationships with the parties now forming the Government and the Opposition and we're grateful for having had this opportunity. We look forward to continuing our dialogue with the Government and are planning to meet with the Government on a regular basis to forward our agenda on behalf of Chamber members."

The Committee also plans to meet with the new mayor and council to continue pushing for productivity gains and to keep the City focused on its Business Friendliest City in Canada commitment.

"The most important thing about goals is having one"

- Geoffrey F. Abert

Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce - Committee Chairs



Aboriginal Opportunities
John Lagimodiere
ACS Aboriginal Consulting Services



Agribusiness Development
Lorne Hadley
AGenuity Consulting Inc.



Celebrate Success
Cliff Wiegiers
Wiegiers Financial & Insurance



Celebrate Success
Arlene Wiks
CIBC



Future Opportunities
Ken Wood
Saskatchewan Place



Future Opportunities
Willy Marcotte
RPS Retirement Planning Services



Government Affairs
Jack Brodsky
Saskatoon Blades Hockey Club



Government Affairs
Coni Evans
Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation

Upcoming Events ...



BREAK FOR SUCCESS

Networking Breakfast

Wednesday, November 26th

Quality Hotel

Build your business and networking opportunities

7:15 - 9:00 am

To register phone the Chamber Office at 244-2151

(Pre-registering is recommended)

The Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce Knowledge Industry Committee

Presents:

“Shaping the Development of our Knowledge Industry”

Thursday November 20, 2003

9:00 am – 4:00 pm at the Willows Golf and Country Club

Knowledge is quickly becoming the new commodity of value. Organizations are realizing that the development of their internal human capital and recruiting new talent to the organization are key to achieving corporate goals. A “one-stop” knowledge industry that can enable them to meet their learning goals will be an invaluable resource for many years to come.

By attending our November 20th forum, you will become a part of the evolution of this “World Class Industry” right here in Saskatoon.

Cost: \$35 (Lunch and GST included)

Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce - Committee Chairs



Health Opportunities
Dave Dutchak
MD Ambulance



Health Opportunities
Vlatka Tustonic
Saskatoon Health Region



Knowledge Industry
Ted Farr
Rawlco Radio



Knowledge Industry
Asit Sarkar
U of S - College of Commerce



Transportation
David Spearin
Logistics Marketing Services

“Chamber on Business” Luncheons

Nola Joorisity

of Institutue of Chartered Accountants

“Saskatchewan as a Place to Live, Work and Invest”

AND

Ray Boughan AND

Ken McCaw

of Canadian Forces Liaison Council

“Employer Certificate Presentation”

Wednesday, November 19th, 2003

The Saskatoon Inn

Mayor Don Atchison

Mayor of Saskatoon

“State of the City Address”

Wednesday, December 10th, 2003

The Sheraton Cavalier

Co-sponsored by The Partnership

To Register call the Chamber Office at (306) 244-21512

Public Lecture

co-sponsored by the U of S Political Studies and International Studies Departments

Professor

Andre Duvenhage

“South Africa: The Elimination of Apartheid and the Transformation of Governance and Politics”

Thursday, November 20, 7:00 pm

U of S, 104 Arts Building

Dr. Duvenhage is an Associate Professor in Political Science and Director of the Programme in Governance and Political Transformation at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein South Africa. He specializes in the areas of political transformation; management and planning; futurology; political development; political theory/ideology; and democratization.

Members in the News ...

Philom Bios Inc. announced the recent appointment of a new Executive Team. David Cortens has joined the company as Chief Financial Officer, and Corporate Secretary; Trevor Thiessen was appointed Vice President, commercial Operations; and Sanford Gleddie was appointed Vice President, Business Development.

Kent Smith-Windsor, Executive Director of the Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce was appointed to the *American Chamber of Commerce Executive Board of Directors*. In order to be eligible to serve on the Board, you must have at least 6 years of senior leadership experience in Chamber management. This gives Saskatoon the opportunity to promote to 50 of the most affluent community based leaders in the US.

The Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce is taking part this year in *The Partnership's Passport to Christmas 2003*. With every \$10 spent at a participating downtown business, or at a Chamber event, you will receive one stamp in your passport. Once your passport is filled with stamps, drop it off at any participating business or at the Chamber Office before December 31st. Winners will be drawn on January 5th for the *Grand Prize* of a \$2000 Shopping Spree.

**Building the Best Business
Climate in Canada,
Thereby Creating a City of
Opportunity.**



PIPEDA: The Personal Information Protection Act



What It Means to Me What It Means to My Business What It Means to My Customers

December 2 ... 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm
December 3 ... 8:00 am - 11:00 am

On January 1, 2004, every business in Canada is expected to have a strategy in place to comply with the Federal Government's Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). PIPEDA sets out the ground rules for how you manage your customers' and employees' personal information.

Participants learn about the Federal Law and design a personal information protection strategy for their businesses. This workshop has been accredited by the Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan Insurance Councils and meets the BC Insurance Council guidelines for professional advancement.

Participants Will:

- Understand PIPEDA
- Know what PIPEDA means for them, for their business and for their customers
- Create a personal information protection strategy

Cost: \$300 + GST (Cost Includes Both Sessions)

To register please call the Chamber Office at (306) 244-2151

**Additional seminars may be added if registration exceeds space limitations.*

Saskatchewan Population: <u>January 1st, 2003</u>	<u>April 1st, 2003</u>
1,009,225	1,007,758

Employment in Canada:

- Employment increased by approximately 65,000 jobs in October in Canada, almost all of which were full-time
- October unemployment rate decreased to 7.6%, down 0.4% from September
- Employment has increased by 100,000 jobs in 2003

Source: Stats Can

Size Matters

... help others connect with us
Tell your business associates about the work of the Chamber of Commerce.

Refer your leads to:

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Membership Director

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E-mail: jsharp@eboardoftrade.com

OR

Jim Zaiachkowski

Project Director

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BUSINESS VIEW

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