

BUSINESS VOICE

HALIFAX'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE

Reaching a world-class calibre of excellence

STARTUP CITY

PAGE 16

PURPOSEFUL DESTRUCTION

Growing Atlantic Canadian science-based technology startups **Pg 22**

DREAMING IN 3D

Halifax's Smarter Spaces is on the global front **Pg 26**

RANSOMWARE ATTACKS

Are local businesses safe from cyberattacks? **Pg 31**





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We want to focus on improving opportunities for young people in our region.”

— Dr. Alain Joseph, Director of Applied Research, NSCC

COVER STORY:

STARTUP CITY



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CHAMBER EVENTS

For a full and up-to-date list of our Chamber events, please visit www.halifaxchamber.com/events

2019 HALIFAX BUSINESS AWARDS

NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

We will be accepting nominations until Tuesday, Sept. 4.

Nominate a deserving business today!

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A CANNABIS CONVERSATION:

WHAT YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS TO KNOW

DATE: Wednesday, July 11

TIME: 11 am - 2 pm

LOCATION: The Cunard Centre

CHAMBER 101

DATE: Wednesday, July 18

TIME: 12 - 1:15 pm

LOCATION: 32 Akerley Blvd.

DATE: Wednesday, Aug. 15

TIME: 12 - 1:15 pm

LOCATION: 32 Akerley Blvd.

SMALL BUSINESS SUMMER SCHOOL

DATE: Wednesday, July 18

TIME: 3:30 - 5 pm

LOCATION: The Stubborn Goat

Gastropub, 1579 Grafton St.

FACILITATOR:

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SMALL BUSINESS SUMMER SCHOOL

DATE: Wednesday, Aug. 15

TIME: 3:30 - 5 pm

LOCATION: The Stubborn Goat

Gastropub, 1579 Grafton St.

FACILITATOR:

TRAMPOLINE BRANDING

Business Development Network

DATE: Friday, July 20

TIME: 12 - 1:30 pm

LOCATION: 32 Akerley Blvd.

DATE: Friday, Aug. 17

TIME: 12 - 1:30 pm

LOCATION: 32 Akerley Blvd.

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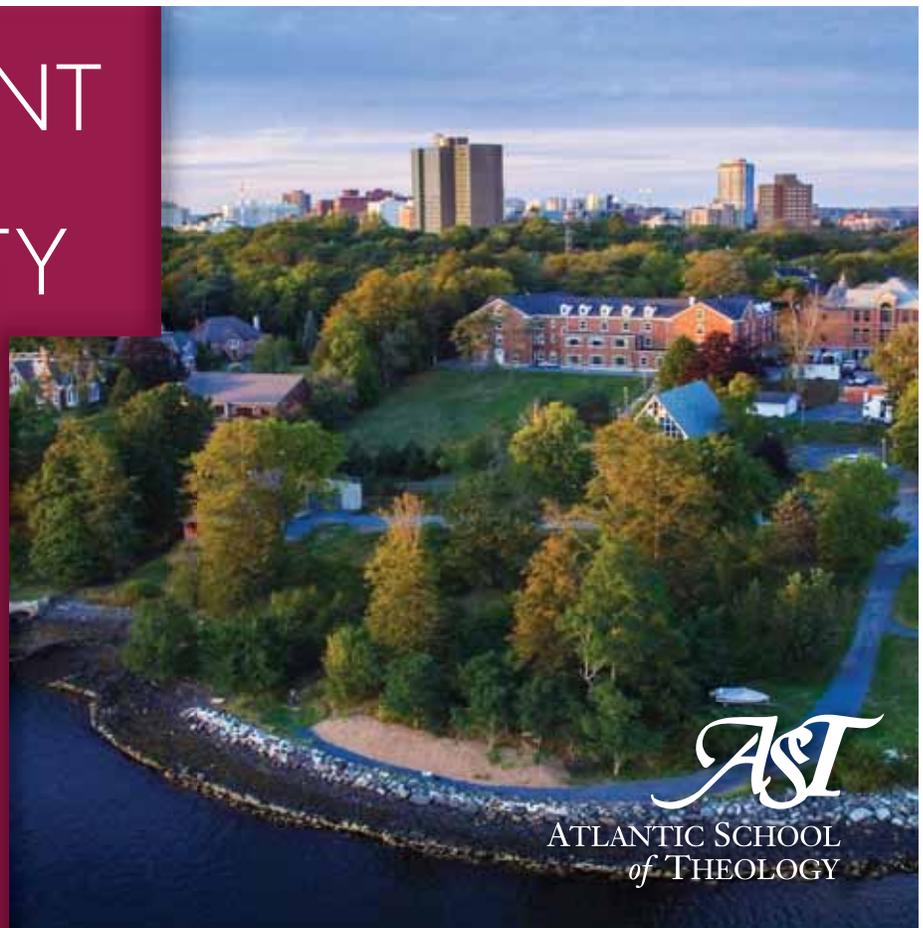


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PATRICK SULLIVAN
PRESIDENT & CEO

When I first took this position at the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, I knew I would be entering a community full of well-established businesses — in a city that's more than 250 years old and full of organizations that have been around for just as long. What I did not expect was the new era that Halifax was entering, one that was filled with startups.

Over my time at the Chamber, the sheer number of startups that I've come face-to-face with has surpassed my expectations. Each of them with their own mission and purpose and desire to grow their businesses. Many of these entrepreneurs got their start in larger organizations and now have stepped out on their own to take their idea and turn it into a reality.

Nova Scotia Community College prides itself on aiding students from a variety of backgrounds to develop these ideas from incubation to fruition. It's compelling to see. You can catch a glimpse of some of their work on page 16 of this issue.

Dalhousie University's Creative Destruction Lab is another excellent initiative that connects the most successful entrepreneurs and business leaders in Atlantic Canada to mentor the most promising science and technology-based startups in the region through a nine-month objective-based program. You can find more about their program on page 22.

I'm impressed by this type of collaboration happening at our post-secondary institutions and I encourage them and their many startups to keep going. From my perspective, if you keep at it, continue

In memory of Ron Hanlon

By **Matt Hebb**, Chair of the Halifax Partnership Board of Directors

On May 27, Halifax lost a champion.

With an understated approach that belied his vast business experience, Ron inspired us to believe in the limitless potential of Halifax. More than that, he lifted us up to go after it.

Ron could have chosen anything or anywhere in the world to spend the final chapter of his career. He chose to spend it promoting the great potential of our city. And he loved it. He was a person of great integrity and strong values. His ambitious vision of Halifax's future was both optimistic

and realistic. With great humour and intellect, he set a high bar — and then set to helping us clear it.

He was a colleague, mentor, leader and friend. We shall strive to honour his memory by sustaining his positive sense of urgency and his unbounded optimism for our city.

Ron, Halifax will miss you.



Dean Casavechia

to grow your network and pivot accordingly, Halifax really will meet its full potential.

As I write this President's message, it comes merely days after learning of the passing of Ron Hanlon, the President and CEO of the Halifax Partnership. He was a leader in our city and knew what Halifax could become. Needless to say, the Halifax Chamber community is deeply saddened by his passing.

Ron regularly contributed to Chamber publications. Inspiring and

encouraging our members to lift Halifax to its fullest potential. Ron's last article can be found in our June issue of *Business Voice* and focused on the power of innovation and immigration.

Our thoughts and support go out to Ron's family, his colleagues and many friends. We will not forget his passion and commitment to Halifax. I hope learning more about Ron will inspire each of you to do what you can to move his dream forward and never stop working towards a brighter tomorrow. ■

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The Community Sector Council helps build organizational capacity within the non-profit and voluntary sector. We act as a non-partisan voice to help Nova Scotians learn about the contributions that the Community Sector makes to our province. Our mandate is to work collaboratively to find innovative solutions to emerging and existing sectoral issues.

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MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

How our members are growing Halifax



NORTHWOOD FOUNDATION RAISES FUNDS WITH LIVE MORE AWARDS GALA

The **Northwood Foundation's** 20th anniversary Live More Awards raised more than \$188,000 at the gala on May 4, to help support programs and initiatives offered by Northwood that are not funded by the government. Well-known local philanthropists, Ken and Dorothy Rowe, were the evening's featured honourees, receiving the Hedley G. Ivany Live More Award. Six other individuals were presented with distinction awards, recognized for their contributions to research, innovation, advocacy, diversity, community and loving care — the six pillars of Northwood.



A DIFFERENT STAGE OF MIND 2018 RAISES \$600,000

Thanks to all of our performers, supporters and volunteers for making this year's **BMO Bank of Montreal's A Different Stage of Mind** (DSOM) such a huge success. Together we raised more than \$600,000 to go toward helping fund mental health initiatives, community grants programs and changing the way

people think about mental illness and addictions in Nova Scotia. We're looking forward to next year's DSOM and gearing up for our upcoming Festival of Trees in November. For more information on the Mental Health Foundation please visit mentalhealthns.ca. We can't change the way people think without you.

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SPRING IS IN THE AIR AT FOREST LAKES

Another successful event has taken place at **Forest Lakes**. On May 27, the resort-style community came to life during the Spring Big Open House. In addition to touring our beautiful homes for sale, guests were able to shop at the artisan market, enjoy outdoor yoga classes, kayak and canoe on Cochran Lake and experience our golf course created by Nicklaus Design. Thank you to everyone who made it out to this event — the turnout was spectacular and we are looking forward to our upcoming events this year. Stay up to date with events at Forest Lakes, by visiting forestlakescountryclub.ca/events.

NASA TECHNOLOGY USED TO CREATE MINI AIR PURIFIERS

HEALTHWIZE Wellness Centre is excited about a revolutionary new product with NASA technology used to “cleanse” the International Space Station interior and has been perfected into a special coating developed and applied to LED bulbs, which emit “high-potency oxygen,” creating an environment that dissolves and destroys E. coli, salmonella, MRSA, SARS, staph, cold and flu viruses, mold, mildew, fungus, flesh-eating necrosis, streptococcus, Legionnaire’s disease, carbon monoxide, formaldehyde and more. They cannot survive this “oxygen-rich environment.” There are endless applications: at home, doctor’s offices, hospitals and nursing homes. These bulbs are highly-effective mini air-purification systems.



TYLER BOWMAN JOINS ATLANTIC CANADA’S LARGEST HOME INSPECTOR TEAM

Originally from Alberta, Tyler and his wife, Brittany, from Lower Sackville, met while they were working in northern Alberta. After many visits to Nova Scotia, Tyler fell in love with the east coast and wanted to raise their family here. A welder and industrial inspector by trade, attention to detail and thorough inspections are not new territory for Tyler. Becoming tired of the lifestyle and wanting to spend more time with family, Tyler joined the **A Buyer’s Choice Home Inspections** team. He completed the highest Home Inspector technical certification in Canada and is proud of the business he is building in HRM. For more information, visit abuyerschoice.com/halifax.

FOX HARB’R HAS A NEW PICKLEBALL COURT

It looks like tennis, sounds like ping-pong and has the same light-on-your-toes action of badminton. But pickleball is the fastest growing sport in North America. The new pickleball court and equipment was up and running in late June.



MAKING NOVA SCOTIA A HEALTHIER PLACE TO LIVE AND BREATHE

Thanks to **Labatt Breweries of Canada**, Peter Clarke was able to speak on behalf of the **Lung Association of Nova Scotia** at the Halifax Chamber of Commerce’s Spring Dinner. Peter shared his story about lung transplantation and spoke about how we are making Nova Scotia a healthier place to live and breathe. We hope you found his words impactful. As a business community we can make a difference. Investing in lung health means healthier employees, lower health care costs and higher productivity. A healthier Nova Scotia means a healthier place to do business. For more information, visit www.ns.lung.ca.



HALIFAX STARTUP HIRES SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

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CELEBRATING TWO YEARS AT THE SOCIAL BOUTIQUE

Dress for Success Halifax is pleased to announce the second anniversary of The Social Boutique™. “Since opening the doors of this non-profit women’s pre-loved clothing store in July 2016, we have witnessed exponential growth and are thankful to Larry Swinemar who has been providing complimentary space.

We are thrilled to be reaching an additional demographic of women in our community who do not qualify for our regular services by providing affordable attire of all kinds. We are equally grateful for the financial funding that is being provided by the daughter of Dress for Success Halifax,” says President Julie Wisen.



ROYER THOMPSON'S NEW LOCATION

We are excited to announce our relocation to Purdy’s Landing, Suite 305, 1949 Upper Water Street in Halifax. Our new office offers a welcoming, creative and open space for clients to collaborate on building talented teams that achieve results. We welcome all Chamber members to drop in and say hello to our growing team — our door is always open. In October 2017, **Royer Thompson** was acquired by company President Kim West. Since taking the helm West has welcomed Amy Reid to the team as Partner and Vice President of Recruitment. For more information on Royer Thompson, visit www.royerthompson.com.



SECOND ANNUAL BENEFIT CONCERT FOR NO TIME FOR THAT ANTI-BULLYING SOCIETY

The second annual Mud Creek Rotary Benefit Concert for **No Time for That Anti-Bullying Society**, founded by Elsie Morden, was held on April 27, at the Wolfville Farmers’ Market. Thank you to everyone who came out to support bullying prevention, mental health awareness and youth empowerment. It was a fun night and more than \$20,000 was raised for the charity. All proceeds from the benefit concert will help the No Time for That Tour continue to visit Canadian schools free of charge. So far, they have been to 22 schools in the Halifax Regional School Board.

CULTURAL INNOVATION FUND GRANT GOES TO HAL-CON

Hal-Con Sci-Fi and Fantasy Association is thrilled to announce it has received a grant from the province of Nova Scotia which will contribute \$240,000 to projects over the next three years. The grant, generously awarded by the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage through its Cultural Innovation Fund, will help support projects and events, such as a video game development conference, the Hal-Con Art Showcase, the Hal-Con Costuming Series and the Hal-Con Reading and Discussion Series.



DEVOFX PROUDLY SPONSORED BY EUROPEAN BODY ART

April was a productive month for **DevoFx**. They are proud to be sponsored by European Body Art, which provides leading airbrush tattoo systems, airbrush paints, performance makeup, stencils and supplies to professionals around the world. In addition, DevoFx is now the largest distributor of European Body Art products in eastern Canada, providing easier access for makeup professionals in the Maritimes.

FAMILY BUSINESS ATLANTIC CELEBRATES 22ND PETER WILSON DINNER

Family Business Atlantic celebrated its Peter Wilson Dinner on May 10, with George Bishop of Scotia Investments, his two daughters, Leslie and Kristin and nephew Jesse Brotz, to share the history of this fifth generation company. We thank them for sharing insights on succession planning, best practices for corporate governance and the breakup of their family dynasty. This annual event celebrates the accomplishments of successful family enterprises in our region.

CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD ATLANTIC AWARDED 16 LEASING MANDATES

Cushman & Wakefield Atlantic is pleased to announce that it has been awarded the retail leasing mandate for Slate Asset Management in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador. Slate Acquisitions Inc. acquired the assets in a recent purchase from Cominar REIT. “This is an exciting time for Slate — and more importantly the retail marketplace in Atlantic Canada,” says Bill MacAvoy, Managing Director of Cushman & Wakefield Atlantic. The mandate coincides with affiliated company Cushman & Wakefield Asset Services being awarded property management by Slate for retained office and retail.



PAYFORMANCEPOS REBRANDS TO SONA

PayformancePOS has rebranded to **Sona**. The rebrand reflects the company’s transparent approach to payment acceptance and aligns Sona with innovative technology. “The Gaelic word Sona represents feeling satisfaction or well-being, coming from a positive situation,” says Sona CEO Ryan O’Leary. “The name resonated with me because it speaks to how we do things differently with a transparent, customer-focused approach to payment acceptance.” Sona partners with First Data in offering tailored solutions. For more information, visit www.sonapay.ca.



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BUILD TOGETHER NOVA SCOTIA LAUNCHED TO SUPPORT WOMEN IN TRADES

The **Mainland Nova Scotia Building Trades Council** is excited to announce the formation of Build Together Nova Scotia, the first chapter of a program on the east coast that promotes, supports and mentors women in skilled construction trades. The official launch of the committee took place at the fifth annual conference on April 10. Build Together is a national program by Canada’s Building Trades Unions (CBTU), represented by tradeswomen of Building Trades Unions across the country. Specific aims of the committee include introducing women to trades and providing mentorship and support.

Are you launching a new business or product? The Halifax Chamber wants to share your story! Please contact Emma Menchefski at Emma@halifaxchamber.com or 902-481-1239.

Atlantic Business Magazine’s 2018 list of Top 50 CEOs included 15 winners from the Halifax Chamber of Commerce’s business community:

Cory Bell, President & CEO, Lindsay Construction Dartmouth, NS
Also featured in the Hall of Fame as a five-time award winner

Lydia Bugden, CEO & Managing Partner, Stewart McKelvey Halifax, NS

Don Bureaux, President & CEO, Nova Scotia Community College Halifax, NS

Richard Butts, President, Clayton Developments Ltd. Halifax, NS

Joyce Carter, President & CEO, Halifax International Airport Authority Enfield, NS

Jennifer Gillivan, President & CEO, IWK Foundation Halifax, NS

Roger Howard, Regional President, Atlantic Canada RBC Halifax, NS

Roger King, President, Supplement King Canada Dartmouth, NS

Allan MacIntosh, President, Marco Group of Companies Dartmouth, NS

Laurie MacKeigan, President, Backman Vidcom Halifax, NS

Stuart MacLean, CEO, WCB Nova Scotia Halifax, NS

Dr. Travis McDonough, Founder & CEO, Kinduct Technologies Inc. Halifax, NS
Also featured in the Hall of Fame as a five-time award winner

Norm Mensour, CEO, Big Erics Inc. Dartmouth, NS

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For the last three years Noethermal Energy Storage Inc. has been working with NSCC's Applied Research team at the Ivany Campus in Dartmouth. Noethermal's CEO, Jill Johnson (right), and Chief Research and Technology Officer, Louis Desgrosseilliers (left), have worked closely with Director of Applied Research, Alain Joseph (centre), shortly after they won the Innovacorp Smart Energy Demo Challenge in 2015.



STARTUP CITY

Reaching a world-class calibre of excellence

BY ERIN ELAINE CASEY • PHOTOS BY PAUL DARROW

Nova Scotia Community College has come a long way in the last couple of decades. NSCC has grown to a complement of more than 120 programs, covering everything from skilled trades to the very latest in science and technology. It might surprise you to learn that in the last five years alone, NSCC has been involved in more than 260 research and innovation projects. In fact, NSCC has a department completely dedicated to developing practical and innovative solutions for industry's real-world problems.

As the Director of Applied Research at NSCC, Dr. Alain Joseph spends a lot of time thinking about those problems. "There are a lot of social, business and economic questions in Nova Scotia that could use some research," he says. Establishing the college as part of the province's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem

is a key part of NSCC's mission to build Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation.

"We want to focus on improving opportunities for young people in our region," says Joseph. "And we're really proud that the college is a middle space in that ecosystem, building on cutting-edge ideas and developing them for practical implementation by industry."

NSCC employs expert research teams and offers a network of faculty and students from a wide range of programs, to help industry improve their products and processes — and grow their businesses. Joseph describes the cutting-edge labs, facilities and equipment at NSCC campuses as a "community resource."

"We have a lot of great infrastructure that we need to deliver teaching and training to young people — and a lot of

that adapts really well to research. We offer applied research opportunities at our campuses to link students and community with experts," says Joseph.

"Culturally, we really recognize the talent and skill sets of our faculty from having worked in industry and passing that on to the next generation," he explains. "They've recently come from industry, so they have a current understanding of what kinds of needs exist in various industry sectors." In addition to scientific disciplines, Applied Research also has the expertise of more than 120 programs at its fingertips, including business, culinary and natural resources.

Applied Research at NSCC focuses on five areas. The Applied Energy Research team develops and tests sustainable energy alternatives; the Engineered Technologies Research team works in a range of

“*We want to focus on improving opportunities for young people in our region. And we're really proud that the college is a middle space in that ecosystem, building on cutting-edge ideas and developing them for practical implementation by industry.***”**

— Dr. Alain Joseph,
Director of Applied Research,
NSCC



technology sectors; the Environment and Agriculture team studies real-world ecological and spatial questions in the sector; the Applied Geomatics Research group applies advanced mapping techniques to solve problems and support sustainable development in the coastal zone and aquaculture sites; and the Applied Oceans Research group investigates the latest innovations in ocean survey instruments.

NSCC's Industry Liaison Office (ILO) acts as the link between industry and expertise, working with industry partners to identify opportunities and develop collaborative research agreements.

How does Applied Research at NSCC actually work? "We want to help industry partners solve problems and the ILO facilitates those interactions," explains Joseph. "There are other agencies that direct clients our way: Innovacorp, ACOA, Nova Scotia Business Inc. and others." Once a project comes to the front door of the college, the Applied Research team looks at it to see if it's a good fit.

"We put together a team and look for funding resources to make it happen," says Joseph. "It's a little different from the traditional research model — we recognize that industry partners have the greatest expertise in their problem and they are part of the team in looking at next steps to solve that problem."

Joseph emphasizes that the college must play to its areas of strength when choosing which projects to pursue. "We only have so many hours in the day!" he laughs.

Startup Neothermal Energy Storage fit perfectly into the Applied Energy Research stream. Chief Research and Technology Officer, Louis Desgrosseilliers, developed Neothermal's electric thermal storage (ETS) technology during his PhD studies at Dalhousie. Together with CEO, Jill Johnson, he formed a company in 2015 to develop and market a plug-in supplemental room-heating appliance. This electric space heater uses thermal storage to save customers money by using time of day electricity rates.

"We've been working with NSCC for three years — and trying to get a brand new clean-tech startup, from an idea to market is a very long process. The fact that they've been supportive of us has been really great. I don't think we would have gotten here without their support," says Johnson. "They gave us access to a lab, equipment and resources, which is invaluable early on." The initial connection to NSCC came when they won the Innovacorp Smart Energy Demo Challenge in 2015 and they've been working with them ever since.

Neothermal Energy Storage started out at the Ivany Campus in Dartmouth, but in May moved to Bridgewater, a small town that's fast becoming a clean energy destination with their Energize Bridgewater program. Johnson and Desgrosseilliers also installed their very first prototype in March, at Pilikan House on the Middleton Campus. The house is a "living lab" and demonstration site where the next generation of residential

construction professionals can learn how to incorporate sustainability into their work.

"It's a high performance house, built the same as an occupied home, all the same systems, but with a whole home automation system that's more common to commercial buildings," says Desgrosseilliers. This test run is measuring both performance and cost savings, critical information that will inform the pilot project planned for this fall, which will see up to 25 homes outfitted with the new heating appliances. "We'd like to talk to anyone interested in being an early adopter and we're looking at programs that would reduce the cost to the customer," adds Johnson.

Desgrosseilliers points to the set up of NSCC as a huge benefit. "Having a more expansive network of campuses is a really big structural advantage of NSCC. It's designed in a way that you can drive 45 minutes in any direction and you can get to a campus." He and Johnson are now also connected to the Lunenburg campus, located in Bridgewater — that network has been invaluable.

Students are a big part of every research project at NSCC. "Any research activity we do is linked to an industry partner and almost all of it involves students," explains Alain Joseph. "Students often will work as hired research assistants, or have opportunities to engage in research for their senior projects. This is a great opportunity to work on an industry challenge."



"We've been working with NSCC for three years — and trying to get a brand new clean-tech startup, from an idea to market is a very long process. The fact that they've been supportive of us has been really great. I don't think we would have gotten here without their support."

— Jill Johnson, CEO,
NeoThermal Energy Storage

“Having a more expansive network of campuses is a really big structural advantage of NSCC. It’s designed in a way that you can drive 45 minutes in any direction and you can get to a campus.”

— Louis Desgrosseilliers,
Chief Research and Technology
Officer, NeoThermal Energy
Storage



“We also bring those problems to the classroom and see if students want to work on them. It often leads to good ideas and a nice connection if companies are looking to hire someone who knows, or has insights into an emerging area. You might realize that a student you’re

working with would be a great person to have on your team.

When it does work, the partners are always really happy, because they know exactly who they have joining their team — it’s kind of a seamless transition.”

The Neothermal Energy team has

certainly benefitted from student contributions. This will be their third year participating in the NSCC student exchange program. “Students from Austria come for the summer and complete different projects related to our technology,” says Johnson. “This has been so valuable



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The difference is a great relationship



The Applied Research team at NSCC helps industry partners, such as NeoThermal Energy Storage, solve problems and grow their businesses.

because it's just the two of us building the business."

"When we first started with Austrian students, we were still completing work at Ivany," adds Desgrosseilliers. "Students there were building on experiments we were already doing around design of components. Last year, they were doing some experiments on future directions, such as cold storage for AC and heat storage for solar electricity. This year, we're back onto doing stuff directly related to our path. We have two students working on central heating integration approaches — taking our technology and tying it into either a furnace or a boiler. We would be directly linked to existing systems so they would physically operate together and all equipment would be located in the furnace room."

This win-win situation allows students to study and learn from cutting-edge technology while contributing much-needed research hours to a fledgling business. "It's fun to see students excel in areas where we really need skills and excellence," says Joseph.

Joseph has been with NSCC since 2009 when he started as one of the College's first post-doctoral researchers after completing an interdisciplinary PhD at Dalhousie. He took over as

NSCC Applied Research by the numbers

- Dollar value of research activity in the last five years = **\$10 million**
- Number of publications and reports in the last five years = **100+**
- Number of students involved in applied research over the last five years = **500+**
- Number of NSCC locations engaging in applied research activity = **9**

Director of Applied Research about a year ago. "I'm even still impressed by the calibre of some of the research activities we have here. We have many of the world's leading experts in some of these applied fields."

One example is NSCC hosting the Industrial Research Chair for Canadian Colleges, Dr. Craig Brown, who holds a \$1 million grant from NSERC, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, in the field of ocean sea floor habitat mapping. Dr. Brown has two post-doctoral researchers working with him. "These young PhDs could go anywhere in the world," says Joseph, "but they're actively doing applied research at the college. This is not something you would have seen 10 or 15 years ago."

NSCC is also one of the only academic institutions in Canada to have light detection and ranging — or LiDAR — mapping instrumentation available. "LiDAR uses a laser instrument to produce really high quality maps, which allows local resource sector companies to get really accurate maps for things like aquaculture. We've worked with municipalities to look at flooding and road planning and to map the solar energy potential of roofs in Halifax."

Joseph also points to important collaborations emerging in the ocean-tech arena. NSCC is a partner in the Ocean Supercluster — and when the COVE (Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship) facility opens this summer on the Dartmouth waterfront, NSCC's Ocean Research team is going to be based there.

“ We want Nova Scotia to have one of the most innovative economies in the world. This is a province with 10 universities and a college with 13 campuses. We can compete globally. The research is about reaching a world-class calibre of excellence.”

— Dr. Alain Joseph,
Director of Applied
Research, NSCC

One of the most unusual things about NSCC’s Applied Research model is that the college does not retain any ownership of the intellectual property developed by their partnerships. “Our mandate is to help industries grow. We help them improve, advance and turn ideas into prototypes. Then we turn it all over to our partners,” explains Joseph.

“Hopefully, we have a chance to loop back to them. If they have success, they’ll be looking for people to help them grow, further refine their research, implement training and develop a business model. Having that connection to industry helps us improve how we teach across all our programs, even the ones that don’t have a direct connection to science or technology.”

Despite the hundreds of projects NSCC has participated in — and the millions of research dollars the institution has garnered, Joseph thinks there’s still tons of untapped potential. “I’d love to see a lot more of that capacity leveraged. You can walk down the halls here and see so many talented people. Our region needs to put that skill and talent into action.”

The Applied Research team at NSCC is thinking big. “We want Nova Scotia to have one of the most innovative economies in the world,” says Joseph. “This is a province with 10 universities and a college with 13 campuses. We can compete globally. The research is about reaching a world-class calibre of excellence.” ■

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Zachary and Joshua Green, co-founders of Mysa, with members of the Mysa team.

Contributed

Purposeful destruction

Growing Atlantic Canadian science-based technology startups into booming companies **By Jon Tattrie**

Writing in the 1940s, the German economist Joseph Schumpeter argued capitalism can never be stationary and that the fundamental impulse driving the capitalistic engine comes from entrepreneurs creating new consumer goods, new methods of production or transportation and new markets.

“Capitalism requires the perennial gale of creative destruction,” he concluded.

Those winds are blowing through the Creative Destruction Lab (CDL) – Atlantic, which in June graduated its first cohort of nearly a dozen new companies looking to clear ground to grow their own businesses on. Executive Director Jeff Larsen says the course runs for nine months and uses objective-based mentoring.

“We take the best startups in Atlantic Canada and we help accelerate their growth by putting them through a program with some of the most

successful entrepreneurs and business people across Canada,” he says.

CDL is a seed-stage program for massively scalable, science-based companies. It started at the University of Toronto five years ago and arrived at Dalhousie University’s Rowe School of Business in 2017. In 2019, New York University will start the first American CDL program. It has locations at the Sauder School of Business at the University of British Columbia, the Haskayne School of Business at the University of Calgary and HEC Montreal.

Atlantic Canada’s first class includes Harbr, which raised \$1.75 million for its startup to use artificial intelligence in project management, real estate development and construction projects. Bereda Training got \$150,000 through three angel investors it met at CDL-Atlantic to develop its online training platform for endurance athletes.

“The thesis of the program is that there are no better ideas or efforts elsewhere in the world, but you see more of these companies growing in Silicon Valley and Boston and a few other places. But in Canada, we’ve had less of them,” Larsen says.

He thinks the Silicon Valleys of the world take advantage of a long tradition of growing companies and a better mentoring system. Larsen says the insights east coast startups can learn from CDL mentors like Clearwater’s John Risley, IMP’s Ken Rowe and Microsoft Canada’s Ozge Yeloglu, can help young entrepreneurs make wise decisions from the start.

And Atlantic Canada, with a stagnant economy and aging population, is rife for creative destruction. “GDP per capita is essentially equal to productivity times demographics,” Larsen says. “If we know our demographic is declining, our only option is increasing productivity.”

Atlantic Canada doesn't have a growing labour force, nor floods of venture capital, so CDL focuses on green-blue innovation (ocean-tech, clean-tech and agri-tech). Larsen says job growth will come from startups, not big companies expanding.

Gillian McCrae is a Venture Manager with CDL-Atlantic. She works directly with the companies over the nine-month program, connecting them to mentors, scheduling regular one-on-one calls to check in on them and guiding them through the process.

They work in two-month "sprints," setting three critical objectives that will "move the needle" for the businesses in that eight-week period. McCrae says it

"We take the best startups in Atlantic Canada and we help accelerate their growth by putting them through a program with some of the most successful entrepreneurs and business people across Canada."

— Jeff Larsen, Executive Director, Creative Destruction Lab Atlantic



could be increasing sales, getting new partnerships, working with contract manufacturers or making critical hires. "A lot of the cases, it's uncovering the unit economics, or the economic benefits, within how they sell to their customers. It does require a deep dive and analysis on market assessments, customer engagement and success planning around the customer side."

Even when they don't meet the objectives, they do find a new understanding of what they should be focused on. "They don't get cut from the program if they don't achieve the programs. The way they make it through is the commitment of the fellows and associates who want to continue working with them," she says.

McCrae, who has run her own businesses including GetGifted, says mentors helped her immensely. Putting your hopes and dreams before experienced business people can leap-frog you ahead, she says. "These are the people who have been there and done that. They have the experience, the history and the challenges that new entrepreneurs have to go through and overcome too."

She won't name it, but says one Toronto-based company built so many relationships in Atlantic Canada through CDL that it's looking at relocating here.

The CDL cohort gets even more support from MBA students like Ryan Bunker, who help them meet those sprint goals. "It can be general market intelligence. If a company is looking to enter a new market space, we would help them with determining the overall market size, dynamic, who are the big players, how do they compete, what are the growth prospects of that market," Bunker says. "It could be helping a company who has a product in a market, but isn't sure on the actual value and how it should be captured through pricing."

Bunker was paired with a CDL startup as part of his studies at Dalhousie. He can't name it for confidentiality reasons, but he helped it figure out how its products differed from existing ones and learned about the pricing strategies of rivals. Other MBA students look at cash flow performance and projections to help with investor packages, or improve pitching and presentation skills to win investors.

Bunker says the students get to test classroom concepts in the real world. "If we're not doing something like this, it's a lot of theory without a lot of hands-on

"These are the people who have been there and done that. They have the experience, the history and the challenges that new entrepreneurs have to go through and overcome too."

— Gillian McCrae, Venture Manager, CDL-Atlantic



experience," Bunker says. "I said to everyone in the Creative Destruction Lab that the first day session was the best day of my professional career. It was just so exciting. I got to meet a lot of great people and build a network that is very valuable."

Zach Green says the CDL program worked well for Mysa, the pioneering smart thermostat company he co-founded to control electric baseboards. "We make it really simple for homeowners to set energy-saving schedules from their phone or tablet and they can see in real time the energy consumption of all the heaters — and all the stuff in their house," he says. "We make really easy for people to save energy and money."

One of their investors suggested they apply for a CDL-Atlantic spot to gain

mentors and secure investment. “It’s been extremely positive,” he says. “There were so many things at CDL that we didn’t think of that has put our business on the right course.”

For a startup company looking to get into the power business, they got a heck of a mentor: Chris Huskilson, CEO of Emera, the company that owns Nova Scotia Power and other utilities in Canada, the U.S. and the Caribbean. “We know our solution from the end-consumer angle, but to hear how our solution impacts the utility angle and how we scale up to provide to thousands and hundreds of thousands of customers — Chris is masterful at that,” Green says.

Huskilson has agreed to work with Mysa after the CDL program ends. “It’s awesome.”

Mentor Matthew MacLellan, President of Eastlink Wireless, gave them valuable insight on debt planning, raising debt and how to use it to sustain the business. “It was extremely helpful advice.”

Another mentor suggested they do another round of manufacturing before they started to sell units. “We did — and

we found a few problems with our manufacturing line that we were able to fix before the units went to customers.”

Green says the CDL experience was a little chaotic at first, with 20 startups and 20 mentors meeting all at once. But by the second meeting, things had smoothed out. They got a number of angel investors on board for the next round of funding and are now exploring a different thermostat for the condo market and a software subscription for commercial users.

“It was the very first initiative I have seen that does a good job of including all four Atlantic provinces,” he says. “I never felt like one was stronger than the other. Just because we are from Newfoundland doesn’t mean we were a ‘nobody’ startup. CDL did a really good job of making it pan-Atlantic.”

The Creative Destruction Lab takes applications on a rolling basis and has set an Aug. 12 deadline for the next cohort. It selects ventures based on their potential to scale, the defensibility of their product or service and the commitment of the co-founding team. Ventures can apply

“It can be general market intelligence. If a company is looking to enter a new market space, we would help them with determining the overall market size, dynamic, who are the big players, how do they compete, what are the growth prospects of that market.”

— Ryan Bunker, MBA Student



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at www.CreativeDestructionLab.com or email questions to info@createdestructionlab.com.

CDL-Atlantic’s Gillian McCrae says the graduating ventures are already blowing the winds of change through eastern Canada. “They’re representing some of the best companies in Atlantic Canada in front of a national audience and to be part of that has been a pleasure,” she says.

Joseph Shumpeter would have called it “unternehmergeist,” or the entrepreneurial spirit.

“Only a few people have these qualities of leadership,” he wrote. “However, if one or a few have advanced with success, many of the difficulties disappear. Others can then follow these pioneers.” ■

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Day 5: Beijing

Bus excursion to the **Great Wall**, the 4,000 mile long and 2,000 year old construction is said to be the only man-made structure visible by the naked eye from the moon. Visit the **Ming Tombs**. One of the 13 Ming Emperors' Tombs is fully excavated and open for exploration.

Day 6 - 7: Beijing/Shanghai/Suzhou

Fly to Shanghai, followed by a bus trip to Suzhou for the **Lingering Garden**, **Tiger Hill**, **Hanshan Temple** and the **National Embroidery Institute** to see silk embroidery, a local craft with thousands of years of history. Dinner this evening will include a show featuring traditional Chinese music.

Day 8: Suzhou/Hangzhou

Morning tour bus excursion to **Hangzhou** for a visit to the **Economic Development Zone** and the centuries-old **Lingyin Temple**, featuring a 64.3 foot high camphor-wood carving of Buddha.

Day 9: Hangzhou/Shanghai

Morning boat cruise on **West Lake** with relaxing stopover at jewellike pagodas and tea houses. Afternoon tour bus trip to Shanghai.

Day 10: Shanghai

Visit the **Yu Garden**, a maze of marvelous pavilions, ponds, rocky works and over-arching trees. Also visit the **Bund**, Shanghai's famous waterfront park. Tour the **Pudong Economic Development Zone**.

Day 11: Shanghai/Beijing/YYZ

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Dreaming in 3D

Halifax's Smarter Spaces is on the global front of 3D scanning **By Matthew Halliday**



Contributed

Dan MacIntosh (left) and Colin Gillis, co-founders of Smarter Spaces, which uses 3D scanning to create digital models of buildings, streetscapes and other spaces.

“I don’t want to create hundreds of jobs in other countries,” says Colin Gillis. “I want to create them here in Nova Scotia. Part of the reason we built this company was to make something that could grow locally and internationally, but create value here above all.”

“We” refers to Gillis and Smarter Spaces co-founder Dan MacIntosh, who jointly created the company in 2016 as an outgrowth of their previous company, IPECC. That company focused on project management and relocation planning, among other services. But, says Gillis, “The model wasn’t growing, wasn’t creating new jobs, not really even paying a fair market wage.”

They decided to take a risk and become early adopters in the burgeoning field of 3D scanning. With the help of a Business Development Bank of Canada loan to purchase equipment, they transitioned the company into what would become Smarter Spaces. Today, they

create detailed digital models of buildings, streets and other spaces for clients including developers, government, non-profits, universities and hospitals.

“It sounds simple,” says Gillis, “but one of the biggest causes of cost overruns in any building project are those ‘I didn’t know that was there’ moments.”

The Smarter Spaces team uses an array of scanning tools which utilize LiDAR (light detection and ranging) technology. The most sophisticated tools can emit tens of thousands of laser pulses per second, measuring the distance between the scanner and nearby objects, creating a “point cloud.” Each point is assigned three-dimensional co-ordinates and the point cloud is transformed into a 3D representation of the space is being scanned. The technology has been used for years in industrial, military and other applications, but the benefits on smaller scale projects are potentially transformative.

“We’re right now working with a local developer to scan a new building as it’s being built, before the drywall and ceilings go on,” says Gillis. “When a contractor builds, he’s supposed to red-mark the drawings to indicate changes — but sometimes doesn’t. Same with the architect, so you can have a brand-new building with an ‘as-built’ that’s already off.”

To that end, Smarter Spaces has trademarked the phrase “as-scanned,” as opposed to “as-built.” With an “as-scanned,” every stud, bundle of wire and pipe is accounted for, making for an unprecedentedly accurate image of a building, inside and out, which helps says Gillis, “Everything from figuring out where a water leak is coming from to knowing where to hang a picture.”

The need for accurate drawings is even more vital in older buildings, which might have decades of undocumented renovations and repairs. Smarter Spaces has been working with

“*I don't want to create hundreds of jobs in other countries. I want to create them here in Nova Scotia. Part of the reason we built this company was to make something that could grow locally and internationally, but create value here above all.***”**

— Colin Gillis,
Co-founder,
Smarter Spaces

Armco on Halifax's old World Trade and Convention Centre (WTCC) and that's also where they're besting their competition globally.

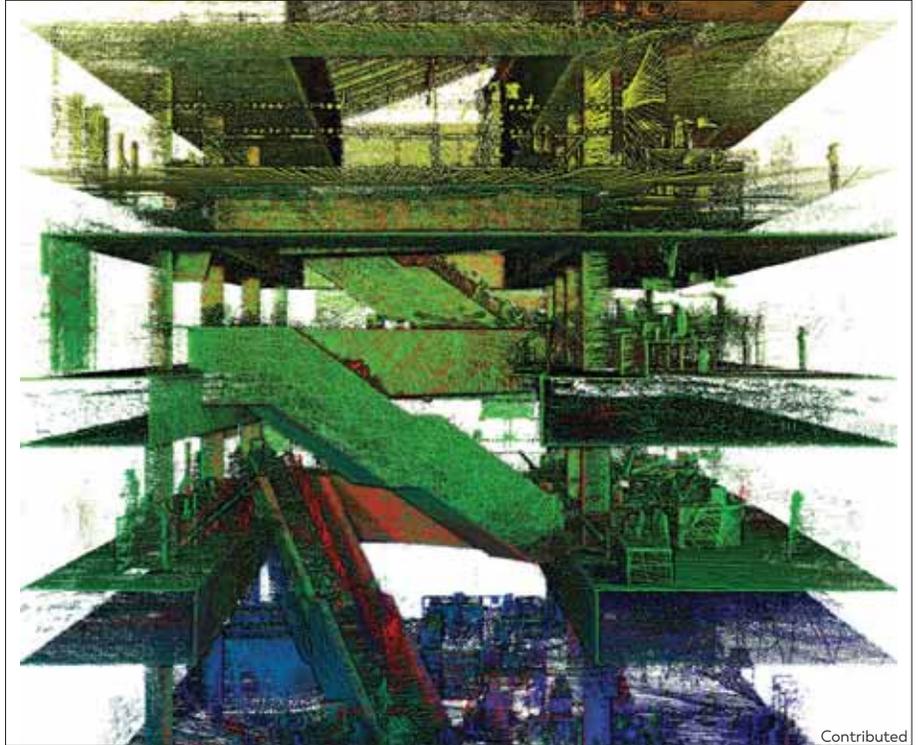
“We are world leaders in merging technology like photogrammetry [surveying and measuring distances between objects with photography] and LiDAR,” says Gillis.

For Armco, they deployed drones to capture aerial images of the WTCC and merged that with their LiDAR scanners. “It allowed us to do a complete model, which would have been impossible otherwise,” since the LiDAR scanners alone only measure up to 30 metres.

The applications go well beyond accurate building drawings — it can be used to create immersive 3D environments for tourism or in video games. All of which makes the company poised that much more for the growth Gillis envisions.

The staff is almost all drawn from NSCC's Architectural Engineering Technician program and Gillis hopes the current team is just the beginning — and that no matter how large the company scales, the bulk of its workforce remains in Nova Scotia.

“Every hour of scanning requires three or four hours of processing, which can be done from anywhere. So we can scan a building in Ottawa and the technicians putting together those renderings are right here in Halifax.”



Contributed

Smarter Spaces uses an array of scanning tools to create a “point cloud,” to create 3D representations of spaces.



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Blockchain demystified

New technology could revolutionize commerce



PAT D'ENTREMONT
SENIOR PARTNER,
NICOM IT SOLUTIONS

At first, it seemed to be all about online monetary transactions and in the very early stages of adoption. But suddenly it's here now — and likely in your industry. So, you should start paying attention to blockchain technology.

What exactly is blockchain technology? First of all, it's not magic. A blockchain is physical storage of data, just like any other data storage, but what is unique is how it is being done. Basically, information is recorded in blocks of data that are linked together, then replicated multiple times across a network of users, called "nodes."

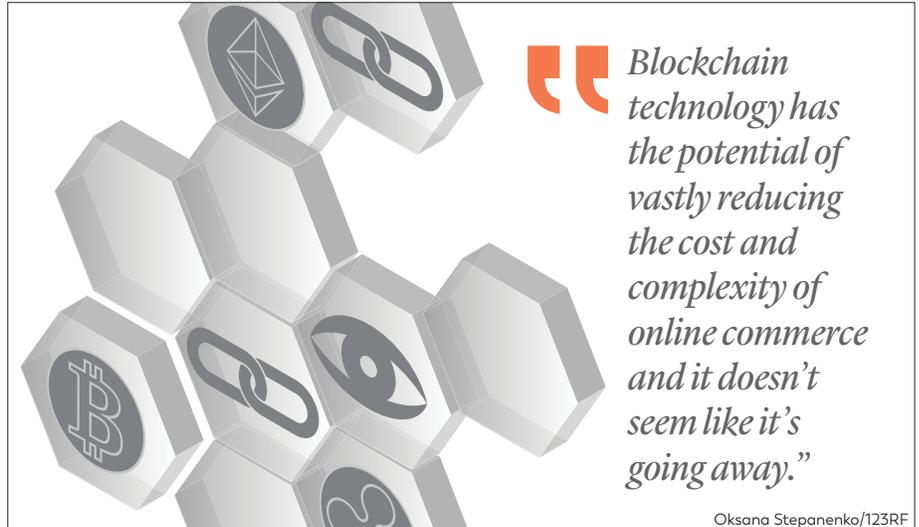
Think of a blockchain as an association and the nodes as its members. There is no central authority dictating the rules of conduct, only whatever governance the association puts in place. It is an ideal technology to ensure trust among trading partners without having to rely on some higher authority or neutral third party. Plus, for the reasons I'm going to list below, it is hard to hack and it's easy to detect if anyone is attempting to do so.

In short, it is highly secure and decentralized.

There are two types of blockchains: public (like the online currency known as Bitcoin) and private (like most business usage). It is the unique properties of these blockchains that make them very appealing as a means of direct communication among trading partners:

RESILIENT DISTRIBUTED NETWORK

The fact that data gets replicated across the nodes means that the entire



Blockchain technology has the potential of vastly reducing the cost and complexity of online commerce and it doesn't seem like it's going away."

Oksana Stepanenko/123RF

system is peer-to-peer, where communication is decentralized and each machine has the same capabilities as any other. There is no central server to be compromised and all records are public and verifiable by authorized individuals. Also, it is very robust, because if one part of the network goes down, other copies will take over.

"IMMUTABLE" TRANSACTIONS

That means that transactions can only be added. The technology does not allow for changing or deleting information once it is placed on the blockchain, leaving a clear audit trail. If anyone tries to change an existing transaction, it will be easily detected. Since only one part of the chain has been compromised, the node where the block resides will simply replace it with a block from another node.

CRYPTOGRAPHICALLY SECURE

Every digital asset and block goes through a cryptographic one-way "hashing" algorithm that further ensures they cannot be tampered with. The hashing yields a unique result called a digest and someone modifying a block and correctly guessing the input that produced the digest is highly unlikely.

TRANSACTIONS ONLY ALLOWED BY CONSENSUS

Network participants must agree on the rules of business, which are embedded in "smart contracts" that are programmed right into the blockchain.

ACCESSIBLE VIA WEB SERVICES

Participants use the internet to participate in the blockchain.

Blockchain technology can be used for transmitting many types of transactions and other digital assets such as mortgages, video content and shipping bills of lading. Although banks and federal authorities are studying this technology, it may be a while before it gets widely adopted. Because these organizations have already spent billions of dollars on existing secure systems. Also, blockchains are extremely resource-intensive due to their security algorithms, something that has to be improved upon before it becomes mainstream and the legality of "smart contracts" is something that is still up for review.

Regardless, blockchain technology has the potential of vastly reducing the cost and complexity of online commerce and it doesn't seem like it's going away. In fact, blockchain has been described by some as being even more important than the internet itself.

Pat d'Entremont is a Senior Partner at Nicom IT Solutions, an IT firm that provides professional advisory services and software products to the seaport industry.

A mindset of curiosity

How to find growth in conflict



MICHELLE FITZGERALD,
SENIOR CONSULTANT,
KNIGHTSBRIDGE
ROBERTSON SURRETTE

“Whether it’s because you don’t believe in it, because you don’t think you can succeed through it or because you don’t think it can lead to a better outcome, you’ve probably got good reasons for avoiding conflict. The problem is that you’re on a slippery slope that leads to a pit of groupthink and risk uniformity. You are going to have to open yourself to the benefits of healthy conflict.”

— Dr. Liane Davey,
Author, *You First*

Recently, I had the pleasure of delivering a constructive conflict workshop to a group of local leaders. Going in, on a Friday afternoon after two days of meetings and what looked to be a hearty lunch, I wondered about the energy of the crowd. However, when I arrived, the room was full, and people were eager and ready. Constructive conflict is a hot topic these days and one that was particularly relevant for this group.

Preparing to embark on a major transformational change initiative these leaders had fallen prey to the all too common groupthink syndrome. In order to drive success, they knew they needed to collaborate with other teams and organizations, think outside of the box and challenge each other’s thinking.

Within the two-hour workshop, we discussed the value of constructive conflict in the pursuit of collaboration and innovation, explored a conflict model and completed a quick self-assessment to uncover the way they typically approach, or avoid, conflict so they can more easily flex when needed.

Among the strategies discussed was a simple yet powerful rule of thumb — adopt a mindset of curiosity.

The underlying theme being: you can’t be both defensive and curious at the same time. When a person is in defense mode, they become self-absorbed, lose perspective and quickly become too attached to their own way of thinking. The easiest and most effective way to escape this pitfall is to adopt a mindset of curiosity. Once a person begins to ask questions, probe and get curious about the other person’s perspective it will pave the way for a more constructive conversation and, as a result, better outcomes.

More often than not, the challenge isn’t what is being said, it is the meaning behind what’s being said.

The more you exercise this muscle — adopting a curious mindset — the more natural it will become, and, as some of those leaders have already discovered, the more success you’ll have navigating through challenging conversations.

So next time:

When this happens ...	Try ...
I feel myself reacting to a “stupid” comment said by someone	“Help me understand what you’re trying to achieve ...”
I perceive a negative reaction in someone to what I’ve said	“I get the sense we’re not on the same page here. Tell me more about what you’re thinking.”
Someone starts expressing strong views or emotions during the conversation	“This sounds like an important point to you. I’d like to understand that better. Tell me more ...”
The discussion goes off track	“I think we might be losing focus. Tell me how this fits in?”
Several comments are on the table or multiple people are speaking at one time	“We have three ideas on the table, let’s tackle them one at a time.”

Protecting your business

Why small businesses need cyber security



ARIN SELIG, CIP, CRM,
COMMERCIAL
RELATIONSHIP MANAGER,
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Cyberattacks on businesses are becoming more frequent news items. The attacks on high-profile companies, such as Sony and Target, have resulted in national headlines — and have helped to bring the growing issue of cybercrime to the forefront. Surveys conducted by organizations such as the Small Business Authority, Symantec and the National Cyber Security Alliance, revealed that many small business owners are still operating under a false sense of cyber security and are unaware of the growing threat of cyberattacks on their business.

The statistics are bleak. The majority of small businesses surveyed did not have a formal internet security policy for employees and only half of these businesses had a basic cyber security measure in place. Further, only about a quarter of small business owners have had an outside party test their computer systems to ensure they are hacker-proof. Nearly 40 per cent do not have their data backed up in more than one location.

Despite these critical security exposures, up to 85 per cent of small business owners believe their company is safe from hackers, viruses, malware and data breaches. This disconnect is largely due to a widespread belief that small businesses are unlikely targets for cyberattacks. To the contrary, data thieves are actually looking for the path of least resistance and as more and more of the larger companies get serious about data security, small businesses are becoming increasingly attractive targets. The



glebstock/123RF

results of which are often devastating for these small business owners.

In recent years, almost 60 per cent of small businesses victimized by a cyberattack were forced to permanently close within six months. Many of these businesses had put off making necessary improvements to their cyber security protocols until it was too late due to beliefs that the costs would be too prohibitive. Avoid making this mistake — even if you don't currently have the resources to bring in an outside expert to test your computer systems and make security recommendations — there are simple, economical steps that you can take to reduce your risk of falling victim to a costly cyberattack. The following list includes easily implementable security procedures and is a great place to start:

- Train employees in cyber security principles, including (but not limited to) email safety and identifying phishing and fraudulent emails. Establish policies on how business data, such as email, should be accessed remotely.
- Install, use and regularly update antivirus and antispyware software on every computer used in your business.
- Use a firewall for your internet connection.
- Download and install software updates for your operating systems

and applications as they become available.

- Make backup copies of important business data and information.
- Control physical access to your computers and network components.
- Secure your Wi-Fi networks. If you have a Wi-Fi network for your workplace, make sure it is secure and hidden.
- Require individual user accounts for each employee.
- Limit employee access to data and information and limit authority to install software.
- Use secure passwords and change them regularly.

In addition to taking these steps, having a disaster recovery plan ready in the event of an attack is critical. Having backup copies of your important data, including one offsite and one disconnected from your network may assist with the recovery. There are various insurance products available to assist in transferring cyber risks.

Cyber security is a serious concern for all businesses, large and small. Contact a member of the Commercial Insurance Team at A.P. Reid to help identify your exposures and provide options that best suit your needs.

Ransomware attacks

Are local businesses safe from cyberattacks?



MICHAEL MURPHY
PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR,
GBS TECHNOLOGIES

Canadian businesses experience as many as 1,600 ransomware attacks per day and estimates indicate that total incidents for 2018 will exceed all previous years (CCIRC, 2018). With the ability to leak, encrypt and lock all business assets from employees, ransomware attacks are becoming a serious problem for businesses. Breaches have become so frequent that banks now ask new businesses to validate their network security prior to providing loans.

Who is most at risk? Larger businesses and corporations often have a whole team dedicated to monitoring security. Small businesses typically don't have that type of luxury. Unfortunately, without the proper security measures and experience, no business of any size is truly safe against hackers.

WannaCry, an early 2017 ransomware virus, took control of more than 250,000 businesses in 116 countries (CSO, 2017). Similarly, TeslaCrypt, which accounted for 48 per cent of ransomware attacks in 2016, made files effectively impossible to restore without help from the malware creators (CSO, 2017). In the period since then, ransom costs to free data rose 230 per cent and in some cases experienced attackers can charge millions (IDG News Service, 2017). The question now becomes, how do these hackers gain access into private business records?

Ransomware can be spread through simple email attachments, software apps and compromised websites. For example, hackers can use fake domains, similar

to a business's email addresses and send companywide emails pretending to be an executive. Typically, these emails will have an attachment and the content of the email will ask each employee to open the file. Once clicked, the employee's computer will begin to infect the network and access will be denied — all from an outside assailant. Once the hacker has penetrated the network, personal information about clients, emails, balance sheets and income statements can be stolen, lost or made public if ransom is not paid before a certain date. The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration states 93 per cent of all companies that lose access to their data for 10 days or more go bankrupt within a year (TechTarget, 2014).

When considering the threats that businesses face, it's critical to ensure

that proper measures are put in place to make certain confidential data is not breached. Presently, the importance of data backup and network security cannot be overstated. Redundant backups are a vital security measure every company should invest in, large or small, to ensure that if an attack were to happen, data can be restored from a secured source. This ensures that not all data is lost and ransom would be avoided. Network security audits are a recommended first step to assess an organization's level of exposure and employees should have a foundational understanding of cybersecurity in the workplace. With the digital black market selling ransomware kits for little as \$10, it is not a matter if your business will be targeted but a matter of when. Make sure your business is secure.

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When technology fails

A solid backup plan is your best bet to mitigate loss



KATHLEEN MacEACHERN
POLICY ANALYST, HALIFAX
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Several months ago, many Atlantic Canadians lost access to their social media accounts, internet browsing capability went to zero and calling, texting and emailing was almost impossible. For a few hours — and for those on that specific internet network — the world was at a standstill. Others, like myself, on a different network, watched the epic meltdown occur on Twitter. The fact is though, for many businesses the outage meant lost revenue as phone lines were down, debit machines stopped processing and I'm sure many meetings were cancelled. The lack of internet access would have had a severe impact on businesses in the Atlantic provinces. So, what do businesses do when technology fails?

PREPARE FOR THE WORST

We all know that technology can fail. The internet can go down, the power can go off, or sometimes just forgetting a password can lead to lost data. The best way to mitigate the loss is to have a backup plan!

- Find an internet backup: Mobile hotspots, often offered by your internet carrier, can save you if you really need the internet at the time it goes down. For instance, during a high-stakes presentation or an important international Skype call.
- Find a good coffee shop: If it's just your internet that's down or your power is out, know where a good "work-from-outside" the office spot is.

“*In the end, while power outages and lost internet can have a major impact on businesses, having a game plan for when it does happen can save your business in the long run.***”**

- **Have an offline project:** Try writing something by hand. Maybe you need to brainstorm some marketing ideas or a new communications plan. You'll rediscover how much fun colourful pens and blank paper can be.
- **Go to lunch:** Sometimes power outages and internet outages don't last too long, but just long enough for you to try a new restaurant or walk around the block a few times. Getting some vitamin D is always a good option.
- **Use a cloud:** If your data isn't sensitive, or if you have a secure server, try using a cloud backup for your information.
- **Two words: Hard. Drive.** Always save important documents somewhere other than your computer.
- **Old-fashioned scanning:** Scan really important documents into a hard copy.

If you do lose data because of a technology fail, there are businesses that can help you extract information from devices, such as external hard drives.

WRITE IT DOWN

I often feel like I might be the only person my age with an actual address book. Call me old-fashioned, but there's something about writing addresses into a fancy notebook with letter dividers. For this reason, I know that if my internet goes down or I lose power my list of contacts won't go with it. Make sure you have your business or customer contact list written somewhere other than online or on the computer. Maybe you have an important meeting, but because of a loss of power you don't have any lights. You may want to reschedule, but without knowing their number, this might not be easy.

HAVE A TEAM MEETING

How often do we get a chance to meet with our team without someone constantly checking their emails? If your office loses connectivity or power and you can still see each other, why not check in with everyone's projects or just have a conversation.

BACKUP TIPS

- **Automatic save:** Set your writing tools, like Microsoft Word, to automatically save your work every five minutes.

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY IN URBAN HRM

Internet access is an on-going issue in Nova Scotia. Rural Nova Scotians have been having trouble connecting for years and while the province has allocated money towards the cause, many people would be surprised to know that it's not just a rural issue. There are businesses in urban HRM, including the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, that have faced difficulties acquiring internet access. There is a real cost to businesses if internet access is not available and may even affect a business owner's decision to locate into a certain area. If you are a business within the HRM having trouble acquiring internet, contact Kathleen at the Chamber as the Create a Positive Business Environment Task Force is looking into this issue (kathleen@halifaxchamber.com).

In the end, while power outages and lost internet can have a major impact on businesses, having a game plan for when it does happen can save your business in the long run. Use the internet, find the best way to back up your data, or find a cozy coffee shop. Don't panic, there was a time when no one had internet and business still continued.

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For more information on next year's Spring Dinner visit www.halifaxchamber.com.

Fighting global disease

Appili Therapeutics wages war on dangerous bacteria **By Heather Laura Clarke**

They don't wear capes and masks, but a team of employees in Halifax is working hard to save the citizens of earth from infectious disease.

Experts in drug development, infectious disease and commercialization founded Appili Therapeutics less than three years ago — and the company has already been making a difference on a global level.

Appili Therapeutics' CEO, Kevin Sullivan, says winning New Business of the Year at the 2017 Halifax Business Awards was an important moment in the early life cycle of the company.

"We'd come a long way fairly quickly and we'd also been successful in the fundraising end of things — raising just shy of \$12 million in equity financing as well as \$14.6 million in non-diluted funding [through partnerships and incentive programs] to support our three programs," says Sullivan. "We were able to do a lot in a short period of time and it got people's attention."

Since winning the award last January, Sullivan says the Appili Therapeutics team has been charging ahead and continuing to expand, going from 14 employees to 20.

"Last year we grew our management team and this year we've been focusing on filling out the organization with a number of critical roles," says Sullivan. "We've been finding the right people in business development, finance, project management and regulatory affairs."

He says the company's approach focuses on "matching clearly defined medical needs with opportunities for more effective solutions," which range from improvements in established therapies to entirely new classes of anti-infectives.

Because Appili Therapeutics isn't bound to a specific technology or platform, employees are able to consider a wide range of additions and target programs that rapidly generate value or represent significant advances in the treatment of infectious diseases.

"The focus has always been to build a balanced risk portfolio that's a mix of products close to market, which can generate revenue and cash flow — and



Halifax is a great place to launch a company and the local business community has been extremely supportive. There's a lot of good talent coming out of local universities and we've been able to attract a really top-notch team to drive our growth."

— Kevin Sullivan,
CEO, Appili Therapeutics

Contributed

programs in the earlier stages of development — which can really and truly change how we treat infectious diseases," explains Sullivan. "The faster-to-market products give the company stability and the higher-risk programs provide the long-term potential growth."

At the moment, their near-to-patient focus is the ATI-1501 program, which has finished its clinical trial and is on track to file its New Drug Application (NDA) to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) by the end of the year. It's an oral suspension (liquid) form of antibiotic that's designed to help pediatric and elderly patients who have difficulty swallowing.

Sullivan says their ATI-1503 program is in the critical gram-negative antibiotic space, where there is discussion surrounding antibiotic-resistant "superbugs." The Appili team is also working on a brand-new vaccine to combat a dangerous strain of bacteria called *Francisella tularensis*.

"It's a thousand times more potent than anthrax, so it could be used as a bioterrorism weapon," says Sullivan.

"The program is partially funded by the U.S. Department of Defense, so we're developing a vaccine to protect troops as well as the civilian population against this potential bioterrorism threat."

Since Appili Therapeutics' business model centres around growth through acquisition, Sullivan says their new asset identification team has been hunting for their future programs.

"We've looked at more than 150 different infectious disease programs globally and there are a few we're interested in," says Sullivan. "If we're successful in bringing those in, we'll have some important announcements to make in the coming year."

Sullivan says the company's focus is entirely global, but it works well for Appili to maintain their head office in Halifax, along with a secondary office in Toronto.

"Halifax is a great place to launch a company and the local business community has been extremely supportive," says Sullivan. "There's a lot of good talent coming out of local universities and we've been able to attract a really top-notch team to drive our growth."

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