

BUSINESS VOICE

HALIFAX'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE



BUSINESS IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Evolve Fitness pivots, fundraises and donates \$65,000

Pg 16



NOT A FULL-STOP

Local company finds new revenue stream

Pg 18

A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH DURING COVID-19

Keeping women safe - from home

Pg 20

REFLECTIONS AND RECOVERY

How Halifax will get back to business

Pg 26

5 WAYS TO PREPARE TO REOPEN

SIMPLE STEPS TO GET YOUR BUSINESS READY TO REOPEN
YOUR DOORS TO HALIFAX



1 Develop a COVID-19 Task Force

- Your COVID-19 task force should be made up of 2-5 people and include a manager.
- This task force will:
 - Develop and lead your COVID-19 prevention plan
 - Ensure best practices are being followed by staff
 - Remain updated with changing guidelines and policies from government.



2 Ensure workplace safety

- Place signage around your office to ensure proper hygiene, and to remind your staff to be physically distant.
- Stock your workplace with the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Consider hiring a professional cleaner.
- Develop an employee assessment tool or system for use before every shift.



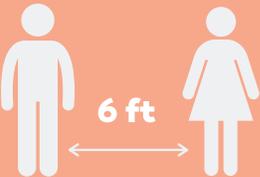
3 Prepare your employees

- Introduce employee assessment tool for screening prior to returning to work.
- Require employees to start reporting symptoms or known contact with someone who has COVID-19.
- Train staff in proper hygiene practices.
- Discourage employees from sharing equipment.



4 Prepare your customers

- Post guidelines at the entrance of your business regarding your expectations.
- Consider downsizing or limiting store capacity.
- Provide a place for customers to wash their hands, or provide them with hand sanitizer.
- Update your website to reflect your new rules.
- Place arrow shaped tape on the ground to direct the flow of traffic.



5 Prepare for transactions

- Sales registers should be six feet apart.
- Avoid cash exchanges, encourage customers to use card, tap or other forms of contactless payment.
- Install plexiglass screens between staff and customers if necessary.
- Consider delivery, take-out and curbside pickup where applicable.



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That's why we are still working and why we are still providing safe housing to 18 vulnerable women and families."

20

— Heather Byrne, Alice House Executive Director



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Business Voice is published 11 times a year for members of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and Metro Halifax's business community. Views expressed in Business Voice are those of the contributors and individual members, and are not necessarily endorsed by, or are a policy of, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce.

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HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CHAMBER EVENTS

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

THE HALIFAX CHAMBER'S NAVIGATING COVID-19 WEBINAR SERIES HAS RECEIVED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE ATLANTIC CANADA OPPORTUNITIES AGENCY



Atlantic Canada
Opportunities
Agency

Agence de
promotion économique
du Canada atlantique

Canada

NAVIGATING COVID-19 WEBINAR SERIES:

The Halifax Chamber is pleased to present our webinar series to help your business through this uncertain time. We feature experts in finance, business planning, mental health, cybersecurity and more.

Find our full webinar lineup online at HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM/EVENTS

SAVE THE DATE:

WONDER WOMEN CONFERENCE

December 4
Halifax Convention Centre
Details coming soon!

HALIFAX SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

October 19 – 23
Full calendar of events coming in
August
Contact chris@halifaxchamber.com to get
involved

FALL DINNER

November 12
Halifax Convention Centre

***WE WILL PROVIDE UPDATES
ON THESE EVENTS OVER
THE NEXT FEW MONTHS***

AVIS



have you heard?

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CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce's
Affinity Partners save you money, so you
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Stay informed

The Chamber is here to help with event updates and support resources

@prezhfxchamber



PATRICK SULLIVAN
PRESIDENT & CEO

Over the past few months of challenges, we have seen an incredible display of resilience and innovation from the Halifax business community. Businesses have quickly adapted to the new regulations and restrictions, from implementing takeout service to opening an online retail store. The impact on the business community continues to expand and we are looking for ways to support you.

In March, the Halifax Chamber put together a group called the Nova Scotia Business Labour Economic Coalition, to work on our members' behalf and to advocate with all levels of government at this difficult time. This group rapidly expanded to over 60 groups and associations that represent over 200,000 workers in Nova Scotia. Your

"We are in constant communication with municipal, provincial and federal government representatives to voice your issues and provide you with solutions."

Chamber is leading this group and voicing your concerns to businesses and government across the province and the country.

We are sharing resources and information within the group to ensure that all members will have the most up to date communication from all relevant levels of government. Please visit our **resources page** daily to find updates from the government and other service providers. This page will also promote and advertise any services you are offering and products you can provide. Check the page to find businesses and restaurants that are open in your neighborhood and other offers.

We have been providing regular updates on this group to our members and the progress we are making. We are also connecting members

with members to support each other while many of you are offsite or working from home. Please check our **member directory** to find the service or product you're looking for. We represent over 1,750 businesses in Halifax and they all have something to offer – plus, you'll be supporting local!

We are asking our members to reach out to us with their concerns by emailing **concerns@halifaxchamber.com**. We are in constant communication with municipal, provincial and federal government representatives to voice your issues and provide you with solutions.

Let us know what we can do to help. This will get better, but I know how challenging it is currently. Let's work together.

We're in your corner.

NEW & NOTED

We welcome our new Chamber members

ACTION CONSULTING GROUP

Who are you? What is it you do?
Who are your customers/market? Do they understand the value you bring to their business?
Are you clear on the customers who will bring you the most value?
When is the last time that you stepped back to make an actionable plan for the future?
Are you maximizing your time invested in meetings?
Engage with us as the perfect partner to bring clarity to those questions and take action on business development!

Curtis Scaplen

1657 Bedford Row Suite 1
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<http://www.action.ca>

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES -
Business Advisors

ADVOCACY

At ADDvocacy, our team of peer consultants and trainers facilitate professional development training for employers, educators and front line staff to increase awareness, productivity, accommodations and accessibility for the neurodiverse demographic that exists within their organizations. We also coach neurodiverse students in Grade 12 - PhD and adults in career exploration/entrepreneurs.

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EDUCATION & PROF.
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AHEAD FISHERIES INC.

Ahead Fisheries Inc. is a seafood export business located in Halifax,

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Mounfiq Abu

Unit 209 - 380 Bedford Highway
Halifax, NS
(902) 448-0541

aheadresourceslimited@gmail.com

<http://www.aheadfisheries.com>

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Management Consultant enabling effective transformation in strategic initiatives. Innovative, creative, internationally experienced. If you require operational management skills to achieve real organizational change in Education, Health, Technology or Community organization, please feel free to reach out for a friendly discussion.

Anthea Taljaard (Van Der Pluym)

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anthea@antheavanderpluym.com

OTHER - Individual Member

BMO BANK OF MONTREAL - CANADIAN COMMERCIAL BANKING

Your BMO team provides guidance, access to capital, risk management, research and a global distribution network that can help connect and grow your business locally and internationally.

Whatever your business goals, we'll work with you to help you succeed.

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Suite 1400

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erin.nauss@bmo.com

<http://www.bmo.com>

FINANCE & INSURANCE -
Corporate Financing

BRIDGEWAY ACADEMY ASSOCIATION

Bridgeway Academy is a specially designated educational facility with 4 locations across Nova Scotia. The mission of Bridgeway is to teach children with learning disabilities and ADHD the way they learn. Our day school and outreach offers many programs designed to teach skills, provide remediation and teach advocacy.

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NOT-FOR-PROFIT GROUPS - Not-For-Profit Groups

DALHOUSIE MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation (DMRF) provides critical support to researchers at Dalhousie's Faculties of Medicine, Health and Dentistry by fundraising to attract the best resources available to bolster their leading-edge work. Whether it's talent, equipment, training, or space, DMRF exists to strengthen this research to positively impact health and wellness regionally, nationally and internationally.

Melanie Champagne

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melanie.champagne@dal.ca

<https://dmrf.ca/>

NOT-FOR-PROFIT GROUPS - Not-For-Profit Groups

**DEVAN KRONISH -
PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF
VICTORIA**

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devan_kronisch@gmx.com

OTHER - Student Member

**FAWCETT EXCAVATING &
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Dartmouth, NS

(902) 452-4451

dirtdigger4@gmail.com

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First Rate Machining is located in Burnside Industrial Park, Dartmouth NS. With 30 years in the business, we specialize in manufacturing a variety of parts for the marine, research, electronics and food & beverage industry. We also offer CNC machining and specialize in small production runs and prototype parts.

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FINANCE & INSURANCE - Income
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**INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATIONS
TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL OF
CANADA**

Information Communications Technology Council (ICTC) is the trusted source for evidence based policy advice, forward looking research and creative capacity building programs for the digital economy. ICTC strengthens Canada's digital advantage in a global economy with the vision to foster globally competitive Canadian industries and a prosperous society empowered by innovative digital solutions.

Alexandria Chiasson

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COMPUTERS, IT & TECHNOLOGY
- Research/Development



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Personal Care

**JOB JUNCTION NOVA SCOTIA
WORKS**

Job Junction - Nova Scotia Works provides a customized and holistic

approach to identify and meet the employment needs of job seekers, employers and service providers in our community. We offer valuable services for small to medium-sized businesses, hosting job fairs and recruiting events on-site and providing information about government programs to hire new workers. We also provide boardroom space and encourage business owners to meet with our Employer Engagement Specialist to discuss how we can help you grow your business. We present workshops on and off-site and have a number of programs targeting youth, new graduates and older workers in transition. We collaborate with our community partners to develop and provide relevant services, such as the men's mental health peer support group and A2A: Attire to Aspire men's clothing event, to better serve our community. Our services are delivered by knowledgeable

and dedicated staff who come from diverse backgrounds to offer high-quality, personalized services to clients in a safe, respectful and inclusive space for all.

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BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES -
Career Management

KIMBALL LAW

Kimball Law is a litigation law firm with a primary focus on injury, insurance and family law. Our lawyers are dedicated and passionate about providing first class legal services to individuals and small businesses throughout Nova Scotia.

Sharon Cochrane

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Law

LUCKY CAT BARBERSHOP

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<http://www.luckyatbarbershop.com>
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Angella Graham

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angella.graham@lyrasis.org
<http://www.lyrasis.org>
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**NAVIGATING COVID-19
WITH THE
HALIFAX CHAMBER
FREE WEBINAR SERIES**



HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM/EVENTS

MANY HATS WORKSPACE

Many Hats is a locally owned shared workspace that promotes a community atmosphere, inspires harmony, protects health and wellness while stimulating growth through cross promotion and internal networking. We are located in the 3rd floor of Bedford Basin Farmers Market, overlooking the tranquil Halifax harbour. We host private and shared office space as well as co-working, meeting and event space.

Jenine Panagiotakos

397 Bedford Highway 3rd Floor
Halifax, NS
(902) 456-1623

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<http://www.manyhatsinc.ca>

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES - Bus. Service Centres

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David Grodkiewicz

Glen Haven, NS
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david.grodkiewicz@marchmont.ca

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<http://www.nichetravelgroup.ca>

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NORTH VISTA IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS INC.

North Vista Immigration Consultants Inc., is opening its new office location in Halifax, NS. The president, Alex Romano and associates are excited to be part of a growing community of

businesses supporting the Nova Scotia Government in its initiatives to assist economic growth in the region. We provide HR and Immigration services.

Alessandro (Alex) Romano

5991 Spring Garden Rd Suite 508
Halifax, NS
(902) 279-8430

alex@northvistaimmigration.com

<http://www.northvistaimmigration.com>

BUSINESS & PROF. SERVICES - Immigration

NOVA SCOTIA COLLEGE OF NURSING

As the new Nova Scotia College of Nursing (NSCN), we regulate more than 15,000 licensed practical nurses, registered nurses and nurse practitioners on behalf of the public. Our work helps Nova Scotians place their full confidence in the nurses who care for them, their families and their communities.

Sue Smith

120 Western Parkway Suite 300
Bedford, NS
(902) 444-6726

information@nscn.ca

<http://www.nscn.ca>

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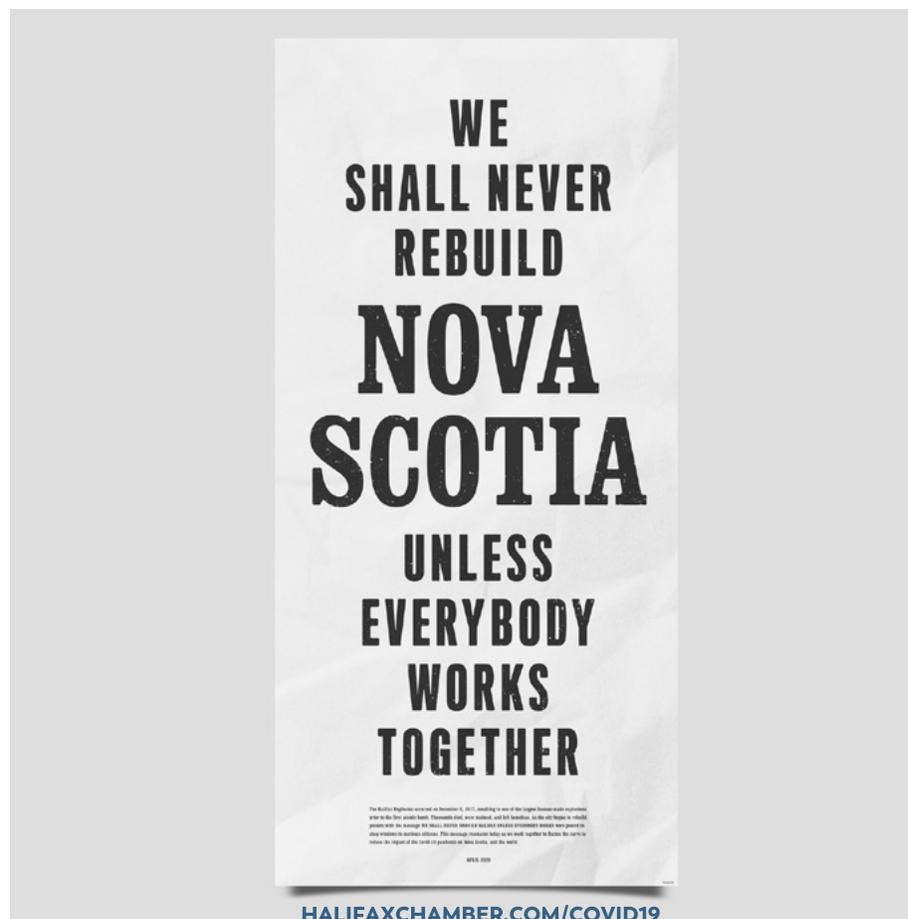
Scott Pettie

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(902) 800-4700

scott@pcwizrd.ca

<http://www.pcwizrd.ca>

COMPUTERS, IT & TECHNOLOGY - Computer Support



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tbruce@pressrealty.ca

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Proven Marketing for Professionals Inc. is Canada's only education-based marketing consultancy

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Catherine Crosbie

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(902) 453-1903

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[http://www.](http://www.provenmarketingforprofessionals.com)

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Spring Loaded is an award-winning company focused on mobility-restoring bionics. The company incorporates its patented liquid spring technology into Levitation®, the world's first compact and powerful bionic knee brace. Levitation® is the only Tri-Compartment Unloader™ brace that can significantly reduce pressure throughout the knee while enhancing strength to alleviate pain and improve mobility for people with knee arthritis and injuries.

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chris@springloadedtech.com

<http://springloadedtechnology.com/>

HEALTH CARE - Health and
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TERRAPURE ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS

Terrapure Environmental is a leading Canadian provider of essential environmental and industrial services for industrial, commercial and institutional customers. With an unwavering focus on health and safety excellence, we provide services that reduce the volume of waste requiring disposal, recover value from industrial by-products and restore industrial operations to peak efficiency. At Terrapure, we're Changing Waste for Good.

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ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT -
Waste Management

CHAMBER CHATS

EPISODE 1: MAYOR MIKE SAVAGE

HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM/PODCAST

THE ALS SOCIETY OF NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA

The ALS Society of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia believes that everyone deserves the chance to live beyond their limits, courageously and boldly, to find joy, to overcome, to celebrate and ALWAYS LIVE STRONG. We loan 600 pieces of assistive equipment annually to people living with ALS at no cost.

Kimberly Carter

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<http://www.alsnbns.ca>

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EDUCATION & PROF. DEVELOPMENT - Org. Development

TMSI LTD

Damien Girardin

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dgirardin@tmsi-ca.com
<http://www.tmsi-ca.com>

TRANSPORTATION - Customs Broker/Freight Forwarders

UNITED SIGN & TRIM-LINE

United Sign is a full-service sign company. We specialize in design, fabrication and installation. First impressions are lasting ones, making effective signage solutions vital. Trim-Line our sister company focuses on vehicle graphics and fleet brand management. Established over 25 years ago we pride ourselves on delivering the highest quality product.

Lauren Adams

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<http://unitedsign.ca>

ADVERTISING, PR & MEDIA - Signage

UNIVERSAL STAFFING INC

Universal Staffing delivers professional, cost-effective, permanent, contract, temporary, temp-to-hire staffing solutions to our clients. We service Logistics & Supply Chain, Transportation, Manufacturing, Clerical & Administrative, Finance & Accounting, Warehousing, Industrial Labour, Food & Beverage and Hospitality. Our company was built on foundations of personal relationships, integrity and high ethical standards.

Robert Snider

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rsnider@universalstaffing.ca
<http://www.universalstaffing.ca>
HR, EMPLOYMENT & STAFFING - Temporary Services

VALERIE BOBYK - RETIRED MEMBER

Valerie Bobyk

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OTHER - Retired Member



looking for take-out?

support local

HALIFAXCHAMBER.COM/COVID19

Head to 'How to Support Local' and find local restaurants and breweries offering take-out, delivery, discounts and more!
Let's work together to support Halifax.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

How our members are growing Halifax



RETURNING HOPE TO LOCAL CHARITY

Every year, numerous Canadians living below the poverty line miss out on government benefits, like the GST/HST credit, because they aren't in a position to file their tax return. We're fortunate at **H&R Block** to be in the unique position to help people facing these challenges; so for the fourth year in a row, we are fostering hope by partnering with shelters and non-profits across the country to provide free onsite tax preparation services. This year our Returning Hope program was in 14 Canadian cities the week of March 15th, including **Souls Harbour Rescue Mission** in Halifax.



BUSINESS LEADERS INCREASE MENTAL HEALTH FUNDS

Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia is celebrating the Cast of A Different Stage of Mind 2020 who raised \$441,094 for Nova Scotians living with mental illness & addiction. The cast includes Alisa Alyward, Alyssa Kelly, Alexa Bagnell, Sue Bachur, Melissa Berry, Clare Champoux, Adam Conter, Howard Conter, Jenna Conter, Tanya Cook, Krista Dempsey, Patricia

Depalma, Cynthia Dorrington, Karen Gardiner, Laura Gibson, Lana Grant, Susan Grant, Pooja Malini Gunaseelan, Josh Kogon, Paul Leblanc, Kim MacDonald, Jean MacDougall, Dawn MacLachlan, Supt. Don MacLean, Rebecca Jabbour, Sharon Resky, Insp. Dustine Rodier, Wendy Ross Clark, Karen Spaulding, Michele Trider, Hon. Dave Wilson and Carolyn Wood.



HOSPICE HALIFAX'S ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Hospice Halifax celebrated its one-year anniversary on April 17, 2020. We would like to thank all of our volunteers, staff and supporters for believing in Hospice Halifax's mission to provide compassionate and supportive end of life care for patients and their loved ones. We would also like to thank our community and the generous donors who helped us achieve this amazing milestone and made our facility and services available in our community.

WELCOME TO THE CHAMBER'S NEW STUDENTS

The **Halifax Chamber** is pleased to welcome our two international students from Dalhousie's MBA Corporate Residency program and our NSCC Public Relations intern. Supriya is working on an exciting new project that we will be launching during Small Business Week. Tianchu is focusing on our marketing efforts, including a new campaign and a bigger digital presence. Mina is supporting our communications team with Business Voice magazine and social media. They look forward to supporting our members during their time with us. Welcome!

LOCAL BUSINESS ACHIEVES SALES HONOUR



Wiley announced today that local business **The Performance View Business Solutions** is a Sapphire award-winning Partner for Everything DiSC and The Five Behaviours. This achievement is in recognition of owner Kathy Stanford's commitment to improving organizational culture and teamwork. "We are proud to partner with The Performance View in their mission to enrich people's lives by building better workplaces and high-functioning, cohesive teams," says Susie Kukkonen, VP of Channels at Wiley. "We are honoured to have them as an Authorized Partner." The Performance View Business Solutions is a Nova Scotia company providing customized training and coaching solutions in Atlantic Canada.



CANADIAN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONFERENCE 6

The Canadian Domestic Violence Conference 6, hosted by **Bridges Institute** and New Start Counselling took place at the Marriott Harbourfront March 3-6 and was attended by 600+ delegates from all over Canada and even internationally! This symposium is unique as it is the only domestic violence conference to bring all the sectors from our country together under one roof addressing the issue. The four-day conference offered a platform for attendees to learn about key issues, underwrite domestic violence awareness and participate in education and training workshops that will bring positive change to their own communities.



NOVA SCOTIANS "STEP UP" FOR LUNG HEALTH

On February 16th, over 120 Nova Scotian "heroes," stepped up for lung health in Nova Scotia, during the **Lung Association of Nova Scotia's** inaugural Stair Heroes event. The first-ever, chip-timed stair climb was held in Barrington Tower at Scotia Square Mall. Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency Services partnered on this event,

which saw firefighters across the province raise funds for lung health and compete for bragging rights, as they climbed the tower in full firefighter gear. The event helped create awareness and raised vital donations in support of the 1-in-5 Nova Scotians living with lung disease. For more information, please visit www.ns.lung.ca.



BREAKFAST WITH BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS

It was a sold-out crowd once again for the annual Breakfast with the **Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Halifax**. The morning event was filled with inspirational stories from current and past Boys and Girls Clubs members. Attendees heard about overcoming barriers, enjoying safe spaces and learning skills for life. The highlight

of the morning was the standing ovation for long time Dartmouth North staff member Lillian Munroe, who coordinates Project Backpack – a program which tackles food insecurity in families. Thank you to presenting sponsor Scotiabank and to everyone who attended. For more information please visit www.bgcgh.ca.



HIAA WELCOMES NEW VICE PRESIDENT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER

Halifax International Airport Authority is pleased to announce Marie Manning will be joining its executive team next month as Vice President Business Development and Chief Commercial Officer. Currently, Marie is the Director, Marketing & Business

Development with St. John’s International Airport Authority, a senior leadership role she has held for nearly 16 years. “We’re thrilled to welcome Marie to HIAA as head of the Commercial Department,” said Joyce Carter, President & CEO. “Marie’s

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

Ducke’s Lawn and Garden is celebrating their 10th year of providing quality service to commercial and residential customers throughout Dartmouth and Cole Harbour.

Specializing in lawn care and flower bed maintenance, Ducke’s is Horticultural Red Seal certified as well as uses organic and environmentally friendly products.

“We’re a family run business,” says owner/operator Graham Oldreive. “It’s important to us that our customers and pets are able to enjoy a well-maintained lawn free from harmful chemical pesticides and toxins.” Ducke’s offers a variety of packages and services to suit varying needs. For a free quote contact the experts at 902 483-4726 duckfoot@ns.sympatico.ca.

IWD AT DRESS FOR SUCCESS HALIFAX

Once again, **Dress for Success Halifax** is pleased to celebrate and thank those supporters who participated in the celebration of International Women’s Day-2020. According to Board Chair, Julie Wisen, “It was a triple crown experience this year with our CEO, Brenda Saunders/Todd, attending and receiving funds and/or support from RBC Wealth Management, Samuel & Co. and the Halifax International Airport Authority on International Women’s Day. We are extremely appreciative for the funds received and for a light continuing to be shone on the importance of recognizing and celebrating women each year, as it enables us to assist the women we serve in our community.”

extensive airport experience in marketing, business development and air service - which has been recognized in the aviation industry locally and within North America - coupled with her natural leadership style make her the perfect addition to our team.”

LIQUID ASSETS NS EXPANDS SERVICE IN YHZ

Liquid Assets NS, Nova Scotia’s only dedicated retailer of Nova Scotian crafted wine, spirits, beer and cider, announces the extension of their store services at Stanfield Halifax, by way of a limited-hours mini-shop in the US Departures (Transborder) lounge. Scheduled to open this summer out of Halifax Stanfield, the Liquid Assets NS mini-shop is poised to serve passengers after they have completed US Pre-Clearance. Products will continue to be sold at the same price as the Provincial liquor stores, are meant for direct-to-destination purchasing to carry onto the aircraft and will need to conform to import limitations going into the US based on volume.

MEET BASKETBALL NOVA SCOTIA'S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I’m Katherine Brien, and I couldn’t be more thankful to the Basketball Nova Scotia (BNS) Board of Directors for bringing me home as their new Executive Director! After finishing my degree at MSVU and playing five years of varsity basketball, I ventured to Toronto. I spent seven years working in one of my dream jobs with the Toronto Raptors, Maple Leafs and Toronto FC. I gained invaluable experiences through these elite leagues and am thrilled to bring those to Nova Scotia. BNS has a rich history of success with 19 National medals (including 4 gold!) since 2002 and yearly growth in participation. I’m excited to keep growing the successes of this organization and to help create more incredible people through basketball.



Lindsay Downie

Jody Sampson

WELCOMING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AT SOUTHWEST PROPERTIES

Two organizational changes took place at **Southwest Properties** in March. Lindsay Downie was named Vice President, Marketing and Communications and Jody Sampson as Vice President, Talent & Customer Experience. The corporate announcement noted that both Lindsay and Jody have taken on increasing levels of responsibility and have made

significant contributions to the success of our company during their time with Southwest. Southwest Properties is one of Atlantic Canada’s leading developers, with more than 1,700 quality apartments and condominiums, plus retail & commercial spaces in Halifax, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland.



PRECISION BIOLOGIC LAUNCHES NEW PRODUCTS

In February, **Precision BioLogic** announced the availability of its new CRYOcheck Hex LA™ kit in Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand following market authorization by Health Canada and respective in-country regulatory authorities. Hex LA is intended for use in clinical labs to aid in the detection of lupus anticoagulants (LA) in human plasma. This is Precision BioLogic's second product to launch this year. Coinciding with its release is the introduction of a third product, CRYOcheck Lupus Negative Control. Hex LA and Lupus Negative Control are the latest additions to Precision BioLogic’s suite of LA testing products.

“We all get to make a difference, and it's our choice what difference we make.”

—Mathew Benvie

“BUSINESS AS USUAL” HAS AN ENTIRELY NEW MEANING

BY MINA ATIA



Closing their doors on March 15 paused business for Evolve Fitness, but that pause didn't last long. They immediately went virtual and within 24 hours hosted their first Zoom workout from home.

Evolve Fitness started hosting 35 sessions per week and they're now up to 69 including boot camps, cardio and yoga. Most of the workouts are held from home by trainers with some held in the studio while social distancing.

“We offered a lot of our private clients a free one-year daily nutrition coaching and their own personal accountability coach to help support them through this,” says Mathew Benvie, owner of **Evolve Fitness Ltd.**, head personal trainer, and 2020 Halifax Business Awards Business Leader finalist.

He jokes he's probably been removed from email lists by clients since he started emailing them daily. Benvie reaches out to his community with inspirational quotes, teachings and guidance by **email** and through their **Facebook page**.

Last month, Evolve Fitness held

a virtual workout program to fundraise for small businesses and it went viral. Open for anyone to join, the workout's fundraising goal was \$5,000 for a minimum of \$5 per donation. One hundred per cent of the proceeds go directly back into the community, by purchasing gift cards to support local small businesses.

"To date, we raised \$65,000 with a list of 125 businesses and organizations being paid out with \$500 to \$1000 gift cards," says Benvie. "We're also offering the program free of charge for healthcare workers in partnership with Partners for Care." Trainers hold programs at varying time periods to allow frontline workers to participate whenever they could.

Evolve Fitness is currently running into challenges with time constraints and planning for an uncertain future. Benvie tries to find time to navigate an unusually large volume of emails, administrative work and membership questions. The response to the fundraiser was overwhelming, and they are now working with 2,000 clients instead of 750 with the same number of staff.

Similarly, planning has been a challenge for him since there isn't a template to follow or other examples on how to proceed in the next few months. "Can we open at 50 per cent capacity? Will it be safe for our clients? Will our clients physically come back before a vaccine is available? And many other questions that can't be really answered yet," says Benvie.

He also wonders how his business is supposed to afford paying the same rent, wages, cleaning costs and supplies, which are now 10 times more expensive, with only a revenue from half of their business capacity.

Despite the uncertainty, Benvie remains focused on the positive side. "We are very lucky to have a lot of close friends and clients who have become mentors and are helping us plan and make decisions going forward," he says. Experts, through the Halifax Chamber, are sending him daily emails to keep up-to-date on and to take advantage of available resources to support his business.

"I love the Chamber and their response has been great as usual," says Benvie who applied for the wage

subsidy, the one-time grant up to \$5,000 and the 40K loan with 10K forgivable. "We still have our full staff employed thanks to the wage subsidy."

Benvie feels very supported by government initiatives. "You can tell they care, are doing everything they can in a very uncertain time and are listening to feedback," he says.

The community response has been nothing short of incredible for Evolve Fitness. They've always been aware of the strong and tight-knit community at their gym, but the support they've received since closing their doors has been truly special and has exceeded their expectations.

Benvie guarantees there are many people ready to offer their support. For him, it's a matter of being willing to ask for help. "I read a really great quote which I shared with our clients this morning. We all get to make a difference, and it's our choice what difference we make," he says.

"I hope everyone is choosing to make a positive difference each day however that looks for them." ■





COVID-19 didn't put a full-stop to this business

Maritime Tartan Company continues on **By Mina Atia**

Sherrie Kearney knew early on, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit Nova Scotia, there would be a demand for masks. She saw the trend in countries with the virus already spreading, and she decided to create a cloth design and post it on Facebook.

Kearney waited until Health Canada advised Canadians to wear masks as a preventative measure. She then made and sold 1,228 face masks with the proceeds donated to different Nova Scotian charities, raising \$5,200.

“We decided it was time for us to start making some money back.”

— **Sherrie Kearney**,
Owner & Creator,
Maritime Tartan Company

For a tartan business after the pandemic, **Maritime Tartan Company** had a lot fewer orders. “We were supposed to supply a few places in Halifax including a shop at the Cruise Ship Pavilion,” says Kearney. “We had a lot of cancelled orders and online ordering dried up.”

“We were going to make products for performers at the Juno Awards and the East Coast Music Awards. A few weddings we were supplying product for also cancelled” she says.

Kearney received a lot of



Photos provided by Maritime Tartan Company

media attention after her charitable donations. “I’m a very giving and kind person. This is just what I normally do when I see folks in need,” she says.

The community’s response has been extremely positive and demands started to climb back up. Kearney increased her supply of tartan, elastic and threads to make and sell tartan masks. “We decided it was time for us to start making some money back,” she says.

Kearney saw a Halifax Chamber [post about CUA](#), an affinity partner amongst others at the Chamber

“*This is just what I normally do when I see folks in need.*”

— **Sherrie Kearney**,
Owner & Creator,
Maritime Tartan Company

who are providing support to businesses during the pandemic. “We saw the post and went that route. We applied for a loan.” After having to cut down on costs and lay off her only employee, Kearney got approved for a loan and rehired the employee to keep up with mask demands.

Maritime Tartan Company is a web-based business who adapted their operations to work safely and adhere to social-distancing regulations. They’re taking orders online by [email](#) or by phone [\(902\) 441-6721](#). ■



A force to be reckoned with during COVID-19

Heather Byrne and Alice House continue to provide support **By Mina Atia**

Shifting to work from home due to the far-reaching impact of COVID-19 has had its toll on **Heather Byrne**. The Alice House Executive Director has to accommodate three workspaces: those of her husband and their two children under the age of 12 – her new work mates. It’s a big change from her organization’s usual day-to-day operations, which would normally include in-person meetings with clients and staff.

“My spouse and I are working and trying to deliver on our roles as business professionals from home,” says Byrne. “But minor children at home and working full time are two jobs in one.”

A social work graduate from the University of Victoria and currently pursuing an MBA from the University of Fredericton, Byrne has been working for over a decade with women experiencing gendered violence.

“When my second job is keeping women and children safe from the rising at-home violence, it can be

“When my second job is keeping women and children safe from the rising at-home violence, it can be overwhelming.”

— **Heather Byrne**,
Alice House
Executive Director

overwhelming,” says Byrne. “There have been a lot of losses as well as violence over the last six weeks.” With her team, she provides safe housing and recovery support to women and children fleeing their homes due to domestic violence.

Alice House has been in the community for over 35 years and has served thousands of individuals and families. During the pandemic, there has been an increasing need and demand for Alice House’s services from women who experience violence in isolation.

“Our work is 80 per cent face to face with clients and within our team. So the switch to working from home was massive. Makes you feel women’s lives are hanging in the balance,” says Byrne.

The team’s main challenge during the pandemic is supporting traumatized women without meeting them. “Safety assessment, integration into our program, orienting the women and children to their new home in a supportive and anxiety reducing way is

a cornerstone of our services delivery,” says the executive director who now has to accomplish all of these tasks without encountering her clients.

Under the public health guidelines and with closures of schools and libraries, Alice House had to adjust the level of other services it provides. Their efficient levels of grocery runs, transportation and overall support were disrupted. Mothers isolated at home with children and no other parenting support is a new challenge the team has been navigating.

Nevertheless, as one of the very few resources for women at risk, Alice House remains positive. The team reaches out and connects with their clients more often. “We continue to be a resource for women who are trying to flee abusive relationships in addition to providing food security, and safety to vulnerable families who are at risk of violence,” says Byrne.

With the help of a grant from United Way, Alice House was able to install internet services in all of their 18 housing units. Additionally, they’re working on acquiring Chrome books and/or tablets for the children so they can keep up with school but also for the women to access important updates, additional services and be able to connect with friends and family.

“Throughout the day, we are working together over the phone or video meetings to provide effective case management, and we work together in making decisions and solving problems the way we did in the office before COVID-19,” Byrne says. They’re also supporting women with counselling sessions through video or over the phone. They deliver care and activity packages to the children and offer them video chats with a counsellor as well.

Furthermore, Alice House received funding from the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women plus federal support through Women and Gender Equality. “With that funding, not only were we able to keep all of our staff, but we were also able to hire an additional staff member to provide support for our expanded ‘COVID-19’ services including our Food Security Program,” says Byrne, who’s been following updates posted



Photos provided by Heather Byrne.

 *We are essential, and we are still here.*
— Heather Byrne

by the Halifax Chamber.

With an eye on the future, Byrne is concerned with the long-term impact of isolation and social distancing. It will affect their fundraising plans and achieving their annual target to remain operational. “In order to maintain our housing units, delivering community support and an appropriate level of staffing, we have to fundraise \$225,000 annually.”

The financial target is achieved through a mix of solicited foundation grants, corporate sponsorships and donations, individual donations and special events. “In a typical event we could expect to raise between \$40,000 and \$50,000, but the likelihood of us being able to host something similar is looking slim,” says Byrne. She anticipates COVID-19 will impact all those areas for months down the road.

However, community response to Alice House has been overwhelmingly positive during this difficult time. “We

are receiving **email support**, phone calls and inquiries about what we need and how our community can help,” says Byrne. “We have tablets donated, people making financial contributions online and many are thanking us for continuing to provide services like ours. We have received wonderful support from FeedNS and Royal LePage Atlantic as well.”

Alice House provides a vital role in the community now and more than ever with the rising violence during isolation. “A woman’s risk of violence actually increases when she leaves an abusive relationship,” Byrne says. “That’s why we are still working and why we are still providing safe housing to 18 vulnerable women and families.”

“We are essential, and we are still here,” says Byrne, attesting that the 35-year support and safety provided by Alice House has been lifesaving on countless occasions. ■

Don't wait to innovate

Be ready and prepared to think critically



Laurie Cook
INNOVATION SPECIALIST,
CHUTZPAH CONSULTING

My hope is that by the time you are reading this, support has come through for you regardless of whether you are a small business or a community organization. I am writing this as Parliament is meeting for the first time since the onslaught of COVID-19 started. It has been overwhelming for everyone to say the least.

I know for many, you may still be in crisis mode – that's OK. Do what you have to do. That's my number one thought.

I also have a couple other thoughts that could be helpful even as you work through crisis mode and start to think 'downstream.' This means thinking about scenario planning for a variety of different situations that could be the case in the next month or two, three to six months from now and even beyond that.

Some tips for thinking about all these situations include:

1- Radical acceptance

In the mental health world, there is a type of therapy called

“Many organizations that have been focusing for a long time on how to create a more inclusive, fair and sustainable economy have many great ideas for how we can do this.”

Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT). Part of it includes the idea of 'radical acceptance.' This is about acknowledging things may never be the same again. You may need to change your business model drastically to survive, or you may need to find another way to accomplish your goals; as a business owner or as a community organization. The sooner you can accept the situation, the sooner you can move on to deal with the reality of your situation.

2- Engage your employees, customers and other stakeholders

Innovation is not about figuring everything out on your own. Once you start to move beyond the initial shock of the crisis, find a way to engage everyone who might have a stake in the recovery of your organization. Who will need your services or products beyond the short-term? How can you modify your business or operational model to adapt now and into the future? What are some potential hard decisions you might need to make, and what would be the criteria for making those decisions? The more variety of other perspectives and ideas about things you can access, the better your long-term chances.

3- Ask how can you be of service to creating a better world for the future

As this crisis was beginning, I was on a LinkedIn group I'm part of. What I saw even as this event was just beginning was people who were not in crisis asking themselves how they could be of service to others in this very difficult time. I think this is a critical question for any individual or business to ask themselves. Even community organizations might need to check and review what their core purpose is as they deal with even more scarce resources than usual.

It also means asking ourselves what kind of world in the future do we want to live in, and how can we all contribute to creating that world. Many organizations that have been focusing for a long time on how to create a more inclusive, fair and sustainable economy have many great ideas for how we can do this.

This crisis has revealed many different cracks in our systems, and experts have been telling us for years this pandemic was coming and there will be more. We need to be ready for more crises and to do that we need to think very critically about our economic systems and how they need to change for the future.



How I didn't win but didn't lose

Remaining proud, grateful and humble



MARIE-CLAIRE CHARTRAND

LEAD SENIOR CARE CONSULTANT, GREYWAVE SENIOR CARE CONSULTING WELLNESS CONSULTANT

So Greywave Senior Care Consulting didn't get Gold, Silver or Bronze at the Halifax Chamber of Commerce 2020 Business Awards, but I sure didn't feel like I lost.

Before the winners were announced, I scanned the room of 650 other attendees (while listening to the amazing Sarah Ellen Morrison performing – love you Sarah) and I had overwhelming feelings of pride, gratefulness and humility.

I was reflecting on how I got to this a room full of business people, and Greywave Senior Care Consulting was

one of the top 29 of 300 nominees out of 7,000 Halifax businesses.

Five years ago, I was a 50-year-old social worker in a government job – the only kind I ever had. I had absolutely no business knowledge or experience. I chose with the full on support of my life partner to leave a full paying job, risking our retirement and our children's education funds to venture off into entrepreneurship solely with the idea that I had the knowledge and experience to meet a huge need in our community – navigating care for older adults and their families.

If you've been an entrepreneur you will know that without start-up money, you have to do everything: book keeping, accounting, legal, web design, branding, marketing, tech support, admin support, social media guru, etc. You would also know about waking in the night and worrying about anything and everything and making some mistake that will undo everything you have worked for. It's 24/7, 365 days a year. At the awards on January 23, I felt proud that I did it! I created, launched and built a viable, successful business that is helping relieve the stress of caring for our older loved ones.

Then came the feeling of gratefulness

and humility. I did it, but I sure didn't, nor could I ever have done it, alone. Firstly, I couldn't have done it without the support of my family. I can't even tell you how it's not possible to do this without their support and their belief in me. A business affects every aspect of our family life.

I had video reel running in my mind of all the friends, entrepreneurs, businesses and organizations who gave of their time, their expertise, their wisdom and encouragement to help me succeed. People taught me Quickbooks, wrote my text for a website/pamphlets/cards, did photo shoots, fixed my laptop, my printer, passed my cards along, shared a Facebook post, taught me to use Canva or connected me to someone who could help me. I felt humbled because they gave of themselves from a place where they really wanted to see me succeed.

When the three top awards were announced, as I sat beside my life partner and four of my long-time supportive friends, I didn't feel like a loser at all. I was feeling very proud, grateful and humbled. My only real disappointment was not getting to give the winner's speech which would have been everything you just read.

The age of smartphone shopping

Marketing your business to the mobile consumer



CAITLIN MACLACHLAN
GETINTHELOOP HALIFAX

In today's digital society, a smartphone is the most valuable tool a shopper can have. Smartphones are enabling customers to find information on businesses, view and redeem offers and make real-time shopping decisions.

Smartphones greatly influence shopping habits. One study found that 70 per cent of smartphone users consulted their phone before making an in-store purchase.

A recent Google survey of smartphone users indicated that there are three types of mobile shoppers: The local information seeker, the action-oriented consumer and the smartphone shopper.

There are some fascinating stats to take away from that survey that shed a spotlight on society's digital shopping habits:

- 95 per cent of smartphone owners have used their mobile device to search for information on local businesses

»» *Smartphones give consumers the ability to make plans on the fly, right from the palm of their hands."*

- Of those 95 per cent, 61 per cent call a business, 59 per cent visit a business and 44 per cent make a purchase
- 79 per cent of smartphone users remain active on their smartphones while they're shopping and 74 end up making a purchase

People are constantly on the go and don't always have time to make advanced plans regarding where they'd like to eat or which shop they would like to visit. Smartphones give consumers the ability to make plans on the fly, right from the palm of their hands. Smartphone owners can also receive information on their phones about great offers located near them.

Businesses need to shift their marketing efforts to mobile to reach smartphone shoppers. Traditional advertising options have become expensive, while marketing through Google and Facebook has become complicated to navigate.

Some companies have enhanced their mobile presence by creating an app to market offers and experiences to customers, provide another payment option and reward loyal customers. This is only possible for larger companies, because even simple apps can cost anywhere between \$50,000 to \$100,000 to build and 20 per cent of the development cost per year to maintain.

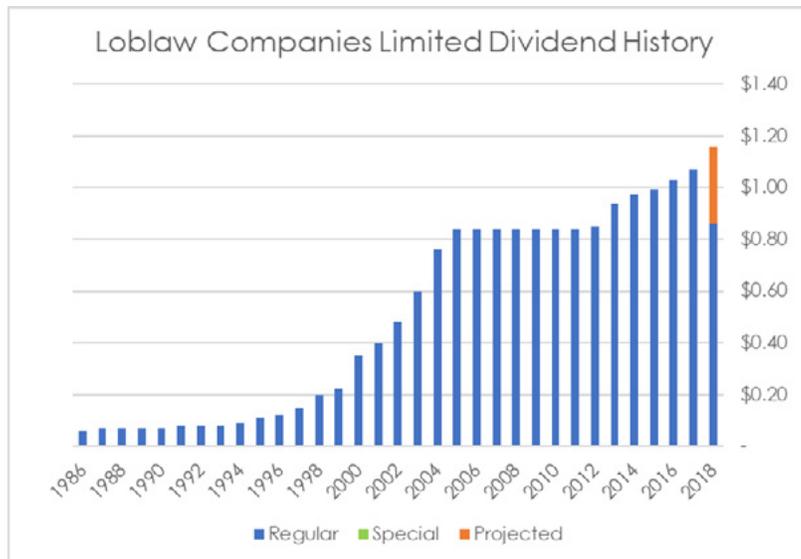
A more attractive option for many businesses is to join an all-in-one shopping app that lists a wide variety of retailers that are providing valuable information to customers such as product information and offers. Members of all-in-one shopping apps gain access to many different types of stores. They only have to make space on their phone for one app, which is important when considering that an average smartphone owner uses 30 apps each month.

One of the challenges for a less-established business is generating awareness and driving traffic through the door. Even if customers aren't aware of a business when they download the all-in-one shopping app, they will inevitably discover the business through category searches or direct offer notifications.

Today's customers are always on their phones - streaming videos, staying connected through social media and utilizing apps to make their lives easier. Mobile shopping has ensured that customers don't need to power down their smartphones when they're browsing for product information or pulling the trigger on purchase.

A potential customer for your business could be shopping on their smartphone as we speak. It's crucial that you have a marketing plan in place to reach this customer.

Is risk-aversion hindering your business growth?



Last to embrace a new music genre, fashion trend, or hairstyle. Why?



MARIA CAINES
BAY STREET TO MAIN
STREET CONSULTING

Have you ever wondered why Atlantic Canada is always last to embrace a new music genre, fashion trend or hairstyle? Atlantic Canadians tend to be extremely conservative in business. So slow are we to adopt new business ideas that risk-aversion is approaching a level that is hindering, or at least slowing, business growth.

Let's look at one business technology idea: customer loyalty and customer relationship management. According to Bond Brand Loyalty's 2019 report on Canadian views and experience with loyalty programs, 65 per cent of people spend more to maximize benefits, 68 per cent are more likely to recommend brands with good loyalty programs and 79 per cent are more likely to continue doing business when a brand has a loyalty program. This means that consumer behaviour is being significantly influenced by companies who offer a loyalty program.

Most national chain stores recognized early the revenue growth potential with a loyalty program to offer rewards and regularly communicate with their customers, to keep their name top of mind and to get their offers in front of them as early and often as possible. Most of us have first-hand experience with PC Optimum as a prime example of how Loblaws has learned to drive consumer behaviour to maximize point collection. What many don't realize is the exponential growth that Loblaws has experienced over the 20 years since PC Points first launched in 1998. Their historical financial statements show after that Loblaws share prices doubled in three years and tripled in five years.

So why are business owners so afraid to implement a business tool that has the potential to grow their revenues by increasing their customer engagement and retention? Even if the results were half of Loblaws experience, the rate of success amongst SMEs would greatly increase.

How can one tool create such an impact? Having a direct communication line with customers will enable businesses to stay top of mind, inform of new products, special birthday offers, sales, increase items in a cart, increase sell-through and generally elevate customer experience. Traditional media costs may be reduced in favour of more targeted marketing efforts.

Features for a loyalty solution:

- Easy to implement & use
- Tech savvy & mobile
- Affordable
- Brand with your logo
- Coalition
- E-commerce API
- B2B adaptability
- Global reach

A coalition platform may reduce your cost of new customer acquisition by marketing beyond your existing customer base, keep the accruing liability off your balance sheet, plus save time and money on design, administration and advertising. It's also more attractive to customers hoping to collect and redeem rewards in more than one place. AirMiles embraces the coalition model as does CAA. Local businesses with a loyalty program can help level the playing field with big box stores.

In November 2019, Narrative Research issued Urban Report stating, "Just under nine in ten residents (86%) say they are more likely to purchase goods or services from a company or organization if it is local." Imagine consumers collecting loyalty rewards whenever they shopped at a locally-owned business and choosing local business more often than they do now. This will keep our hard-earned dollars churning through our economy many more times, creating jobs, paying the way for new businesses and giving our young people better opportunities to create a life in our province.

Isn't that worth a very minimal risk?

COVID-19: Reflections and recovery

Working together to overcome uncertainty



NANCY CONRAD
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, POLICY
AT HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

COVID-19 seemed a distant threat early in the new year and far, far away from our homes. Then everything changed in a wink. People got sick, businesses closed and workers were laid off – the stress of “what’s next” was overwhelming.

The Halifax Chamber tackled the issue early on, along with many other stakeholders. As Nova Scotians usually do, we did so with singular focus and respectful collaboration.

A group of over 70 representative organizations met virtually three times a week. Helmed by our CEO Patrick Sullivan, they brought forward concerns and suggested solutions to senior officials from all levels of government. Members’ issues were raised and considered and solutions were actioned. The government welcomed this direct input.

Full praise to our political leaders – our Premier, whose firm tone reminds all of us daily what’s at risk. Our opposition leaders shelved political points and stepped up as the leaders we needed

in our communities. Our Mayor and council are active and visible (virtually). Having been part of this city all my life, I expected nothing less but was very pleased to see all levels come together in this time of crisis.

Regularly, communications come to us from all levels of government – very welcomed by our group to share with our members and in our communities. We share information and resources, from pandemic preparedness plans to business continuity plans, to supports for individuals and businesses.

From the Chamber’s perspective, this is advocacy at its finest. It’s specific, focused, thoughtful and credible. It represents a common message from many voices: how to help with a view to the future.

What a time it has been. And now, with the arrival of May and summer within sight, the economic recovery is underway. Groups like the Chamber and our partners look to continue this work as there is much to be done to rebuild the economy.

Government budgets will need to be adjusted to go to the most urgent and effective ways to rebuild our small and medium sized businesses. Choices need to be made. It’s time for the “need to have” not the “nice to have” mentality. Commercial tax deferral, corporate tax reductions and access to low cost capital are critical. Lest we not forget that businesses hire people, buy supplies and are destinations to attract tourism back to our city. Our social safety net took quite a beating as well. We must always be there for those most vulnerable. We have to be ready to adapt to the adjustments and changes to every system.

Don’t hesitate to reach out and tell us your story. We have much to learn from this experience. The Chamber is, as always, in your corner.

Thank you and a fond farewell...

Just a quick note to thank the many dedicated volunteers I have worked with during my career at the Chamber. Together we tackled many issues to create the conditions for success in our business community. We are the voice to remind the broader community about the role of business – the taxes paid, services provided, the community initiatives championed and the staff engaged.

And a huge thank you to the members of the Chamber. Your support allowed me to do my work in policy development and advocacy with independence. Your financial support is so very important as it allows the Chamber as the voice of business to speak your mind on issues.

I have had the great pleasure to work with amazing colleagues. What a gift to work in an environment where people laugh, share each others joys and support hardships.

I write this as we are in recovery from COVID-19 and wish you all the very best.

Send your business’s COVID-19 story to concerns@halifaxchamber.com

**From the Halifax Chamber of Commerce team
and our members:**

THANK YOU.

Our members have stepped up during this unprecedented time to share their insights, knowledge and expertise to support businesses through COVID-19. We have hosted free webinars with experts in cybersecurity, labour law, business planning, finances, mental health and many more. Thank you to the following organizations and individuals for reaching out to keep the business community informed:



We would also like to thank:

- April Stroink
- MP Andy Fillmore
- MP Darren Fisher
- Ministre Mélanie Joly
- Dr. David Bardsley
- White LeBlanc Wealth Planners and HollisWealth