



# The Pelican

Your Best Source for Local Business News and Information | February 2021

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The Pelican is published by Community Futures Lac La Biche. Please forward any comments, suggestions, or story ideas by e-mail to [manager@cflb.com](mailto:manager@cflb.com) or call 780-623-2662.



Gene Wesley, General Manager, Community Futures Lac La Biche

## Businesses Inside Your Business

A business within a business (BWB) is most often defined as departments or people within one organization acting as separate entrepreneurs to increase customer service, results, and efficiencies, keeping in mind the overall team goal of becoming the supplier of choice the customers. However, when I thought about this a bit more, I came up with something completely different.

What if a business within a business meant one business cooperating with a completely separate company in a complementary or symbiotic manner? The traditional BWB definition made me think about one of my favourite words, "Intrapreneurship." If you have an existing business, think

about which other company might work well with you. We all know what a lost-leader is - advertising something that doesn't make any money just to bring people into your store. So why not align yourself with another business that might help you do just that. You might even be able to share facilities or resources, cutting overhead expenses in half (virtually).

Or what about inviting a home-based business (or two, or three) to combine with your bricks and mortar business? How about a collective of home-based businesses sharing space in your facility. These unique arrangements (Work Sharing Spaces) might offer businesses both old and new ways to start and grow.

When I grew up in BC, if my memory is correct, it seemed that there was a sign at the end of every driveway advertising eggs for sale, small engine repairs, fresh vegetables, or something else. At the same time, in booming Alberta, supplemental sources of income became less commonplace. Maybe now is the time for us to be creative and find those additional revenue streams,

whether they be businesses on the side, home-based, or virtual. You may want to consider and pursue a variety of unique partnerships or models.

Think outside the box. Give things a try in small ways with minimal risk. Take one step at a time and you never know where

you might end up. If you need help brainstorming, don't hesitate to come to talk to me. That's the part of my job I love the most. Challenge me to come up with something that might work for you. Call me at 780-520-6707 now - **I DARE YOU.** ■



## Inside this issue



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# CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY FOR YOUR BUSINESS

## To “like” or not to “like”

For many of us, when we were introduced to social media, it was a matter of “liking” something that someone else was doing, or posting an update on your personal status. Twenty years later, social media platforms, from LinkedIn to TikTok, have become an integral part of the way business is done, and a critical component of both the local marketplace and worldwide economy.

## Let’s get viral

While we used to think of advertising as something that we purchased from newspapers, magazines, radio stations, or television, it is now something completely different, with these traditional forms of media often taking a backseat to creating a “viral” campaign on social media.

## Getting a good start

So where does a small business owner who needs to compete in this new marketplace start? The best answer, other than hiring a social media marketing agency to do the work for you, is “baby steps”. In other words, start with a social media platform that you are familiar with, like Facebook or Instagram, and create a page for your business. In simple terms, the whole idea is to create positive conversations about your business, product, or event with as many people as possible. If you have a personal social media account, post an invitation to all of your “friends” or contacts to visit and “like” your new business site. Ask your employees and regular customers to do the same. This will get the ball rolling.

## Adding value

Now here’s the catch. You will need to demonstrate some value on your social media site to encourage everyone that has had a first look to come back. This means, you need to post interesting information, offers, or promotions related to your business regularly. For a restaurant with daily specials this might mean posting everyday. For a clothing boutique it might mean once a week for most of the year with increased posting activity during sales campaigns. In any case, postings must be regular and value-added. Be a good social media listener and to respond to any comments about your services or products that may need clarification. Do not, and I repeat

do not, muddy the waters of your business by posting your personal viewpoints about the news of the day. While 50% of the population may agree with you, there is a risk of losing the other 50% as customers. Save your opinions for your personal social media.

Once you are comfortable with one social media platform, you are ready to expand your presence by taking on another.

## Coming up...

Over the next several issues of **The Pelican** we will explore social media marketing in more detail, looking at strategy development, target audiences, analytics, and ways to make the process of managing multiple social media platforms more manageable. ■



**Lately, it seems like everyone is a marketing expert...**



“He’s reacting to a customer shift that only he can hear.”

## Lakeland Connect Keeps Businesses Online and Communities in the Loop

The idea for **Lakeland Connect** was seeded more than five years ago in Bonnyville when CEO Jena Colbourne was working for a rural Alberta radio station. She noticed that something was changing with the kind of news was being reported. While local news began taking a backseat to provincial and national stories, listeners and advertisers were becoming less engaged and were turning to social media and in particular Facebook to connect with their local community. After unsuccessfully pitching the idea of creating an on-line news outlet for the local radio station, Jena asked herself, "Why can't I do this myself?"



Colbourne's willingness to risk her job and career became the catalyst needed to start **Lakeland Connect** in her basement. While working at a job elsewhere, her husband Chad sold advertising when he could, and before they knew it he was also working full-time for Lakeland Connect. Growing readership soon led to the assembly of a team of news media and marketing professionals dedicated to serving the communities and region of northeastern Alberta.

Jena points out that traditional media in rural Alberta had little competition for a lot of years, but this is quickly changing. With the advent of online news outlets like **Lakeland Connect**, news gathering and advertising are more easily locally focused. Moreover, advertising through **Lakeland Connect** is measurable, affordable, and effective because the product and her team are 100% local. She is also very proud to mention that **Lakeland Connect** has assembled one of the most skilled media teams in the region to assist businesses with social media, digital

advertising, or the creation of web pages. In Colbourne's own words, "The world is online. If your business is not already online, you should find out how Lakeland Connect can help you develop your very own digital presence."



Lakeland Connect CEO Jena Colbourne

Visit **Lakeland Connect** at: [www.lakelandconnect.net](http://www.lakelandconnect.net). To find out more about advertising and media services, call 587-840-4409, or email [sales@lakelandconnect.net](mailto:sales@lakelandconnect.net). ■

## Upcoming Events and Webinars

**Project Gazelle** is a program offering **FREE** workshops to **FEMALE** entrepreneurs.

### START UP SERIES Pitch with Confidence February 10th

*Free Workshop starts at 5 PM*

**TO REGISTER**, go to:  
<https://bit.ly/gaz04>

In celebration of International Women's Day and as part of the Gazelle Project; Community Futures Lac La Biche is co-hosting a **FREE EVENT**:

### **Choose To Challenge**

March 8th, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Keynote speaker :

**Michele Charles Gustafson**

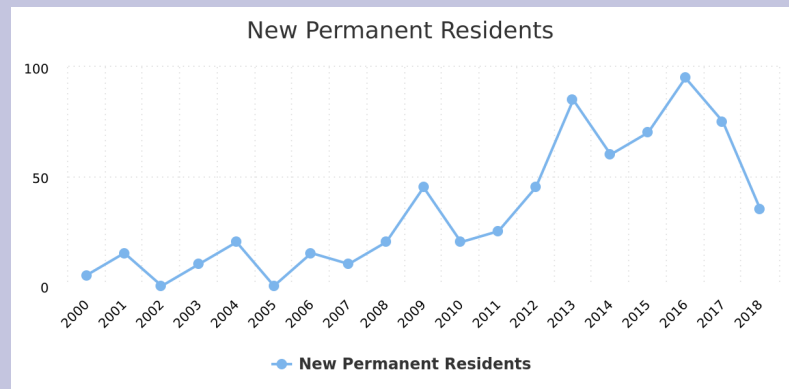
**TO REGISTER**, go to:  
<http://bit.ly/MCG0308>

**Questions?**

Email: [projectgazelle@albertacf.com](mailto:projectgazelle@albertacf.com)

## Didja KNOW?

Population growth in Lac La Biche County fluctuates with the economy.



(From TownFolio <https://townfolio.co/ab/lac-la-biche-county/demographics>)



# Recruiting for Customers? Customer Service BEFORE and AFTER Probation

Contributor: Shirley Leonard, Pinnacle Organizational Performance Solutions

Many employee positions – whether part-time or full-time – have a 90-day probation period, a time for both the employee and the employer to determine if the role is a ‘fit’ for both parties. Mentor/coaching managers see the probation period as a time of orientation, trial and error; a time of setting and coaching to achievable goals and of managing expectations. If a probation period does apply for a new hires role in your company, don’t forget that there should be a formal acknowledgement of the passing of probation with the new employee.



This ‘trying out’ time enables both the new employee and the employer to realize the hopes from this recruitment. Or not. Those hopes likely exist for both parties: the new employee has expectations of training and learning what is most important to his/her manager and of understanding where this employment fits within his/her overall career plan.

So where does customer service fit in this meshing of hopes, expectations, goal setting and learning?

It lies in opportunity. Every employee in the supply chain of your business – whether front-facing with the external customer or internally to each other- has the opportunity to deliver ‘knock your socks off!’ customer service.

In this 11th month of the Covid-19 virus we do not need to be reminded that everyone is tired. Which means, paradoxically, we will need to try harder now to compensate for our energy that may not be as high as we like it to be. The opportunity is

that using energy creates energy for us to reach, bring and keep our exemplary service attitude visible to customers and to each other.

It is crucial to our business’ future to instill in our new employees, at the time of recruitment and hiring, the customer service attitude and behaviors that the business is known for.

During probation, provide the training, goals, and coaching to reinforce how to appropriately and positively engage with customers and each other. Make that a primary goal and once probation is successfully achieved, the expectation for even better service is raised because your new employee has become a more valuable asset to your business to boost your business through service:

- Being present, interested, and courteous
- Greeting with a smile
- Genuinely understanding the value of the customer bringing their business to you
- Helping in a timely and responsive manner
- Anticipating needs

Continue to look for ways to make small, impactful improvements. This cooperative approach works for our external and internal customers and can be felt within your business environment. You will be glad you hired, trained, and helped your new employee to successfully pass the probation period and will have instilled a service perspective to use through all of life’s circumstances and opportunities. Your customers will see and feel that! ■

*Shirley Leonard is the Owner of Pinnacle Organizational Performance Solutions (Edmonton, Alberta), offering Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness consulting, coaching and facilitation services. Pinnacle provides leadership and team development, employee engagement and strategic change management planning to business, leaders and managers. She can be reached via: Shirley@pinnacleperformance.ca, (cell) 587-982-3314, or visit her website: www.pinnacleperformance.ca*

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