



Membership Newsletter

Fall 2021



Message from your Winnipeg Chamber Chair

Shreeraj Patel
Vice President of
Commercial Financial
Services at RBC

As my time as Winnipeg Chamber Chair comes to a close next month - it's been a true privilege and honour to have the opportunity to support our members and our city's business community.

Though most of my time as Chair was virtual, I feel encouraged and inspired by the stories of our members' resilience and perseverance.

In the face of the global disruption these last 18 months, you persevered and pushed through such a difficult and transformative time. I am overwhelmed with pride for what you have accomplished.

As we focus on emerging from the pandemic, the opportunity to connect again is imperative. I look forward to connecting, networking and engaging with you all at an upcoming Chamber event - or even for a coffee!

I encourage you all to keep supporting local - and let's keep magnifying what makes this city so special.



Message from your Winnipeg Chamber President & CEO

Loren Remillard

This past season was a transformative year for our Chamber. Our team continues to reimagine our events and programming — creating more diverse and custom solutions tailored to your business needs.

For example, we recently launched our new and improved online membership directory- bizzz.ca- where you can find local and credible professional services and goods. We also look forward to continuing our new Business Crews networking program, dynamic online resource hubs, and on-demand event video libraries.

After 18 months of being physically apart, we are thrilled to resume our in-person Chamber events starting in October 2021.

Welcoming you back to in-person events comes with excitement, but we want to assure you our top priority is the health and safety of our staff, volunteers and you, our members. Rest assured everyone in the room for all in-person Chamber events including staff, volunteers, attendees and vendors will be fully vaccinated.

As we embark on the 2021/22 season, we want you, our members, to know we will continue to advocate, support and champion you and your business throughout this year and beyond.



Best Practices

Have you checked out **Bizzz.ca**? Bizzz is our new Winnipeg Chamber online business directory for our business community to list and find local and credible professional services and goods worth buzzing about (see what we did there?).

If you are familiar with our traditional Winnipeg Chamber membership directory, this is it. We just got a new name, sleeker look and a more user-friendly profile for you.

Ready to set up your Bizzz Profile?

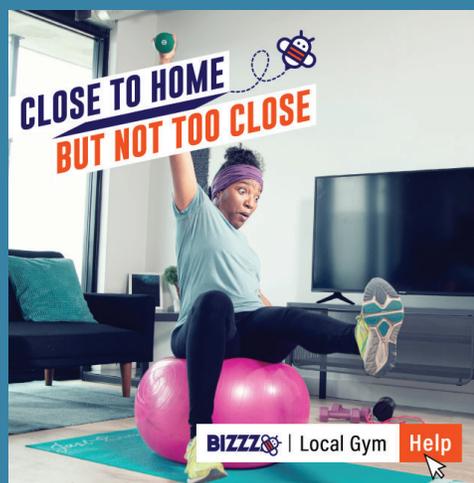
Here are our top 4 best practices for having your account stand out:

Imagery is so important: It's the first thing that catches someone's eye as they scroll through. That's why we suggest using consistent and high-quality images on your profile.

Use your Google reviews and testimonials: Share those customer experiences to help create a buzz and build your business's credibility.

Share on social media: Share your profile on your website and link it on your social media platforms

Keep it simple: Short and to the point is always best. When describing your products and services we suggest using the bullet point system to ensure your customers are getting the information they need quickly and efficiently.



Meet Riele Bailey

Events & Program Manager



You left The Chamber in 2019, what made you decide to come back?

The team at The Chamber is unmatched. Working for Liz Cron, VP of Programs & Marketing, was a dream and we kept in contact after I had started a new role. It just so happened that shortly after I started my maternity leave in February of 2020, the world went in a tiny worldwide pandemic and my position was eliminated at my then-current job – just around the time that there were shifts happening at The Chamber.

It worked out that Liz was looking to bring someone on to her team around the time my leave was ending. It's been incredibly refreshing being back and I am very thankful for our incredible team and supportive management team.

As an event professional, you see first hand the challenges and obstacles the event industry has been facing over the past year and a half. What are some of the trends you have noticed and think will continue in years to come?

It's been interesting to see the shift to virtual, especially starting this position in January of 2021 when the "shift" had already become the new normal. I am pretty tech-savvy, to begin with, but being thrown into Zoom, Hopin, Teams, Google Hangouts and all the other platforms companies had adopted was quite the learning curve.

Although there are a lot of things a virtual event can't offer that an in-person event can, there are also a lot of positives to

them – no need to find parking, no commute time, you can fit in multiple events in a day and no business formal wear required!

Virtual events are definitely here to stay. Whether events return as hybrids (offered virtually and in-person) or companies offer a mix of both throughout the year, I don't think virtual events are going anywhere anytime soon.

What is your hope for the next event season?

That we can all safely get back together and enjoy a meal together again. We've once again put together an incredible line-up of speakers for our membership luncheons and I can't wait to see those events come to life.

In addition to our regular lineup, my colleague Sanjana, our Diversity and Inclusion Manager and I have been planning some exciting new programming focused on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and I hope our membership will be as excited about the programming as we are!

 The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce
Healthy Workplaces



A Healthy Workplace tip from the WCB: Having a Return to Work program improves worker recovery, minimizes WCB claim costs, and helps workers stay connected. And the vast majority of workers are satisfied with their Return to Work arrangement with their employer!

*Healthy Workplace Tip
Provided by Johnston Group*

How We're Amplifying Your Voices

Colin Fast, Director of Policy



Since the start of the pandemic, your Chamber has been working nonstop to provide you with critical information and resources, new ways to connect with one another, and a powerful voice for your needs at every level of government.

Early on, we established an online resource hub with details of public health restrictions, financial assistance programs, and advice on issues ranging from the human resources and legal challenges of COVID-19 to establishing proper protocols for reopening your business.

We worked closely with all levels of government to secure immediate measures to protect your cash flow like deferring tax and utility payments. Together with the Chamber network across Canada, we pushed the federal government to develop and improve critical assistance programs like the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, Canada Emergency Business Account and the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy. In April 2020 we proposed a business support initiative to the province, and after months of persistent advocacy

the Manitoba Bridge Grant was established and later extended.

As public health restrictions have shifted your Chamber has been a consistent voice for using a science-based approach, and we asked for better data from public health officials on sources of transmission. Beginning in spring 2021, we encouraged the provincial government to provide access to rapid testing kits for small businesses and introduce new measures to avert large-scale business shutdowns for future waves.

We also recognized the need for Chamber members to have their voices heard directly by government, so we have hosted town hall events with key decision makers like Federal Minister of Economic Development Melanie Joly, Federal Minister of Small Business Mary Ng, Former Premier Brian Pallister, Former Provincial Minister of Economic Development and Training Ralph Eichler, Mayor Brian Bowman, Dr. Brent Roussin and many others.



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MEMBER TESTIMONIAL

NOAH WILSON

Futurpreneur + Co-chair of Truth and Reconciliation Advisory Council

"My hope with this council is to provide the connections between Indigenous youth entering the business sphere and connect them with established professionals in the community to create these mutually beneficial relationships. I really see The Winnipeg Chamber as the platform to do that."