

A RESOURCE FOR BUSINESSES



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NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

***MADE IN NIAGARA 2024: SHOWCASING NIAGARA'S BUSINESSES IN GERMANY
AT HANNOVER MESSE 2025***

CELEBRATING THE 11TH EDITION OF HAMILTON 40 UNDER FORTY AWARDS CEREMONY



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Dear Business Link Readers,

Welcome to the latest edition of Business Link Monthly, where we continue to highlight the vibrant opportunities and innovations shaping our region.

In this issue, we proudly present "Made in Niagara 2024: A Region of Opportunity and Innovation," showcasing our local achievements and promoting our strengths internationally, with a spotlight on our initiatives in Germany for 2025.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) remain at the forefront of our discussions, as we explore "Why DEI Matters: One Community, Many Perspectives." This feature emphasizes the importance of diverse voices in driving progress and fostering a more inclusive environment for all.

We are also thrilled to celebrate the 11th edition of the Hamilton 40 Under Forty awards ceremony, honoring the remarkable young leaders who are making significant contributions to our community.

Stay informed with our update on Bill C-18: The Online News Act, which outlines critical changes impacting the news landscape in Canada.

Our Community Leadership Development Program for 2024-2025 is also highlighted, reinforcing our commitment to nurturing the next generation of leaders.

Thank you for joining us in this journey of discovery and growth. Together, let's continue to build a prosperous and innovative future for our community.

Warm regards,

Yours in Business
Marilyn Tian, M.B.A
President & Co-Publisher
Business Link Media Group



MADE IN NIAGARA 2024: SHOWCASING NIAGARA'S BUSINESSES IN GERMANY AT HANNOVER MESSE 2025	04
CELEBRATING THE 11TH EDITION OF HAMILTON 40 UNDER FORTY AWARDS CEREMONY	05
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM 24-25	18
DEI SUMMIT & AWARDS: CELEBRATING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN NIAGARA FALLS	19
LOCAL BUSINESS BUZZ	UPCOMING EVENTS IN NIAGARA 20
AN UPDATE ON BILL C-18: THE ONLINE NEWS ACT	22
NATIONAL BUSINESS BEAT	CANADA TARGETS MAJOR EMISSIONS CUTS IN OIL AND GAS SECTOR BY 2030 23
CLIMATE-PROOFING REAL ESTATE SUSTAINABLE UPGRADES FOR A RESILIENT FUTURE	15
THE TOP 7 CLOUD COMPUTING TRENDS DEFINING BUSINESS IN 2025	17
GLOBAL BUSINESS PULSE	NOVEMBER GLOBAL NEWS HIGHLIGHTS 29

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MADE IN NIAGARA 2024

SHOWCASING NIAGARA'S BUSINESSES IN GERMANY AT HANNOVER MESSE 2025

Explore what makes Niagara one of Canada's most vibrant and innovative regions. Made in Niagara (MIN), our annual publication, captures the dynamic industries, institutions, and cultural highlights that set Niagara apart. MIN celebrates Niagara's forward-thinking approach, blending traditional values with modern innovation, and proudly shares these stories with the world.



Business Link in China International Import Expo 2024

Why Made in Niagara?

Made in Niagara highlights the businesses, educational leaders, and community contributors who propel the region's growth. By featuring the core sectors that drive Niagara's economy—business, education, culinary arts, sustainability, tourism, and culture—MIN serves as an essential resource for anyone interested in Niagara's unique mix of opportunity and quality of life.

Promoting Niagara Globally

As part of our commitment to promoting Niagara on an international scale, this year's edition of MIN will be showcased at major global events, including the China International Import Expo from November 5-11 and the Hannover Messe in Germany in March. These platforms offer invaluable exposure for Niagara's innovators, fostering connections with new markets and potential investors across industries.

Innovative Outreach at Hannover Messe

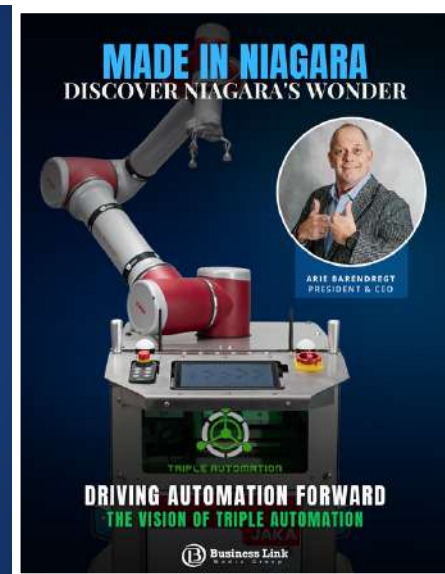
There's still an opportunity to be part of one of the world's largest innovation and industry showcases in Germany at the Hannover Messe. This prestigious event provides a platform for businesses to connect with a global audience, and through our AI Chat Portal, exhibitors can engage with international investors and collaborators in real time, ensuring your products and services make a lasting impact.

Be Part of Made in Niagara 2025

Join us in the next edition of Made in Niagara and promote your business to a broad audience at home and abroad. Secure your place in our upcoming 2025 edition to showcase your business at renowned international events, expand your reach, and connect with potential partners and clients.

Explore our latest edition [here](#) to learn more about the success stories driving Niagara's growth.

Contact us today at info@businesslinkmedia.com to discuss advertising opportunities and be part of Niagara's story on the global stage.



CELEBRATING THE 11TH EDITION OF HAMILTON 40 UNDER FORTY BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS RECIPIENTS



The 11th Annual 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards lit up Hamilton on October 23, 2024, at Carmens Banquet Centre, bringing together nearly 300 business leaders, innovators, and supporters, including Deputy Mayor John-Paul Danko. Hosted Mothers of Ceremony, Ashley Borzellino and Vince Genuardi, the evening celebrated Hamilton's emerging leaders shaping the city's future.

Over 20 alumni returned to inspire the new honorees, highlighting the strong network fostered by the 40 Under Forty program. With 36 local businesses sponsoring the event, including 21 led by past awardees, the community's support was palpable. Business Link Media Group's President, Marilyn Tian, and event Co-chair Charlie Agro expressed gratitude to all contributors, receiving recognition from Hamilton Mayor Andrea Horwath and Councillor Mike Spadafora.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the 'Best in Class' award to John-Anthony Losani, recognizing his exceptional leadership, and the 'Alumni Impact Award' to PJ Mercant for his dedication to Hamilton's growth.

Since its inception, the 40 Under Forty awards have honored 440 outstanding leaders, establishing a legacy of support for Hamilton's business community. Founded in 2003, Business Link has transformed from a publishing company into a digital marketing and media entity, helping local businesses navigate technology and innovation.

The 40 Under Forty Awards continue to promote excellence, community, and resilience, with each awardee representing Hamilton's bright future.

Nominations and applications for the 12th Annual Hamilton 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards are now open, visit businesslinkmedia.com/hamilton-40-under-forty to apply or nominate.

2024 NIAGARA 40U40 AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Jason Acton

Company: Parsons Precast Inc

Jason Acton holds a bachelor's degree in economics from McMaster University and an MBA from the DeGroote School of Business. With over 20 years in the construction industry, Jason is passionate about providing home builders and homeowners with quality products and excellent customer care. As General Manager at Parsons Precast Inc., he also leads in product installation, customer service, and sales. Jason has been instrumental in the growth of Parsons Precast, which now employs over 35 full-time staff and supplies concrete products and custom railings to the new home construction industry across southern Ontario. Additionally, he volunteers his time coaching multiple youth sports teams in the Hamilton community.



Afshan Ahmad

Company: NeuraVue and Deloitte

Afshan Ahmad is a visionary leader in artificial intelligence and safety technology. As the founder of NeuraVue Ltd., she developed an AI-driven platform that enhances safety in senior living facilities and educational institutions, impacting lives through real-time emergency detection. With over a decade of experience at Deloitte, Afshan now leads high-impact digital transformation projects in its Consulting practice. A passionate advocate for innovation, she mentors startups and volunteers for charitable causes like the Ride to Conquer Cancer. Afshan's work reflects her commitment to leveraging technology for societal good and driving meaningful change.



Mike Anderson

Company: Inter Alia Law/Lagom

Mike Anderson is a lawyer for creatives, founders, and do-gooders. His clients include record labels, major music festivals, professional sports leagues, innovative startups, and award-winning national charities. In 2021, Mike created an online platform called Lagom to help creative Hamiltonians run their businesses. By offering innovative legal assistance at affordable rates, Lagom has since grown to support creative entrepreneurs across the country. Mike seeks to drive positive community change by co-hosting the award-winning Lawyer Life Podcast, providing free legal assistance to low-income Ontarians, and granting post-secondary bursaries to students who use innovative solutions to better their communities.



Joseph Apps

Company: Joe Apps Technology Support

Joseph Apps is a driven entrepreneur and technology expert, dedicated to helping businesses navigate the complexities of the online world. With a background in Computer Systems Technology and Software Development from Mohawk College, he co-founded HD Electronics, a highly successful electronics refurbishment business in Downtown Hamilton. During his time at HD Electronics, Joseph recognized the growing demand for reliable, high-quality tech support services for businesses, which led him to establish Joe Apps Technology Support.



2024 NIAGARA 40U40 AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Joseph Battaglia

Company: Flourish Affordable Housing Communities

Joseph Battaglia, born and raised in Hamilton, is a project manager with Flourish, working to deliver over 250 affordable multi-family units across the city. In 2014, he earned an MBA from the Schulich School of Business, where he developed a passion for sustainable business and urban development. He co-founded Westpark Homes, a custom home building company focused on exclusive projects in Hamilton's mature neighborhoods. Joseph served on the Board of Directors for the West End Homebuilders' Association from 2016 to 2020. Outside of work, he enjoys time with his wife and two sons, cycling, playing guitar, listening to vinyl, and learning about astronomy.



Ryan Botelho

Company: Tripemco Insurance Group

Ryan Botelho is an Account Executive at Tripemco Insurance Group with over a decade of experience in the industry. He holds a degree in insurance and an R.I.B.O license and is consistently recognized as one of the organization's top-performing sales brokers. Ryan is an active member of the West End Home Builders' Association and a recognized contributor to the business community. Beyond his professional achievements, he is dedicated to giving back, supporting nonprofit organizations including Toys for Tots, the Winter Coat Drive, and Good Shepherd. Ryan is a devoted husband to his wife, Elisa, and a proud father to their son, Roman.



Melissa Carrington

Company: Melissa Carrington Real Estate with Keller Williams Complete

Melissa Carrington is a dedicated mother, realtor, and the founder of Collective Executive Offices, a women-focused co-working space. A top force in real estate, she quickly earned titles such as Rookie of the Year, Women's Influencer on RHAB, and a spot on the ALC.A 40 Under Forty honoree, Melissa specializes in helping clients maximize equity. She also co-founded the Steel City Women's Collective, raising over \$14,000 for community causes in its first year. Known for her community spirit and commitment to empowering women, Melissa inspires others to achieve their dreams and make a lasting impact.



Brandon Carrol

Company: Raw Roots

Brandon Carroll, driven by a passion for health and wellness, founded Raw Roots in his parents' basement, where he began crafting nutritious smoothies with organic, plant-based ingredients. His dedication to helping others through wholesome food quickly transformed his small operation into a thriving food truck. With growing demand and a loyal following, Brandon expanded Raw Roots into a storefront, creating a community hub for those seeking natural, nourishing options. His journey from a basement startup to a successful business reflects his unwavering commitment to promoting healthy living and making nutritious, accessible food available to all.



2024 NIAGARA 40U40 AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Cody Chambers

Company: Foot Traffic North America

Cody Chambers is a dedicated Hamilton entrepreneur focused on creating opportunities and supporting local businesses. With over 10 years of sales and consulting experience, he uses unique strategies to engage clients organically while automating operations. As the owner of Foot Traffic North America, Cody offers innovative digital display units for events, restaurants, retail, and brand activation across Canada and the U.S. Through Hamilton Billboard Co., he provides cost-effective advertising solutions with an expanding network of billboards in the greater Hamilton area. Cody's passion drives his efforts to boost local business visibility and success. He dedicates this award to his grandfather.



Robert Coruzzi

Company: Meridian Credit Union

Robert Coruzzi is the Associate Vice President of Wealth Distribution at Meridian Credit Union, overseeing asset growth through the advisor channel and QTrade, and guiding wealth distribution strategy. He focuses on providing advisors with the tools and support needed to enhance the member experience. Active in the Hamilton community, Robert has contributed to various boards and events, including Pride In The Park, United Way, and Mount Hamilton Youth Soccer. He is also President of the Santa Croce Di Magliano Italian club and a Hamilton Public Library board member. Robert enjoys spending time with his wife, Beatriz, and their three daughters, Gisella, Gabriella, and Isabella.



Suzy Costa

Company: City of Hamilton and Tomala The Portuguese Pit Stop

Suzy Costa, 37, is a seasoned professional with a background in Business and Finance. She has spent 18 years with the City of Hamilton, currently as a Program Training Coordinator in Public Works' Transportation section, with experience across various departments. Suzy is also a successful entrepreneur, having opened her first Hamilton restaurant in 2012 and a second in 2018. She is a dedicated mother to Skyler, 8, and Sarina, 10, and enjoys fashion and travel. Balancing her career, business, and family, Suzy exemplifies commitment and versatility.



Jack T. Doan

Company: Mercedes-Benz Burlington

Jack T. Doan has been a dedicated sales representative at Mercedes-Benz Burlington for over a decade (12 years), showcasing the brand's innovation and luxury. Passionate about his work, Jack also co-hosts the Mercedes-Benz Burlington YouTube and Instagram channels, sharing insights into the latest vehicles. His goal is to provide personalized 5-star service, ensuring every client finds the perfect car to match their lifestyle and dreams.



2024 NIAGARA 40U40 AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Tone Frisina

Company: BBB Architects

Since joining BBB in 2010, Tone Frisina has achieved tremendous success with many of the firm's largest professional sports and entertainment projects. His unrivaled passion and leadership quickly led him to become the firm's youngest partner. Tone provides revenue-generating strategies and on-site management for clients across Canada and the U.S., with proven expertise in interior design, detail excellence, and project execution. As a proud Hamiltonian, Tone is dedicated to enhancing his hometown's FirstOntario Centre, aiming to create an unparalleled spectator experience for all demographics.



Patrick Gaughan

Company: Mercedes-Benz Burlington

Patrick Gaughan has been a dedicated sales representative at Mercedes-Benz Burlington for the past seven years. As an AMG Specialist and one of Canada's few globally certified sales consultants, Patrick is passionate about showcasing the innovation and luxury of Mercedes-Benz. Beyond the showroom, Patrick hosts the Mercedes-Benz Burlington YouTube channel, sharing expert insights into the latest vehicles and connecting with viewers who share his passion for automotive excellence. Committed to making a positive impact, Patrick actively participates in community events and builds lasting relationships along the way.



Natasha Goreil

Company: TD Bank

Born and raised in Hamilton, Natasha Goreil is a dedicated financial professional of Italian and Assyrian descent. An alumnus of McMaster University and Mohawk College, she has been with TD Bank since 2011 and became a Mortgage Specialist in 2019. Natasha has received multiple awards for her career achievements and outstanding customer service. Active in her community, Natasha is a CIBPA Hamilton-Halton member and was recently nominated as Trustee for the Order Sons & Daughters of Italy of Canada, where she continues to support community service and cultural heritage.



Kartik Gupta

Company: Panāyā Consulting

Kartik Gupta boasts a distinguished international career spanning nearly two decades. In 2021, he founded Panāyā Consulting, a boutique forensic accounting and dispute resolution firm that has quickly expanded across North America, Europe, and Asia. His expertise has earned him prestigious accolades, including the International Business Stevie Award in 2024 and the LexTalk Global Expert Award in 2022, among others. Beyond his corporate success, Kartik is committed to his community through pro-bono mediation and volunteering for the City of Burlington, reflecting his dedication to justice, fairness, and positive social impact.



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2024 NIAGARA 40U40 AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Jen Hughes

Company: [Gowling WLG](#)

Jen Hughes is a career learning and development professional, specializing in aligning people development with organizational growth and culture. In 2023, she became the first national Head of Learning & Development for Gowling WLG Canada, where she drives the firm's learning strategy as part of the People & Culture leadership team.

Passionate about education and community, Jen also mentors with Girls E-Mentorship, serves as a committee member and event host with the Women's Network, and is a board member with the Hamilton Foundation for Student Success.



Benish Ikram

Company: [Bank of Montreal](#)

Benish Ikram has over 8 years of experience in the financial industry, with numerous certifications in retail banking. In her 2 years as a leader, she has overseen branch operations, managed a team of financial professionals, and ensured that financial targets are met while upholding high client service standards. Her leadership focuses on empowering her team and fostering continuous improvement. Benish is recognized for resolving complex client issues with professionalism and empathy, earning a reputation for turning challenges into opportunities for enhanced customer loyalty.



Mark Irish

Company: [Ross & McBride LLP](#)

Mark Irish is a Partner at Ross & McBride, practicing in the Personal Injury Law Group where he works on behalf of injured people to ensure they achieve the best possible result after an accident. Over the past decade, Mark has become a leader within his firm and an active member of Hamilton's legal community. He is the current President of the Hamilton Lawyers' Club and sits on the Fund Advisory Committee for the Hamilton Lawyers' Legacy for Children/The Ray Harris Fund. Mark is a former OBA Council Member and is a current member of the Ontario Trial Lawyers' Association.



Chelsea Ladd

Company: [radius & The Soulful Co.](#)

Jack T. Doan has been a dedicated sales representative at Mercedes-Benz Burlington for over a decade (12 years), showcasing the brand's innovation and luxury. Passionate about his work, Jack also co-hosts the Mercedes-Benz Burlington YouTube and Instagram channels, sharing insights into the latest vehicles. His goal is to provide personalized 5-star service, ensuring every client finds the perfect car to match their lifestyle and dreams.



2024 NIAGARA 40U40 AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Alyssa Lancia

Company: Darling Donuts

Alyssa Lancia is the founder of Darling Donuts, established in 2018 to offer delicious mini donuts with gluten-free and vegan options. Recognizing the challenges of entrepreneurship, Alyssa launched WERK Nights in 2022 to create a supportive community for female entrepreneurs. This initiative has since brought together over 300 women across Hamilton, Burlington, and Niagara through more than 15 events. Her efforts earned her the FirstOntario1 Awards in 2022 and the Female Empowerment Award from the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce in 2024. Alyssa's work fosters connection, collaboration, and growth among women in business.



Miguel Lima

Company: Century 21 Heritage Group Ltd

Miguel Lima, a leading real estate agent in Hamilton, is renowned for his expertise and client-focused approach. The son of Portuguese immigrants, he began his career at 18 and quickly rose to become Vice President of CUPIDO Realty by 24. With over two decades of experience, Miguel has been a top performer in the Century 21 Canada system for 12 consecutive years. A dedicated family man, he cherishes time with his wife, Laura, and their three children. Miguel is also a passionate advocate for small businesses and the entrepreneurial spirit in Hamilton, supporting local causes and exploring the city's culinary scene.



John-Anthony Losani

Company: Losani Homes

John-Anthony Losani is a third-generation builder and developer who developed a passion for the industry at a young age. After earning his undergraduate degrees from Brock University and an MBA from the University of Barcelona, he joined Losani Homes full-time. John-Anthony has held various positions across different departments, gaining extensive knowledge to become a key contributor not only to his family's company but to the industry as a whole. He joined the West End Home Builders Association's board of directors in 2016 and was later named to the executive leadership team, becoming President in January 2024.



Andrew Mantecon

Company: FirstOntario Credit Union

Andrew Mantecon is the Director and Team Lead of Commercial Services at FirstOntario Credit Union, where he has led the Hamilton/GTA West team since 2019. With a strong background in retail and commercial banking, particularly in real estate finance, Andrew has guided his team in originating and managing an \$800MM+ loan portfolio across various real estate asset classes. Passionate about downtown Hamilton's revitalization, he serves as an Executive Board Member for the Downtown Hamilton BIA. His leadership and dedication have significantly elevated FirstOntario's profile within the Hamilton and Halton business communities.



2024 NIAGARA 40U40 AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Michelle Montour

Company: Feste.Co

Michelle Montour, the visionary behind Feste.Co and Feste.Co Kids, is known for her next-level creativity in designing innovative and trend-setting party decor, displays, and experiences. Her work has set new standards in the industry. Together with her husband, she passionately leads and nurtures the highly acclaimed Castelli Cucina and the newly opened Castelli Mercato & Capri Gelateria in Ancaster, renowned for their authentic Italian offerings. Beyond her entrepreneurial success, Michelle's warmth and dedication inspire those around her, making her a true role model in both business and life. Her inspiring leadership and creativity make her a deserving Top 40 Under 40 honoree.



Tyler Ouwendyk

Company: Momentum Fitness

Tyler Ouwendyk is the owner of Momentum Fitness, a 24/7 boutique fitness club dedicated to making fitness fun, non-intimidating, and accessible to all ages and fitness levels. He has helped hundreds of people achieve their goals through a "no nonsense" approach that focuses on individualized, habit-based strategies for long-term success rather than fads or quick fixes. Momentum Fitness has been recognized with Business of the Year and multiple awards for 'Best Fitness Club' and 'Best Personal Training.' A proud community advocate, Tyler supports the Boys and Girls Clubs of Hamilton and recently climbed 29,029 feet—the equivalent of Mount Everest—to raise over \$29,029 for the organization.



Alexandria Palazzo

Company: Scarfone Hawkins LLP

Alexandria Palazzo graduated from McMaster University with a B.A. (Hons.) in Political Science in 2013 and earned her J.D. from the University of Windsor in 2017. She was called to the Ontario Bar in 2018. Alexandria began her career articling and practicing civil litigation and family law at a small firm in Hamilton. In 2021, she joined Scarfone Hawkins LLP, where she practices exclusively in family law and leads the Family Law Group on the Thompson Moloci Stanton Litigation Team. Active in the legal and Hamilton communities, Alexandria volunteers with various clubs and committees. She is a member of the Family Law Subcommittee of the Hamilton Law Association and serves on the Board of Directors of the Hamilton Lawyers' Club.



Rudy E. Peressini

Company: RRuper Construction

Joining his father in 2004, Rudy Peressini of RRuper Construction specializes in building one-of-a-kind custom homes. Combining years of expertise with a passion for his craft, Rudy takes pride in working closely with clients to bring their vision to life, offering personalized designs and high-quality craftsmanship. RRuper Construction excels in the 'mountain home' aesthetic, capturing the rustic charm and rugged elegance of mountain living. Utilizing sustainable materials and innovative building techniques, RRuper Construction ensures each custom home reflects both beauty and functionality. With trust, tradition, and excellence as its foundation, RRuper Construction has crafted a legacy that is timeless.



2024 NIAGARA 40U40 AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Eric Persi

Company: Corbell Private Capital

Eric Persi is a private equity professional and Certified Sommelier, merging his passions for finance and wine. As the Founder and Managing Partner of Corbell Private Capital, he specializes in acquiring businesses from retiring owners. With a decade of experience, Eric and his team unlock the potential of established companies, guiding them through growth phases. His relationship-building skills make Corbell a trusted partner for smooth transitions and sustainable growth. Additionally, Eric founded Bacco Imports Inc., focusing on sourcing premium wines globally. As a minority shareholder, he curates a unique wine portfolio and hosts tastings that blend education and community. Known for his integrity and innovative thinking, Eric shares insights on investment strategies and wine markets through various speaking engagements."



Alexandra Petermann

Company: Ross and McBride LLP

Alexandra Petermann ("Alex") is a lawyer at Ross and McBride, specializing in Family Law. She provides legal guidance to individuals dealing with family-related issues and relationship matters. Beyond her legal practice, Alex is an active volunteer in the local community, serving on the boards of SportHamilton, the Sons and Daughters of Italy Housing Corporation, and the Catholic Youth Organization. She has also volunteered with the ArcelorMittal Grassroots Soccer program. Outside of work, Alex enjoys playing soccer and spending time with her family and dog.



Kate Rigby Pipan

Company: Gather Floral and Events

Kate Rigby Pipan transitioned from the corporate world to pursue her passion for event florals after having her first child. Recognizing the potential of her side business, she turned it into a full-time venture by opening Gather Florals. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, Kate launched her floral shop on James St. N. in 2020. Since then, Gather Florals has been involved in 80-100 events annually. Kate's vision is to create floral art through unique, inspired designs, continually pushing boundaries and turning the impossible into beautiful, tangible creations.



Anthony Pizzuti

Company: MNP LLP

Anthony Pizzuti has worked in public accounting for over 10 years. He earned his CPA, CA and LPA designations and currently works as a Senior Manager at MNP LLP, helping small to medium-sized private companies with accounting, tax and business advisory solutions. As a result of Anthony's contributions and commitment to his clients, he is progressing towards his goal to obtain partnership. As an active member in the community, Anthony was awarded the U40 Young Professional Award in 2022 from the West End Home Builders' Association ("WE HBA"). Anthony serves as Chair for the U40 Committee of the WE HBA and as Director for the CIBPA Hamilton-Halton Chapter.



2024 NIAGARA 40U40 AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Cassandra Rattana

Company: Proactively Social

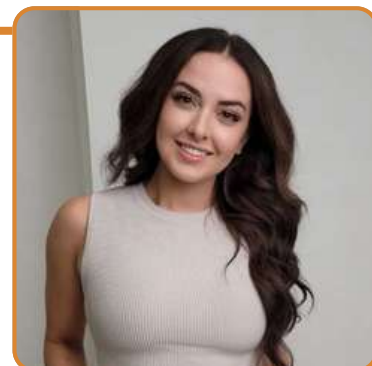
Cassandra Rattana is a seasoned entrepreneur with over a decade of experience, including the past four years leading her successful social media agency, Proactively Social. Renowned for her expertise in enhancing brands and driving sales through strategic social media, she has become a trusted industry leader. As an instructor at Mohawk College, Cassandra is dedicated to mentoring the next generation of professionals, sharing her insights to support their success. She is also an influential member of the Hamilton Chamber's YEP Executive Team, where she actively supports young entrepreneurs. Passionate about innovation and growth, Cassandra advocates for and drives marketing efforts at Mohawk College's Centre for Entrepreneurship.



Marika Renieris

Company: SOMA Wellness Studio

Marika Renieris is the owner and operator of Soma Wellness Studio. After years of establishing herself as a Registered Massage Therapist in a multi-disciplinary clinic, she decided in 2020 to merge her holistic healthcare background with the evolving beauty industry. Over the years, Marika has enjoyed offering fully customized and unique treatments to her clientele. She developed her own model and method of Facial Experiences, combining various industry-leading technologies to deliver the most effective results. Marika's passion is to provide a tranquil space where clients can relax and leave feeling refreshed and confident in their skin.



Jessica Spadafora

Company: Jessica Spadafora RDH (formerly NuEra)

Jessica Spadafora began her fruitful career in dentistry after graduating dental hygiene school at only 19 years old in 2017, currently in 2024 Jessica spends her time acting as head hygienist at a prestigious dental office in Ancaster as well as a dental hygiene business in clinic as well as mobile. When Jessica isn't actively practicing in clinic you can find her volunteering her time with mental health and addiction services as pertaining to dental health, donating to local animal shelters or spending time outdoors with her closest family, friends and her dog and cat Mercy and Aloha at their family cottage.



Josh Taylor

Company: Defining Movement Dance

Josh Taylor is a dancer, choreographer, storyteller, artist-educator, and the owner of Defining Movement Dance (DMD) studio and arts hub. Since opening in 2009, Josh has built partnerships with organizations, school boards, and charities like Theatre Aquarius, Tourism Hamilton, Telling Tales Festival, Hamilton Fringe, Supercrawl, HWDSB, H.A.R.R.C, and Easter Seals, to increase visibility and access to dance in Hamilton. Through projects like The Uncomfortable Project and events like 73 'Til Infinity, Josh aims to entertain, educate, and inspire. He is the 2020 recipient of the Hamilton Arts Award and the 2015 John C. Holland Award for Arts Excellence.



2024 NIAGARA 40U40 AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Derek Taylor

Company: Grapl Inc.

Derek Taylor is the COO and Co-Founder of Grapl Inc., a company revolutionizing the construction industry with bespoke panels for rapid home development, leveraging AI-driven software, innovative production equipment, and advanced robotics. Grapl can cut build times by up to 80%. Before founding Grapl, Derek accumulated over a decade of experience in construction, land development, and asset management. Outside of work, he enjoys reading, exploring new technologies, wandering through the RBG, and cheering on the Ticats. Derek is a McMaster University alumnus (Hons BA & MA) and lives in Hamilton with his family.



Emily Thompson

Company: Hamilton Cardinals Baseball Club

Emily Thompson serves as the In-Game Host for the Hamilton Cardinals Baseball Club in the Intercounty Baseball League. On game days, you'll always find Emily engaging with the crowd and keeping the energy high. She has also been an In-Game Host for the Brampton Honey Badgers in the CEBL, as well as a digital host for the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. Beyond the sports arena, Emily has worked as a television producer for Entertainment Tonight Canada. Emily is deeply committed to her community and takes great pride in being a positive role model.



Sarah Elkami Trdina

Company: Always Connected

Sarah Elkami Trdina is a leading expert in behavior analysis and leadership, holding a Master's in Professional Behavior Analysis from Florida Tech. As a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and Registered Behavior Analyst in Ontario, she co-founded and serves as Executive Director of Always Connected Treatment Network, a hub for individuals with disabilities and diverse learning needs. She also co-owns the Always Connected Family Room, an inclusive space for play, learning, and development. With locations across the GHA and GTA, Sarah's leadership has grown the organization to include over 40 professionals. Her impactful journey, which began over a decade ago, focuses on enhancing the lives of children with developmental disabilities.



Giuseppe Valente

Company: McMaster University and St. Joseph's Hospital Hamilton

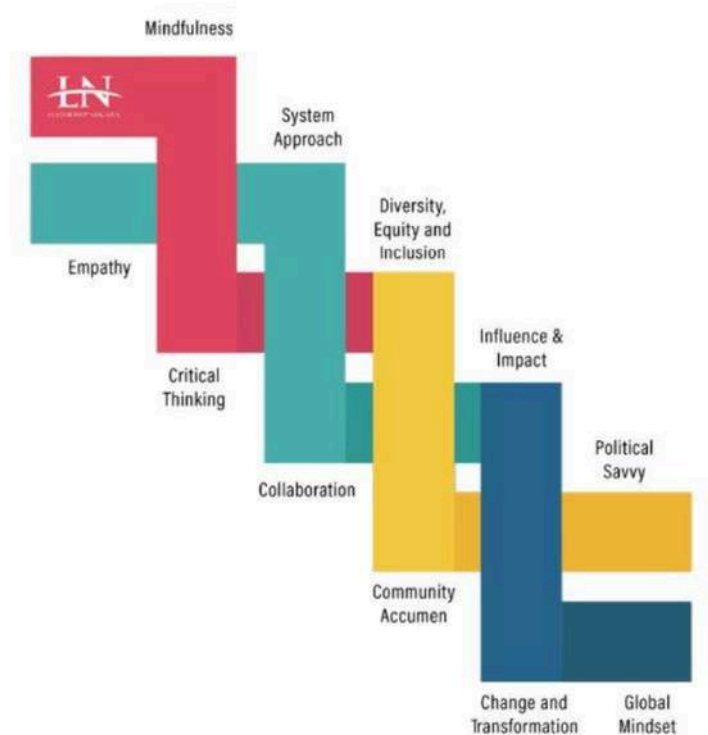
Dr. Giuseppe Valente joined St. Joseph's Hospital Hamilton in 2019 as an orthopedic surgeon specializing in trauma, foot and ankle, and revision arthroplasty surgery. After 1.5 years, he also took on the role of Associate Professor at McMaster University. Over the past four years, Giuseppe has held several leadership positions at St. Joseph's Hospital, including Head of Orthopedic Trauma Surgery, Head of the Resident Learners Teaching Unit, and Chief of Orthopedic Surgery. He is actively involved in recruiting and teaching learners and implemented an Acute Care Service (ACS) orthopedic strategy that has improved wait times for orthopedic trauma surgery.



COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM 24-25

Leadership Niagara welcomed its newest cohort of participants to the LN Community Leadership Development Program in mid-October. With a return to fully in person learning days, the Program Advisory Committee (PAC) has revised the delivery of the program to allow for more collaborative opportunities among the participants.

Leadership Niagara has developed a DNA framework of leadership competencies which it feels are assets to the development of all community leaders. These competencies as shown below are intricately connected to each other – and form the basis for the Learning Day Topics. Participants explore how these competencies connect to the leaders with whom they interact at work or in the community.



The PAC also makes use of the 5 Practices of Exemplary Leaders as outlined in *The Leadership Challenge* (2023) by James Kouzes and Barry Posner. While each day's overall topics connect to the LN Competencies, within each learning day we articulate how the five practices can serve to enhance your leadership capacity. On the first full learning day, participants had the opportunity to review all five practices and take the Leadership Practices Inventory to assess how often they engage in each of the practices in their daily work.

The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership



Through the remainder of the CLDP program, participants will learn about the most important issues facing our communities in Niagara, meet and learn from the community's most dynamic leaders, and strengthen their leadership capacity through face-to-face learning and a team-based community action project. All of this learning will be linked to the competencies and will enhance the exemplary leadership practices of our participants.

DEI SUMMIT & AWARDS

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN NIAGARA FALLS

A Recap of This Year's DEI Summit

The 1st Annual DEI Summit held in Niagara Falls brought together community leaders, business owners, DEI professionals, and other stakeholders for an impactful discussion on the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in shaping the future of the region. The summit, themed “Why DEI Matters: One Community, Many Perspectives,” focused on creating spaces where diverse voices are heard, respected, and empowered. This event not only highlighted the benefits of diversity but also emphasized the ongoing work needed to foster inclusion within the community.



2024 1st Annual DEI Summit

2025 DEI Awards & Summit

In addition to the DEI Awards, the 2nd Annual DEI Summit will take place tentatively on March 3, 2025, at the Niagara Falls Exchange. This year's summit, titled “One Community, Many Perspectives,” will continue to bring together diverse voices to explore how DEI principles can further transform both the workplace and the community.

As we reflect on the success of this year's summit, preparations are already underway for the 2025 DEI Awards. These awards celebrate the outstanding contributions of local businesses, organizations, and individuals in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. The three main categories for the DEI Awards are:

- **Workplace DEI Award:** Recognizing a local business that fosters an inclusive and equitable work environment.
- **Community DEI Award:** Honoring organizations or individuals who have made significant, lasting contributions to the community through DEI efforts.
- **Youth Empowerment DEI Award:** Celebrating youth residents or groups of youth under the age of 21 who have demonstrated leadership in advancing DEI principles.

Nominations Soon to Open

The DEI Awards nomination portal will soon be open, inviting the community to submit their nominations for individuals, businesses, and youth who have made exceptional contributions to advancing DEI. These awards provide a platform to honor those working towards a more inclusive Niagara Falls.

For more information on the DEI Awards and to submit nominations, visit the Niagara Falls DEI Advisory Committee page [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR NOVEMBER

16
SAT

SANTA CLAUS PARADE

Saturday, November 16, 2024 4:00 PM

The route will then veer from Valley Way onto Queen Street, ending at Centennial Square in front of City Hall.

You are invited to join us for the 2024 Santa Claus Parade, presented by Ontario Power Generation and Niagara Peninsula Energy, on Saturday. As always, the parade will showcase bands, floats, characters, performers, and, of course, Santa Claus!

Event: <https://niagarafalls.ca/events/annual-events/santa-claus-parade/default.aspx>

17
SUN

DECK THE HALLS: HOLIDAY MARKET AT THE EXCHANGE

Sunday, November 17, 2024 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM

The Niagara Falls Exchange, 5943 Sylvia Place

The City of Niagara Falls is hosting a new holiday market Deck the Halls on November 17, 2024 at the Niagara Falls Exchange (5943 Sylvia Place). The day will be packed with family fun, including a Polar Express train, kid's activities, s'more station and of course, Santa Clause!

Tickets: <https://nfexchange.ca/about/deck-the-halls>

23
SAT

OPEN HOUSE AT THE UNF

Saturday, November 23, 2024 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM

University of Niagara Falls Canada 4342 Queen St, Niagara Falls

Join us Nov. 23 on our downtown campus in Niagara Falls, Ontario and learn why UNF is the right choice for you. Tour the state-of-the-art facility, meet faculty and staff, and learn more about our innovative programs. Stop by our university Open House between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Innovation Flows Here.

Event: <https://unfc.ca/events/join-us-at-the-unf-open-house-november/>

28
THU

WOMEN IN STEM EXPERIENCE

Thursday, November 28, 2024 , 6:00pm-8:30pm

Niagara College - Glendale Campus 135 Taylor Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON

Come join us at Women in STEM - The Sip, Savor, and Science Food Lab for a fun and interactive evening of food, drinks, and hands-on science

Event: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/women-in-stem-experience-the-sip-savor-and-science-food-lab-tickets-1055012694369>

ELEVATE YOUR BRAND: ADVERTISE IN BUSINESS LINK'S 2024 SIGNATURE MAGAZINE

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Family — a simple yet profound word — resonates deeply with all of us. It binds us, reveals our identity, traces our journey, and points toward our future. This essence is the cornerstone of All In The Family Magazine. Over our 20-year journey, we've connected with countless individuals in the successful business landscape of the Golden Horseshoe area. A common thread among these thriving enterprises is strong family ownership.

In this publication, we spotlight these family businesses, acknowledging their unique strengths. Within these pages, you'll find stories of their challenges and triumphs, offering valuable insights to educate and inspire the next generation of business owners. Our goal is to celebrate the resilience of family businesses and foster a dynamic, informed community of entrepreneurs.



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AN UPDATE ON BILL C-18: THE ONLINE NEWS ACT

By Ryan Li, Vancouver



In our September 2023 edition, BLMG published an article on the potential effects of Canada's Online News Act (Bill C-18), set to come into force in December 2023. Now, with its impacts becoming clear, we revisit this pivotal act and its impact on online news.

The Online News Act, effective as of December 19, 2023, mandates that large tech companies like Google and Meta compensate Canadian news outlets for every user click on a news story. While the federal government positioned this act as a means to support smaller Canadian firms, critics, including Dr. Michael Geist, a professor of law and Canada Research Chair in Internet and E-Commerce Law at the University of Ottawa, warned it might provoke backlash from major tech firms. He cautioned this could undermine the "core principle of unrestricted online access to information," as he told BLMG last September.

In response, Meta has blocked Canadian users from viewing any news content on platforms like Instagram and Facebook. As an example, CBC stopped posting on its Instagram account after August 15, 2023, because its posts are no longer visible to Canadian users. Smaller and local news outlets, often reliant on social media to reach readers, are also struggling. Meta's news service cutoff has restricted both Canadian and international news, creating significant informational barriers for Canadians who depend on social media for news.

Google, on the other hand, has reached an agreement with Ottawa to continue providing news in Canada. In November 2023, Google agreed to a \$100 million annual payment to the government, which will be redistributed to media outlets under the new law. This compromise ensures Canadians retain news access, though smaller outlets may still lose visibility to larger news sources that dominate Google search results.

The bill's goal was to increase revenue for Canadian news outlets, but a Media Ecosystem Observatory study indicates that smaller outlets have seen a 30% drop in web traffic since Meta's Canadian news shutdown. This situation raises ongoing questions about balancing revenue for Canadian outlets with maintaining a diverse, accessible media landscape.

Ryan Li is a dedicated Youth Journalist from Vancouver. He is known for his insightful reporting and passion for journalism. Currently, Ryan is studying public policy at Georgetown University in the U.S.

CANADA TARGETS MAJOR EMISSIONS CUTS IN OIL AND GAS SECTOR BY 2030



Canada has unveiled a bold plan to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in its oil and gas sector, aiming for a 29% to 35% cut below 2019 levels by 2030. This move is part of Canada's broader effort to meet its climate commitments, which require a 40-45% reduction in emissions from 2005 levels within the same timeframe. The plan directly targets the energy industry, which accounts for nearly a quarter of the country's emissions.

The proposed reductions are an update to Canada's emissions cap for the sector and come after ongoing negotiations between government officials and industry leaders. Canada's Environment Minister, Steven Guilbeault, announced that achieving this goal would mean slashing emissions in the sector to between 110 and 120 megatonnes by 2030, down from around 160 megatonnes in 2019. The strategy includes measures like improving energy efficiency, adopting carbon capture technologies, and accelerating the transition to cleaner energy sources.

While Canada's energy industry acknowledges the importance of emissions reduction, it has expressed concerns over the feasibility of meeting the targets without significant financial and logistical support. The sector, a major contributor to Canada's economy, argues that ambitious emission cuts must be balanced with economic sustainability.

The plan is expected to face challenges both politically and from industry groups, particularly in Alberta, where the oil and gas sector is a critical economic driver. However, the Canadian government maintains that these cuts are essential to align the country with global climate targets, aiming to position Canada as a leader in sustainable energy.

As Canada prepares to implement this policy, it signals a crucial shift toward reducing the environmental impact of its most emissions-intensive industry, reflecting the nation's commitment to a sustainable and competitive future in the global energy landscape.



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Phone number: 647-395-9669

CLIMATE-PROOFING REAL ESTATE

SUSTAINABLE UPGRADES FOR A RESILIENT FUTURE

As climate challenges intensify, the real estate industry is prioritizing strategies to make buildings more resilient against environmental risks like extreme weather, flooding, and rising temperatures. Sustainable building upgrades are not only about immediate protection but also about ensuring long-term value, lower costs, and eco-friendliness. This evolving approach includes integrating green energy, optimizing water use, and using durable materials to create adaptable, high-performance properties. Here's a closer look at the innovative upgrades driving climate-proof real estate.

1. Green Roofing and High-Performance Insulation

Green roofs, covered in vegetation, provide natural insulation that regulates indoor temperatures, reduces energy costs, and combats the urban heat island effect. High-performance insulation works to stabilize indoor climates by minimizing heat transfer, making buildings more comfortable and energy-efficient.

2. Renewable Energy Solutions

Solar panels, wind turbines, and geothermal systems are transforming energy sourcing in buildings. These renewable options not only cut down on energy costs but also provide power independence during grid outages, especially critical as climate-induced disruptions increase.

3. Smart Water Management

Efficient water use is increasingly essential. Advanced water management systems, such as rainwater harvesting and permeable surfaces, help capture and reuse water, reducing both consumption and the impact of heavy rainfall events. Effective stormwater systems also help prevent property damage by channeling excess water away safely.

4. Durable and Sustainable Building Materials

Materials like recycled steel, reclaimed wood, and low-carbon concrete bring both resilience and sustainability to construction. Many of these materials are designed to withstand environmental stress, reducing the need for frequent repairs while supporting sustainable practices by using fewer natural resources.

5. Advanced HVAC Systems

Efficient HVAC systems maintain indoor air quality and temperatures, regardless of outdoor weather extremes. Innovations like geothermal heating and cooling offer stable temperature control by tapping into the earth's consistent temperatures, reducing energy use and emissions.



6. Smart Building Technology

Automation is revolutionizing property management. Smart systems adjust lighting, HVAC, and other controls based on conditions and occupancy, reducing energy waste. Real-time monitoring also helps property managers optimize usage patterns to further enhance efficiency.

7. Green Certifications and Standards

Certifications like LEED and WELL promote sustainability and resilience. These standards ensure buildings meet rigorous requirements for energy, water use, and indoor quality, which improves market value and attracts eco-conscious tenants.

Benefits of Climate-Proofing for Property Owners and Communities

Despite these challenges, the future of Agentic AI is incredibly exciting. Its potential to drive innovation, streamline operations, and enhance customer experiences will be game-changing for businesses worldwide. As more industries adopt this technology, we can expect to see significant advancements in productivity, efficiency, and innovation.

Agentic AI is more than just an incremental improvement; it represents a paradigm shift in the way AI functions, moving from being a tool controlled by humans to becoming an independent player in business and technology. This breakthrough will likely reshape industries in ways we are only beginning to imagine.

Looking Ahead: Building Resilience in Real Estate

As sustainable practices gain momentum, the real estate industry is poised to set a new standard in climate resilience. Climate-proofing is no longer just beneficial—it's necessary to secure buildings' future value and performance. By adopting green roofs, renewable energy sources, and smart technologies, property owners are investing in resilient, adaptive spaces that can withstand environmental challenges. This shift toward sustainability promises not only to protect buildings but also to reshape the industry's impact on the world.

Article Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alihoss/2024/11/07/how-to-climate-proof-buildings-with-sustainable-real-estate-upgrades/>



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THE TOP 7 CLOUD COMPUTING TRENDS DEFINING BUSINESS IN 2025

The world of cloud computing is set to redefine business innovation in 2025, as advancements in technology open new pathways for growth, efficiency, and resilience. Here's a deeper dive into the trends that will shape the future of business operations:



1. AI-Powered Cloud Services

AI is transforming cloud computing by enabling smarter, faster data analysis and process automation. From customer insights to predictive maintenance, AI-driven cloud services can analyze vast data sets, improve operational efficiency, and even personalize user experiences. With AI models hosted on the cloud, businesses can leverage powerful computational tools without building infrastructure from scratch.

2. Multi-Cloud and Hybrid Solutions

To maximize flexibility and minimize dependency on single providers, many businesses are adopting multi-cloud and hybrid cloud strategies. Multi-cloud allows companies to balance workloads across multiple cloud providers, while hybrid cloud enables integration between public and private cloud environments. This model is especially appealing for industries requiring high reliability and regulatory compliance, as it ensures continuity and data control.

3. Edge Computing Expansion

Edge computing brings data processing closer to the source, allowing for faster, more reliable data handling. This is particularly beneficial for applications that require immediate insights, such as autonomous vehicles, IoT, and real-time analytics. By reducing latency and reliance on distant cloud data centers, edge computing creates a faster, more responsive infrastructure that can handle high-speed data streams in areas like healthcare, manufacturing, and smart cities.

4. Sustainability and Green Cloud

Environmental concerns are pushing cloud providers to adopt greener practices, including energy-efficient data centers and renewable energy sources. As companies prioritize sustainability, cloud services are evolving with low-carbon, eco-friendly solutions. "Green cloud" initiatives help organizations reduce their environmental footprint, supporting both compliance with environmental regulations and brand reputation as responsible corporate citizens.

5. Quantum Computing in the Cloud

While still in its early stages, cloud-based quantum computing is poised to unlock capabilities that traditional computing can't achieve. Industries such as pharmaceuticals, finance, and logistics are exploring quantum's potential for solving complex problems, from drug discovery to optimizing supply chains. By accessing quantum resources through cloud platforms, businesses can experiment with this next-generation technology without prohibitive costs or specialized infrastructure.

6. Enhanced Security Protocols

With the increasing amount of sensitive data on cloud platforms, security remains a critical concern. Providers are investing in advanced security measures, such as encryption, zero-trust architecture, and real-time threat detection, to protect user data. Enhanced security protocols give businesses more confidence in cloud adoption, allowing them to leverage the benefits of the cloud without compromising data integrity or privacy.

7. Industry-Specific Cloud Solutions

The demand for industry-specific cloud solutions is growing, with customized platforms for healthcare, finance, retail, and more. Tailored solutions enable organizations to meet industry regulations, address unique challenges, and optimize operations with specialized tools. From telemedicine platforms to retail analytics, industry-specific clouds empower businesses to streamline processes and better serve their customers.

Article Source:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2024/11/04/the-7-revolutionary-cloud-computing-trends-that-will-define-business-success-in-2025/>

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NEWS

WORLD

World's leaders meet today to discuss global warming and terrorism issues. Among other things will also discuss new measures on global security. Last time this meeting was very productive and has brought major changes on Earth. We will visit several places of strategic interest and will discuss possible collaborations nationally.

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BUSINESS NEWS

ECONOMY • INVESTMENTS • CORPORATION • STOCK EXCHANGE

Economic Growth

The economic situation is growing after the most recent changes are tax system. Last time this meeting was very productive and has brought major changes on Earth. We will visit several places of strategic interest and will discuss possible collaborations nationally.

Will also discuss new measures on global security. Last time this meeting was very productive and has brought major changes on Earth. We will visit several places of strategic interest and will discuss possible collaborations nationally.

NOVEMBER GLOBAL NEWS HIGHLIGHTS



HIGHLIGHTS

Meta's Messaging Strategy Begins to Deliver Positive Returns

Meta's big push on messaging platforms is showing promising results, with new business features driving growth and user engagement.

Key highlights:

- WhatsApp and Messenger are becoming revenue drivers, thanks to enhanced customer-business interaction tools.
- Business messaging is attracting advertisers and expanding Meta's monetization avenues.
- With increased usage, Meta is solidifying messaging as a growth pillar within its app ecosystem.

Article Source : <https://www.businessinsider.com/meta-big-bet-messaging-finally-starting-to-pay-off-2024-11>

OpenAI Acquires Chat.com Domain

OpenAI has secured the Chat.com domain, adding a strategic digital asset to its portfolio.

Key details:

- The acquisition of Chat.com could support OpenAI's efforts to expand its AI-driven chat services.
- The domain aligns well with OpenAI's ChatGPT brand, potentially enhancing accessibility and branding.
- OpenAI's move signals continued investment in simplifying access to AI communication tools for users.

Article source: <https://www.businessinsider.com/openai-acquires-chat-com-url-website-domain-2024-11>

DNA Testing Firm 23andMe to Lay Off 40% of Workforce Amid Struggles

Genetic testing company 23andMe, known for its popular DNA-testing kits, has announced plans to lay off 40% of its employees, equating to approximately 200 job cuts, as it works to stabilize its finances.

Key Points:

- Job Cuts for Survival: Facing financial difficulties, 23andMe is reducing its workforce by 40% in an effort to cut costs and streamline operations.
- Shift in Strategy: Alongside layoffs, the company will halt its development of new therapies, focusing instead on its core business to manage resources effectively.
- Challenges in Genetic Testing Industry: The layoffs highlight broader challenges in the genetic testing industry, where companies are navigating fluctuating demand and heightened competition.

Article source: <https://www.businessinsider.com/china-economy-local-government-debt-rescue-trump-us-presidential-election-2024-11>



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