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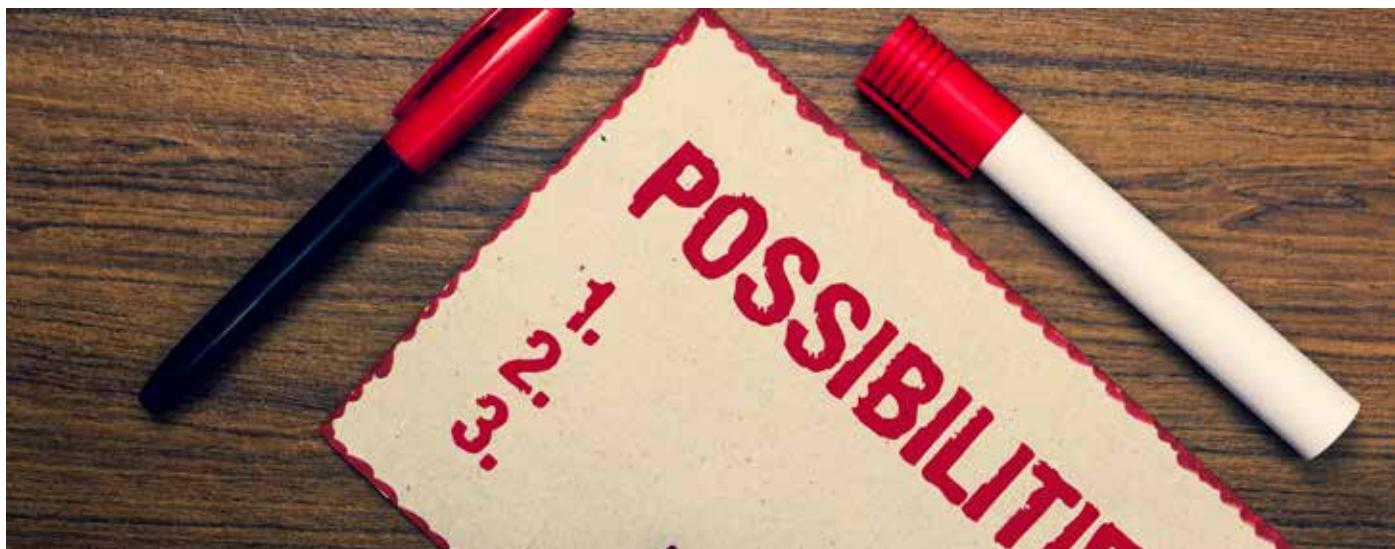
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PITCH COMPETITIONS: BENEFITS BEYOND CASH

BY CATHERINE RICE

Pitch competitions tend to offer generous cash and prize incentives to participants – but the number of these incentives also tend to be limited. While you're not guaranteed to walk away with one of the top prizes – cash or otherwise – there are many intrinsic benefits to participating in a pitch competition, and everyone will get a slice. Consider these benefits next time the opportunity to pitch your business comes your way:

PUT YOUR BUSINESS IN THE LIMELIGHT

All businesses need exposure to gain traction. Pitching your business at a pitch competition can expose you and your business to a room full of potential customers, entrepreneurs in your business community, media and investors. It's also very likely the competition host will share details of each pitch on its social media channels; be sure to engage.

MAKE NEW CONNECTIONS

Making new connections and continuously expanding your professional network can lead to extraordinary opportunities for you and your business down the line. The room will be full of like-minded, ambitious professionals with a variety of expertise and experience; use this opportunity to interact with them to your full advantage. Ask lots of questions and listen carefully and openly to the answers.

PRACTICE YOUR PITCH

In most cases, the more you do something, the better you get at it. Pitching your business applies here. With insightful feedback from judges, and sometimes from the audience, you can make favourable

adjustments to your pitch not only for future competitions, but also for real life opportunities to sell your business idea to investors and customers. With each constructive change, you become one pitch closer to delivering your perfect pitch.

CONNECT WITH BUSINESS ADVISORS

Before some pitch competitions – once you've been accepted as a participant – you will be required to meet with experienced business advisors. This requirement places you in close contact with knowledgeable and experienced business advisors that can both help you deliver your pitch for optimal results, and potentially help you refine your business idea for greater success.

It's not surprising many entrepreneurs will enter pitch competitions just for the cash prizes – but don't lose sight of other valuable incentives. Merely participating in a pitch competition can yield all the benefits listed above and more. Next time you enter a pitch competition, keep this list close by and prepare to take full advantage of the experience. **BL**

Catherine Rice is the outreach & communications coordinator at Innovate Niagara, a not-for-profit private corporation that connects innovators to the people and programs required to bring their innovations to market through a suite of in-house programs, resource partners, and network of incubation facilities. Learn more about Innovate Niagara and become a client at www.innovateniagara.com. Twitter and Instagram @innovateniagara

LEGALIZATION OF CANNABIS AND THE WORKPLACE – A GAME CHANGER?

BY LEANNE STANDRYK

The Federal Cannabis Act and the Ontario Cannabis Act, 2017 (the “Ontario Act”) changed the legal landscape of the use and possession of recreational cannabis on October 17, 2018. Effective October 17, 2018, the Federal Cannabis Act permitted individuals 18 years of age or older to possess up to 30 grams of cannabis. Ontario’s government passed legislation to increase the minimum age and individuals must be 19 years of age and older to buy, use, possess and grow recreational cannabis. In addition to determining age limits, provinces have also been given the authority to determine where individuals are permitted to smoke and vape cannabis.

The Ontario Liberal government proposed restrictions on the use of cannabis in public spaces. On September 27, 2018, the Progressive Conservative government announced Bill 36 (the “Bill”) to relax the restrictions on the use of cannabis in public places. As of October 17, 2018, Ontario residents are able to smoke and vape cannabis wherever the smoking of tobacco is permitted (with certain exceptions). While the legalization of cannabis and the relaxed restriction on public use has received varied responses, one thing is for sure. Ontario employers are concerned about how legalization and the anticipated trend of increased use will affect the workplace. The foremost concern expressed to our labour and employment lawyers relates to workplace safety, decreased productivity and performance, attendance and testing for impairment. So how will legalization impact the workplace?

Let us be perfectly clear. After October 17, 2018, there is no absolute legal right to use cannabis at work, even with a prescription or medical authorization. The Ontario Act will still prohibit the consumption of cannabis in a workplace as defined by the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Employers have the right and obligation to ensure a safe workplace and are also entitled to expect that employees will be productive while at work. At the same time, employers are required to respect and comply with existing laws including the Human Rights Code regarding the accommodation of disabilities.

The law currently requires and will continue to require employees to report to work fit to perform their duties. The law will continue to require employees attend work and perform their duties competently.

Where an employee reports to work impaired, due to the effects of alcohol, medication and/or cannabis (medical or recreational), the employee most likely has violated their

employment contract. Depending on the circumstances, an employer may be entitled to perform drug testing and/or impose discipline including termination.

The legalization of cannabis on October 17, 2018 was not a gamechanger. The fact remains that employers will continue to treat cannabis impairment in the workplace in the same manner they have historically dealt with concerns of impairment due to alcohol and/or medications. The legalization of cannabis is not a license for use and impairment in the workplace.

The legal landscape of drug and alcohol testing also continues to apply. Employers are currently entitled to conduct reasonable cause, post incident, and in some cases post treatment return to the workplace drug and alcohol testing. Random drug testing has not been fully endorsed in Canada, save for those workplaces considered inherently dangerous and even then, only where an employer can satisfy certain criteria. Random drug testing may also be imposed in certain industries, for example in transportation where employees conduct cross-border runs and are subject for example to the New York State, Department of Transportation regulations.

Employers are permitted and required to take measures to ensure a safe workplace. With the exception of medical marijuana, it will be perfectly acceptable for an employer to outright prohibit the use of recreational marijuana, illicit drugs and alcohol in the workplace subject to consideration of human rights laws.

While we compare the management of the legalization of cannabis in the workplace to the management of alcohol, the detection of cannabis impairment is likely more complex and uniquely difficult to detect and/or measure consistently.

Employers are encouraged to review the status of their current workplace rules, policies and employment contracts. Create a policy that incorporates cannabis use and addresses the unique treatment of medical marijuana and proper use of prescription drugs.

Policies should include reference to cannabis, alcohol, medical marijuana, medications and/or other intoxicants that may cause impairment and affect your workplace. Consider a protocol for disclosure of dependency/addiction issues and non-disciplinary protocols where it is suspected that an employee is struggling with dependency issues. Identify employee assistance plans available to accommodate employee needs through a rehabilitation/treatment program.

Consider questions regarding possession of cannabis at the workplace even if it is inaccessible and out of sight. Some employers may prohibit possession of cannabis at work where the workplace is one that is safety sensitive. Others will prohibit possession on the basis that possession makes access and use easier.

Consider that legalization will likely normalize cannabis in society. Will your policy permit the gift giving of cannabis similar to the gift of wine or alcohol? Will it prohibit the gifting of cannabis paraphernalia?

Several workplace policies may have an exemption to possession and consumption of alcohol during social events. Will your policy permit consumption of cannabis during social events? Consider the balance of obligations under health and safety and human rights laws. Consider any impact that it may have on others in the workplace with scent sensitivities or allergies to cannabis that must be accommodated under our human rights legislation.

Several employers may permit a dress down day or “casual Fridays.” Are employees currently permitted to wear clothing containing alcohol logos at work or outside work when representing the company? Will the same apply to cannabis?

Consider on-call policies in the context of remaining fit for work.

Ensure that your testing policy, if any, is clear as to process and procedure. Most importantly, given concerns over existing testing technology, keep track of the latest updates in testing technology and case law around drug and alcohol testing in Canada.

Of course, workplace education and training on these issues is key. Ensure that all employees, particularly managers, are aware of identifying the signs of impairment and that all employees understand your policy and their joint responsibility in facilitating workplace safety.

The use of drugs and alcohol and the impact on today’s workplace has been and will continue to be a complex issue. Understanding the legal implications of legalization on your workplace is imperative. **BL**

Leanne Standryk is a senior partner at Lancaster Brooks & Welch LLP and works within the Labour & Employment department. If you require her assistance on a labour or employment issue, she may be contacted at 905.641.1551.

The foregoing information is provided to you for information purposes only. We caution you to obtain legal advice specific to your situation in all circumstances.

LEANNE STANDRYK is a senior partner within the Lancaster Brooks & Welch LLP Labour & Employment Department.

When you need support in a labour or employment law matter, it is good to have someone who can navigate the law and represent your interests.

Call Leanne at 905-641-1551



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ARE YOU BUILDING A CULTURE OF SECURITY?

BY TAYLOR HAYWARD

I am a huge proponent of proper security measures for the SMB and have been writing about it in one way, shape or form all year. As users of technology in the 21st century, we must arm ourselves against those that would do us harm. Arming ourselves means taking responsibility for our digital lives. It means using our collective intelligence as a weapon to defeat those that would take our freedom by stealing the integrity of our information and the lifeblood of our businesses.

Building a culture of security is a top-down process that includes everyone—from your board of directors to your shipping department. It requires security conversations, training, knowledge, teamwork, and understanding. It is a “stop and think instinctively” challenge. Building a culture of security in your business will pay untold dividends for the future.

Here are a few areas that you can focus on as you build your culture of security:

- Security awareness training for your staff
- Anti-virus for your systems and devices
- Local and cloud backup, encrypted or password protected
- Security updates and proper maintenance
- Use a business class firewall, not a router!

Engage everyone in your business to be a part of this movement towards better security. Teach them this mantra. “If you’re connected, you must be protected!” Remember it – it could save your business. **BL**

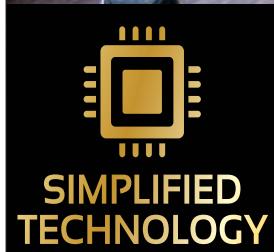
Taylor Hayward is the owner of STS, a technology company dedicated to simplifying I.T. for small and medium businesses in the Niagara Region. Taylor can be reached at 905.327.6163 or go to www.simplifiedtech.ca.

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The Gift of Knowing Why

BY GERRY VISCA

As I approach my 50th year on this Earth, I've arrived at a deeper realization that we spend a third of it unconsciously living it. Think about it.

•We build. •We chase.

•We consume. •We climb.

We live unconsciously as doing machines instead of helping one another remember that we are human beings. Each one of us was born with a deeper purpose, a light that was meant to scorch the skies. How do we begin to unwrap this gift? By asking and living the question: Why am I here?

In the end, what our soul truly craves is peace and an inner knowing of why we are here.

Throughout my journey of inspiring on million "whys" in this precious world, I have arrived at a deeper understanding that the greatest gift we can present a fellow human being is the acceptance of our soul's true purpose. When we collectively choose to unite and define a new ROI for the world, one where we reach out and inspire one another, we will elevate humanity's deeper reason for being.

As an 18-time transformational author and inspirational speaker, the energy from my audiences reveal that we have forgotten what it means to simply be. When you arrive at the realization that your deeper why is an inspired way of being you will choose to invest your precious time in being what you seek. A great way to ignite this deeper

awareness is to simply decide what you want others to experience. When this profound insight ignited my soul, I chose to become inspirational. This is what I truly wanted for others; to be in-spirit with their life purpose. With every inspired action the way revealed itself with greater clarity and purpose. Your why ignites the way.

Somewhere along mankind's quest to exert its dominion upon the world, we have forsaken our gift of being human. One only needs to look up from their buzzing devices to witness the so-called connection age we have created is disconnecting us all from one another and from the truth of who we really are and what we are meant to be.

Why does this matter? From the many why time sessions I experience with a fellow human being – a one-on-one conversation with their soul – people share with me that they are overwhelmed and seeking a greater sense of inner peace.

Someone dear to me recently passed away. They had spent their whole life living as a doing machine and in the last few words his soul whispered to me: "Gerry, what did it all mean? Did my life matter?" I closed my eyes and pressed a hand to his heart and whispered in return the many ways his light force had made an impact on me.

I believe we have all been given the gift of life to realize our soul's true purpose. In my new transformational novel: Why Am I Here? I define time as the gift of life in the present moment. Looking up and asking yourself: "Why am I here?" is the first step; the invitation to the party and the bigger picture of your one precious life. The invitation invites a deeper awareness into your

very being that we are so much more than physical bodies roaming the earth. Along your wondrous journey, you may even arrive at a deeper realization that all of us are here to be more than just a tribe of shopping mall builders. Somehow, I would like to think that the last thought just before I leave this Earth won't be if I paid the bills on time!

It is time we inspire one another to unwrap our hidden gifts; the passion and purpose that we all knew at a young age. That's what I love most about children, they are our greatest teachers. They are like a fresh snowfall, pure and unstained by the imprint of society telling them to do more. There exists a purity and inner knowing of why their soul is truly here.

It's time for humanity to return to this inner knowing and the realization of our true purpose. Contrary to what you have been conditioned to believe, each one of us is born with a deeper why that I define as the world helped by you. Our education system and corporate enterprise has done very little to nurture this gift so it's up to all of us to create a world of meaning and purpose. A world that is free to explore what it means to know why! This is the gift we need to unwrap and it starts now with you in the present moment asking and living the only question that truly matters in the end.

Why am I here? **BL**

Gerry Visca is the #Why Guy, and on a mission to inspire one million whys. He is a registered inspirational speaker with one of the top speaking bureaus; National Speakers Bureau, an author of 18 books, including the two new transformational novels: Remembering Why and Why Am I Here?

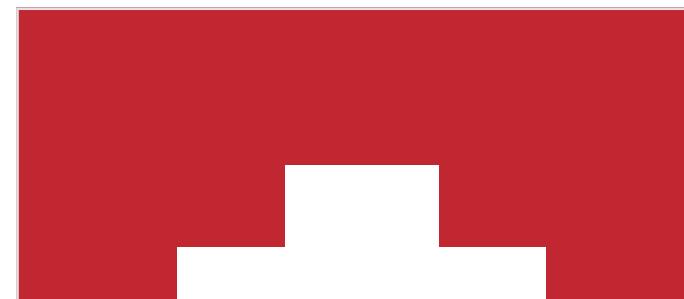


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LEAVING A LEGACY FOR HEALTH CARE



Carole & Roy Timm Photography



PROVIDED BY HAMILTON HEALTH SCIENCES FOUNDATION

Do you have an updated will? November is "Make a Will Month" in Ontario, when we are reminded about the importance of wills for all adults, not only seniors. Nobody likes to contemplate the end of one's life. But planning for the future is essential and it gives peace of mind for both you and your loved ones. Regardless of your age and the value of your assets, a will is one of those essential documents that every adult should have.

One of the many benefits of having a will is the ability to outline how you would like your assets dispersed after death, rather than having the government manage this process for you. It is an opportunity to reflect on gifts

you will leave to family, as well as gifts you will leave to charitable organizations that are important to you.

People leave legacy gifts in their will for a number of reasons. Some are motivated by the desire to support the well-being of future generations. Others are inspired by a personal experience. For Charles "Bill" Boxall of Hamilton, leaving a legacy gift simply seemed like "the right thing to do."

Bill's story began in 1996 when he met Shirley Mae Turner at a dance. They were both 63 years old and it was love at first sight. That was the start of a relationship that spanned nearly two decades.

In 1997, abdominal pain led to the discovery of two tumours in Shirley's stomach. The tumours were surgically removed at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre and she underwent intensive chemotherapy, but the cancer had already spread to her colon.

"Shirley passed away in 2014 having lived a very full life," says Bill. "We were able to travel the world together for 18 years."

Wanting to say "thank you," Bill updated his will and he has left a gift to The Foundation.

"This is my way of leaving a legacy of health care excellence and honouring Shirley," he says.

We all wonder how we will be remembered. We want to feel like we've contributed something to the world. Leaving a legacy gift is a way to ensure that your memory lives on into the future. What many people do not realize is that you can provide for your family in your will while also leaving a gift that can make a difference in the lives that follow.

When you make a legacy gift to Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation, you are making a

statement about your commitment to the future of health care throughout southcentral Ontario, from Niagara Falls and Brantford to Kitchener-Waterloo and Burlington.

Through a legacy gift to Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation, which is the charitable entity for Hamilton Health Sciences and its family of hospitals, you help to ensure ongoing excellence in health care.

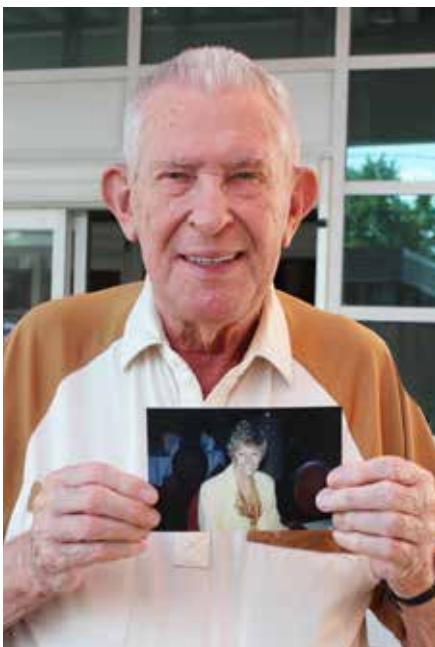
Many misconceptions exist that prevent people from leaving a legacy gift. For example, it is commonly believed that legacy giving is something for seniors only. In reality, adults of all ages can leave legacy gifts to ensure that their favourite charities are supported into the future. Another misconception is that legacy giving is a complex process. A meeting with a trusted lawyer or financial advisor will help you explore your options and make the process easy.

WAYS TO LEAVE A LEGACY GIFT INCLUDE:

- will/bequest
- charitable gift annuity
- life insurance
- RRSPs and RRIFs
- gift of securities

"It feels wonderful knowing that my gift will purchase important medical equipment into the future," says Bill. "It will help to ensure that patients continue receiving outstanding care, just like Shirley did." **BL**

Leave your own legacy today and make a real difference in the future of health care for generations to come. Visit www.hamiltonhealth.ca/legacy or call 905.522.3863.



Bill Boxall with a photo of wife Shirley.

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES:

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE NETWORK HITS THE FAN

BY RICH DAVIDSON

WHEN IT COMES TO network reliability, what's your pain point? It is often joked that a disaster recovery plan isn't required until an organization experiences a real disaster situation. The looming threat of a big network outage, however dire, isn't always enough to get the decision makers thinking about what an effective disaster recovery plan would look like.

There are proactive and reactive disaster recovery strategies. With a proactive plan, you've eliminated single points of failure in your network and you've set up some dynamic (automatic) failover mechanisms for critical applications like email and back-ups. With a reactive plan, you're aware of single contingencies in your network and you've documented a policy to deal with them in the event of a failure.

A proactive plan is better than a reactive plan, but a reactive plan is better than no plan at all. Cost is obviously a big factor and will determine which path you take. What is up-

time worth to you and your company? There is no one-size-fits-all solution for a bad day at the office, but there are cost-effective ways to mitigate risks.

The most common technical support issue we deal with is a "network down" call from a panicked customer in the middle of the night. Usually there's been a power issue on-site, but the customer isn't there to witness it. The result is the same, though – the network is down. The best way to address this is to purchase a good Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS). It's basically a big battery that will be charged in advance and can provide a set amount of up-time in the event of a power hit.

Internet redundancy should be a top consideration for any business looking to prevent a network-wide outage. There are different flavours of internet redundancy, depending on your budget and level of expertise, and failover can be automatic or manual. You may choose to purchase a redundant solution from your ISP, or you may want to bring in a second provider to mitigate risk in their network. This is called "Multi-Homing."

Fibre is your most reliable choice and should ideally act as your primary internet feed. DSL, cable, and wireless internet services are low cost by comparison and can provide survivability in the event of losing your primary connection. If internet connectivity is critical to your business like it is for many companies, you can contemplate bringing in redundant fibre internet connections for additional reliability and performance.

If you're looking to create a solid disaster recovery plan, and need assistance, don't hesitate to reach out to your internet service provider. Niagara Regional Broadband Network offers a complete suite of fully managed routers and firewalls that can help automate survivability and reduce risk to your network. Contact me today for more details. **BL**

Rich Davidson is network architect at Niagara Regional Broadband Network on 5580 Swayze Dr. Niagara Falls. To contact Rich, please call 289.668.8864, email rich.davidson@nrbn.ca or go to nrbn.ca.



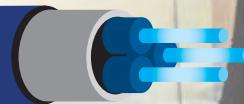
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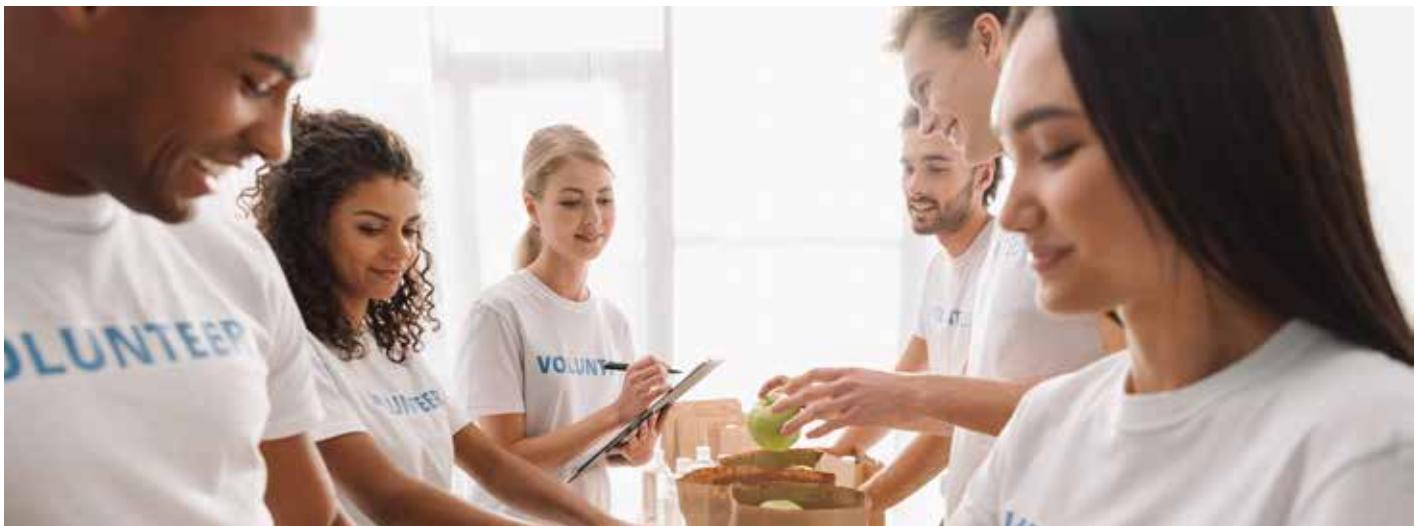
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CUSTOMERS ARE MORE LOYAL TO COMPANIES WHO DO GOOD

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Why are customers more interested in businesses who do good? Charitable work brings in loyal customers. Creating a loyal customer base is key to a successful business, which can be assisted by using cause related marketing. In fact, 84% of Canadians agree that they would "switch brands to the one affiliated with a good cause if the price and quality were similar." This is especially true for the younger consumer who is looking to do more with their cash.

Who is interested in charitable work? Donations are appealing to consumers who are interested in helping local charities but aren't sure where to get started. By collaborating with the Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara, your customers can be assured that they are helping children and families in their community.

Associate your brand with us today! There are brands that are known for being associated with charity, and your business can be one of them. By donating and getting involved with the Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara, your company can grow its customer base. **BL**

Take the opportunity to expand your customer base as well as contribute to a local charity. The Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara is interested in working with your business. For more information, please call Executive Director Janet Handy at 905.937.5435, email jhandy@kristenfrenchcacn.org or go www.kristenfrenchcacn.org.



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OPEN YOUR MEASUREMENT TOOLBOX

BY DENNIS O'NEILL

If you're not measuring it, you're not managing it.

THE CHALLENGE

Most people find a huge challenge in trying to find what to measure. Next, we don't know how to measure. We seldom exercise our minds in devising measurement tools. We have impoverished models.

LOOK TO YOUR AUTOMOBILE

What's in your car? What do you measure there? Speed. Mileage driven. Gas gauge. Battery charge. Clock. Engine temperature. A whole range of essentials.

NOW APPLY THAT SCOPE TO YOUR BUSINESS

Measurement tools come in many shapes and sizes. Try expanding your thought horizons and find meaningful scales to assess your success.

SUMMARY

Why must you measure? What should you measure? How will you measure? Is there a better way you could measure it? When should you measure?

ACTION

Now start measuring! **BL**

Dennis O'Neill, The Business Growth Coach is located in Niagara-on-the-Lake. For more information on how to grow your business, please call 905.641.8777, email dennis@dennisoneillcoach.com or visit www.dennisoneillcoach.com.

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THE THREE TENSIONS EVERY NEW MANAGER MUST MANAGE

PART
TWO

BY TIM ARNOLD

In the first installment of this three-part series, we identified the three tensions that will make or break the career of a new manager, and looked specifically at the first tension, Control vs. Empowerment. Now we'll go deeper into the other two tensions:

Being a Boss vs. Being a Friend

Once a manager is given a team to lead, they need to assume the responsibilities of being a boss. This can mean holding people accountable, having uncomfortable conversations, and ensuring there's consistency and fairness throughout the team. At the same time, the best bosses are also seen as a friend to those they lead. This doesn't mean they have to go for drinks after work and be "friends" on social media. But it does mean they truly know and care for each team member. They believe in each person and everyone on their teams knows this is the case. Unfortunately, being a boss and a friend can be incredibly challenging and result in a lot of tension.

Over-focusing on being a boss to the neglect of being a friend results in team members not feeling cared for and seen simply as a tool being used to get things done. This often leads to high turnover, an unpleasant team culture, and people only living up to the minimum expectations of their job description.

Over-focusing on being a friend to the neglect of being a boss is just as dangerous. Crucial but uncomfortable conversations around performance are often avoided in order to preserve the friendship. Decision making is often skewed because the leader is thinking too much about "How will this impact my team relationships?" instead of "What's the best option for the organization?"

Focusing on My Part of the Organization vs. Focusing on the Whole Organization

One of the biggest challenges a new manager will face is they're now responsible for their part of the organization. This means they need to be incredibly focused on the productivity of their division and the culture of their team. At the same time, they need to ensure their part is connected to, and working in alignment with, the whole

organization (i.e. all the other parts). This means they need to be communicating and collaborating with other teams, departments, and divisions. It also means they need to make decisions that don't only benefit themselves, their bottom-line, and their team members, but benefit everyone in the organization. Similar to the tensions above, focusing on their part while at the same time focusing on the whole is often easier said than done.

When managers over-focus on their part of the organization to the neglect of the whole, they start to create divisions within the company. Regardless of how well their part of the organization is doing, they're not aligned with what's going on in the rest of the company. When this happens, teams become divided from other teams, and the company develops what's often referred to as a silo mentality, where the benefits of collaboration, communication and innovation are stifled.

When managers over-focus on the whole organization to the detriment of their part, their team often feels neglected and believes their unique needs are not being understood and fought for. This can also lead to unnecessary bureaucracy and red-tape because managers require too many meetings, consultations and approvals before they give their team the freedom they need to get things done in an effective way.

Stay tuned for the final installment of this three-part series, where we provide the three steps every new manager can take to ensure these tensions are working for them, and not against them. **BL**

Tim Arnold is the president of Leaders for Leaders. Tim provides his clients with a real-world perspective through his experience launching successful for-profit and not-for-profit businesses, overseeing community outreach and healthcare programs, and managing international development partnerships in four continents. For more information, call Tim at 289.723.2546, email info@leadersforleaders.ca or go to www.leadersforleaders.ca.

See how well your team is tapping into the power of healthy tension by taking this 10-question quiz at www.leadersforleaders.ca/quiz.

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COMPASSION LIVES HERE

Hospice Niagara celebrates 25 years of providing Niagara residents with compassionate care and comfort.

BY SCOTT LESLIE

The year was 1993. And three nurses – Colleen Bredin, Audrey Rows and Pat Hundertmark – had a dream.

"Palliative care was in its infancy and there was considerable lack of understanding within the community," says Carol Nagy, the executive director of Hospice Niagara. "Colleen, Audrey and Pat came together to improve the quality of life for people dealing with life-limiting illnesses, death, dying, grief and loss."

It was through the collaboration of these nurses that the dream of Hospice Niagara became a reality.

Originally, the organization operated out of a small building on King Street in St. Catharines with additional services offered at the Grantham United Church. As awareness and participation in programs and services increased, the need to establish additional space to accommodate growing programs including a hospice residence became apparent.

In 2007, Hospice Niagara opened The Stabler Centre in St. Catharines, named in honour of the late Eric and Gwen Stabler – two former Hospice Niagara clients who left a substantial gift in their estate.

According to Carol, a lot has changed since Hospice Niagara was incorporated as a registered charity back in 1993.

"Back then, people weren't talking much about hospice palliative care," she says. "We have made great strides in normalizing conversations to help bring palliative care to the forefront, but there is still more work to be done. We want to let people know we're here to help."

To increase awareness, Hospice Niagara has implemented a speakers' bureau, whereby staff and volunteers deliver presentations throughout the community. To complement this, Hospice banners and other informational materials are displayed at various public libraries and city halls across Niagara.

Building on the strong foundation that



Children's bereavement program during the holidays.

was created 25 years ago, Hospice Niagara continues to evolve to best meet the needs of Niagara residents living with a life-limiting illness, and their families, charging no fee for its services.

Serving people with a wide range of terminal illnesses, Hospice Niagara currently runs many of its programs at The Stabler Centre. The 14,000 square foot complex houses a 10-bed hospice residence where clients receive 24-hour palliative care in a comfortable home-like setting. In 2017 alone, Hospice Niagara provided end-of-life care for 237 people in this residence.

Hospice Niagara offers several other care services including a weekly Day Hospice where clients with life-limiting illnesses can relax, enjoy a meal together, and take part in several activities and complementary therapies. It also provides family caregivers a day of respite.

"It's important for caregivers to have time for themselves," Carol says. "We recognize caregivers as needing a special type of support, and look forward to expanding our services for caregivers over this next year."

Currently, Day Hospice runs in St. Catharines and Welland. The Welland program is available to both French and English-speaking clients.



Elected board of directors.



Hospice volunteer visiting a client.



Sharing Heartfelt moments.



Tender moment of grandfather and grandson.

Following the death of a loved one, Hospice Niagara also supports loved ones through its grief and bereavement programs for children, youth and adults.

WORKING TOGETHER

With a diverse and aging population in Niagara, partnerships enable Hospice Niagara to meet the needs of the community. They work in partnership with other health care services in the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). Over the past year for instance, Hospice Niagara has set up a caregiver network with the Alzheimer Society of Niagara Region and Centre de santé communautaire to identify and implement supportive resources for caregivers. Hospice Niagara also works closely with its partners to provide palliative pain and symptom management consultation and interdisciplinary palliative care education to local health care professionals.

"Many people prefer to die in their home," Carol explains. "Eighty-percent of people don't want to die in hospital. Unfortunately, about 70% of people in Niagara end up doing just that."

Hospice Niagara partners with home health care providers and physicians to provide in home palliative care. This team works to support clients to stay at home as long as possible and if they wish to die at home. In this way, more people are supported every year in their own home, in their own community.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

PARTRIDGE IGGULDEN
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"Thank you to the entire team at Hospice Niagara for being so kind and compassionate to families during a very difficult time in their lives."

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EVERY DAY COUNTS

Only 60% of Hospice Niagara's operating expenses are funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. Consequently, Hospice Niagara relies heavily on community donations in order to make up the remaining 40%. (In 2018, that difference amounted to \$1.8-million.)

"Our priority is serving clients who are living with chronic and complex illnesses," Carol says. "The demand for services continues to climb, yet we need to be judicious with our budgets in order to direct as many dollars as possible into programs and services."

In recent years, Hospice Niagara has launched several initiatives in order to decrease the gap between government-funded dollars and meeting its operating budget. This has included launching several annual fundraisers such "TASTE," "Hike for Hospice Niagara," and the "Swing Hard to Live Strong Golf Tournament." Its signature fundrais

ing event is the "5 Car Draw" – a raffle with chances to win five new vehicles and cash prizes – which just reached its 10th anniversary.

In addition, during the holiday season, people can honour a loved one by making a donation and hanging a personalized butterfly ornament on a special holiday tree at the Pen Centre or at The Stabler Centre.

"It's a symbolic and meaningful gesture that provides comfort to people by honouring someone they love at this special time of year," says Carol.

Many people in the community also organize their own fund-raising activities, everything from bake sales to golf tournaments to motorcycle and bicycle rides and donate the proceeds to Hospice Niagara. Local companies have held dress down days and offer employee matching gifts to support their donations to Hospice Niagara.



Official opening of the Stabler Centre



Some of Hospice Niagara's 350 plus volunteers

THE HEART OF HOSPICE NIAGARA

The big hearts and expert skills of staff and 350+ volunteers dedicate their time and talents to serve those living with a life-limiting illness, and their loved ones throughout Niagara. Volunteers work diligently to enrich people's lives in countless ways. Last year, Hospice Niagara volunteers spent more than 18,000 hours supporting clients at end-of-life and an additional 8,000 hours helping with office, fundraising and grounds maintenance support.

As it celebrates a quarter century of operation, Hospice Niagara is fully committed to serving the hospice palliative care needs of its clients and their loved ones. The organization's volunteers and staff continue to build on the strong foundation that Colleen, Audrey and Pat built which is anchored in dignity, integrity, respect and acceptance to bring exceptional and compassionate care to everyone, everywhere every time. **BL**



For more information on its programs and services or to find out how you can get involved or support its mission, please call Hospice Niagara at 905.984.8766, email info@hospiceniagara.ca, visit hospiceniagara.ca or go to its YouTube channel. Stay connected by subscribing to Hospice Niagara's quarterly eNewsletter at news@hospiceniagara.ca. Follow Hospice Niagara on Facebook and Twitter.



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Have a quick review of your travel insurance policy before you go, and familiarize yourself with your policy coverages and take note of any exclusions, or limitations. Dial the Emergency Assistance phone number on your wallet card for pre-trip assistance. Also, be sure to gather and update, if necessary, any other key travel documents you need to take with you – like your government issued ID, boarding passes, itinerary, etc.

TIP 2: DOWNLOAD THE TRIPWISE TRAVEL APP – SMART AND HANDY IN AN EMERGENCY

The TripWise App is available to download from the Apple or Google play store to your smartphone for free! Be sure to add your Emergency Assistance toll-free and collect phone numbers, directly into the App. It could save you precious time in an emergency when you don't have to search for a number.

The Trip Wise App has several useful features such as Hospital Search (with GPS locator capability to find an accredited, local hospital at your travel destination), Rx and First-aid Terms with a medical dictionary containing the internationally recognized names of common prescription medications, as well as the ability to translate popular first-aid terms in over 15 languages, and finally, Country Information so you can quickly access the local emergency services numbers (ex. 911), for over 195 international destinations.

TIP 3: ENSURE YOUR VACCINATIONS ARE UP-TO-DATE

Certain travel destinations require you to have up-to-date vaccinations or special ones specific to their area. Visit your doctor or travel clinic to ask about any vaccinations you might need. Note that some must be administered weeks before you travel, sometimes in multiple doses, so aim to have this discussion as far in advance as possible to find out what might apply to your specific situation.

TIP 4: SHARE YOUR ITINERARY WITH FAMILY

Provide your family (those travelling with you and others who aren't) with the details of your trip so they know exactly where you'll be and how to reach you during your travels. Consider providing them with a photocopy of your passport as well (take a photo and email yourself a copy too, just in case), and register with the Canadians Abroad service online or in person at your destination so they can get in touch with you in an emergency.

TIP 5: COMPLETE YOUR TRAVEL CHECKLIST

For some, a travel checklist can be a handy tool for staying on track when planning a trip. For others, it can simply serve as a guideline, offering useful reminders of what you need to do to prepare. Visit the Canadian government's website www.travel.gc.ca to review the useful tips available to help you stay on track for a safe trip. **BL**





Get Your Stretch On!

BY VANESSA GROENEVELD

WHETHER YOU WORK 40 hours, 20 hours or 70 hours a week, work takes a toll on our bodies and our minds. Some of us sit for hours staring at a screen and then there are those of us that are on our feet for lengthy hours. There is the constant hum of what, when, where and how fast do you need it/need to do it? Let's face it – a majority of our daily lives are spent working. Our muscles ache, our bottoms go numb from sitting at that desk, and most of us have stress that's through the roof.

In 2017, Global News published an article stating that a staggering 500,000 Canadians miss work each week due to stress and its health-related issues. But what if there was a remedy to this? What if the workplace cared about your physical and mental wellness? What if your employer gave you the tools to make every day better, healthier?

A new trend in the corporate world is yoga and meditation in the workplace. Corporations are finding that not only do these practices increase staff morale, they also improve staff retention. With the use of yoga and meditation, employees are claiming a handful of happy benefits that include lower stress levels, better sleeping patterns, and an ability to quickly and easily make mindful decisions in the workplace. Simply put, they are more productive on the job and getting along better with their co-workers.

Forward-thinking and innovative companies such as Apple, Forbes and Nike have been investing in mindful programs for some time now and find the value unrivaled when compared to any other staff retention programs they have offered in the past. Google offers yoga and emotional intelligence courses to all of their employees. General Mills

has a mediation room in every building on its corporate campus.

The best part about yoga and meditation is that it can be done anywhere, anytime! If you are at a desk, stand up, take a big breath while reaching your hands up to the ceiling, and exhale your hands down to the ground and repeat. Are your legs tight? Step your feet about three feet apart and forward fold. Not bendy? Simply hold onto a stable object (desk, counter, car) and fold.

Movement and stretching is great, but the simplest exercise, and quite honestly the most important habit, is to remember to breathe. We go about our days not realizing that we are constantly holding our breath. Try taking a big belly-filling breath in, hold it for a moment, then release and repeat. Take notice of your breath throughout the day. Are your inhales longer than your exhales or vice versa? Try and even them out by counting a few breaths.

Yoga and meditation in the workplace can benefit employers in the following ways:

- Teach individual stress management
- Increase clarity, alertness, and positive decision making
- Promote positive thinking and staff morale
- Improve the posture, flexibility, mental/physical strength and overall health of their staff
- Help employees find their breath (breath is key to lowering the negative effects of stress)

As you can see, the benefits of yoga and meditation are about as long as Chris Kringle's naughty and nice list! So go ahead, get your stretch on and get the stress out! **BL**

Vanessa Groeneveld is creative director at Bodhi Yoga Wellness. For more information, call 289.696.6157 or go to bodhiyogawellness.ca.

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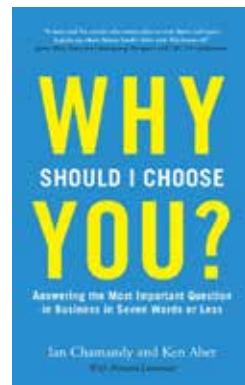
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BOOK REVIEW

Why Should I Choose You?

(In Seven Words Or Less)?

BY IAN CHAMANDY AND KEN ABER

PUBLISHED BY COLLINS CANADA

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Why should I choose you? That's the question every customer asks every single time he buys a car, picks a shampoo or chooses a distributor, a brokerage house, an animal hospital or a hairbrush. Sometimes the question is spoken out loud; other times it's subliminal. But the fact is that every product, service or decision is a choice. And often it's a choice we make within seconds.

Ian Chamandy and Ken Aber understand just how essential that choice is. Their Toronto-based consulting firm, Blueprint, helps businesses define their specific promise - the one thing that sets them apart from every other organization that does more or less the same thing - in seven words or less.

Their blueprinting process has produced extraordinary results for organizations big and small in all sorts of industries in both the for profit and not-for-profit sectors including construction firms, marketing/communications consultancies, boutique investment banks, and hospitals.

Combining practical steps with case examples, Why Should I Choose You (in Seven Words or Less)? will:

- give you confidence you never had before to lead into a bold new future make your employees more innovative and creative.

- reveal revenue streams you never knew existed.

- give your employees a newfound sense of purpose that motivates them to contribute at a higher level.

- help you sell faster and more easily because you will inspire, rather than try to convince, customers to buy. **BL**



HOW TO AVOID A CORPORATE EVENT NIGHTMARE

BY BRETT DANEILSON

It's like the old dream where you're delivering a speech to a packed house - and suddenly realize that you're standing there with your trousers around your ankles. You've planned the perfect company dinner - and the caterer got the date wrong. Your keynote speaker didn't show up because his travel tickets were never confirmed. And the napkins at the tables don't match the tablecloths. Are your guests going to think "Oh, their corporate event planners let them down?" Of course not! When you plan a large scale corporate event, your company's reputation is on the line. Why would you leave that in unskilled hands?

The most successful corporate events are those that are well-planned and flawlessly executed. If your company is hosting a customer appreciation event, a team building day or any other type of corporate event, it pays to hire the best corporate event planner you can find to take care of all the details. But how do you choose the best event planners? Here's a checklist of criteria to help you narrow down your choices to those corporate event organisers that will deliver an event that your customers and employees will enjoy.

1. If you're new to planning corporate events, ask around among your business colleagues for recommendations. If you attend a grand opening or company dinner that impresses you as well-planned and well-organized, make a note of whether an event planner was used, and which one it was. Excellence has a way of being noted, and word of mouth is the best recommendation you can find.

2. When you interview a corporate event planner, pay as much attention to the questions that they ask as to the answers that they give. A professional will ask questions designed to gauge exactly what you want to accomplish with your event so that they can translate your vision into the spectacular event that you have in mind.

3. Ask the right questions to get the information you need to know. How often do they handle events similar to yours? What other corporate events has the firm planned lately? Do they have experience with the type of event that you want to run? How will they approach your goals for this event?

4. Always ask for references. A professional event planner will be happy to provide you with the names of other clients that you can contact. Just as importantly, they can provide a list of vendors with whom they've worked and have relationships. As in any other business, successful event planning is based on who you know as much as it is on what you know. An expert corporate event planner will have worked extensively with vendors and services in your area. They'll know which companies are reliable and which to avoid.

No matter what the event you're planning, it makes sense to turn to a knowledgeable professional for help with the details. A professional corporate event planner can make running your event painless - so that you can relax and enjoy the evening as much as your guests. **BL**

Article courtesy of Ezinearticles.com.



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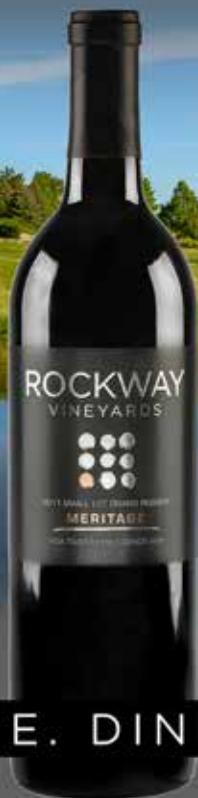
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GOLF. WINE. DINE.

It's Time to Thank Your Loyal Clients and Employees this Holiday Season

BY SANTINO PERRY

Did you know...a number of people were asked to describe how they feel about receiving a corporate holiday gift from a company they do business with in one word? The majority of those polled in ASI's annual survey said "appreciated." Other commonly cited words were "grateful," "thankful," "appreciative" and "happy." You work hard to find new clients and retain them. Why not show how much you appreciate their business with a branded gift?

Just as important as your clients are your loyal team members that make sure your customers are treated with respect and their needs are fulfilled. Show your team some appreciation this holiday season with branded products that they can be proud of wearing or using.

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The Inner Workings of Credit Card Processing

BY RICK SMITH

HOW TRANSACTIONS ARE PROCESSED - When you process a credit card transaction, the information is transmitted through the networks (Visa, MasterCard) to the card issuing banks that send back an authorization code or decline the transaction. Once you receive the "authorized" notice, you go ahead and complete the sale. However, as far as your business is concerned, the transaction has not been completed and you have not received credit for the sale.

When your daily settlement or batch is done, your processor receives notification that the sale has been completed and you are credited. Until the batch is done, the card issuing bank is showing the sale on the account as "pending" and will hold it there for a maximum of three days. After three days, the sale disappears from the account and the credit amount goes back into the available credit of the customer.

If you batch/settle after that time and the customer has used up that credit, you are out of luck and will receive a chargeback. We always recommend that batches are done every day there are sales in the machine and that an "auto batch" option be set up as a failsafe to batch before 11:00 p.m. for next day's deposit. If you have already batched before this time, no harm done. The machine will not batch automatically if it is empty.

PRE-AUTHORIZATION - This is a mystery to most and generally underused. You can pre-authorize a transaction to make sure the credit is good before ordering goods or making a reservation. The process is simple and the amount is held on the credit card for five to 30 days, depending upon a number of factors. If you have a question about this, you should contact your processor. When you are ready to finalize the sale, if you are within the time limit for the pre-authorization, you can do a "forced sale" using the authorization number you received originally with the pre-authorization. It should be noted this will be treated as a "card not present" transaction and extra fees will apply. If you put the card through later with the card being present, you will save some fees.

RECURRING AND TERM PAYMENTS - These are two options that are underused by businesses and can be a real time and money saver. First, recurring payments are set up to be automatically charged to a credit card account at a specific time (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc.) and for a specific amount. In order to qualify as a recurring payment, there must be no end date specified although they can be stopped at any time. Most programs will automatically send a notice to the payee and payor via email if set up. The best part is that the Interchange fees for these payments are actually lower than card present transactions.

Term payments are set up for a specific number of payments, at specific time intervals and for a specific amount. These can also be set up for automatic confirmation to both parties. But unlike recurring payments they are processed as "card not present" transactions at a higher Interchange rate than a card present transaction. It should be noted that in order to use these options you have to have a "virtual terminal" account, and in order to take advantage of the savings a cost plus processing account. **BL**

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DOES YOUR AUDIT PROGRAM MEET REQUIREMENTS?

BY DAVE BROWN

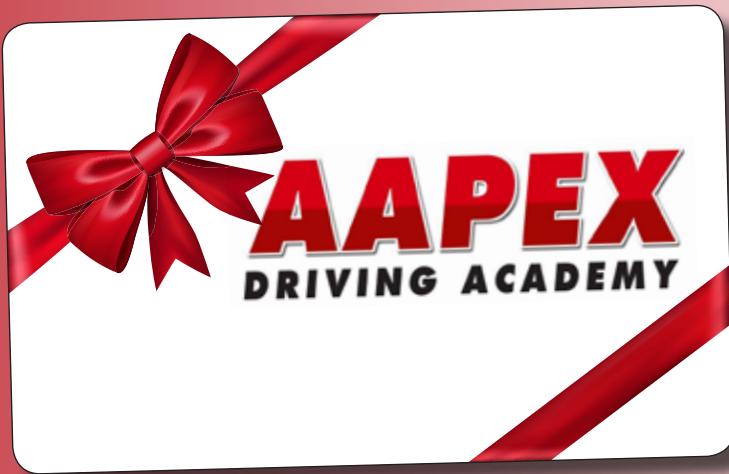
When ISO 9001:2015 was released, the requirements for specific documented procedures was removed. One such procedure removed was that for Internal Audits. The standard now only requires evidence of an audit program including evidence of completed audits. What constitutes evidence of an audit program?

ISO 19011, the guideline for auditing was re-issued in July 2018. This guideline provides more insight into what is required for your audit program. A schedule of planned audits with matching completed audits may not be sufficient.

As with all ISO core standards, there is a greater emphasis on risk. It is not a requirement to audit every process every year, so how do you determine which areas will be audited? Who is responsible for managing your program? How do you know they are competent to do so? How do you select auditors and how do you determine their competence? Does your program include Supplier and other External Audits? Is your system achieving its desired outputs and does your audit program provide supporting evidence?

These are just some questions to consider. Your audit program is much more than a calendar and audit report or two. It is worth reviewing prior to your next CB visit. **BL**

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BUSINESS PROFILE



Wilma Snippe

CEO - H2Only Inc.

Established in 1994, H2Only is Niagara's premier source for reverse osmosis purified water. Based in St. Catharines, H2Only delivers three and five-gallon bottles of filtered water to hundreds of residences, schools, businesses and industries – all the way from Fort Erie to Burlington.

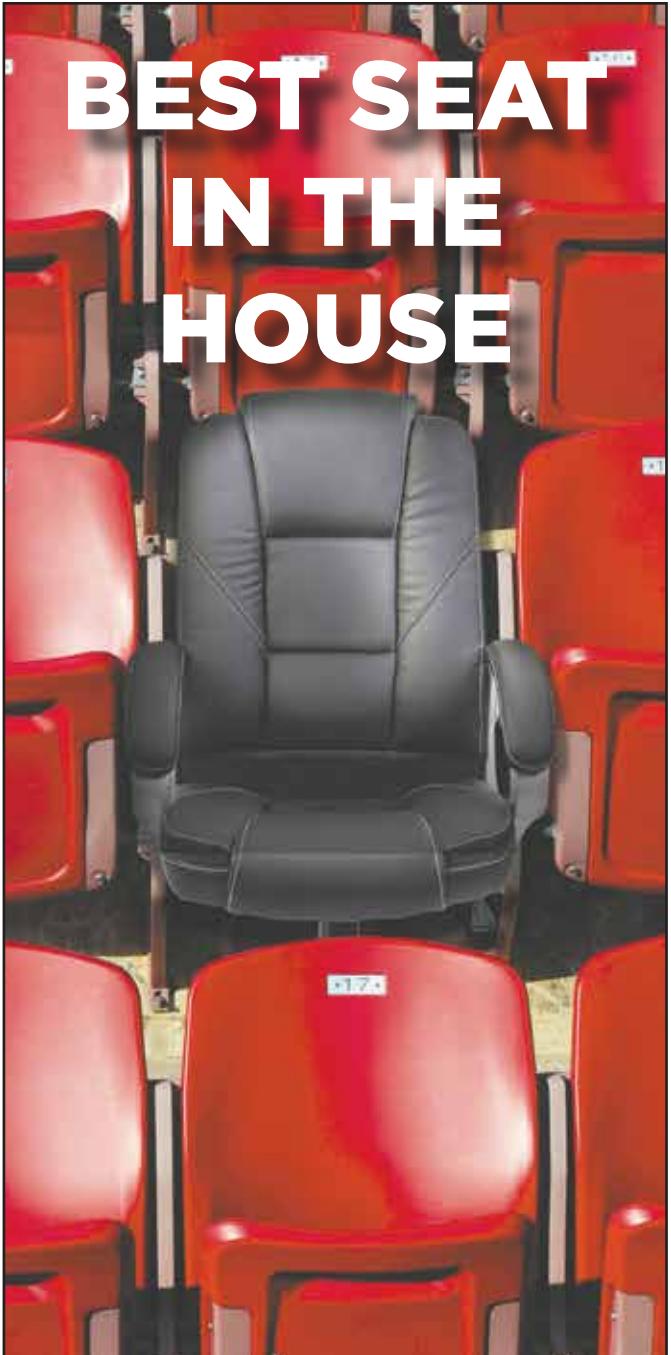
H2Only uses municipal tap water as a starting point and runs it through a customized nine-stage filtration process, removing contaminants like chlorine, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and bacteria. Typically, municipal tap water has a rate of impurities that runs between 150 and 175 PPM (parts per million) TDS (total dissolved solids). With H2Only's double-pass reverse osmosis technology, however, the resulting water has less than three PPM TDS.

H2Only goes that extra mile to keep their water bottles clean once they've been returned to the facility – putting each bottle through a seven-step cleansing process. H2Only also offers Canadian-made Thermo Concept coolers for rent or purchase. The H2Only delivery team will monitor each cooler, and even provides a full cooler cleaning service.

Ordering is easy. Simply order online, by phone or email. And there are no contracts or extra service charges to worry about. Just pure drinking water at an affordable price! **BL**

For more information on purchasing H2Only's filtered water for your home or business, please go to <https://h2only.ca>.

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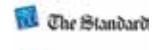
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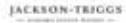
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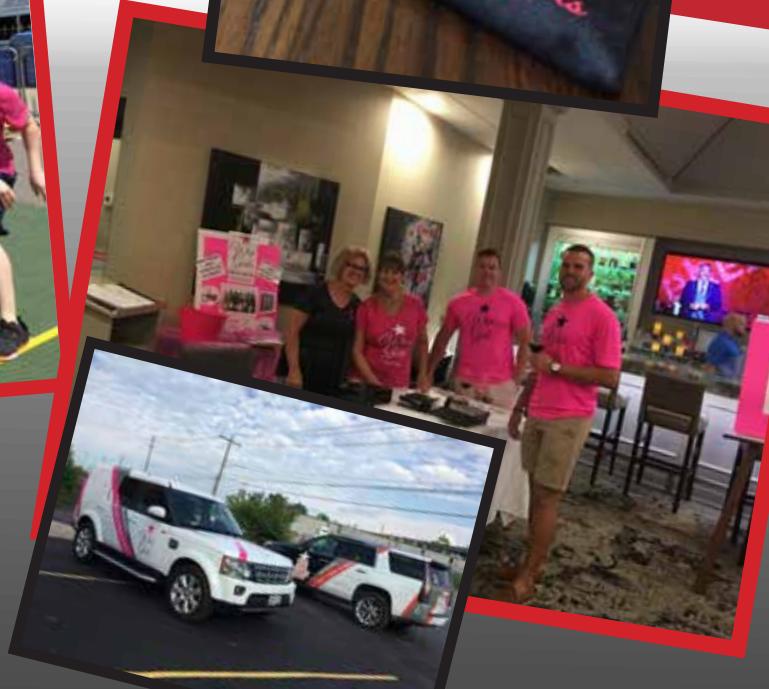
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