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18TH ANNUAL

40
2021

UNDER FORTY
BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

NIAGARA

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NOW AVAILABLE FOR
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Dear Business Link Readers,

We are happy to announce our 2021 Edition 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards recipients. Each 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Award is given to an individual under the age of 40 who consistently makes their endeavour in business and contributes to their respective communities.

On behalf of Business Link Media Group, I would like to send out our sincere congratulations to 40 business leaders to be announced. A sincere "thank you" goes out to all those who took the time to nominate these outstanding individuals and to our amazing judges for their efforts to hand pick winners.

Our 2021 Niagara 40U40 Awards Live Broadcast Ceremony will be premiered at 8 PM on June 23rd. We warmly invite everyone in this community to join us and celebrate this cheerful moment.

For all 40 recipients, all the best in your continuing efforts - Congratulations!

Yours in business,

Marilyn Tian M.B.A
President & Co-publisher
Business Link Media Group



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2021 WHO'S NEXT

6.23
8 - 9 pm

2021 18th Niagara 40U40 Awards Live Broadcast Ceremony
Premiere on [Business Link Media Group YouTube Channel](#)



THE CLASS OF 2020 WINNERS



THE CLASS OF 2019 WINNERS



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RAPID COVID-19 TESTS

Now Available for Niagara Businesses

01



The Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce (GNCC) is pleased to announce a partnership with Great Wolf Lodge for the distribution of COVID-19 rapid testing kits. Great Wolf Lodge, located at 3950 Victoria Avenue, Niagara Falls, is a member of the Ontario Vaccination Support Council, whose mission is to support public vaccination through partnerships with

private businesses. Great Wolf Lodge will be the distribution site for kits throughout Niagara.

The kits are being provided free of charge to employers, with kit costs covered by the governments of Ontario and Canada. The GNCC and Great Wolf Lodge are donating their resources and facilities to the administration of this program, which was developed and spearheaded by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

Kits must be ordered at <https://gncc.ca/workplace-self-screening-kits/>. Online ordering is now available. The online portal allows businesses to book an appointment to pick up kits, which will be offered between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday. The ample facilities and parking available at Great Wolf Lodge will make processing orders safe and easy. The GNCC and Great Wolf Lodge are also providing facilities for the safe return and disposal of used tests.



For the safety of staff and volunteers at the site, no kits can be picked up without an appointment. These kits are for businesses with essential employees only and cannot be distributed to the public. Great Wolf Lodge is unable to provide information or book appointments directly. Vital and familiar safety measures will be implemented to ensure a safe and contactless pickup. Masks, hand sanitizing, following the red directional signage and appointment schedules will be critical.

Studies have suggested that as many as one-third of COVID-19 cases are asymptomatic, so detecting and isolating asymptomatic carriers is vital to stopping the spread. While PCR testing remains the gold standard, these tests are expensive and must be done in a laboratory, with results taking several days to return.

Rapid antigen test kits can identify a significant number of asymptomatic individuals. When used to test employees in essential work-



COVID-19
TESTS

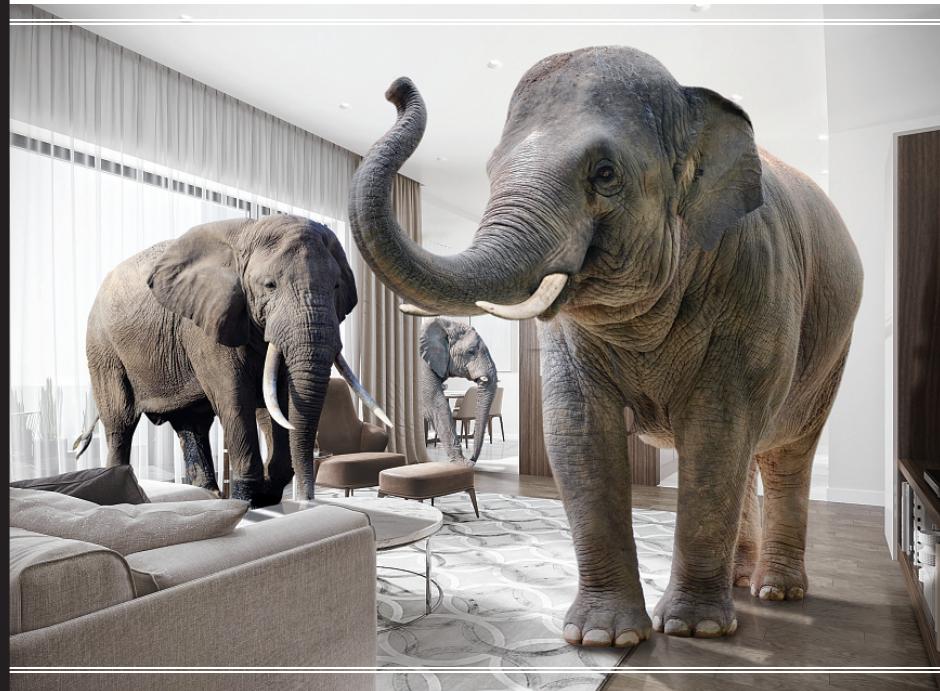
THE
ELEPHANTS IN
THE ROOM

places, along with rigorous self-screening, the COVID Alert app, physical distancing and PPE, these tests can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 through workplaces.

Symptomatic individuals should contact health authorities to arrange for a PCR test.

The tests are to be self-administered twice a week, under supervision. Instructions on correct usage of the kits are being provided with them. All aggregated test results are sent to the Province to identify and track outbreaks, and while employees retain the right to opt out of testing, no personally identifying information is gathered or uploaded. **BL.**

The Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business in Niagara, the largest business organization in the region and the second-largest Chamber of Commerce in Ontario, with 1,500 members representing 50,000 employees. More information on the GNCC is available at gncc.ca.



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* Altus Government Charges and Fees on New Homes in the GTA 2018

** Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

*** Altus Unmet Demand Analysis 2019



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40 2021

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WINNER ANNOUNCEMENT

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THIS YEAR WINNERS!

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THE 18TH ANNUAL NIAGARA 40 UNDER FORTY BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS

Caitlin Armstrong
Meridian Credit Union

Michelle Biskup
Niagara River Lions

Robin Bleich
Niagara Regional Police Service

Dr. Jessica Blythe
Brock University

Rima Boles
The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre

Amanda Braet
Women's Place of South Niagara Inc.

Jhon Canon
OnDemand Staffing

Krysle Caputo
Ontario Public Service

Valérie Chartrand
Human Resources & Communications

Graeme Dargavel
Gillian's Place

Matthew Davies
Davies Environmental Ltd.

Jordin Funk
Go Green Plumbing

Cory Goulet
Canvas Engineering Ltd.

Marissa Hartley
CHZ PLZ

Samantha Hoodless
General Motors

Alexis Kleiman
DSBN ihub

Amanda Lachapelle
B4 Networks

Stephanie Lakeit-Hall
SH Consulting Group & Leadership Niagara

Leah Letford
Town of Pelham

Clayton Letourneau
Custom Sign Lab

Marc MacDonald
Town of Pelham

Mathieu Martin
Your Water Company

Bex McKnight
McKnight Inclusive Design

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Iron Performance Center

Sandra Nuckle
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Meridian Credit Union

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Michelle Reynolds
Reynolds Regier Homes

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Elite Hair Salon and Spa

Annette Smith
Lip Service Beauty

Carlie Smith
Royal LePage NRC Realty & Twee Rozen Farms

Shawna Thibodeau
Be Free

Drew Toth
Elevate Living Niagara

Matthew Trennum
The Regional Municipality of Niagara

Will Warren
Atlassian Corporation Plc.

Wes Wolfe
Cobourg Cougars

Christopher Yendt
Brock University

02

VIDEO GAMES CAN BE MORE THAN JUST ENTERTAINMENT



Video games have become an important part of mainstream culture, spawning movies, tv series, e-sports leagues and numerous physical and virtual conventions which celebrate gaming and gaming culture. Even with the vast reach of gaming throughout our society gaming still deals with stigma and is treated as a lesser form of art and entertainment.



Devil's Cider Games has always felt the formulaic nature of many mainstream video games greatly limits the experience and potential of players. This formulaic game design contributes to the stigma around gaming. A stigma which is unwarranted as games can go beyond just a simple source of entertainment and can be used to help make the world a better place.

Devil's Cider Games since its creation has focused on making truly unique games which disregard the formulaic nature of mainstream game design and focus on the vast potential that games have to create unique gaming experiences or the help make the world a better place.

It is almost impossible to separate 2020 from the thought of COVID-19. This pandemic has changed how we live, interact and work and will have a long-lasting effect on our collective consciousness even after the final vaccine is administered to give the world the protection of herd immunity.

Devil's Cider Games used their vision to create Cat Colony Crisis, during the Jamming the Curve Game Jam event presented by IndieCade, LabX, Georgia Tech and Seattle Indies. After winning the Jamming the Curve Game Jam the team went on to improve Cat Colony Crisis and on February 9, 2021, Cat Colony Crisis was released free on itch.io, Steam, Google Play and the Apple App Store.

The goal of Cat Colony Crisis is to promote pro-science and pro-social concepts which help in the fight against the spread of COVID-19. Cat Colony Crisis has over 50,000 downloads cumulatively worldwide on all platforms. The game has received media coverage in the LA Times, CBC News, AM 640 Toronto, CTV Your Morning and RMIT's Under Cover podcast. Cat Colony Crisis, won the Character management category at Jamming the Curve 2020, won a LabX development grant and placed 2nd in the Game Development World Championship 2020 game jam category.

The team at Devil's Cider Game feel that Cat Colony Crisis is an excellent example of how games can have a positive impact in the real world and even help in the fight against a global pandemic.

Devil's Cider Games is an award-winning game studio, founded in 2018 by Paul Boyko, Christine Harte, Chris Lyons and Chelsea Saari and is based in the Niagara Region. Since founding, Devil's Cider Games has contributed to the creation of various high-end and quality projects on multiple different platforms. Devil's Cider Games has received awards and critical acclaim for their in-house IP and have done contract work on 3rd party award winning titles. Learn more about Devil's Cider Games at devils cider.com. **BL.**



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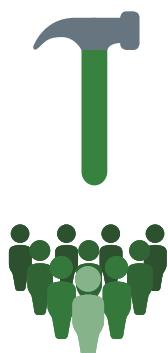


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- Trade Contractors
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- Allied Professionals

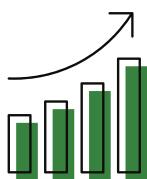


Building Niagara

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REGION

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5

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Covid-19 Has Sparked
A New Wave of Innovation across
**Consumer
Industries**
in Canada, According to Accenture Research

03





The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way Canadians live, work and socialize, accelerating demand for innovation as retailers, consumer goods, and travel companies shift from reacting to the crisis to reinventing products and services, according to findings of a new global survey from Accenture (NYSE: ACN).

After a year of lockdowns, 95 per cent of global consumers Accenture surveyed said they made at least one change to their lifestyle that they expect will be permanent. Working from home, changing travel patterns, and a growing desire

*S*uccessful consumer-facing companies are repurposing physical locations, exploring new business models, and rapidly adopting advanced analytics and other disruptive technologies to find new sources of growth.

to shop locally are challenging industries to fundamentally rethink how they cater to the pandemic-adapted consumer. The latest survey of more than 9,650 people in 19 countries, including 409 consumers in Canada, support Accenture's previous findings that many changes in behaviour will likely be long-term. (Accenture also conducted booster surveys of 301 people in Toronto and another 307 in Montreal; data is below.)

"The lasting impact of the pandemic will be felt well into the future and Canadian consumer-facing companies have learned all too well why they must be agile, resilient and responsive to change," said Jeffrey Russell, president

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of Accenture in Canada. "Yet these trying times have also created opportunity and ignited innovation. Many companies reinventing how they do business and expanding in new growth areas - and many are using advanced analytical capabilities to identify and make the most of changing consumption trends."

COVID-19 has led to compressed transformation, with companies simultaneously transforming multiple parts of the enterprise and reskilling people in what previously would have been longer-term step-by-step programs. Many consumer-facing companies have re-platformed their businesses in the cloud, addressed cost pressures, and continued to build resilience and security, putting the infra-

structure in place to enable innovation and position them for future success.

Dawn of the “third space”

The pandemic forced a rapid shift to consumers working from home, with many expressing that they want flexibility in how and where they work moving forward. Sixty-nine per cent of Canadians who will continue to telecommute once the pandemic subsides say that they would like to occasionally work from a “third space” – a location other than their home or place of employment – and about 30 per cent said they would be willing to pay a fee out of their own pockets to work from a café, bar, hotel, or retailer with a dedicated space. This highlights a potential opportunity to grow revenue for the hospitality and retail industries.

The desire to work from a “third space” is accompanied by a shift in attitudes towards business travel. Fifty-three per cent of Canadian respondents who normally travel for business expect to reduce such activities in the future. How long this view will hold firm remains to be seen, but the current outlook indicates that the return to travel will resume principally within the leisure market, pushing the industry to adapt and become even more efficient to make up for lost income.

“Travel and hospitality firms have had to be both creative and practical to find new revenue streams in order to keep the lights on over the past very challeng-



ing year,” said Daniel Bunyan, managing director and travel industry lead at Accenture in Canada. “We have seen hotel rooms converted into pop-up restaurants while others have created a ‘third space’ for those looking for a temporary office setting outside of their home. While there has been experimentation with innovation in select pockets, companies need to scale these new services and address travellers’ renewed focus on health and safety, for example, by using the cloud to help enable fully contactless interactions.”

Shifts in consumer habits are here to stay

Not only do consumers think some of their work habits and travel plans have likely permanently changed, many also think their shopping habits have evolved for the long haul. The latest research supports Accenture’s previously released findings that the dramatic rise in e-commerce is likely to remain or accelerate further. For instance, the proportion of online purchases for products such as food, home décor, fashion, and luxury goods by previously infrequent e-commerce users in Canada – defined as those who used online channels for less than 25 per cent of purchases prior to the outbreak – has increased 316 per cent since the outbreak.

Canadian Survey Results:	Canada n=409	Toronto n=301	Montreal n=307
Percentage of Canadians who will continue to telecommute once the pandemic subsides that would like to occasionally work from a "third space" (a location other than their home or place of employment).	69%	77%	73%
Percentage of Canadians who say they would be willing to pay a fee out of their own pockets to work from a café, bar, hotel, or retailer with a dedicated space.	30%	40%	49%
Percentage of Canadians who normally travel for business and expect to reduce business travel in the future.	53%	63%	49%
Percentage growth in online purchases for products such as food, home décor, fashion, and luxury goods by previously infrequent e-commerce users in Canada since the start of the pandemic. (infrequent defined as those who used online channels for less than 25% of purchases prior to the outbreak)	316%	373%	322%

Robin Sahota, a managing director at Accenture who leads its retail practice in Canada said, “Many leading retailers handled the rush to online shopping with relative ease based on past investments in technology, while others had to quickly accelerate their journeys to cloud and digital. When we get past the pandemic, across retail sectors, companies will need to continue to meet consumer demand for online shopping but also increase the efficiency of the channel to enable profit growth. This next retail transformation will require new investments in micro-fulfilment and supply chains, stores of the future, and the future worker, who will drive new experiences.” **BL.**

About the research

Accenture’s COVID-19 Consumer Research is tracking the changing attitudes, behaviours and habits of consumers worldwide as they adapt to a new reality during the COVID-19 outbreak. The latest waves of this survey were conducted November 28 - December 10, 2020 and Feb-

ruary 25 - March 5, and surveyed 12,487 and 9,653 consumers respectively, in 19 countries across five continents: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UAE, UK, and USA. In addition, Accenture conducted a separate booster survey of 6,986 in 23 metro areas in North America, including 301 people in Toronto and another 307 in Montreal, February 26 - March 16.

About Accenture

Accenture is a global professional services company with leading capabilities in digital, cloud and security. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries, we offer Strategy and Consulting, Interactive, Technology and Operations services – all powered by the world’s largest network of Advanced Technology and Intelligent Operations centers. Our 537,000 people deliver on the promise of technology and human ingenuity every day, serving clients in more than 120 countries. We embrace the power of change to create value and shared success for our clients, people, shareholders, partners and communities. Visit us at www.accenture.com.



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