**BUSINESS TO BRUCE** 

### Port Elgin Business Recruitment Strategy & Support





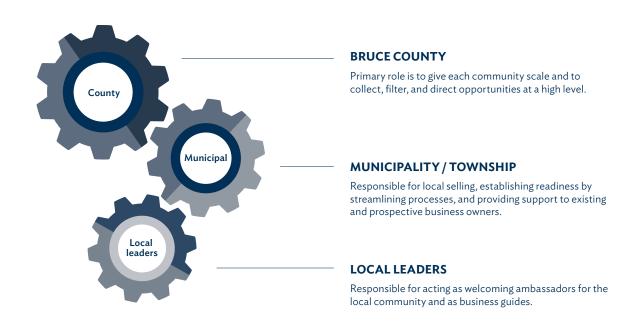


#### **CONTENTS**

BUSINESS TO BRUCE COUNTY	4
The County's Role	4
BUSINESS TO PORT ELGIN	
Situation Analysis Summary	5
Audiences	7
Recruitment and Expansion Opportunities	8
Port Elgin BtoB Strategy	9
Port Elgin Positioning	10
Port Elgin BtoB Narrative	11
Port Elgin Theme	11
ACTION PLANS & WHO DOES WHAT	12
Roles & Responsibilities	13
The Port Elgin Business Owner Network	15
Action Plans	16
The Port Elgin THINK TANK	16
Barriers to Business Innovation	17
Promotional Asset Development	18
TOOLS - PART ONE:	19
The Port Elgin THINK TANK	20
Print Advertising	21
E-vite	22
Radio Advertising	23
Digital Ads	24
Sample Media Plan	25
TOOLS - PART TWO:	27
Pitch Kit (Folder & Inserts)	28
E-newsletter	29
Pull-up Banner	30
E-blast	31
Video	32

#### **BUSINESS TO BRUCE COUNTY**

In 2014, Bruce County developed a county-wide community investment program, called Business to Bruce (BtoB), that was founded on the principle of collaboration and focused on recruiting/nurturing entrepreneurs. Three levels of participation were identified (county, municipal/township, and local leadership) each with their own role to play.



#### **BUSINESS TO PORT ELGIN**

The innovative, pioneering entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in Port Elgin, Bruce County. Our strong base of technical smarts and access to inventive thinking in the energy sector ripples out into all sectors of the economy including tourism, retail and technology-based services. Equally important, our population is well-educated and enjoys a standard of living that is unmatched in rural Ontario. Port Elgin is where we can energize business innovation by coming together and working together for a brighter future.

#### **Situation Analysis Summary**

Before creating the BtoB strategy for Port Elgin, an audit of the current situation was conducted and a business community insight session was held.

REVIEWED	CONSIDERED	HEARD
<ul> <li>Spruce the Bruce toolkit</li> <li>Saugeen Shores 2017 Guide</li> <li>2012 Saugeen Shores Business Retention &amp; Expansion survey results</li> <li>New Venture brochure</li> <li>Tourism guides</li> <li>Municipal website</li> <li>Municipal social media</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Retail innovation and evolution</li> <li>Engineering and technology development</li> <li>Sharing economy</li> <li>Existing clusters</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>The local economy has momentum because of the planned Bruce Power expansion</li> <li>There's opportunity to diversify the energy cluster to move beyond Bruce Power and nuclear</li> <li>Challenge finding unskilled and semi-skilled labour in the area</li> <li>New Canadian population is growing</li> </ul>

Based on the current situation and opportunities audit, and using insights gained from business owner stakeholder sessions, it was concluded that:

- (1) The current economic momentum in the region (a result of the planned Bruce Power plant expansion) needs to be capitalized on so that future economic prosperity can be enjoyed independent of Bruce Power.
- (2) The community has a high concentration of engineers, technical specialists and innovative creative thinkers. Extended families are well-educated and seeking creative outlets. Connecting these people to each other by creating a platform for creative innovation and shared learning is step one in the process.
- (3) Using the activities and outputs of the THINK TANK as content will attract interest among the primary external audiences; there is something new and exciting happening in Port Elgin that is centred on a cluster of creative thinkers both in the energy sector and beyond it.

#### **Audiences**

There is a talent pool in Port Elgin that while related to Bruce Power, is not limited to working there. The friends and families of Bruce Power employees and others who grew up in Port Elgin share an innovative approach to life and the capacity for contributing to the local economy through inventive thinking. What they're looking for are opportunities to get involved and to create.

wно	DETAILS	WHEN
Local Engineers	<ul> <li>connected to Bruce Power (or a supplier)</li> <li>higher percentage of New Canadian compared to general         Port Elgin population     </li> <li>those that are interested in a less-regiment work environment         (open to exploring)     </li> </ul>	All year
Bruce Power Families	<ul> <li>spouses of Bruce Power employees who are either unemployed or underemployed</li> <li>skew female</li> <li>have high-earning partner so may be more willing to take a risk</li> </ul>	All year
Bruce Alumni	<ul> <li>age 25-35</li> <li>young (singles or couples) with or without children</li> <li>moved away for an education</li> <li>college or trades training</li> <li>familiarity with the area (originally from the area or have visited)</li> </ul>	Focus on summer and holidays when they might be visiting
Friends & Family	<ul> <li>rural upbringing</li> <li>reached through personal networks and social media</li> <li>seeking middle class life and opportunity</li> <li>working in SWO (may not own a business yet)</li> <li>located in Windsor to London corridor, Kitchener/Waterloo and Guelph</li> </ul>	
Local Tourists	summer-focus     families	June - September

#### **Recruitment and Expansion Opportunities**

The Business to Bruce program strategy is to focus on the who, not the what (the business owner/entrepreneur no the business sector itself). That said, Port Elgin should focus on specific sectors that align with their existing talent pool.

SECTOR	OPPORTUNITY		
Innovative • differentiated through the blend of unique products, experiences and value-added distribution (Value-Add) Retail			
Energy	renewables and technology enhancements		
Consulting	<ul> <li>engineering</li> <li>software development/computer sciences</li> </ul>		
Small Tech	• similar to engineering only focused on products and services outside the energy sector (i.e 3D printing, software development, medical instruments, precision instrument manufacturing etc)		

#### **Port Elgin BtoB Strategy**

In the context of economic development, creating and deploying a strategy should result in advantage and preference for Port Elgin. The strategy should present a reason for a special type of prospect to choose Port Elgin. To that end, meaningful differentiation is critical to success; meaningful to the target audience and different when compared to all competitive options.

Port Elgin's strong energy sector is often referred to as a double-edged sword (local employers outside the energy sector have trouble competing for and keeping people). On the other hand (where the glass is half full), the community enjoys an unusually high household income, access to a pool of technology and engineering smarts and a pioneering or innovative creative spirit that can be harnessed to impact other sectors (retail mix/renewal, technology and innovation, training/education/consulting).

The strategy for Port Elgin should focus on two key activities: Building the brand culture (the product) and; communicating the outputs of that culture to attract external interest and inquiry. Building the brand culture starts with forming a volunteer group among the community's innovative thinkers from all sectors; design and nurture it as a 'social club' for invention and shared exploration. Outputs could include ideas like digital development training, technical ideation or retail innovation for the digital age. As this culture begins to take hold and produce ideas, the brand should be promoted externally using attraction-focused communications tools. Essentially, build the product and as it forms, promote the culture that ensues.

#### Why Focus On Innovation?

By mobilizing and focusing the local 'innovation community', Port Elgin can build a reputation and capacity for inventiveness in all sectors of the community's economy and become a hub for positive change. This work may even attract investment by Bruce Power and related partners.

#### **Port Elgin Narratives**

Human beings transfer information in the form of stories. In the context of marketing, these stories are called brand or positioning narratives. The narrative sets direction, establishes context and becomes the lens through which the strategy comes to life.

Port Elgin will position as Bruce County's innovation centre where the entire community is engaged (and participates) in the development of new thinking and skills capacity building.

#### **Port Elgin BtoB Narrative**

Imagine a community where innovative thinking, idea design, technology literacy and a pioneering spirit is the backbone of local commerce and skills development. Where main street retailers have the skills to thrive in a digital shopping era and have the support of the community as they try new ideas. Computer literacy would be pervasive in all age groups. Our small businesses in the energy sector and other technical sectors could enjoy better access to the skills they need to grow. Port Elgin, on the shores of Lake Huron in Bruce County is that community of the future. By mobilizing the creative thinkers and resources that live here and exist here today, we are energizing innovation locally for a brighter future.

#### **Port Elgin Theme**

Themes (slogans, taglines, positioning statements) summarize what makes a community unique and 'of interest' to the target audience in as few words as possible. The Port Elgin 'theme' is the summary of the positioning narrative and should be used as a key message in all BtoB communications.

Port Elgin		ENERGIZING INNOVATION		
wordmark		theme		

## Action Plans, and Who Does What?

Strategies are a waste of paper without relevant action plans and the right people doing the right things to execute those action plans. What follows are the Port Elgin's BtoB action plans and roles/responsibilities guidelines.

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **MUNICIPALITY**

- Identify and recruit local business owners in technical, retail, energy, environmental and business services sectors to the volunteer 'Port-Elgin THINK TANK'
- Apply localized marketing tools to promote local business culture
  - keep the conversation positive
  - encourage entrepreneurial culture
  - focus efforts on high-traffic season
- Support local leader network
  - monitor online network and facilitate connections with locals
  - facilitate the formation of the Port Elgin THINK TANK
- Identify and mitigate current obstacles to new or expanding businesses
  - engage local business leaders where their insight is needed
  - focus first on the quick/easy wins
  - flexibility is more important than being ready for every scenario
- Continue to work with and encourage participation in Spruce the Bruce grant program
- Identify and nurture existing business expansion opportunities
  - get to know your current business owners and help connect them with each other (either through quarterly events or one on one as needed)
- Help elected officials champion the local Business to Bruce program, positioning and messaging
- Use attraction tools to promote the business culture in Port Elgin (based on 'THINK TANK' outputs and activities)

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### LOCAL LEADERS (BUSINESS OWNERS)

- Annual commitment of approximately 15-20 hours
- Participate in online network that welcomes prospective business owners
   respond to questions
- Act as ambassadors for new business prospects
  - meet/guide new prospects when they come to town
  - mentorship for newly established business owners
- Engage extended networks in business recruitment

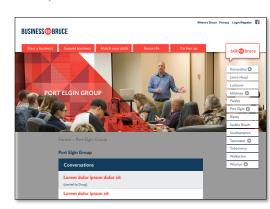
#### The Port Elgin Area Business Owner Network

The best way to welcome prospective business owners to Port Elgin is to connect them as quickly as possible to other business owners in town. We're making this easy and digital by forming a loose association of local entrepreneurs online. This approach is easy to learn and manage, and it will be located on the Business to Bruce website. Key to the success of the network is timely and relevant response.

**NETWORK ADMIN**. Port Elgin's network admin is the Port Elgin economic development staff's role. An email alert will be sent to this individual every time a post is made in Port Elgin's network. Their job will then be to alert an appropriate business owner in the network so that the ensuing response and conversation is directly between an existing business owner and a prospect, when appropriate (i.e. planning or process question), the economic development staff can respond directly.

BUSINESS OWNERS. Current Port Elgin business owners representing various sectors should be recruited to be on standby for network participation when needed. Time commitment is 15-20 hours annually and the main role of the business owners will be to answer questions and serve as welcoming ambassadors to new prospects. Current business owners are free to post questions or discussion topics at any time.

**PROSPECTS**. Prospects directed to Port Elgin's network on the Business to Bruce website can ask questions in the forum at any time. Questions may be answered by the Municipality or current business owners in the network (whichever is most appropriate).



Port Elgin Group Website

#### **ACTIONS PART ONE: BUILDING THE CULTURE**

#### 1. The Port Elgin THINK TANK

Short Term (ST): 2-3 months | Medium Term (MT): 6-12 months | Long Term (LT): 1 year +

In order to build and expand Port Elgin's culture of innovation, the community needs to harness its well-educated talent pool across a variety of sectors and create an environment where sharing ideas and exploring innovative approaches are celebrated and supported. By creating a volunteer group of current business owners and top innovative minds, the community will be well positioned to support progressive new businesses and expanding current businesses.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Identify existing progressive business owners in the sectors you want to grow.	ST
Recruit volunteers from this group of business owners to be part of the Port Elgin THINK TANK.	ST
Decide on a style of how the group should run, what additional support is needed from the Municipality and develop a charter and operations guidelines (the Municipality will need to get the ball rolling but should plan to reduce their involvement over the next three years).	ST
Set up web landing page/microsite and social media properties.	ST
Organize and run sector-specific innovation sessions supported by THINK TANK knowledge and research.	Ongoing
Work with innovation session participants to execute their ideas (existing and new business owners).	Ongoing
Continually explore new ways the THINK TANK can help support innovative business growth in Port Elgin.	LT/Ongoing
Create a plan for transferring 'ownership' of the group from the Municipality to its members. It's important to stay somewhat involved as the group evolves however so that the Municipality can support whatever ideas are generated (business- or community-focused).	LT

**Outcome:** An active, progressive business culture, as demonstrated by a well-defined group of volunteers with a specific purpose, will attract like-minded, entrepreneurially-minded targets to Port Elgin. It will also help existing businesses expand and/or adapt to changing realities in their sectors. The concept of a 'THINK TANK' in the community leverages existing energy sector awareness, the large number of skilled technical people and their families in the area and tourism.

#### 2. Barriers to Business Innovation

A few barriers (or perceived barriers) to new business development and business expansion were identified in Business to Bruce stakeholder session. The documentation of these barriers needs to be formalized and action plans needs to be developed to mitigate each obstacle. While this will have the obvious effect of making the Municipality easy to deal with when starting or expanding a business, it will also demonstrate a willingness to cooperate with current business owner which will help to bolster the positive local business culture. Remember, flexibility is more important than being prepared for every possible scenario.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Identify and document barriers for innovation for innovation that new and expanding businesses may face (consult Municipal staff, County staff and business owners).	ST
Prioritize list based on perceived barriers (those solved by improved communication) and barriers that will require process changes or additional resource support (financial or human).	ST
Develop barrier-specific action plans for how to remedy the barriers to business.	ST
Execute action plans (focus on and promote the quick wins first).	MT

**Outcome:** Not all documented barriers must be eliminated. Reducing barriers and streamlining processes where possible, however, will create a more positive relationship with the Municipality and over time, cooperation with the Municipality will be viewed as a an asset to the business community as opposed to an unavoidable necessity. It's important that this process be an ongoing one with challenges being regularly reviewed by staff.

### ACTIONS PART TWO: USING THE CULTURE TO ATTRACT NEW BUSINESSES AND EXPANSION

#### 1. Promotional Asset Development

The recommended tools require actual innovator stories and photography. In order to roll out the tools and promotion, innovator participants need to be found, interviewed and photographed. This can be done in tandem with videography work.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Identify innovative business owners to feature in promotion. These should be THINK TANK members if possible.	ST
Interview and photograph participants; guiding questions can be found in the radio advertising section of the toolkit.  Keep in mind that the purpose of telling these stories is to position Port Elgin as an innovative centre so every story written should be done so through this lens.	ST
Tailor the assets to fit the advertising templates provided.	ST
Continually source new stories and update creative.	Ongoing

**Outcome:** The key to positioning Port Elgin as Bruce County's innovation centre is to focus on the real stories of existing talent and business. Building a library of assets (interviews, photography, video) will allow you to tell these stories in compelling ways across a variety of media.

### TOOLS PART ONE: LOCAL AUDIENCE

Building & reinforcing the Port Elgin 'THINK TANK' and local business culture.

#### The Port Elgin THINK TANK

In order to build and expand Port Elgin's culture of innovation, the community needs to harness it's well-educated talent pool across a variety of sectors and create an environment where sharing ideas and exploring innovative approaches are celebrated and supported. By creating a volunteer group of current business owners and top innovative minds, the community will be well positioned to support progressive new businesses and expanding current businesses.

ACTIONS	TIMELINE
WHAT	The Port Elgin THINK TANK will start as a social invitation to the community's leading business innovators and thinkers; this will be a subjective list of invitees initiated by the project leaders and contributors. After it has started, the group will establish the purpose of the THINK TANK: To foster a culture of business and community innovation that is based on new idea creation, community improvement and economic growth and inclusion.
WHO	At least one representative of each business sector (that aligns with economic growth and innovation) should be invited to the first meeting: energy, retail, business services, technology/engineering. Using the social networks and connections of those early participants, build out the group to include as many 'innovation leaders' in the community as possible.
WHEN	Establish a schedule of THINK TANK meetings every other month and connect on social media or through the formation of working groups and committees that are created as a result of the larger meetings. The THINK TANK meetings should be a mix of business development, idea sharing and social activities. A positive local business culture is the goal of the meetings.

#### **Considerations**

- The Municipality can get the ball rolling on the group but should let the members dictate the form it ultimately takes. Evolution is an expected outcome of creativity and innovation.
- The purpose of this group is not self promotion so make it clear up front that the purpose is to share and create together.
- To get things started, the Municipality should come up with themes for the monthly meetups and put together an inspiring mini case study related to that theme to kick each session off.
- Over time, transfer responsibilities like email communication and theme generation to THINK TANK members.

## TOOLS: PRINT ADVERTISING

Create print ads that focus on local business owners and innovators who are doing things differently – sponsored by the Port Elgin THINK TANK. Run the advertising during tourist season. This promotes both local success stories and the efforts/contribution of the Port Elgin THINK TANK.

Content (stories and images) for print ads should be collected from THINK THANK members. See sample interview questions in the radio advertising section for guidance.



Print Ad

### TOOLS: **E-VITE**

This is a sample of the type of electronic invitation that could be used to promote Port Elgin THINK TANK events (example used is an invitation to an evening of exploration in new retail ideas and opportunities.



E-vite

## TOOLS: RADIO ADVERTISING

Create 60 second radio spots that focus on local business owners and innovators who are doing things differently - sponsored by the Port Elgin THINK TANK. These can be the same stories that are featured in the print ads. While 60 seconds is longer than a standard radio ad, this format is suggested to allow for longer storytelling.

VOICE OVER: "Port Elgin is growing into a hub of innovation and business ideas that go well beyond our strength in the energy sector. How do I know? Ask the business leaders of our community; what were you thinking, Jane Smith of Smith and Daughters?"

INNOVATOR: (INTERVIEW CLIP - 25 SECONDS MAX)

VOICE OVER: "Thanks Jane - and good luck."

"What are you thinking when it comes to starting or expanding a business in Port Elgin? Join the Port Elgin THINK TANK to share ideas and boost the pioneering spirit in our community."

"Port Elgin is where we're energizing innovation. Visit saugeenshores.ca/portelginthinktank to learn more. Sponsored by the Port Elgin THINK TANK and the municipality of Saugeen Shores."

#### SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

- 1) Describe your business and what makes it unique.
- 2) Why is Port Elgin the right place for your business?
- 3) Why is innovation so important in business today?
- 4) Why do you belong to the Port Elgin THINK TANK? What do you get from it?

## TOOLS: DIGITAL ADVERTISING

Digital ads can be used to promote Port Elgin THINK TANK events in local digital media. Consideration should also be given to a broader audience if the event is topic specific and, as a result, represents a bigger draw. Ads should link to a THINK TANK microsite (or THINK TANK section of the Saugeen Shores website).



Banner Ad

## TOOLS: SAMPLE MEDIA PLAN

The sample media schedule and budget is directive only meaning costs are not negotiated and there could be savings.

The same media plan works for both building the THINK TANK product and promoting it so can be used several years in a row. Each year media choices should be reviewed to ensure they're still relevant to the audiences.

MEDIA	UNIT SIZE	# OF PLACEMENTS	ESTIMATED COST	JUNE	JULY	AUG	TOTAL PLACEMENTS	TOTAL ESTIMATED MEDIA COST
PRINT								
Shoreline Beacon	1/2 page, 4C horizontal	6	\$600 per	Х2	X4	х3	9 insertions	\$5,400
RADIO								
98 The Beach	60 seconds	28/week	\$30/spot		4 weeks	2 weeks	168 spots	\$5,040
My FM 90.9		x6 weeks	\$36/spot		4 weeks	2 weeks	168 spots	\$6,048
ONLINE*	'	'				ı		
The Weather Network	300x600,	40,000/month	\$21 CPM				120,000 impressions	\$2,520
Shoreline Beacon	728x90, 15 second	40,000/month	\$24 CPM				120,000 impressions	\$2,880
YouTube	15 second	-	\$0.08 CPV				18,750 views	\$1,500
Facebook	Various	-	-				-	\$1,500
							Total:	\$19,488

<sup>\*</sup> Event-specific creative should be run during the two weeks leading up to an event. General branding promotion can be run all summer in alignment with print and radio advertising.

## TOOLS: SAMPLE MEDIA PLAN

Here are some media planning tips to consider:



#### Layering:

Be sure you run several media at once. Media consumption habits have changed and the days of single media campaigns are long gone.



#### **Audience:**

Remember that this is a business recruitment campaign and not a tourism campaign. Run your ads when and where you think the right audience may be looking for information.



#### Timing:

Summer is a popular time to run media in tourist destinations so be sure to book early to make sure you can purchase the media space you want. April is a good time to start inquiring about availability.



#### **Event Promotion:**

Advertising that promotes events should be run for around two weeks leading up to the event.



#### **Material Rotation:**

Mix up your creative so that the audience doesn't get tired. For the suggested media schedule, consider featuring two different stories and refresh halfway through the campaign.

# TOOLS PART TWO: NON-LOCAL AUDIENCE

Attracting new entrepreneurs and business ideas to Port Elgin.

## PITCH KIT (FOLDER & INSERTS)

The pitch kit is a positioning tool that introduces key themes and facts about Port Elgin during events, face-to-face meetings and for mailing as required. Blank mastheads can be used to create content that is customized to the activity (specialized information about a business sector like green energy or micro manufacturing for example).



Folder Cover



Insert

### TOOLS: **E-NEWSLETTER**

E-newsletters will be comprised of 'innovator stories' and THINK TANK outputs such as new ideas generated by the group or invitations and announcements. The THINK TANK should be e-published twice per year (Spring and early Fall). Distribute the newsletter through the website, social media and through the personal networks of business owners and residents.



E-newsletter

## TOOLS: PULL-UP BANNER

For use at events, trade shows and even THINK TANK meetings when appropriate. This is a positioning tool that reinforces the economic development focus of the community.



Pull-Up Banner

### TOOLS: **E-BLAST**

This is an example of promotion that can be used to generate interest in THINK TANK activities during the summer months when tourists and alumni are visiting. Use THINK TANK networks, resident networks to distribute. The e-blast content can also be reformatted to fit website pages and be promoted through tourism pages and promotions.

## Port Elgin ENERGIZING INNOVATION Summer Series



### Computer-Coding for Commerce Demonstration

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Learn, laugh and energize your creativity this summer in Port Elgin. >>



BUSINESS to BRUCE.com/port-elgin

E-blast

## TOOLS: VIDEO

A short video that features some of our great business owners captures the essence and amazing potential of running a business in Port Elgin. The video is posted on businesstobruce.com/port-elgin and the entire community should be encouraged to promote the new video through their personal social media networks.

A 15-second video is also available for online advertising.



Video