

Strategic Plan

Saint John Board of Trade

June 4, 2013

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Strategic Direction

Vision Statement

The vision of the Saint John Board of Trade is that the greater Saint John community will become the best place in Canada to start, run and grow a business...period!

The success of the organization in achieving its vision will be judged by the success of the community's position in CFIB's Communities in Boom Report, embraced by True Growth 2.0.

Mandate

The mandate of the Saint John Board of Trade (SJBOT) will be built on a culture that recognizes that our members are our customers, and our collective efforts must be focused on delivering value for membership. Our Members expect that we will use the resources they provide to us, and the combined power of their collective voice, to undertake activities to ensure their membership in the SJBOT will:

- 1. Make members money**
- 2. Save members money**
- 3. Reduce members risk**

This mandate defines the value proposition for the SJBOT and ensures a focus on our members and what is important to them. Implemented and communicated effectively this mission will provide the SJBOT an opportunity to connect with members, attract new members and retain more members thus improving the financial health of the organization.

Mission Statement

As a volunteer Board of Directors and as paid, professional management and staff, we view it as our **mission to strive to achieve the Vision, and to fulfill the Mandate provided by our Members** through:

1. Forceful, clear and consistent advocacy in our Members' interests;
2. Operating as a 'best-in-class' member of the Canadian Chambers of Commerce movement; and,
3. Providing an effective program of services and growth opportunities to our Members.

Strategic Initiatives

In order for the SJBOT to successfully achieve its mission, the organization will focus on 5 strategic initiatives designed to strengthen our organization and the business community over the coming year:

- 1. Increase SJBOT Focus on Small Business**

The overwhelming majority of our members are small businesses with fewer than 20 employees. Their individual voices on issues affecting their ability to grow and prosper are often subsumed by other, more powerful voices. The Saint John Board of Trade must use the power of our members' collective voices to represent their combined strength in discussions with policy makers and other actors in our shared community on issues affecting their viability and

opportunities to grow. The Saint John Board of Trade must consistently be “***the Voice of Small Business***” in greater Saint John and will take actions to ensure this becomes reality.

2. Forge one Collective Voice for Business in Greater Saint John

An opportunity exists for our region’s Chambers of Commerce and business associations to come together and form one larger organization, a Greater Saint John Chamber of Commerce. This new organization has the potential to become the largest Chamber of Commerce in New Brunswick serving over 1000 members. Furthermore, this new organization will provide one collective voice for business in Greater Saint John. The SJBOT will engage in this process and focus its resources to bring these organizations together.

3. Support True Growth 2.0

The SJBOT has been an instrumental founding partner in the development of True Growth 2.0 and continues to be a partner in the implementation of the program. SJBOT identified and lobbied to have the CFIB Communities in Boom survey used as the benchmark for measuring the success of True Growth 2.0. This measurement has been adopted by the community and the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC).

Saint John is currently ranked 78th out of 103 cities. We know we can do better. So our goal is get in the top 50% by 2014, top 30% by 2015 and crack the top 20% by 2016.

SJBOT will leverage its skills and expertise to help advance the True Growth 2.0 agenda including;

- Strategic advocacy – SJBOT is a private organization funded buy its members and may be able to speak out on issues where others may not be able to.
- Facilitating special events and provide access to the SJBOT membership
- Engage our members through the working committee re-alignment and encourage strong ties between our members and True Growth 2.0 committees while avoiding duplication.

4. Advocate for a Positive Business Climate

Effective advocacy on behalf of its Members is a core tenet and strength of the chamber of commerce movement within Canada. The SJBOT will continue to adopt a core strategy of investing time and resources to participate knowledgeably and effectively in policy discussions with all levels of government on matters relating to Members’ ability to achieve success in their business endeavours. In doing so, SJBOT will continue to maintain and leverage its affiliation with the regional and national chamber organizations. It is part of the SJBOT job to:

1. Be aware of policy initiatives in the making;
2. Analyze and understand potential impacts on our Members;
3. Educate policy makers as to any potentially negative impacts on our Members; and,
4. Advocate vigorously for changes, as appropriate, to mitigate business risk for our Members.

As well as identifying potential risks to the business climate and advocating on behalf of our members, the SJBOT needs to identify and support initiatives that help advance our vision and promotes a positive business climate for our region including but not limited to:

- Support the city's bid for clean, reliable, and affordable drinking water.
- Support the construction of a West-East pipeline to the IOL Refinery.
- Support the exploration of an indigenous New Brunswick natural gas industry.
- Support an innovative health research program through NB Health and Life Science to exponentially increase health research and investment.
- Advance Tucker Park as a world Cardio Vascular Research Center of Excellence.
- Support the development of Saint John supply chain growth opportunities for Halifax Shipyards.
- Further advance strategic investments to our Waterfront, Port and Airport.
- Remain laser focused on all policies which drive increased input costs for Small Businesses – energy, taxation, regulation, wages & benefits.
- Celebrate positive business success stories.
- Foster for a stronger collaborative approach with our regional economic development agencies.

5. Operational Excellence

The Saint John Board of Trade is itself a small business entity. It has revenues and expenses, it provides services, it is an employer, a holder of assets, and operates under the guidance of a volunteer board and professional management. It is also a member of the Chambers of Commerce movement within Canada, and participates in regional and national activities of the chamber movement.

In this context, our Members have a right to expect that we strive to operate as a 'best-in-class' chamber, employing best practices for small business operations and management. That means prudent fiscal management, enlightened employment practices, effective use of technology and other resources, and a constant focus on continuous improvement in all that we do.

Action Plan

The work program for 2013-2014 will be comprised of initiatives developed from a variety of sources, which can be completed in the next 12 months. Sources include:

- Staff analysis of operations and input from Members
- Director-led Task Forces who analyzed challenge areas identified by the Executive Committee and reported to the Board of Directors at its March meeting
- Strategic Planning Session held at Timeless Cottage

The Action plan below is prioritized from 1 to 3 and a staff member has been chosen to champion the action. The board will be regularly updated on the progress of the Action Items and new Action items will be identified through an annual strategic process and adopted by the board.

- 1 – The action is currently underway or it will be undertaken as a priority
- 2 – The action is a priority to implement once resources are available
- 3 – The action is not as imperative and will be moved back in the calendar

Action / Outcome	Source / Detail	Resource Requirement	Priority	Time Frame	Strategic Fit
Define & implement a program to monitor, evaluate and respond to changes in policy environment. This will be done in conjunction with committee redesign with a focus on improving SJBOT's response	Strategy workshop	Patrick – Supported by Dick Task Force Required	1	Framework by July 30 Implement September 2013 with new Committee Structure	1,3
Define & implement a program to support innovation & entrepreneurship –This could take the form of celebrating entrepreneurship in our OBA.	Strategy workshop	Eric – will enlist the support of Gerry Pond and Scott Walton	3	Q2 2014	1
Improve understanding group insurance plan and effect on Amalgamation	Revenue Generation Task Force	Dick/Eric	1	June 2013	1,4

Action / Outcome	Source / Detail	Resource Requirement	Priority	Time Frame	Strategic Fit
Design & Implement a “News Flash” Program Per communications update recommendations	Communications Task Force	Christine	1	May 2013 This is complete	1,2,5
Improve the “Member to Member” discount program Understand how ChamberMaster can be fully utilized	Strategy Workshop	Nick – Task Force Required	3	Q2 2014	1,5
Revisit membership fee structure & administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repair unintended consequences of earlier restructure Develop a backup dues structure if Amalgamation is unsuccessful	Revenue Generation Task Force	Dick – Supported by the task force from GSJCC	1	October 2013	1,2,5
Revise program of events & event management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on member interests Improve profitability Improve DSS Evaluate opportunity to partner with Scotia Bank for Small Business Week and True Growth 2.0 to facilitate events 	Revenue Generation Task Force	Carole/ Patrick Task Force Required for each	1	Ongoing	1,3,4,5
Pursue the Partnership with KVCC and RVCC	Revenue Generation Task Force	Dick/Eric/Larry/Andy	1	Framework by October 2013	2,4

Action / Outcome	Source / Detail	Resource Requirement	Priority	Time Frame	Strategic Fit
Design & implement a more effective committee operations program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on accomplishment • Effective engagement of volunteers • Effective communication with board 	Committee Structure Task Force	Patrick – Supported by Dick and Eric Task Force Required	1	Framework by July 30, Implement September	4,5
Implement a 'touch program' for 1 & 2 year members to improve retention – This may require tweaking the Sales Compensation Package	Revenue Generation Task Force	Nick	3	Q3 2014	5
Review Sales Compensation to align with strategies		HR Committee and Dick	3	Q4 2013	5
Review Human Resource requirements and job descriptions to determine if they are in line with the strategic direction and compare to similar size Chambers		Dick	2	Q4 2013	5
Deploy a Mobile App for members	Communications Task Force	Christine/Dick	2	September 2013	5
Implement "ChamberMaster" administration program	Revenue Generation Task Force	Dick/Carole	1	June 2013, Training September	5
Member directory Mobile-friendly, online	Communications Task Force	Christine	1	September 2013	5

Action / Outcome	Source / Detail	Resource Requirement	Priority	Time Frame	Strategic Fit
Revise advertising program & fee structure for Advertising. This will include a review of re-introducing a directory and possibly magazine as well as a review of ChamberMaster opportunities	Revenue Generation Task Force	Nick Task Force Required	2	Q3 2013	5
Web site redesign Revamped, mobile-friendly	Communications Task Force	Christine Supported by Dick/Nick	1	July 2013	5
Upgrade computer equipment	Strategy Workshop	Carole	1	June 2013	5
Cost Containment Exercise Review all line items to reduce organization costs	Revenue Generation Task Force	Dick/Colleen	1	September 2013	5
Integrate Accounting and ChamberMaster – Bring Accounting in-house	Revenue Generation Task Force	Dick/Colleen	3	Q3 2014	5
Review and Update the balanced Scorecard based on this Strategic Plan	Revenue Generation Task Force	Dick/Eric	2/3	Q1 2014	5
Develop a Website implementation Plan to determine how to manage the site going forward		Christine/ Nick Task Force Required (Include Mike George)	2	Q4 2013	5
Review the Fredericton and Halifax Chambers program for home and auto insurance		Nick – Supported by Dick	3	Q2 2014	5
Adopt a communications and marketing plan being developed by Comeau Marketing		Christine -	1	Q4 2013	1,2,3,4,5