



Working with communities, First Nations, local government and businesses to build a stronger North by investing in economic development in central and northern British Columbia, Canada

November 2016 - Newsletter

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The power of shopping local



Welcome to the busiest shopping season of the year. It is also a perfect time to reflect on the value of locally owned and independently operated businesses in communities throughout Northern B.C.

Northern Development leads [Love Northern BC](#) – the largest shop local

program in Canada. The program spans 34 communities with more than 1,500 participating businesses, all locally owned and operated. The program is enhanced by the horsepower behind community champions in each community who provide support for the program and its businesses at a local level.

Northern B.C. really is one of the most colourful, diverse and eclectic regions in Canada. The character of the area is largely shaped by unique shops and shopkeepers that are at the heart of our vibrant communities. Supporting these entrepreneurs not only helps their businesses succeed, but also supports economic diversification throughout the entire region.

Why invest in local?

**SHOP LOCAL
TO BUILD
THE ECONOMY**

Every \$100 spent at a local independent store generates \$46 in local spending. The same \$100 spent at a big box store only generates \$18 in local spending. This means that local businesses recirculate 2.6x more into the local economy than multi-national chains.

SOURCE: YELLOW PAGES

LOVENORTHERNBC.COM

Keeping dollars circulating locally is key to the economic health of our communities. For every \$100 spent locally up to \$46 stays in your community, as compared to just \$18 when spent at a big box or chain store. Shifting spending into local businesses can pave the way for growth, new jobs, and a thriving economy. Better yet, it also helps to keep creative, invested and entrepreneurial people in your community.

More than 50% of small businesses - much higher in the North - do not have an online presence. Love Northern BC is changing that. The program works with locally owned, independent businesses to create online profiles, complete with professional photography and writing that will allow these businesses to be found in a world that is increasingly reliant on digital information.

Locally owned businesses are stable generators of wealth and are more resilient in times of economic hardship. During business downturns they are less likely to relocate. When a large employer leaves a community, this departure is often followed by massive unemployment and lower tax revenues. The stable employment and services local independent businesses provide are an asset to northern communities that are not strangers to boom and bust cycles.

Local businesses serve as a sound investment when considering how to build a stronger north. In resource-dependent economies, unique local businesses also diversify the economy and strengthen the region.

Championing Northern BC businesses



The "Hunt for the Heart" campaign in Williams Lake.

Every community that is part of Love Northern BC has a community champion. They know their local business community and work collaboratively with local business owners to keep digital profiles up to date and promote the Love Northern BC initiative at a local level.

Northern Development offers a \$1,200 marketing grant to support the program in communities throughout the region:

Love Terrace

Terrace has established a steering committee, made up of members of the business and non-profit community, to help the local community champion recognize the needs of businesses and provide input on marketing activities and strategies. They are developing newspaper and

radio advertisements just in time for the holiday shopping season.

“These will remind both people coming into town and those already here of our vibrant local independent shopping destinations when searching for the perfect gifts,” said Brian Doddridge, community champion for the City of Terrace. “This would not be possible without the support from Northern Development.”

Love Hudson’s Hope

In Hudson’s Hope “Love Bucks” are handed out to kids for performing good deeds, such as picking up litter. They can redeem them at local businesses like the ice cream store, helping to ingrain a value for local business early.

“They just love it and it’s a lot of fun! The resources from Northern Development allow me to fulfill my role as community champion in a fun way that really motivates everyone in town,” says Becky Mercereau, community champion for the District of Hudson’s Hope.

Love Williams Lake

A “hunt for the heart” campaign was led in Williams Lake, where heart posters were hidden in local, independent businesses around town. Participants had to collect stamps from six participating businesses in order to win prizes.

“It was great to hear people talk about how they went into businesses they don’t usually go into just to participate,” says Heidi Jakubec, community champion for Love Williams Lake.

They also distributed postcards promoting Love Williams Lake to new home owners in the community in partnership with local real estate companies.

Love Dawson Creek

The community champion in Dawson Creek, Shaely Wilbur, wrapped a car in Love Dawson Creek graphics and joined more than 80 classic cars in the Mile Zero Summer Cruise to create awareness for the program.



Plaid is the new black



Cantata Singers strolled through downtown Prince George singing carols as part of the Plaid Friday event.

Conceptualized in 2009 in Oakland, California, Plaid Friday was developed to promote shopping locally as a leisurely and pleasurable activity instead of participating in “Black Friday” mayhem at big box stores. This year, on the last Friday in November, Love Northern BC participated in the campaign.

Plaid Friday was conceived from the idea of weaving the individual threads of small businesses together to create a strong fabric that celebrates the diversity and creativity of independent businesses.

Communities across the North embraced the campaign to offer events,

specials and extended hours to help build awareness and entice visitors to their local businesses.

- Love Lillooet organized a scavenger hunt where participants had to find 10 plaid hearts hidden in their website as well as 10 plaid toques in participating businesses.
- Love Houston BC held a community event with bonfires and fireworks. One business even opened their space to allow home-based businesses to set up pop-up shops for the day.
- The Mayor of Dawson Creek officially proclaimed the last Friday in November as Plaid Friday. They celebrated there by fully embracing the spirit of Plaid Friday with business owners and staff alike dressed in their finest plaids.
- More than a dozen Love Downtown Prince George businesses stayed open late. A free holiday-themed green screen photo booth was set up, with hot chocolate, special deals and strolling carolers.
- In Burns Lake a selfie contest encouraged shoppers to take a picture of themselves with a receipt from a Love Burns Lake business. These photos were posted on a Facebook page with the winner taking home a gift certificate for a Love Burns Lake business of their choice.

Even after Plaid Friday concluded, people still posted their selfies on Facebook to celebrate their favourite businesses.



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LOVE
DOWNTOWN PG

**PLAID FRIDAY
2016**









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PLAID FRIDAY
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Plaid Friday marks the kick-off to other shop local initiatives including Small Business Saturday, originally an American Express campaign which has picked up steam across North America, as well as the fifth annual BC Buy Local Week (November 28th to December 4th). These campaigns serve to not only generate foot traffic into local businesses, but to educate the public about the importance of supporting local businesses to help shift their consumer decision making process. These campaigns are particularly important during the holidays, when big

spending decisions are often made.

Here are some great statistics as part of our BC Buy Local Week campaign that demonstrate the impact that shopping at local small businesses can have on a community.

SHOP LOCAL TO LOWER TAXES



Local businesses put less demand on our roads, sewers, and safety services than most chain stores and also generate more tax revenue per sales dollar, helping to keep your taxes lower.

SOURCE: AMERICAN INDEPENDENT BUSINESS ALLIANCE

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SHOP LOCAL TO CREATE JOBS



As of December 2015, the Canadian economy had more than one million businesses with employees. 97.9% of these were small businesses, employing more than 8 million people in Canada every year, which is more than 70% of the labour force.

SOURCE: KEY SMALL BUSINESS STATISTICS, GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

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SHOP LOCAL TO BUILD INFRASTRUCTURE



Local businesses pay income taxes, contributing to essential services like health care and transportation services. They also pay property taxes and municipal levies, providing much-needed revenue for Canada's growing cities.

SOURCE: LOCO BC

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SHOP LOCAL TO BE TREATED LIKE ROYALTY



Some of the benefits of shopping with local small businesses include creative solutions, flexible delivery, better customer service and response time, and decreased environmental impact.

SOURCE: BUYING LOCAL - TOOLS FOR FORWARD-THINKING INSTITUTIONS

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SHOP LOCAL TO SUPPORT CHARITIES



Local businesses invest where they live. The 1,500 businesses participating in the Love Northern BC program collectively support more than 2,000 unique charities.

SOURCE: LOVE NORTHERN BC

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Small northern B.C. businesses are already seeing results from their participation in this program. The program connects locals to learn more about what is available in their own towns, helps new businesses get established within their local business environment and exposes established businesses to new markets. Here are some testimonials to the power of local:

Dejacali Wellness Services, Love Fort St. John

<http://lovefortstjohn.com/businesses/dejacali-wellness-services>



Debra Rees recently began her massage therapy business focused on eldercare. With the support of the Love Fort St. John community champion, Lilia Hansen from the Fort St. John and District Chamber of Commerce, Debra is a proud member of Love Fort St. John.

“I just started my own business in February of this year. With limited income for advertising, the Love Fort St. John initiative was a welcome and affordable option,” says Debra Rees, owner of Dejacali Wellness Services. “The exposure through Love Fort St. John alone has been positive and beneficial. The opportunity to mingle with other business

owners has been great too. I feel like I have support and help to succeed!”

Heartstrings Decor, Love Smithers

<http://lovesmithers.com/businesses/heartstrings-home-decor>



In Smithers, Heartstrings Décor is located in a quaint log frame building with gorgeous mountain views and has been in business since 2003. Co-owner Sherri Matthews says it’s no secret that Heartstrings is popular with locals, but their Love Smithers online profile has given them an edge to attract international shoppers.

“A few months ago, a German couple came into our shop and when I asked them how they found us, they mentioned that they used lovesmithers.com to find a place to stay and everywhere they wanted to shop! They said they knew right away that Heartstrings would be their first shopping destination based on the pictures alone!”

Thomas Greene, Traditional Haida Carver, Love Haida Gwaii

<http://lovehaidagwaii.com/businesses/thomas-greene-traditional-haida-carver>



Born and raised in Skidegate, Thomas Greene worked in fishing, commercial diving and tree falling, but found his true calling as a Haida jewellery maker. He never could have anticipated the impact his Love Haida Gwaii profile would have on his practice.

Before his profile went online, he had never seen his work displayed online and had no web-based presence whatsoever. A few months after his profile went online, he called the Trust to share his excitement as he had received his first online order for a set of wedding rings. Soon after, Northern Development's Director of Business Development, Renata King, was facilitating a workshop in Hudson's Hope and was sharing Tom's story. A participant in the room stood up to exclaim that those rings were in fact for her wedding, illustrating how the program can introduce fellow northerners to each other.

Thanks to his web profile, Tom now receives orders from overseas for his jewellery.

Explore hundred of projects...

and connect with the people who are building their communities and a stronger regional economy in central and northern BC.

Share Your Story...

Do you have an update or personal story about a project undertaken in central and northern BC that has made a positive difference for you, your family, or organization?