

NETWORKING | Joining the Board of Trade can help your business grow

Four entrepreneurs share their experiences in the Small Business Council

For small business owners, networking is among the greatest challenges of growing their business. Building relationships with other business owners creates a platform that facilitates the exchange of ideas as well as services based on trust and good faith.

As your network grows, so does your client base, as more individuals learn what your business is about and as an owner becomes more adept at managing, marketing and growing that business.

Business strategist Pauline O'Malley became a Member of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade 20 years ago when she volunteered to help increase membership among young people in business.

"From that task force of remarkable business and student members, the Leaders of Tomorrow mentorship program was born, and one of my proudest honours was to serve as its founding chair," she says.

More recently she joined the

Board of Trade's Small Business Council. "I was able to foster a surprisingly fast and deep connection with its members," says O'Malley. "The synergy between them is quite amazing: sentences don't even need to be finished as members are nodding their heads in agreement. There's an openness to learn, listen and benefit from the insights of others."

Corin Gutteridge, owner of Formever, joined the Small Business Council hoping to network and potentially generate new leads.

"There's strength in the unity of voice and I was happy to get involved with an organization that represents the voice of small business," says Gutteridge. "One unexpected benefit was the feeling of community in the SBC. The SBC provides me with a group of peers with whom I can 'talk shop' and discuss business and related issues. This enriches my work life, shows me other ways to approach problems, sparks new



Dr. Grace Lee, Corin Gutteridge, Chris Milton, and Pauline O'Malley are all Members of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade's Small Business Council. Each has benefitted from the program in different ways | GREG HOEKSTRA

ideas and provides me with new resources."

Chris Milton, co-founder of Tangle Creative, joined the Board of Trade in his final year of university with the goal of building his personal network. As a student, the experience had a tremendous impact on him, such that it made sense to stay on after he graduated.

"As a small business owner, having access to decision makers was our goal for joining the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, and it's been a great opportunity for business development," he said. "For example, in the last quarter we've gained four new clients. That makes the membership worthwhile, and makes it a profitable endeavor."

Dr. Grace Lee was invited to a Board of Trade lunch meeting prior to joining and recalls feeling energized by the people she met and the keynote address. Later, when a Board of Trade account executive called to inform her about the Company of Young Professionals program for those under 35, she joined immediately.

"I've always enjoyed business networking and as an entrepreneur I truly value the experience of interacting with the business community," says Lee.

Today she's in her third year as chair of the Small Business Council communications subcommittee and said she remains amazed by the talent and brilliance of new members she meets.

"My experiences serving the Small Business Council program have contributed to my knowledge of local small business policies, and nurtured my passion to advocate for those who struggle in this uncertain economy." **SB**

Want to learn more about the Small Business Council? Watch the video at boardoftrade.com/SBC.



Welcome to some of our newest members

Companies

Shane Todhunte
14 Oranges Software Inc.

Jeff Roby
Aequilibrium Software Inc.
aequilibrium.ca

Maz Artang
Aughdem Recruitment
aughdem.com

Chris Arthur
Balfour Beatty Investments
balfourbeattyinvestments.com

Ross Wheatley
Heritage Office Furnishings Ltd.
heritageoffice.com

Brenda Broughton
Broughton Consulting Group

Roger Phillips
Custom & Contract Hospitality
Resource Group

Daniel McIntyre
Daniel B. McIntyre Law Corp.

Lisa Barakzai
DLC Casa Mortgages
dlcmortgageangel.com

Kerry Anne Sheehan
Gentis Water Company
gentiswater.com

Lee Crockett
Global Digital Citizen Foundation
globaldigitalcitizen.org

Henry Soo
Gold Ocean Capital Corp.
goldoceancorp.com

Dean Yano
Grand & Toy
grandandtoy.com

Bob Hans
Hans Group
hansgroup.ca

James Devenish
FIRMA Foreign
Exchange Corporation
firmafz.com

Mikayla Voth
Optis Consulting
optisconsulting.com

Nadin Elkhali
Peregrine House School
peregrinehouseschool.com

Individuals

Randy Craddock
Sohale Shikarpuri
Shaurya Chhikara

Parul Sahi
Andrew Forsyth

Brandon Hillier
Samantha Liang
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Lucien Lu
Eric Zhu

Iana Baiman
Ian Luo

Lucas Musa
Jeremy Choy
Lexi Soukoroff
Emile Scheffel

Leadership loves company