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“WHY SO SERIOUS?”



Jim Bence
President/CEO
Hospitality Saskatchewan

In March of 2020, the whole world whispered “Houston, we have a problem”. As the contagion did its death race across the globe, we wondered if this was Armageddon? Thunderstruck I looked at my dog and said “Toto, I’ve a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore”.

Glued to our network of news outlets, we wondered if this was the apocalypse now or would it come later. Many a night I would scream at the tv “Whachu-talkin’-bout Willis, this can’t be right?”

And as the science unfolded and the animal planet grew more anxious, the truly unbelievable started to happen. 2 very disparate groups began to emerge regarding the mask, and a war of these worlds exploded in front of our very eyes. At complete odds with each other, each group claimed to have all the facts ma’am and that the other faction just couldn’t handle the truth.

Yes, yes, I know, you are mad as hell and not going to take it anymore and I appreciate that you are all on a raft of defiance. No matter, as we were all eventually thrown overboard, we became castaway’s looking for das boot to save us. Seeing how truly screwed we were, all I could think was that “at this rate, we’re gonna need a bigger boat.”

But we in Saskatchewan, all things considered, are living a semi charmed kinda life. We were, for the most part, allowed to keep our doors open to earn what money we could. Every morning we got up, and although nothing gets us down, we wondered where have all the cowboys gone? We need revenues! It felt, during these fast times, that all we were living on was a prayer

When the government announced an easing of restrictions, it was Dy-no-mite and the sound of music to our ears! Not everyone decided to throw the doors open right away though. Every operator thought to themselves “You’ve got to ask yourself one question: “Do I feel lucky?” For many the answer was immediate and obvious, open those doors and scream at the top of their lungs “show me the money!”

As the first customers trickled back in, they would say “much appreciation that you are open”. So grateful that they had decided to return, we happily replied “You had me at hello”. Consumer confidence was slowly returning, and folks were starting to travel around the province a little more, discovering that there really was no place like home. They were back to wishing John Boy a good night in our hotel rooms and exclaiming “NORM!” when our regulars returned to our bars.

But as the world was becoming more confident, the 2 camps became more divided. Digging in their heels, the one group resisted and claimed that nobody puts Baby in a corner. As masks were mandatory, some of this group would angrily take out their frustrations on staff saying things like “go ahead, make my day” or “keep the change ya filthy animal”. Alas, we were now experiencing in real life terms that every rose has its thorns.

Offering their perspective on mandates and how their rights were being infringed upon, all I could think was “frankly my dear I don’t give a damn.” and that I guess in this society, being a jerk makes you worthy of our time. Not so.

Oh, behave people! It’s not good enough to say, “I’m not crazy, I’ve just been in a very bad mood for 40 years.” Some days it makes operators and staff regret that of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world, she walks into mine.

Why can’t people engage the bartender with “Say hello to my little friend” and request a martini, shaken, not stirred. How lovely it would be if her companion would say “I’ll have what she’s having”. That’s a far cry from “A bartender once tried to test me. I ate his liver with some fava beans and a nice Chianti.” Maybe what we have is simply a failure to communicate?

We are getting through it though, and we see it daily as we work towards getting back together and gathering again. Last year we had to cancel our conference and trade show, but we said loud and proud "Don't you forget about me, cuz I'll be back!" We knew that if we built it, they would come. One day we would again look to the skies and shout "De plane! De plane!" and welcome visitors back to our airports and our show.

I can't wait to say, "Please allow me to introduce myself" and join our delegates in celebrating the return of our extravaganza. Hearing old friends shout "Stella, hey, Stella!", and get the reply "Yo, Adrian, who loves ya baby?!?" See friends shaking hands saying "how do you do?" and "sit here and tonight won't you please be my neighbor?" I ache to once again hear Lawson call his buddy bad names and hear Denis retort "I know you are but what am I?"

Yes, it's time to gather again and make a big splash. Dining on fried green tomato's while supping on a tequila sunrise, we will do our best to not get too goonie on all the love in the room.

As all we really want to do is live long and prosper, we know that there are only 2 options if we want to survive: Do or do not. There is no try. We will meet each new wave of the virus with a sturdy "hello darkness my old friend" and we shall overcome. Carpe diem, we will seize the day and bid this disgusting disease hasta la vista baby.

Yippee-ki-yay brothers and sisters, throw your hands in the air and give me a hallelujah! Life is beautiful and it's time for us to get back to living our best lives. To infinity and beyond!

"2 free delegate passes to the first person who correctly identifies how many movie, tv or song references are in the article".



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“GATHER AGAIN 2021”

After an 18 month wait, and with tremendous excitement, Hospitality Saskatchewan is pleased to announce our very first tourism industry association conference. This year’s inaugural event will be held September 27, 28, 29, 2021 at the World Trade Centre Prairieland Park in Saskatoon.

This “Must Attend Event” will include 3 days of informative sessions, networking opportunities, and tradeshow. Featuring a wide variety of exhibitors that supply goods and services to the hospitality & tourism industry, operators will save time and money by shopping, sampling, and discovering the latest solutions from top suppliers to the industry.

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GATHER AGAIN



Hospitality & Tourism Industry Conference and Tradeshow

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2021

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 27TH

3:00–3:45pm Annual General Meeting
The purpose of the Annual General Meeting is to receive reports, approve the 2020 audited SHHA Financial Statement, vote on resolutions and vote in the election of new directors (that have been received and filed prior to the meeting.)

4:30–6:00pm Brewers' Reception
Brewers invite you to enjoy their complimentary beverages as you visit with colleagues.

6:00–8:00pm Delegate Dinner
with special guest Hon. Jeremy Harrison
*Minister of Trade and Export, Development;
Minister of Immigration and Career Training;
Minister Responsible for Innovation Saskatchewan;
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan*



TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 28TH

8:00–9:00am Breakfast

9:00–10:00am Introduction
Jim Bence, President & CEO Hospitality Saskatchewan
Opportunities in Times of Change
Jonathan Potts, CEO Tourism Saskatchewan

10:00–11:00am Hotel Financial Literacy
David Lund
Create hotel teams who know how to Increase profit. David Lund is The Hotel Financial Coach, a hospitality financial leadership pioneer. He has held positions as Regional Controller, Corporate Director and Hotel Manager with an international brand for over 30 years. David authored an award-winning workshop on financial leadership and has delivered it and others to hundreds of hotel managers.



TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 28TH CONTINUED



10:00–11:00am Covid-19 Recovery Update for Employers

Brent Matkowski, Partner MLT Aikins

Overview of the latest legal topics impacting your workplace such as vaccination policies, disclosure of vaccination status, and the ongoing impact of COVID-19.

Brent Matkowski assists employers with labour and employment law matters including labour relations, human rights, occupational health and safety, certification, collective agreement negotiation, workers' compensation, employment standards, employment contracts, employer policies and discipline.

10:00–11:00am Niche and Passionate Markets

Presented by Tourism Saskatchewan

People who travel to pursue their passions often stay longer and spend more money. Learn the value of attracting niche and passionate markets and why Tourism Saskatchewan is targeting niche-based travellers to ensure long-term growth of the industry. Presenters: Amy McInnis and Jeannette Lye



10:00–11:00am Economic Development

Christian Boyle, CEO Glyph Creative Strategy, a strategic consulting agency, focusing on helping communities develop strong sustainable tourism

Recovery for established and start up rural attractions.

Seizing Opportunity – Investing in tourism as a foundation for economic growth

COVID-19 has changed travel, Saskatchewan and its communities can benefit from these changes. Learn why now is the right time to invest in tourism and how tourism can support growth and investments in other industries and sectors.

11:00–12:00 Goodbye Stress. Hello Life! Reclaim your power and start living for YOU

Allan Kehler, Mental Health Advocate.

Drawing from his own experiences, Allan will inspire you to persevere through your personal challenges rather than avoiding or escaping them. You will be encouraged to take an honest look at what lies beneath your stress and be provided with tools to heal through a holistic approach.

Allan is a mental health advocate, international keynote speaker, and best-selling author of four books. His writing has been published in countless national magazines and he has been featured on several television and radio programs. He has also instructed various mental health related courses at the college level and spent years working as an addiction counselor and clinical case manager.



11:00–12:00 Identifying Local Talent to Diversify Tourism Potential

Presented by Tourism Saskatchewan

Every Saskatchewan community offers visitors something unique. Learn how to enlist community ambassadors and build on local talent, knowledge or expertise to enhance tourism in your area.

Presenter: Corrina Kapeller





Lunch**Keynote Address**

Beth Potter,
President & CEO Tourism Industry Association of Canada
Beth Potter is an accomplished leader with over 35 years of diversified provincial, national association experience, and close to 20 years in the tourism sector. In March of 2021, Beth joined the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC), with a vision to heighten the awareness of the industry across Canada, and to strengthen the organization's advocacy objectives and results as the sector works through and post the COVID-19 pandemic. At the international level, Beth is an active member of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) COVID-19 Taskforce and Government Affairs working group.

As a testament to her leadership in the industry, Beth was recently named one of the Top 50 Women in Travel by the Global Business Travel Association.

1:00–2:00pm Hotel Financial Literacy

David Lund

1:00–2:00pm Forging the Future of Indigenous Tourism in Canada – Build Back Better

Keith Henry, President & CEO.
The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada.

Keith Henry has become an international Indigenous cultural tourism leader receiving Indigenous recognition as the former CEO for Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (AtBC). In April 2014, the inaugural World Indigenous Tourism Alliance award recognized the work of AtBC and Mr. Henry's leadership. Mr. Henry has been spearheading the growth of authentic Indigenous tourism in Canada as he worked to redevelop the national Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada as elected chair when this organization incorporated in April 2015. In October 2015 Mr. Henry took the full-time role as the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada's President and CEO.

**2:30–3:30pm Dealing with Tourism's Systemic and Chronic Workforce Challenges**

Philip Mondor, President
Tourism HR Canada

Philip Mondor is a recognized labour market specialist with more than 25 years of experience. Recently, Philip was appointed to the Deputy Minister's Advisory Council, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and to the National Stakeholder Advisory Panel of the Labour Market Information Council. Philip is an advisory member of the Ted Rogers School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Ryerson University. He is a Board member of the Events Management Body of Knowledge, and a technical advisor to the International Network of Skills Sector Organizations.

**2:30–3:30pm Best Practices in Content Marketing**

Presented by Tourism Saskatchewan
Reaching consumers in a competitive and crowded marketplace requires businesses to be "always-on"—delivering valuable and engaging content to acquire new customers and gain their loyalty. Learn about best practices and the value of content marketing from Tourism Saskatchewan content creators and digital consultants.

Moderator: Elizabeth Braitenbach.
Presenters: Andrew Hiltz and Mitch Serbu



TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 28TH CONTINUED

4:00–5:00pm **Cyber and Privacy Risks in Hospitality**

Sponsored by Western Financial
Presented by Ms. Mouna Hanna
Partner, Dolden Wallace & Folick LLP

It is no secret that cyber threats continue to plague the hospitality industry. With a high volume of transactions and customers, hotels can be attractive targets for data breaches, ransomware, and other cyberattacks. This presentation will provide you with an overview of the current and emerging cyber security risks, the legal implications following a cyber attack or a data breach, and how you can be prepared.

Mouna Hanna is a Certified Information Privacy Manager (CIPM) designated through the International Association of Privacy Professionals and holds a Certificate in Privacy Law and Cybersecurity from Osgoode Hall Law School. She sits on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Defence Lawyers and on the Ontario Bar Association's Privacy & Access to Information Section committee. Mouna is also a contributing author of the book "Cyber Liability and Cyber Insurance in Canada", published by Thomson Reuters in 2020.



4:00–5:00pm **Building Your Business**

Tourism Saskatchewan Programs

Tourism Saskatchewan offers a number of programs to support tourism businesses, communities and events to be sustainable and profitable. Learn about funding programs for co-operative marketing, event sponsorship, and new experience development as well as the AWESome Experience Design Studio online course.

Presenters: Denise Stroeder and Nathan Morrison



5:30–10:00pm **Delegate Dinner & Entertainment**

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 29TH

8:00–9:00am **Breakfast**

9:00–10:00am **Managing Through Rising Food Prices and Chaos in the Food Supply Chain**

Greg Prokopowich,

Director of Business Resources, Sysco Canada

With over 30 years of Food Service Sales, Greg originally started up and lead the development of Sysco's Business Resources team over 17 years ago in Winnipeg. This team is now a regional team with members based in Regina and Winnipeg and is comprised of Business Resource Specialists whose primary focus is the health and business success of every Sysco customer. This passionate and driven consulting team is comprised of culinary, operational, marketing, and other industry expertise. They are not afraid to bring solutions and ideas to every business challenge associated with running restaurants.



9:00–10:00am **Covid-19 Saskatchewan Hospitality Industry Impact and Recovery Forecast**

Mark von Schellwitz, VP Western Canada, Restaurants Canada

Mark von Schellwitz's work on numerous public policy issues in BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan over the years has helped association members in the challenging foodservices industry grow and prosper. Mark continues to be a strong advocate for the hospitality industry and represents the industry on numerous small business and tourism related organization boards and committees. Mark is past Chairman of the Coalition of BC Businesses and of Go2 (BC's resource for people in tourism).





**10:00–11:00am Future of Craft Brewing in Saskatchewan
Where are we, and where are we going?**

Glenn Valgardson, General Manager,
Pile O' Bones Brewing Company

We are craft beer drinkers and award-winning home brewers. We know you only get out of a beer what you put into it. That's why we're committed to using the best quality ingredients we can get our hands on and treating them with respect. Whether it's malt and other grains, water, yeast or hops; we pay attention to every detail to ensure we're producing a quality craft beer for you.

**11:00–11:45am Well Made...Elevating the Customer Experience
with Conciere**

Presented by QUASEP

Presenter: Carlos Villarreal,
LeVecke International Sales Manager

In this session discover how your operations can elevate the quality of house drinks while increasing profit margins. Additionally, learn about the Conciere story and approach to creating a premium brand without the premium price tag. From vodka originating in America's heartland, using only locally-grown yellow corn, to rum produced in the Caribbean, Conciere sources the highest quality ingredients.



11:00–12:00 Managing Food Costs "Keep More Money in Your Jeans"

Greg Prokopowich,
Director of Business Resources, Sysco Canada

**11:00–12:00 Covid-19 Saskatchewan Hospitality Industry Impact and
Recovery Forecast**

Mark von Schellwitz,
VP Western Canada, Restaurants Canada

11:00–4:00pm Tradeshow

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YOU ARE NOT ALONE: MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR ALL

Financial struggles, tough economic times, family conflict, and relationship troubles can affect your mental health, and mental health problems can make these challenges even more difficult to navigate. Whether it is for yourself or someone else (an employee, co-worker, friend), there are supports in place that are accessible to you.

- Visit the Canadian Mental Health Association, Saskatchewan Division, website at www.sk.cmha.ca
- Visit Mobile Crisis Services online (www.mobilecrisis.ca) or call one of their helplines (306) 757-0127
- Farm/Rural Stress Line (800) 667-4442
- Healthline 8-1-1

Remember, you are not alone. If you have even the smallest question or concern, contact any of the resources listed above right away.



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STILL IN FLUX



Daniel Hirschhorn
Saskatoon Immigration &
Employment Consulting Inc. (SIECSI)

While there is still much we don't know about what the future will hold, what with a fourth wave and all, we can sure state with certainty that we have a severe labour shortage right now. This is affecting most industries, with some calling it the worst they've experienced.

So, what is happening in the world of immigration that will help you? Not much really. Last time I talked about long processing times. This hasn't changed sadly, and with the Afghanistan crisis taking away all available resources from our folks at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, it seems that the future holds even longer processing times. The only department that should not be affected by the recent crises is Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) the department responsible for assessing an employer's need for foreign workers, via the application process known as Labour Market Impact Assessment, or LMIA.

However, keep in mind that while you may seek and obtain approval for foreign workers via this LMIA process, if your selected workers are from a country needing a visa to enter Canada, the work permit processing times will then be a real issue. Ironically, you'll have to prove to an officer at ESDC that you have an 'urgent and immediate need' for labour, yet if approved, you may wait for 18 months for the worker to arrive anyhow.

There is light at the end of the tunnel however, as we are expecting the announcement of one of more pilot programs that may be of great interest to the Hospitality Sector. Stay tuned.

SADLY, THE PRICE OF COFFEE IS GOING UP!



Diane Cohoon
Tourism Industry Consultant

Anyone who purchases products for any business is finding challenges in getting supplies to meet customer expectations. Some Saskatchewan food and beverage operators report that as much as one third grocery orders may be backordered or simply not available and many products have seen significant price increases. If you sell beer, providing bottled or canned beer for customers with a brand that they are loyal to is a real challenge. Breweries apparently are able to produce the beer, but the bottles, cans, ink for the labels, boxes and glue are victims of the pandemic and its disruption to the supply chain. Hotels are finding it difficult and expensive to replace sheets, towels, mats and shower curtains.

Another big price hit is likely still coming. Coffee is going to be one of those products that is significantly more expensive. Some of this increase can be attributed to the pandemic and backlogged shipping. but the larger culprit for the price increase is the snow in Brazil. Brazil has been the largest world producer of coffee for the last 150 years. On July 26, for the first time since 1994, coffee, sugarcane and orange producers were blanketed with snow. A 60 kg bag of coffee beans that was \$77.30 from the grower in December was twice the price at \$154.60 in July and that is expected to increase.

Vietnam, Indonesia and Columbia contribute product to the coffee market as well. Columbia, the fourth largest producer, is in the midst of a drought, similar to ours in Saskatchewan adding to the shortage of beans.

GRATITUDE, TURKEY AND WINE



Doug Reichel
Doug Reichel Wine Marketing Inc.

It's interesting how wine and gratitude seem to travel together in so many cultures. Someone's life, some past event or circumstances, some present reunion of acquaintances, friends or family around a meal - all imply gratitude. Wine is at its best when it's communal, when it invites others to share and participate in what we're thankful for. Like other alcoholic beverages, wine is at its worst when it is used for avoidance and manipulation.

As well, feasting and gratitude often travel together. There's two turkey times per year in our home: Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Turkey is a challenge to pair with wine. More accurately, it's really all the other food items that accompany the turkey that present the "wild card" to good pairing with wine: jellied and nutty salads, creamed turnips and curried beans, lentils, sage with apple dressing, and Aunt Doris' pickled beets. Wow! How does one wine dance with all that?!

So, from my experience, here are some wine related tips for traditional turkey dinners and wine. First some cautions:

- Generally, big, dense red wines (Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, Merlot, etc.) are best paired with dense red meats, cheeses and thick cream sauces, not poultry.
- Cranberry sauces are to wine, what kryptonite is to Superman – deadly. Cranberry astringency will kill the most exquisite of wines. If they're on the plate, make sure you have some bread or a fork full of potatoes or dressing before you have a swallow of wine.

Here are the kinds of wines that can work nicely:

- Bright ripe fruit of quality Rieslings with varying amounts of residual grape sweetness
- Oaked Chardonnays (fermentation and/or maturing takes place in oak barrels) have a fruity and buttery quality
- Lighter, fruity reds like Pinot Noirs
- Drier style Rosé wines
- Drier style Sparkling wine, etc.

Enjoy.

Doug Reichel
Dougswines.com

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INTRODUCING THE NEW TOURISM SASKATCHEWAN CEO

By Kayla Guerrette



Jonathan Potts
CEO Tourism Saskatchewan

From a young age Jonathan Potts remembers having an interest in tourism. Growing up in Swift Current, his parents would often drive him and his siblings to the junction of Highways 1 and 4 and ask them which direction they wanted to go. With two-to-three weeks of holidays ahead of them, they would pick a direction and plan their trip while still riding in the car.

"I always had the travel bug and always had the notion of travel and discovery," said Potts.

As the new CEO of Tourism Saskatchewan, Potts has the chance to help others discover the travel bug and find great places to visit in the province. He recently succeeded Mary Taylor-Ash who retired as CEO at the end of June.

"I think what makes Tourism Saskatchewan so special is the fact that we represent Saskatchewan," said Potts. "This province is an amazing place; it's a place that is very near and dear to my heart, and I can tell you that for our staff here, it's also very near and dear to their hearts."

Shortly after completing his undergraduate studies in marketing, Potts taught English in South Korea at the Seoul National Tourism Interpretation Institute. He was able to help people who were entering the travel industry as inbound or outbound tour guides. These experiences, coupled with his marketing degree, rekindled his interest in tourism.

When he returned to Canada, he pursued an opportunity at a consulting firm in Saskatoon. Through the company he was able to complete a number of projects that involved the tourism industry in Saskatchewan.

"I had the opportunity to learn a lot more about travel and the tourism industry through this experience," said Potts. "I developed a lot of strong relationships and plenty of knowledge about the tourism industry."

This experience led him to Tourism Saskatchewan, where he became the Director of Industry Development in 2006. Four years later he transitioned to become the Director of Marketing and in 2014 he became the Executive Director of Marketing and Communications.

His leadership and expertise have been recognized by colleagues across the country and he has contributed to national committees. He has strengthened Saskatchewan's relationships with Destination Canada and other provincial and national partners. Last year he led the development of strategies for the recovery of Saskatchewan's tourism industry and a re-start of the visitor economy, post COVID-19.

When the pandemic hit, it pushed the team at Tourism Saskatchewan to sharpen their focus and while there have been challenges, Potts said it has been an honour to work with a team that is dedicated to working within the industry with such a positive outlook.

"Even the notion of travel during a pandemic is a beacon of hope for people," said Potts. "It was such a cathartic feeling when people were able to travel again and even just get out and support local businesses. It meant so much for people to get back out and experience some of the things they love."

After 15 years with Tourism Saskatchewan, Potts said it means a lot to him to know that he has been able to grow within the organization. It has been a great opportunity to work with so many great people throughout the industry.

Over the years Potts has got to know the staff, their challenges, and successes and that has helped him understand the strengths they bring to the industry. He intends to maximize these strengths for the industry in his new role.

"There's so many great things that already exist in our tourism industry," said Potts. "But there's more we can do and there's a real opportunity to position Saskatchewan even stronger on the national and world stage."

As Saskatchewan slowly finds its new normal, Potts hopes to help grow the industry to a \$3.6 billion industry by 2030. He added there will be plenty of growth in experiential developments and new opportunities for people to experience Saskatchewan in different ways.

There will also be a heightened focus on business travel, particularly in supporting sectors of strength in the province. He said Tourism Saskatchewan is looking closely at high yield niche markets that may have been untapped or underutilized by Saskatchewan in the past.

"We are really trying to build some areas of strength," said Potts. "It will help support the industry through good times and bad going into the future."

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