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Magazine

**Looking
forward...**

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In this issue



Manufacturing Civility

The world feels like it's never been more divided. The 'us vs them' mentality is all too often wreaking havoc on relationships, both personal and professional. But do you know how your own actions and words might be impacting the civility of your workplace?



Communicable disease & your business

Beyond COVID-19 there's influenza, hepatitis, and countless other illnesses that can be transmitted within the workplace. Explore the legal implications and your duty of care with our legal experts.



Lean and Green in Alberta

Manufacturers in Alberta are getting serious about being lean and green. How that looks, however, can be different for every company. Meet three businesses taking the lean and green message to heart and making a positive difference for industry and consumers.



Manufacturing. Revolutionized.

Whether you call it Industry 4.0, advanced manufacturing, or the fourth industrial revolution, one thing is clear – the business of manufacturing is changing and the pandemic has served to accelerate the agents of change.



The Next Generation

A boilermaker and steel fabricator with oil sands connections shares his journey into renewable energy and social enterprise. Learn about a movement of innovative tradespeople looking to transform Canada's energy landscape.



And the storm rages on

Turbulent doesn't even begin to describe the storm that rages around our world thanks to COVID-19. One of Canada's leading research virologists shares his take on the situation, the career-defining moments and why this illness is such a challenge.

Next issue

Beyond the City Limits - Manufacturing in the Prairies is not just a domain of the largest urban centres. We'll introduce you to manufacturers who are serving their customers and making their marks in cities, towns, and villages well beyond the big smoke of our Prairie metropolises.

Taking the runway by storm - Fashion is big business around the world. The Prairies are home to innovative fashion designers and manufacturers who are taking on the global runways and exhibitions from the heartland of Canada. From clothing to accessories, from footwear to fine millinery, Prairie fashion means business.

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Step back. Celebrate. Carry on.

Marking the decade year that has been and looking forward to whatever lies ahead

By Jeff Baker

Well... welcome to Day 294 of March 2020!
Wait, sorry... what's that?
It's December?!

forlorn sigh with tired laughter

Okay, so we're still in this, dear reader. But at least we're in this together.

I've often heard the pandemic situation described as not a sprint, but rather a marathon. This past week, though, I heard my province's top public health doctor describe it in a much more accurate way – it's not a marathon; it's an Iron Man.

The Iron Man description is definitely fitting. We're nine months into this pandemic, and it's been a long haul. Most parts of Western Canada hunkered down hard in the spring, loosened up a bit through summer, and perhaps our complacency led to the virus rearing its ugly head through the fall into winter.

We're past the swim and the full-length marathon; now we're into the endurance bike ride. There's still so much race left ahead of us, but we cannot let up our efforts, and we cannot give up before

the finish line – whenever and wherever it might be.

There's only one way to the finish line of this thing, and it's right through the middle of what is probably the toughest slog we're going to have to endure in most of our lifetimes.

While we're in this, we might as well focus on what we can control. In my case, it's the great line-up in store in this issue of *Prairie Manufacturer Magazine*.

In store

In our fall issue, we dove head-on into the COVID-19 pandemic response from manufacturers across the Prairies, and we explored how the industry was responding to the shock. This time, we're stepping back a bit from the pandemic focus, instead casting our gaze forward to what might lay in the 'after' times.

Our resident economist, Jayson Myers, uncovers how the industry performed over the summer and delves into the countless factors behind what is shaping up to be a very uneven recovery phase heading into winter. Not one to just

find the holes, Jayson offers us a glimpse of what might need to change as we move forward.

In a time when it feels like we've never been more divided, Christian Masotti from Civility Experts brings us insight and useful tips to bringing civility back into the workplace (not to mention society as a whole!) and shares the positive impact it can have on the workplace and our people.

What's that saying again? Never let a perfectly good crisis go to waste! Well, one boilermaker and steel fabricator with years of experience in the oil sands and beyond shares what he sees as a way forward for industry and workers as the globe transitions into deploying and using more renewable energy. It's not just a dream for Lliam Hildebrand and his organization, Iron & Earth; it's how we're going to thrive.

And because we just can't ignore the elephant in the room, we do have a bit of COVID-19 coverage in this issue. One of Canada's leading virologists and researchers working in the area of

emerging viruses and disease, Jason Kindrachuk, offers us his take on the virus, its origins, and our journey with it to date.

In addition, we're welcoming a number of new contributors and columnists into our pages to help you understand various aspects of this rapidly changing economy and industrial landscape. If you thought insurance and law were dryer than a box of saltines, our experts will quickly change your mind and give you some wonderful food for thought.

Looking ahead

As we close out our fourth year of publishing *Prairie Manufacturer*, we reflect on our journey. But we definitely don't rest on our laurels!

We're working hard right now to develop another great year of stories from

industry and partners across the Prairie region. By the time this issue lands in your mailbox, we're already working on our spring edition, but that doesn't mean we don't want your feedback.

Au contraire, mes amis... we love hearing from you, our readers, throughout the year. After all, many of our best stories come directly from you!

As you take time this holiday season to relax and reflect on your year, and as you look ahead at the year to come, I'd encourage you to share a story with us at *Prairie Manufacturer*. We love hearing from you, and we love to hear about the successes you're enjoying – no matter how big or small you might think they are.

From day one to now – and into the years ahead – *Prairie Manufacturer* is about your industry, your community, and is your magazine. It's our privilege to serve you.

From our family to yours

For now, that's it from my desk. I hope you enjoy the read.

Let me take this opportunity, on behalf of the entire *Prairie Manufacturer* team, to wish you, your teams, and your families the best of this holiday season – whatever tradition you celebrate and regardless of how different it might look.

I hope you can take time to connect with your loved ones wherever they may be, and you can make sure that the holiday spirit stays strong.

Be safe, be calm, and be kind to each other.

Until we chat again. f

There's still so much race left ahead of us, but we cannot let up our efforts, and we cannot give up before the finish line – whenever and wherever it might be.



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Manufacturing Civility

People treatment as a continuous improvement strategy

By Christian Masotti

As a manufacturing leader, you probably have a solid handle on your organization's processes and procedures when it comes to the actual production of your wares, and you're probably working a strategy of continuous improvement for these processes.

Ask yourself these questions, though: Is your company including your people and your people processes in your strategy for continuous improvement? Do you know the effect that your company culture is having on your productivity and your effectiveness?

Roughness poisons your culture

In traditional manufacturing environments, you often need to show you are not weak. Fitting in often requires being "rough" which might include engaging in what many perceive as uncivil behaviours:

- Swearing
- Calling people names
- Ignoring people
- Criticizing people in public
- Walking away when people are talking to you
- Shouting
- Demonstrating physical strength, e.g., punching a wall, stomping, making a fist
- Toughing it out when you experience small injuries
- Crowding others, e.g., getting into their personal space
- Overtalking and/or interrupting
- Rolling your eyes
- Gesturing rudely
- Shutting people down verbally
- Speaking in a harsh tone
- Taking a staunch stance, e.g., wide postures
- Failing to acknowledge others
- Avoiding showing softness, e.g., formal thank you, hugging, too much smiling
- Avoiding apologizing
- And generally, just not being nice.

Some of this behaviour might be understood as normal or acceptable by those who live in these organizations, but technically, these are uncivil behaviours which, when left unaddressed, collectively create a toxic work culture.

Sure, the noise, the time constraints, the stress, the union aspects, etc. all contribute to a what can be described as a toxic workplace culture, but the hard truth is that for the most part, the

lack of niceness is due to leadership (including supervisors and managers) and their respective attitudes toward what constitutes acceptable 'people treatment.'

Treat your people properly

People treatment is a term coined by my colleague, Lewena Bayer, that refers to an overall attitude about what constitutes a fair and good way of interacting with people. People treatment includes how you speak, nonverbal gestures, the extent to which you are empathetic, and how you define honesty and integrity. An individual's idea of positive people treatment can vary from one context to another.

In order to navigate the interpersonal dynamics of both the workplace and the world at large, each of us, but especially those of us in leadership positions, needs to be able to both convey positive people treatment and read cues and behaviours of others so that we can encourage civility in interactions.

The recommendation for manufacturing organizations, where command and control management style, and the often-associated negative verbal and nonverbal behaviours might be deeply ingrained, is to focus on social intelligence training. In a very short time, this strategic training can build skills such that there is immediate measurable impact to the workplace culture – specifically to the overall tone of communications.

Reading the room is critical

Social intelligence is the ability to read and effectively interpret verbal, nonverbal, tonal, and contextual cues. Social intelligence includes social radar (being present and paying attention), social style (the ability to adapt your approach to interaction), and social rules (knowledge of the unwritten and written guidelines that vary with context).

Social intelligence teaches people skills which can offset communication skills gaps, enable people who cannot problem solve on their own to ask questions, and builds trust such that people can collaborate more effectively.

Social Intelligence training enables people to:

- Read verbal, nonverbal, contextual, and situational cues to interpret the mood, motivation, and needs of others
- Exhibit nonverbal, verbal, and situational cues appropriately
- Be present, e.g., pay attention to what is going on around them
- Recognize when gestures, language, behaviour, or approach is grounded in culture, generation, or gender nuances

- Pick up on subtle changes in tone and behaviour, e.g., sense when a mood shifts
- Learn unwritten rules, e.g., unspoken and unwritten expectations for how to live in a certain environment, e.g., aspects of workplace culture
- Learn written and known rules, e.g., codes of conduct, regulation etc.
- Become self-aware of one's own social style
- Adapt one's social style to what is appropriate or required for a certain situation
- Adapt to change quickly by shifting social gears when necessary
- Respond to events calmly e.g., due to ability to anticipate and/or monitor
- Recognize the appropriate time to ask questions
- See aspects of personality that are otherwise unnoticed
- Send a positive first impression
- Make others feel at ease
- Build trust, e.g., due to paying attention
- Be a better listener
- Be cordial and approachable
- Show humility, e.g., recognize when help is needed
- Read emotions, e.g., be empathetic when needed

When leaders in manufacturing have high social intelligence combined with some experience interacting with others in the workplace context, for example, they know the general expectations for the workplace culture, they know the industry jargon, have some knowledge of the terms and processes, etc., they can apply their social intelligence in a way that fosters **social acuity**.

Indicators of social acuity

Leaders need to have high **social acuity**. That is, they need to have a keen social sense. They must be consistently accurate and timely in their perceptions and assessments of social settings. They need to know how to:

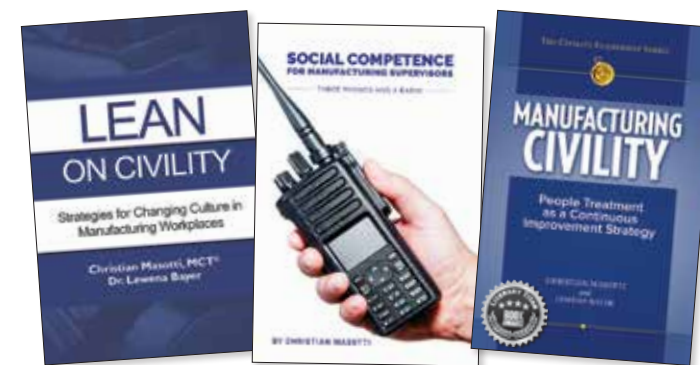
- Read contextual cues
- Be attentive to the nuances of workplace culture
- Navigate politics in union environments
- Identify who will be an ally and who will be a challenge
- Build trust
- Repair when a trust is broken
- Consider contextual aspects when timing everything from greetings, to feedback to workplace coaching and performance reviews

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“When we define people solely in economic terms, our motivational and incentive schemes tend to become mechanical and manipulative. We try to define a system that will idiot-proof the process, which can in turn make people feel like idiots.”

- Communicate in a way that leaves everyone involved in the interaction feeling valued
- Acknowledge differences that make a difference, e.g., related to gender, culture, generation
- Give timely and effective feedback
- Monitor and manage nonverbal cues to boost credibility and perceived competence
- Adapt supervisory approach and style to meet the needs of individual workers
- Apply adult learning principles
- Maintain credibility as a leader but still be perceived as approachable by the production team

One of the outcomes of high social acuity is a recognition that each individual in an organization has value. But we have to be careful not to attach only monetary value to individuals.

In *Doing Virtuous Business*, Theodore Roosevelt Malloch states that, “Every person has a fingerprint of personality and potential and desire to contribute. When we define people solely in economic terms, our motivational and incentive schemes tend to become mechanical and manipulative. We try to define a system that will idiot-proof the process, which can in turn make people feel like idiots.”

Value just from being

From a civility perspective, each individual of course has value as a human being. As such, every individual is deserving of respect just because he or she is human and on the planet. However, trust is something that must be earned and not every person is deserving of trust.

In terms of workplace value, individuals at all levels should be acknowledged for:

- Potential (amount of potential might vary)
- Intelligence (nature of intelligence might vary)
- Education (type and extent of education might vary)
- Social contribution (nature and volume of social contribution might vary)
- Experience (time on the job and type of experience might vary)
- Resilience (extent of resilience might vary)

All of these elements are aspects of value, but it is each individual's understanding of civility, and his or her choosing civility that enables us to recognize and appreciate these aspects of value.

Without civility, and without respect, people often fail to see the value of others. As such, it is important to also recognize the **Civility Quotient**.

- Civility commitment + civility competency = Civility Quotient

The idea is that when everyone in a workplace understands that each individual has value, overall civility and positive people treatment in the organization improves. ⁸

Christian Masotti is Director of Business Development with Civility Experts Inc. With decades of industry experience with some of the world's largest manufacturers, he is a continuous learner who combines technical skills in continuous improvement with social intelligence and cultural competence. He is author of Three Phones and a Radio, and co-author of Lean on Civility: Strategies for Changing Culture in Manufacturing Workplaces.

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MANUFACTURING STRATEGIES NEED ASSET MANAGEMENT!

Manufacturing Context

Manufacturing firms depend on plant equipment and infrastructure to produce consumer goods and deliver **stakeholder value**. Manufacturers create stable economic life and are collectively monitored at the macro-economic level. Manufacturing companies are asset, capital, energy, and data intensive. Their assets are complex with **long life cycles**, and asset changes are rare, difficult, and expensive. This, and other risk factors in their operating context, places their manufacturing strategies at significant risk.

Asset Management in the Manufacturing Context

Asset management is the **coordinated effort** by an organization to realize **value** from its assets. Value is delivered

through asset management decision-making. Asset management decisions such as asset investment prioritization and maintenance strategy underpin manufacturing strategies. Properly implemented, asset management offers benefits to manufacturers such as:

- **Improved financial health** through better decision-making, prediction of long-term funding needs, and lifecycle costs optimization.
- **Improved risk management** through better visibility and treatment of risks such as climate change, aging assets, and regulatory complexity. Further improving the ability to manage the business to the agreed risk appetite.
- **Improved stakeholder confidence** in organizational sustainability and governance.

Asset Management is a Key Success Factor

Asset management may well be the last line of defense against spiraling life cycle costs and other **manufacturing risks**. Many assets have been poorly maintained, with insufficient capital intervention, leaving many manufacturers ill-equipped to face today's business environment, one plagued with **volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity**. Many of the risks that manufacturers face require an asset management response. Adopting an asset management approach can help manufacturers maintain the crucial balance among **asset performance, manufacturing risks and costs** and manage future financial risks. ⁹

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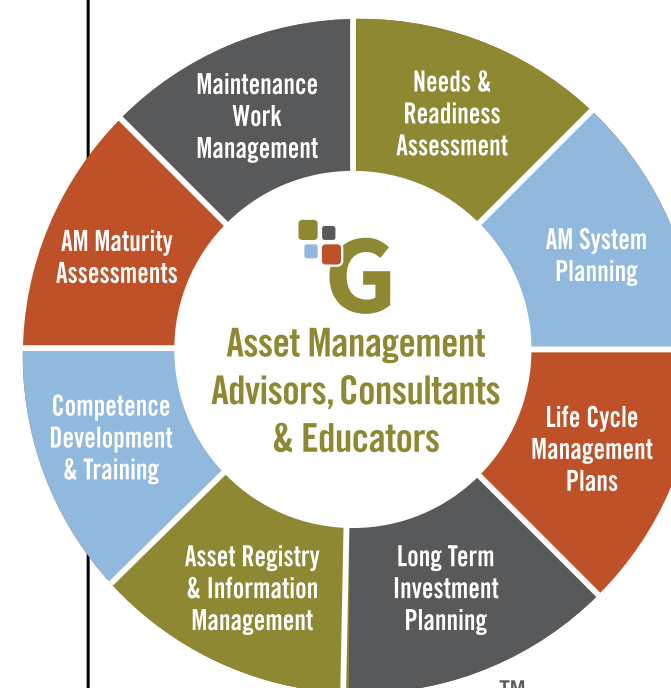
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The bumpy road behind us (and ahead, too)

What lies ahead for Prairie manufacturers heading into 2021?

By Jayson Myers

It's really hard to predict what 2021 has in store for Prairie manufacturers – or manufacturers anywhere for that matter. In themselves, sales and production data from September, the latest month for which statistics are available, tell us little about what lies ahead.

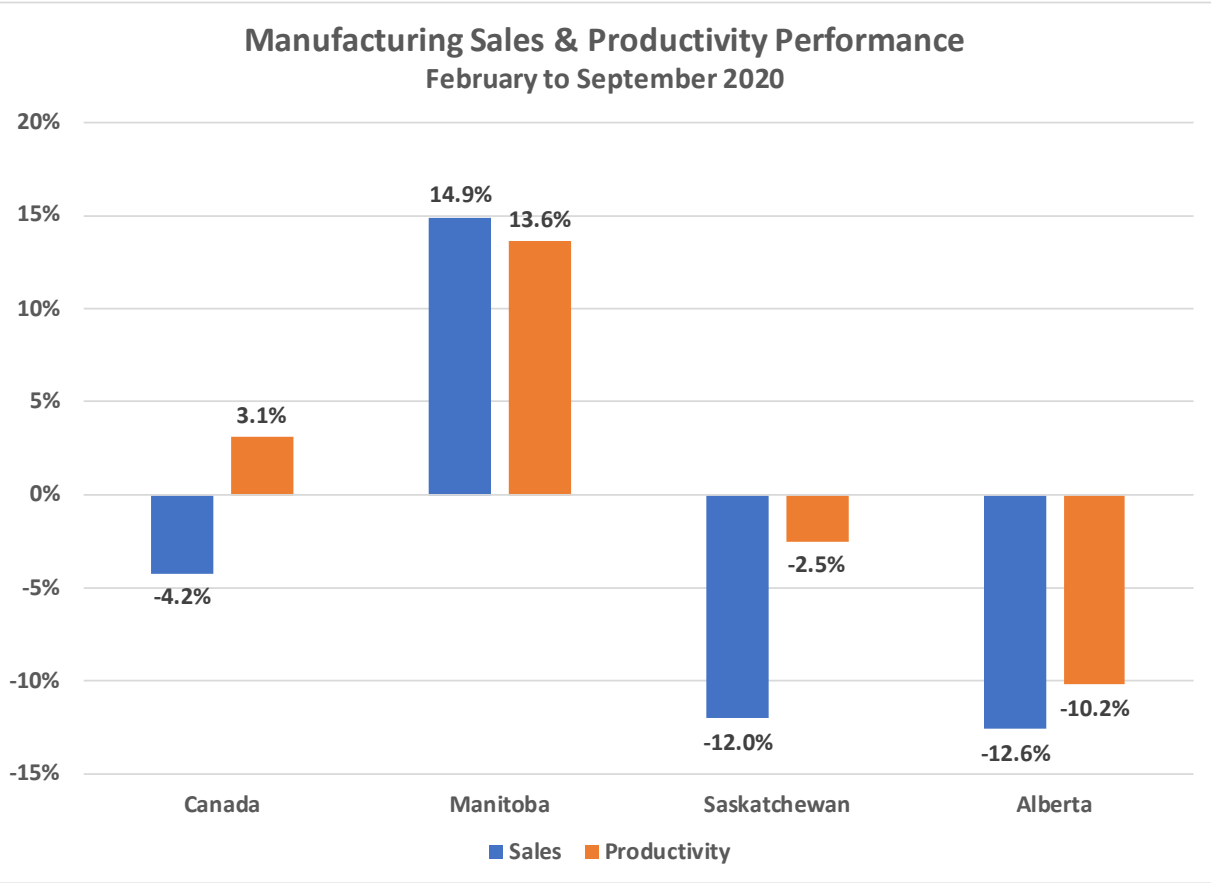
The impact of the second wave of COVID-19 is being felt immediately by every business across Canada. In some

sectors, customer demand has taken a second hit. Businesses are shutting down, some permanently. Supply chain risks are rising once again. At the same time, new opportunities are opening up for manufacturers flexible enough to pivot into new product lines and supply chains. Cash remains under tremendous pressure. Yet, investments in productivity improvements are necessary to take

advantage of new business opportunities, keep pace with innovation, and remain competitive, let alone grow. Those investments need to be well targeted and managed profitably in order to achieve desired business results.

The full extent of these impacts is not yet evident in economic statistics. Uncertainties around the duration of the pandemic, the prospect of future business

Uncertainties around the duration of the pandemic, the prospect of future business restrictions, and the resiliency of both customers and suppliers will persist well into 2021.



restrictions, and the resiliency of both customers and suppliers will persist well into 2021. Yet, it is possible to point to some trends both in market conditions and in the capabilities of manufacturers themselves which suggest that the outlook over the year ahead, while fraught


with risk, may be positive for some companies and industry sectors. Retail sales, for instance, provide a good gauge of the strength of consumer demand within Canada. Spending did take a hit as the first wave of the pandemic struck last March. More activity went

online. Canadian retail sales had fully recovered by June and were running almost four per cent above pre-COVID levels in September. The buoyancy of Canadian consumers, albeit aided by government wage supports, indicates that domestic demand is likely to remain

resilient for manufactured goods, and will probably be much stronger than either business investment or government procurement (except when it comes to medical products in the fight against COVID-19).

International demand for Canadian resources and manufactured goods will also continue to grow. The bad news is that Canada's export sales to the United States are likely to remain weak until the American economy gets over COVID-19. In September, they were still eight per cent below their pre-pandemic level. However, our merchandise exports to the rest of the world are proving to be much more robust. Exports to countries other than the United States had more than fully recovered by September. China is proving to be a particularly important market for Canadian merchandise exports, thanks to the rapid recovery and strong resurgence of economic and industrial growth in that country. Canada's exports to China were running a full 26 per cent above pre-pandemic levels in September, and they are on pace to grow rapidly over the year ahead as well.

The third early indicator of manufacturing performance in 2021 is productivity – or at least the gains in productivity that have been made by Canadian manufacturers over the past year. While overall manufacturing output in Canada was still running four per cent below pre-pandemic levels in September, labour productivity measured in terms of sales per employee was back to where it was at the beginning of 2020, just over three per cent higher than in September



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Productivity will have to increase dramatically if Alberta's manufacturing sector is to overcome its dependence on a weak oil market in 2021.

2019. That is one of the most rapid annual rates of growth in productivity that Canadian manufacturers have experienced in 12 years!

Manufacturing productivity has been boosted by process improvements made necessary by the pressures of the pandemic. They have also resulted from the more widespread deployment of digital technologies which have helped improve operating efficiencies and enhance flexibility allowing manufacturers to take advantage of new market opportunities. Further productivity improvements will be necessary for Canadian manufacturers to remain competitive and cash positive, and exploit emerging supply opportunities. Prospects for Canadian manufacturing are looking up for 2021, although they are not uniformly positive across the Prairie provinces.

Manitoba the strong

Manitoba is leading the entire country when it comes to the pace of its manufacturing recovery. Manufacturers in the province shipped \$1.765 billion worth of product in September. That is almost 15 per cent higher than in February, just before the pandemic struck!

Manufacturing growth is being led by the chemical sector (up 49 per cent since last February), transportation equipment (41 per cent

higher), machinery (up 29 per cent), food processing (12 per cent higher), and furniture (up 10 per cent). Plastics, wood products, fabricated metals, electrical equipment, and medical products have just about fully recovered. Other sectors, though, are not doing as well.

Year-to-date in September, manufactured exports from Manitoba were still running 0.8 per cent below levels recorded over the same period of time in 2019. Exports to the United States were down 3.7 percent, but exports to other countries were 13.2 per cent higher. Manitoba's exports of manufactured goods to China were up by a full 98 per cent on a year-over-year basis.

Manitoba's manufacturing productivity performance has been very strong over the past year as well. In September, sales per person employed were 14 per cent higher than at the beginning of 2020. Based on the potential for export growth and its record on productivity improvement, Manitoba's manufacturing sector is well positioned for growth into 2021, even with the uncertainties of COVID-19.

Saskatchewan hammered on multiple fronts

Overall, the situation is not as strong in Saskatchewan. In September, manufacturing sales in that province

totaled \$1.084 billion but were still running 12 per cent below pre-pandemic levels.

Although sales data are not as comprehensive as for other provinces, available statistics point to a very strong recovery in some sectors. Wood products were up 78 per cent from last February, machinery by almost eight percent, and chemicals by slightly over four per cent. Other sectors had still not recovered from the downturn earlier in the year.

The pandemic was only one of the factors that have hammered Saskatchewan manufacturers in 2020. The decline in oil prices and the impact that has had on the oil and gas sector in western Canada are also important constraints to growth that will continue into 2021.

Exports will continue to be a key determinant of manufacturing growth in the province over the year ahead, especially sales outside North America. On a year-over-year basis, the total value of manufactured goods exported from the province declined by 4.2 per cent during the first three quarters of 2020. Exports to the United States fell by 7.9 per cent, but exports to the rest of the world were up by almost six percent. Exports to China increased by 9.6 percent, while sales to Chile, Australia, and Hong Kong jumped by double digit rates.

However, lagging productivity performance may be a factor in holding Saskatchewan's manufacturing sector back from its full potential. In September, manufacturing labour productivity in the province was running 2.5 per cent below pre-pandemic levels.

Alberta needs serious productivity boost

The outlook for manufacturing in Alberta is not as strong as in Saskatchewan. Alberta manufacturers sold \$5.434 billion worth of goods in September, down 12.6 per cent from pre-pandemic levels.

Here too, some manufacturing sectors have been more resilient than others. Shipments of electrical equipment were 45 per cent, wood products 32 per cent, paper products and medical devices both 14 per cent, and food products two per cent higher than in February. Production of chemicals and plastics had just about recovered, but the entire petroleum sector and its extended supply chain remain depressed. In September, petroleum products were running 35 per cent lower than before the pandemic struck, fabricated metal products and machinery were down by 30 per cent, and sales of primary metals and computer equipment were both off by about 20 per cent.

Export performance has also been weak. Year to date in September, Alberta's exports of manufactured goods were still 13 percent lower than during the first three quarters of 2019. Exports to the United States were down 13.7 percent while those to the rest of the world had fallen by 12 per

cent. Alberta's high dependence on petroleum exports accounts for the lack of resiliency in markets outside the USA.

Manufacturing productivity has also taken a major hit in Alberta since the beginning of the year. In September, sales per person employed was a full 10 per cent lower than pre-pandemic levels. Productivity will have to increase dramatically if Alberta's manufacturing sector is to overcome its dependence on a weak oil market in 2021.

The digital outlook: deploying Industry 4.0 technologies

A recent survey undertaken by RK Insights of how Canadian manufacturers intend to deploy Industry 4.0 technologies in 2021 points to a more rapid adoption of digital technologies which will be critical for both driving productivity improvements and opening more opportunities for business growth.

The survey found that 62 per cent of manufacturers across the country are now deploying digital technologies, up from just over 50 per cent in 2019. The outlook for digital deployment is also very positive. By mid-2020, just about half of manufacturers already had automation and robotics systems in place. Another 24 per cent are intending to deploy automation systems in 2021.

Approximately 46 per cent of Canadian manufacturers were using digital technologies to capture data and monitor operations at the time of the survey; 41 per cent were connecting production processes

through digital networks; and 40 percent were using data analytics to improve operating efficiencies or enhance value for customers.

In 2021, the survey shows that technology deployment rates are expected to increase. Just over 79 per cent of manufacturers intend to use digital technologies to capture data and monitor performance, 76 per cent say they will have robotics and automation systems in place, 63 per cent will be deploying digital networks to connect production processes, and 59 per cent say they will be using data analytics in their business.

These rates of technology adoption may be aspirational – a great deal depends on the business case for investment and the ability of companies to manage these technologies in a productive and profitable way. Nevertheless, the outlook for future productivity growth across Canada's manufacturing sector is very positive.

If the past year is any indication and the outlook for technology deployment is at least half correct, improvements in productivity will be the most important factor behind the business success of Canadian and Prairie manufacturers in 2021. 🦋

Jayson Myers is CEO of Next Generation Manufacturing Canada - the country's advanced manufacturing supercluster. An award-winning business economist and leading authority on technological change, Myers has counselled Canadian prime ministers and premiers, as well as senior corporate executives and policymakers around the world.

Communicable Disease in the Workplace

If your employee is sick, you may be the one coughing up

By Brittany Goodman & Jeff Palamar

This year more than ever our conversations have included the words 'communicable disease.' In response to the rapidly increasing impacts of COVID-19, individuals, businesses, governments, and industries have all been scrambling to learn and adapt.

Public health-mandated restrictions have changed well-established operations in fundamental ways. Manufacturing as an industry plainly does not lend itself to employees working from home. How to safely and legally have employees come into the workplace leads to various concerns for manufacturers and their employees alike and raises many challenging liability-related questions.

One of the toughest questions when considering liability is whether the communicable disease is work-related.

No employer wants to be the actual or perceived source of risk for its employees. Many cases of COVID-19 are not contracted or spread in the workplace, and just because an employee becomes ill does not necessarily mean that has anything to do with the workplace and make the employer liable. If the employer has failed to do what is required, fairly or not, there is a greater likelihood the employer will be blamed. On the other hand, if the employer has done what is required, the likelihood of blame decreases.

With this in mind, there are four main legal grounds for potential liability that manufacturers must consider: **workplace safety & health, negligence, human rights, and privacy rights.**

Workplace Safety & Health

Both employers and employees have an obligation to ensure the health and safety of their workplace under workplace safety and health legislation. Apart from specific legislated requirements applicable to the specific industry, these obligations include taking reasonable steps to protect employees from a contagious disease such as COVID-19.

Employers have the ability to control some aspects of that environment, and the inability to control others. Manufacturers are required to do what they reasonably can regarding what they can control.

For example, this would include creating barriers between workstations, requiring masks, mandating frequent hand washing, disinfecting high traffic areas, and controlling how people move, interact, and gather. These should sound familiar this far into a global pandemic and are common sense for many, but for manufacturers this is more than common sense, they are legal requirements. It's your responsibility to ensure there are protocols in place, your staff are aware of those protocols, they are required to follow these protocols, and there are disciplinary consequences for failing to do so.

Review & update

What we know about COVID-19 is changing, and so best practice is that your policies are reviewed and updated regularly as our knowledge changes, because you clearly would not be taking reasonable steps if your policies were based on outdated knowledge. Employees

need to be trained on and informed of those evolving policies, which should be in written form and readily available for employees to reference in an easy to access place.

Under workplace safety and health legislation, workers have the right to refuse work they reasonably believe constitutes a danger to their safety and health, or that of another person should they perform the task. This includes a disease like COVID-19. If these concerns are raised by an employee, manufacturers have the legal responsibility to treat the objection like they would an objection to any other workplace hazard.

The consequences for failing to ensure a safe workplace can be significant. In Manitoba, for example, an inspection officer can impose improvement or stop-work orders, and prosecution for offences can lead to fines for a first offence of not more than \$250,000, in the case of a continuing offence, to a further fine not exceeding \$25,000 for each day during which the offence continues, and for a second or subsequent offence up to double that.

The Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba requires that workplace injuries resulting in time missed from work or certain medical treatment be reported within five business days. It's not always clear when a case of COVID-19 may be work-related, but if it is, it must be reported within that timeline. The Workers Compensation Board will consider each claim on a case-by-case basis to determine if a worker contracted the virus as a result of an exposure arising during the course of their employment.

Human Rights

If an employer is actually or should be aware of any particular physical or mental vulnerability (whether COVID-19-related or otherwise), or perceives one,

Manufacturers and industrial businesses negotiate a constantly evolving competitive and regulatory landscape.



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Employers have the ability to control some aspects of that environment, and the inability to control others. Manufacturers are required to do what they reasonably can regarding what they can control.

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there may be a duty to accommodate the person in question to the point of undue hardship based on human rights law. This can trigger a legal obligation to proactively inquire of the employee to obtain information and search for solutions. Failure to do so can lead to a human rights claim, and liability even if the employer did not intend to discriminate but rather quite innocently failed to live up to its obligations.

Negligence

While employees cannot sue an employer for negligence if the workplace is covered by the workers compensation system, third parties such as customers, could. Some jurisdictions like Ontario and British Columbia have begun to take steps to protect individuals, businesses or other organizations against COVID-19 exposure related lawsuits if they have made an honest effort to follow public health guidelines. This kind of legislative change has not yet been introduced in Manitoba but may offer some protection in other jurisdictions. Still, wherever you operate, taking all reasonable steps to protect everyone from communicable diseases in your workplace is the best practical solution.


There is no doubt this era marks a unique and challenging time for employers, their employees, and their customers.

Privacy

Employees have a right to privacy regarding their personal and medical information. When collecting or disclosing any personal health information employers must be careful to respect such privacy rights. This of course has to be balanced against the need to take reasonable steps to ensure a safe workplace for others. Most likely an employer would be obliged to disclose the fact of a positive test but not necessarily the identity of the individual who tested positive. While it would depend on the details, that disclosure might have to extend to describing where and when the person worked. In a smaller workplace this might have the practical effect of identifying the individual, which arguably makes the employer liable for violating that employee's privacy.

Asking employees for their consent is the simplest way to avoid any liability problems with privacy concerns. It is important to remember though, when asking an employee to consent to the sharing of their personal or health information, they must be free to refuse.

Keep health and safety a priority

There is no doubt this era marks a unique and challenging time for employers, their employees, and their customers. Manufacturers should of course be aware of their specific legal obligations and the potential liabilities that arise from those obligations. Beyond that though, the priority should be on doing whatever reasonably can be done to promote health and safety. Everyone doing their best to keep workplaces safe will go a long way to getting all of us through this. 

Brittany Goodman and Jeff Palamar are members of the Labour and Employment Law Practice Group at the Winnipeg law firm, Taylor McCaffrey LLP. They focus on helping employers thrive by finding creative and proactive solutions to the challenges they face. Since 2008, Jeff has been listed in the peer-selected Best Lawyers in Canada in his field.

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Lean and Green in Alberta

*Companies across the sector are
reducing their environmental
impact while growing their business*

By J.D. Baldwin



Many manufacturers in Alberta are getting serious about being lean and green. How that looks, however, can be different for every company.

Even companies servicing and supplying the manufacturing sector are getting behind the movement, and they're ready to work with manufacturers to tackle environmental challenges head-on.

Meet three companies who are taking the message to heart and making a positive difference for industry and consumers across the province and beyond.



PHOTO CREDIT: JANA HANOVA / SWIRLTEx

Swirltex

When you think of wastewater, you might not necessarily think 'innovation' at first. Calgary's Swirltex is trying to change that.

Dealing with wastewater – such as sewage effluent, produced water from oil and gas extraction, process water in food & beverage production, and even pond water – is an absolute necessity in today's industrial environment. While the need to effectively manage wastewater has not significantly changed, Swirltex has set out to change how companies do it and help them do so more efficiently.

Swirltex isn't a new filter material. Rather, it's a new way to move the wastewater through existing filtration media.

"We change the way the water moves before it gets to the filter, and we do this using less power than a traditional system," says Swirltex CEO, Melanie McClare.

"The system separates solids and liquids based on buoyancy," says McClare. "We manipulate the contaminants in the water to keep them away from the filter membrane, and this lets more of the water through and keeps the filter cleaner longer."

McClare says, "with our technology, we're able to deploy membranes where they were previously uneconomical. We can use fewer membranes to achieve full results, and we can process more water for the same amount of input."

Swirltex is still in the early stages of the business, but McClare says the company is ready to take on more and more challenges.

"We're selling wastewater treatment as a service to companies, as opposed to the traditional capital expenditure for customers. We can deploy our systems seasonally, if needed, and we can come in to do a retrofit on existing systems and provide a polish on the back end of existing infrastructure."

Alberta Apparel

It was around 2015 when Calgary's Thomas Mo decided to do something about all the mass-produced throwaway clothing – often sold to tourists – that he found in shops across Alberta.

Having garments manufactured in low-cost jurisdictions, emblazoned with imagery and slogans from his home province in other offshore locations, then sold for rock-bottom prices in local shops just didn't sit right with Thomas or his peers.

It was Thomas's desire to change this situation that was the genesis of Alberta Apparel.

"It was a no brainer to source Canadian-manufactured clothing," says Mo.

About 80 per cent of the company's expenditures are in Canada, and that's about the highest proportion that can be reasonably done in this country, according to Mo.

"Textile manufacturing is about

volume – unless you're doing something really boutique and niche," says Mo. "There used to be textile plants in Canada, but the industry has shifted



PHOTO CREDIT: THOMAS MO / ALBERTA APPAREL

and every brand is buying from the same small number of factories."

While the raw material for many of their garments still comes from abroad, Mo explains that all the design, cutting, sewing, decoration, and packaging is done in Canada.

"The high value work is being done domestically," says Mo. "We're keeping as much of the production as close as possible to the customer."

Asked about his company's ethos, Mo says, "It's important to us to be local and to educate people on not just the clothing industry, but the Canadian clothing industry and manufacturing industry overall."

Instead of trying to compete with the 'fast fashion' brands like H&M, Zara, and other international behemoths, Mo says Alberta Apparel is finding a niche in the higher end of the market.

"Our products are going to be a bit more expensive because they're made in Canada, but they're definitely much higher quality and will last more than a single season," explains Mo.

"Our customers are our ambassadors, and they know the difference that Canadian-made clothing can make from a financial and environmental standpoint. The pieces they're buying are going to be a part of their wardrobes for a number of years."

SPONSORED CONTENT

Clean and green manufacturing is finding a home in Parkland County and throughout Alberta

Located 20 miles west of Edmonton, Parkland County is home to about 31,000 residents and over 1,500 businesses. With one of the lowest tax regimes in Western Canada, its cost-competitive land options, proximity to resources, a skilled labor force and direct access to key markets and supply chains north and west of the region, Parkland County is ideally suited for clean/green manufacturing. One such company, Genics, based in the city of Acheson, produces safe and environmentally friendly wood treatment products that extend the service life of utility poles.

Several Federal and Provincial financial mechanisms are today available to support the sector. Alberta Innovates, the province's largest research and innovation agency, for example, helps fund to commercialize existing and new ventures within the sector. Over the next three years, the agency will be distributing \$50 million from the industry-funded Technology Innovation and Emissions Reduction (TIER) system intended to grow the province's clean-tech industry and cut emissions. With additional dollars invested from industry, this support will total almost \$200 million.

Since September, Alberta's government has already announced TIER funding for methane programs, carbon capture, utilization and storage programs, flood resilience programs, and the construction of a renewable natural gas and a clean fertilizer

facility in Lacombe which will transform agricultural and plant waste into organic fertilizer, cutting the equivalent of 8,500 cars in emissions.

Alberta today is no longer just about oil and gas; thanks to local government and industry support, heavy investments are being made to support a sector the Province views as a future economic driver. Parkland County is here to welcome Clean and Green companies seeking an ideal location to do business." said Robert Fernandez, Director of Economic Diversification, Parkland County.



Learn more at www.parklandcounty.com / Do Business

Terrapin Geothermics

Waste isn't just the tangible stuff that ends up in a bin or down the drain; it includes things we cannot see but can definitely feel: heat.

Gray Alton, Vice President of Project Development with Terrapin explains that excess heat from industrial processing is a huge opportunity for capture and transformation.

"Globally, we're wasting at least 290,000 petajoules of heat every year," says Alton. "Globally, we use more than 530,000 petajoules annually to generate the energy we need as a society, so we're really only getting full value from about 50 per cent of the energy that we use."

Editor's note: Just to be clear on the scale we're talking about, the numbers in the paragraph above - if written out fully - would be 21 digits long (i.e., 290,000,000,000,000,000,000 joules). That's a LOT of energy, both generated and wasted.

Terrapin works with companies who have significant waste heat in their processes and/or facilities to match them with technology to capture the heat and transform it into the most efficient and effective mode, all the while bringing in financing partners to pay for the technology in the customer's plant.

"Depending on the specific situation, we may bring in a technology to simply capture the heat and redistribute it via a district heating system," says Alton. "Alternatively, we can take the heat and use it to generate electricity and feed it into the larger grid, offsetting what might usually be generated from fossil fuels."

"We look for opportunities where a company's waste heat might be available 85 to 90 per cent of the time, and that lets us use the waste heat as a baseload generation source - which is usually what coal is used for on the grid," explains Alton.

"We work with each client to find a number of heat resources within their processes, and then we prioritize the sources that will give everyone the biggest win," says Alton.

"There's tonnes of excess heat out there, but not all of it can be captured and efficiently transformed into other forms of energy," Alton says. "It's usually the furnaces, industrial process heating, and other 'big' sources that will make the most sense."

"While we're not necessarily reducing emissions directly in each client's facility, we are helping to get more value from each unit of energy and its associated emissions," explains Alton. "Reducing emissions intensity is still very positive."



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Manufacturing. Revolutionized.

Canada is poised to thrive in the new manufacturing economy, Prairie companies can lead the way

By Rob MacLeod

The past year can be characterized by a single word: *change*.

We've changed the way we do business, how we stay connected, and how we see global value chains.

It is important to note, however, that many of these changes were afoot long before the pandemic put the global economy in a stranglehold. The COVID-19 crisis aggravated business conditions that were already challenging manufacturers such as weakening global demand, concerns around supply chain resilience, falling oil prices, growing protectionism, and heightened cybersecurity risks.

At the onset of the pandemic, the Canadian economy saw a contraction of 20 per cent – a period that was especially challenging for manufacturers, characterized by a drop in output of one-third.

Manufacturing operations around the world are being disrupted not only by the impacts of the pandemic, but also by intense global competition, personalized customer expectations, stringent regulatory environments, and rapid advances in technology.

Whether you call it Industry 4.0, advanced manufacturing, or the fourth industrial revolution, one thing is clear – the business of manufacturing is changing and the pandemic has served

to accelerate the agents of change – smart technology platforms, connected factories, near-shoring, and supply chain traceability to name a few.

While changes to the global operating environment will bring significant disruption, Canadian manufacturing is well positioned to respond and take advantage of new opportunities.

The Canadian Opportunity

Canada has a strong foundation in advanced production technologies and the essential tools like artificial intelligence, machine learning and digital technologies that constitute a modern manufacturing operation.

Canada is also home to world-renowned research centres with leading capabilities in strategically important areas like advanced materials and next generation computing.

Although manufacturing output is down, recent data shows that, as of September, Canada has seen the fastest rate of manufacturing productivity growth in 20 years. Our advantage lies in our pool of diversified and agile manufacturing capabilities led by a highly capable, modern workforce.

The key to our success is in our ability to connect the dots and foster a culture of operational excellence.

While changes to the global operating environment will bring significant disruption, Canadian manufacturing is well positioned to respond and take advantage of new opportunities.

About NGen

NGen is the industry-led, non-profit leading Canada's advanced manufacturing supercluster, which is founded on the principle that the transformation to advanced manufacturing will enrich the lives of Canadians, delivering better products and good jobs while generating the economic growth essential to a better future.

NGen is committed to building world-leading advanced manufacturing capabilities in Canada through collaborative partnerships that integrate our research, technology, and manufacturing strengths to accelerate the development, deployment, and adoption of new technologies in manufacturing.

Canada is a manufacturing nation that can claim a position of global leadership by focusing our efforts on a shortlist of priorities.

Industry-led investments

Canadian innovation policy has long focused on early-stage technology-push incentives in lieu of supporting the downstream commercial applications of new tech. While this approach has helped foster a vibrant technology and start-up community, it has also resulted in stranded intellectual property and has left start-ups to find their own ways to commercialize – often through offshoring or foreign acquisitions which are accompanied by an exodus of taxpayer-funded innovations whose economic benefits are reaped beyond our borders.

Superclusters are unique in their demand-pull approach to

commercialization. By focusing on strategic, market-driven opportunities that involve the industrial applications of new technologies and processes, superclusters are simultaneously de-risking technology development and deployment while incentivizing Canadian innovators to grow their businesses at home in Canada. This approach is connecting both the users and the producers of technology to encourage innovation driven by market needs.

In the new manufacturing economy, world-leading solutions will not be built in silos.

Connections & Collaboration

In the new manufacturing economy, world-leading solutions will not be built in silos.

The advent of Industry 4.0 means that manufacturers are becoming solutions providers. A majority of Canadian manufacturers do not collaborate meaningfully or on a regular basis, but with more integrated supply chains and the outsourcing of inputs and services, innovation partnerships are transforming supply chains into value networks.

Key to Canada's success will be incentives that promote collaborative innovation partnerships which leverage strengths across industry sectors to develop more valuable, integrated solutions that can be commercialized around the world.

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With a national mandate, NGen has had the privilege to work with some of Canada's best and brightest companies to solve a variety of complex challenges in areas like healthcare and the environment.

NGen works to promote Canada's research, technology and manufacturing capabilities on the world stage but also domestically to improve the awareness of risk sharing opportunities in our own backyard.

Operational Excellence

"To a man with a hammer, everything looks like a nail" – Abraham Maslow

The productive management of manufacturing enterprises will take on an increasingly important role as the bevy of digital tools and technologies grows and promises an evergreen range of solutions.

Successful advanced manufacturing operations are managed by those who understand *where* to apply new technologies to eliminate waste and generate value not only for the customer, but further downstream for the customer's customer.

NGen recognizes the role that effective business management will play in creating the globally competitive companies of tomorrow. That's why we're making investments in workforce development and management education through ecosystem development initiatives like *AmpUp*.

NGen in the Prairies

With a national mandate, NGen has had the privilege to work with some of Canada's best and brightest companies to solve a variety of complex challenges in areas like healthcare and

the environment. Our experience in the Prairies has been no exception. The following project snapshots demonstrate some of the exciting collaborative initiatives being led by NGen members in Western Canada.

Protecting the Environment

Exergy Solutions leads a consortium that includes Suncor Energy and Precision ADM. The consortium is developing additive manufacturing solutions to reduce the environmental impact of oil sands industrial users. The project will develop new oil sands and mineral processing technologies aimed at reducing energy intensity and enhancing reliability, as well as cleantech to drastically reduce water usage and potentially eliminate tailings ponds. The project lays the groundwork for industrial additive manufacturing technology across Canada, potentially creating multiple spin-off business opportunities – both in terms of other sectors, as well as the manufacturing facilities to serve these sectors.

Improving the Quality of Orthopaedic Surgery

A consortium, led by Orthopaedic Innovation Centre (OIC) and including partners Pega Medical, Numalogics, Conceptualiz, and Precision ADM, is developing a fully integrated platform expected to result in the provision of customized medical devices that can be manufactured 'on demand,' simplifying

surgeries, expediting the length of healing and return to function, and improving patients' quality of life. The project will revolutionize the manufacturing of orthopaedic implants by integrating medical science, precise imaging, virtual design and testing, with industrial 3D printing. The new made-to-order implants will offer an alternative to off-the-shelf, standardized devices. In addition to ensuring a better fit, the personalized 3D printed medical implants are expected to be comparable in cost to factory-produced models.

Enhancing Digital Services for Saskatchewan's Mining suppliers

The Saskatchewan Industrial Mining Supplier Association (SIMSA) represents over 200 mining suppliers that are responsible for over \$10 billion in revenues, \$8 billion in GDP, and impacts over 23,000 jobs. With the support of NGen, SIMSA is creating a new digital platform, SIMSA Digital, that will allow members and members' clients to continue to do business together by digitizing current practices and developing new partnerships and business opportunities. The new platform also allows SIMSA and its members to link virtually to other mining industry associations across Canada, encouraging innovation and collaboration with new partners in both traditional and non-traditional industry sectors. ¹



Manufacturing Success

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Shipments
2009-2019  **45%**

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Rob MacLeod is Corporate Secretary & Director, Strategic Communications at NGen – Canada's advanced manufacturing supercluster. Rob holds an MSc in International Business Management from Ivey Business School and previously worked to support the federal suite of business innovation programs as a Strategic Policy Analyst with the Ministry of Innovation Science and Industry.

Andie's Battle with Lymphoma



"In 2018, we were having a pool party," Andie's mom says, "and I noticed a little bump on Andie's neck." It was small, hardly anything. It didn't seem serious. They didn't know it then, but Andie's journey with cancer had begun. She was 10.

In the meantime, the new school year was starting up, and Andie returned to her routine of classes and sports. But she was coming home exhausted every day — unusual for her. A few months later, it got worse. She was tired and feverish. But after a few days in bed, she started feeling better, and went back to school and volleyball.

That's when Andie noticed some small masses on her neck. She cried out to her mom: "What are these?!" Andie's mom looked. "My heart sank," she says.

Andie went to the doctor then a specialist, and the tests revealed the devastating news: Andie had lymphoma.



"It felt like a bad dream," Andie's mom says. Andie had surgery and chemotherapy, but stayed strong and positive through it all. "I was so happy to finish my cancer treatments," she says, "and to be cancer free."

With everything she's been through, Andie deserves her dream. She was hoping to visit Disney World, but the coronavirus made travel impossible. So she had to change her dream, and she chose a swimming pool for her backyard.

Andie's swimming pool dream come true will bring joy, laughter, and fun during an otherwise challenging period; but we depend on your support to make it possible. Please consider a donation to The Dream Factory this holiday season to help bring a very special dream to life for a very special young woman in our community.



Please give now to fulfill the dreams of more kids like Andie in Manitoba who are battling life-threatening illnesses.

Your Gift Does These Three Things for a Kid Like Andie

With COVID-19 causing so many challenges, I hope you can take action for the holiday season and the New Year. When you give now, you do these three things:

1 GIFT DOES 3 THINGS!

1. Make dreams come true for more Manitoba kids. There's a waiting list of more than 70 kids in the New Year. They all deserve to see their dreams come true, and you can make it happen. Take Logan. He's a sweet five-year-old with cancer. He wants to visit Walt Disney World to see his favorite character, Lightning McQueen.

2. Go Beyond Dreams for more kids. The Beyond Dreams program includes the little things that make a big difference for sick kids, like tickets to sporting events, trips to the zoo, birthday gifts, parties, and more.

3. Help families struggling to cover costs. Parents with a sick child shouldn't have to worry about expenses. Your support provides assistance to cover costs like childcare, time off from work, hospital meals, groceries, bills, and more.

Please give now to help fulfill the dreams of more kids in Manitoba who are battling life-threatening illnesses.

We're all dealing with uncertainty because of the coronavirus. But we can't let COVID-19 and the challenges that have come with it steal the dreams from these kids.

They go through so much. Their families go through so much. Especially at the holiday season and for the New Year, please give now. Do it for a kid like Andie.

Sincerely,

Howard Koks
Executive Director
The Dream Factory

**Help make dreams come true for kids like Andie today -
visit www.thedreamfactory.ca/donate
and become a Dream Maker for a child here in
Manitoba fighting a life-threatening illness.**

We can't do it without you!



The Next Generation

*Building a renewable future
on fossil fuel foundations*



The next generations of manufacturers, builders, and makers aren't the one-trick ponies of the distant past. They're intelligent, informed, engaged, and looking to make a difference in their world, for their world.

While the foundations of our society and industries aren't necessarily going to change overnight, the changes are coming, and they are being felt. The critical piece is making sure that you, your organization, and your workforce are ready, willing, and able to embrace the adjustment and jump to the new demands.

Prairie Manufacturer's editor, Jeff Baker, spoke with Lliam Hildebrand, Red Seal Steel Fabricator & Welder, and Founder and current Executive Director of Iron & Earth, a non-profit organization built by workers and supporters from and connected to Canada's fossil fuel industries that is looking to use their skills and knowledge to transition Canada into a greener energy future. Here's their conversation.

Jeff Baker – Let's start by telling me about yourself, how you got into your trade, and how you made your way to Alberta.

Lliam Hildebrand - I grew up on a 10-acre farm on the West Coast of British Columbia, where I learned how to work with my hands and developed a really deep appreciation for the environment. I was outdoors, playing in the woods, and just being on the farm every day.

Another sort of random bit of information, but important part of my story is that my family sold our farm when I was 13, and we moved to a small Pacific island nation called Vanuatu.

We lived on a totally self-sufficient island, and the people lived very traditionally. I was able to really immerse myself into that culture in that environment and made friends with kids my age and ran around in the woods with our machetes all day long. It was just absolutely an incredible experience.

In the evening time, I was able to spend time with elders around the fire, hearing these stories that are hundreds of years old. That's where I really developed an appreciation for Indigenous ways of life.

Coming out of all of that, I didn't really know what to do after high school, but the one thing that I really enjoyed was metal shop. So, I went straight into the trades and started as a welder.

My first job was at a gravel truck repair shop. It was a little rough around the edges, for sure, but it was great pay and a great place to learn all sorts of skills.

We really need to bring this topic up in the national conversation – to really talk about it - in a way that isn't so polarizing. It's not an either-or question; it's a yes-and sort of issue.

One day, I got a phone call from my old baseball coach, saying 'Hey, why don't you come work at my fabricating shop? We're building some really exciting projects. I think you'd have a lot of fun here.'

I said, 'Okay, that sounds good,' and that was the beginning of my steel fabrication career.

I totally loved my job. I thought it was just such an exciting thing to be able to go into work every day, open up the blueprint and figure out what you're building, and try to come up with creative solutions to build these huge infrastructure projects that we were building.

We built all sorts of things. We built flare stacks that we shipped off to China. We built industrial composters that we sent to Ireland and Mexico. We built a lot of drilling rig platforms for Alberta, a lot of pressure vessels for the oil and gas industry around the world, and we built some the real megastructures, including some coal ship loaders and other types of infrastructure.

I really loved that job, like I said, but then one day I got put on a new project as a lead hand.

The first project I was the lead hand on was a wind farm weather station, and that was my first real exposure to that scale of renewable energy.

Since it was my first lead hand project, I got into the research around what this technology was all about - what it was that we were building - and I came across all of this information about climate change.

That was the game changing moment for me when I realized that my skills could build all of these things. I could build all these structures that are creating climate change, and I could also build the structures that are going to be one of the key solutions to addressing the issue and reversing it.

At that point, I actually went in and quit my job. I ended up on this mission to figure out how to apply my trade skills to building the renewable energy future.

JB: That sounds like a gutsy move on your part, that you said 'Okay, I'm going to get out of this, and I'm going to try to build something new.'

LH: Absolutely. It was pretty terrifying in some ways. My parents thought I was crazy.

I was young, and I was taking a chance. And at first, the gamble didn't pay off. I wasn't able to find this sort of new career

'That stuff looks like what we're building outside, so my skills are going to be required to build those things, so maybe this is something I can get on board with.'

in renewables, and I ended up working in the oil sands on and off for the next six years.

It was really while working in the oil sands that my understanding of the complexities of the transition really started to emerge and where I was able to emerge as well.

JB: Tell me more about this emergence. You were sort of a lone figure standing on the horizon, saying 'I see a better way.' Were you actively looking for others like you, or did you just end up in conversations and found out you weren't the only one?

LH: I really wear my heart on my sleeve, and I sort of put my ideas forward right off the bat. On day one, I was nicknamed Greenpeace by the other guys in the lunchroom.

Seriously though, it was inspiring, because what ended up happening was that I had more and more people coming up to me saying that what I was talking about actually resonated with them. Eventually, the conversations in the lunchroom started to change, and by the end of that job, we were candidly discussing all these exciting new opportunities.

The sceptics were still around, and that was just all part of the conversation. Year after year, I kept on going up [to the oil sands] and the conversations were evolving along with the rapidly changing renewable energy space.

Then this bold dream became more and more a dire necessity that really came to a head in 2015 when the oil price crash was resulting in what ended up being 100,000 layoffs within a very short period of time.

That's when we said, 'Okay, it's time to really do something about all this talk.' That's when Iron & Earth came to be, and it's been a pretty wild ride since then.



PHOTO CREDIT: SKYFIRE ENERGY

JB: What were the sceptics and detractors around you saying about the ideas you were sharing?

LH: There were so many different questions and doubts about this renewable energy future. One common theme was just that the technology just wasn't there yet.

I rarely met anybody that just didn't like renewable energies for their own sake. A lot of people just believed they weren't cost effective, and it would be an unwise use of public dollars to incentivize that industry until it came along on its own legs.

That changed, though, when the price competitiveness of renewables during those years was changing faster than most people realized. I showed them the information and comparisons of the cost per kilowatt-hour against all of the different technologies, and you could see where the cost curve was going. While it wasn't yet at price parity then, it is now, and solar is now the cheapest form of energy in history.

The conversations really changed, and people's minds changed once they saw the up-to-date information. They might have been right just a few years earlier, but things changed, and they weren't aware.

Another theme of the naysayers was that they just didn't see themselves in that [renewable energy] future. They saw themselves as one thing and said 'I'm an oil sands guy; I'm not going to install solar panels for the rest of my life. So why are you talking to me about this?'

But I was able to just show them pictures of all of the different types of renewable energy technologies.

JB: So, you're showing people the technologies of an industry in which they just couldn't see themselves...

LH: Exactly.

We need these jobs to continue in the short and medium term, but we also believe in the transition and one that can bring everybody along. So, let's do this in a way that respects everyone.'

You know... sometimes you find your spot on these jobs and you end up sitting with the same people for a couple of months during shutdown or maintenance turnaround.

I remember this one guy who was sitting across from me in the lunchroom. He was the biggest sceptic on site – and that was perfect – because I got to engage in all sorts of different angles of this conversation. It was really when I showed him pictures of all the different types of renewable energy technologies, and he realized 'That stuff looks like what we're building outside, so my skills are going to be required to build those things, so maybe this is something I can get on board with.'

JB: Was there any time that you felt afraid bringing out into the open the renewable energy ideas – especially on an oil sands site?

LH: I wasn't ever afraid, because I'm a member of the Boilermakers Union, and we have pretty strong protections to ensure our rights as workers are enforced. And I was confident that if I'm with this organization (Iron & Earth), with co-workers who also visibly support the initiative, that we would get the attention of our union leadership and they would ensure that our voice was at least considered at the table.

And that was the case. After we launched Iron & Earth, we were able to engage with leadership – union and company – pretty quickly. They're a little bit slower to get on board with some of what we're pushing for, but they too, see the need for climate action.

There's never a job security issue for me, but I really wanted to make sure other workers felt safe signing on as members of the initiative.

The goal has never been to antagonize the oil and gas industry or the coal industry. Rather, it's always been first and foremost to say 'Hey, we really appreciate everything the fossil fuel industry has provided to us and is continuing to provide to us, and we don't want our jobs to go away just because we're sort of signing the line and launching this initiative. We need these jobs to continue in the short and medium term, but we also believe in the transition and one that can bring everybody along. So, let's do this in a way that respects everyone.'

We really need to bring this topic up in the national conversation – to really talk about it – in a way that isn't so polarizing. It's not an either-or question; it's a yes-and sort of issue.

JB: How big is Iron & Earth now?

LH: We have a total of over 7000 supporters that have signed one of our petitions, and more than 900 of those are workers in the fossil fuel industry.

We just launched a new campaign called the *Prosperous Transition Campaign*, and we hope to get thousands of workers to support our new call for investment in a green recovery, in our detailed four-point plan. We're hoping to really build our membership even further over the next few months.

JB: I see that you're looking to pass the Executive Director torch to someone else in the next while. What led you that decision?

LH: Yeah, it's a pretty exciting time right now for our organization and also for my own life.

I'm really proud of the fact that I've been able to launch this thing and get it out of start-up mode. Just this year, we finally secured a bit more funding to ensure our foundation is a little more secure, so we can look forward for the next year or so.

It's a good time to find somebody who has a shared lived experience of what our organization stands for but also the experience scaling-up an organization to the next level.

We're also hiring for a new CEO who is going to launch the social enterprise to take over the project and training programs side of the organization.

I'm absolutely confident we'll find the right people.

JB: From where you've been to where you're at and where you're going, can you offer any words of wisdom to others who might be looking to influence change in industry, especially with people who might not be particularly open to it?

LH: For me, where things really crystallized in my own journey was when I was having these hundreds and hundreds of conversations with my coworkers.

Start reaching out to others in your field and find allies. Have the difficult conversations to get closer to the problem and closer to the solution.

You don't even necessarily need to know what the solutions are or even understand exactly what the shared problem is. I think that really emerges through conversations with people that have some sort of shared interests. From there, just follow the emergent process.

When you come up with an idea that could potentially improve the world, try to do it in a in a bit of a group effort way. Don't try to go it alone. Find your allies that are going to commit to taking action.

Just take the initiative. ☺

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Manitoba Aerospace honours industry excellence



Since 2002, Manitoba Aerospace has held the annual *All-Stars Awards Dinner*, celebrating the aerospace industry in Manitoba and recognizing excellence in the aerospace community.

Despite even more reason to pause and celebrate this year, we've skipped the dinner for 2020!

The *All-Stars Awards of Excellence* recognize partners or individuals involved in or with the aerospace and defence industry who have demonstrated excellence in a variety of areas from leadership to business growth. Award recipients are nominated by their industry peers.

"In a demanding industry where excellence is the baseline for performance, genuine excellence is key to our sector's growth and success. The *All-Stars Awards of Excellence* is an ideal forum for recognizing contributions to our aerospace community," said Wendell Wiebe, Chief Executive Officer for Manitoba Aerospace.

Three recipients have been recognized this year for their outstanding achievements:

Award of Excellence for Builder and Education/Training

• **Kathryn Atamanchuk, P.Eng.**
Price Faculty of Engineering,
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg



Award of Excellence for Leadership and Education/Training

• **Management Development Program Implementation Team**
Boeing Canada
Winnipeg



Award of Excellence for Business Growth and Teamwork

• **Heli Transition Team StandardAero**
Winnipeg



Helping students and industry take flight

"In past years, the *All-Stars Awards Dinner* has also been a major fundraiser for the Manitoba Aerospace Student Endowment Fund," said Wiebe.

"Over the years, through the generous support of individuals, companies, and organizations, over \$300,000 has been raised for the fund and has helped more than 120 deserving students. Ultimately, this endowment fund is a win-win situation: more students can benefit from specialized schooling and the number of high-quality young people in the aerospace and defence industry is also increased. All of this together only serves to strengthen our industry."

Education funding recipients are from Tec Voc High School, Neeginan College of Applied Technology, Red River College, and the Price Faculty of Engineering at the University of Manitoba.

Aerospace in Manitoba

Manitoba's aerospace and defence industry is the largest in Western Canada and the third largest aerospace hub in Canada, producing and selling more than \$2.6 billion of products and services annually. Aerospace is one of the province's premier industries and directly employs more than 5,000 Manitobans.

About Manitoba Aerospace

Manitoba Aerospace is a membership-based not-for-profit organization representing aerospace, aviation, and defence companies. We work with stakeholders to lead the sustainable worldwide business growth of member companies through collaboration, innovation, and supply chain development. We support and promote the aerospace, aviation, and defence industries through business development, research and innovation, and human resource initiatives.

2020 Manitoba Aerospace All-Star Award Recipients

Manitoba Aerospace Award of Excellence for Builder and Education/Training

**Kathryn Atamanchuk, P.Eng.,
Engineer in Residence**
**Price Faculty of Engineering,
University of Manitoba**

Kathryn Atamanchuk, P.Eng., was Director of Engineering Services at StandardAero before being seconded to the University of Manitoba's Price Faculty of Engineering as an Engineer in Residence (EiR). She is currently EiR for the local Aero-Engine Test and Advanced Digital Manufacturing sectors and is Canada's second female EiR.

Kathryn teaches at the graduate and post-graduate levels, developing the next generation of engineers for the aerospace industry and is a liaison between industry and the faculty.

Kathryn believes in applied research partnerships between industry and academia, she is pivotal in ensuring academic objectives are achieved while meeting industry's needs on time and on budget.

Kathryn is an advocate for the aerospace industry, inspiring students and colleagues to understand the benefits a successful aviation and aerospace industry provide for Manitoba and Canada. She is an outstanding champion dedicated to enhancing the performance of local aerospace firms.

Manitoba Aerospace Award of Excellence for Leadership and Education/Training

**Management Development
Program Implementation Team**
Boeing Canada Winnipeg

Congratulations to the team at Boeing Winnipeg that created the highly successful Management Development Program, designed to ensure a ready pool of trained first-line leaders for the company in Winnipeg.

The program is open to local non-management (union and non-union) Boeing employees who are judged on their work experience and readiness to assume leadership roles.

Successful candidates go through a one-year program that focuses on building business acumen in aerospace manufacturing and interpersonal competencies. There have been nine successful cohorts with a total 49 graduates since the program started in 2010, 26 of whom are currently managers at Boeing's Winnipeg facility.

Of the graduates, 20% are women and there is steady growth in the number of women applicants.

This project is a win-win for the company and employees, preparing individuals for leadership roles and increasing engagement, loyalty, and morale as employees recognize Boeing's investment in them.

Manitoba Aerospace Award of Excellence for Business Growth and Teamwork

Heli Transition Team
StandardAero

StandardAero's Heli Transition team has created Centres of Excellence (CoEs) at three of the company's sites (Winnipeg, Langley BC, Summerside PEI). A highlight was the consolidation of the Helicopter Centre of Excellence to one site in Winnipeg where the company also invested in facility improvements and acquired a new test cell supporting Rolls-Royce M250/RR300 helicopter engines.

The CoEs were created in order to expand StandardAero's business in accordance with changing markets.

This was a large, complex project to plan and execute while ensuring StandardAero's commitment to current customers was uninterrupted. The team also collaborated with OEMs in order to meet their stringent requirements.

The success was due to the right combination of leadership, teamwork, and collaboration involving Operations, Customer Service, Engineering, Quality, and Supply. The project team focused on transferring best practices while implementing local process improvements. The project was delivered on budget and 6 months early!



Looking forward. Looking ahead.

Women leaders offer their takes on what's ahead for women in manufacturing

Prairie Manufacturer Magazine is a proud supporter of the Women in Manufacturing initiative spearheaded by Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters.

We believe that manufacturing – in all sectors – needs more women at every organizational level, and we aim to recognize and champion those companies and organizations working to advance women's roles and positions in the industry.

While there have been great strides made by organizations and individuals across the sector and the region, there is still work to be done. The COVID-19 pandemic has hit women in industry especially hard, and we want to make sure this is only a short-lived statistical blip.

We asked two female leaders connected to Prairie manufacturing to share their takes on the current business environment and what their respective organizations have in store for the coming year.

Alison Kirkland Women's Enterprise Organizations of Canada

This time last year, I was looking forward to the end of 2019. It had been a challenging year on several fronts and 2020, the start of a new decade, was a beacon of hope and excitement for me.

In the decades to come, I expect we will look back on 2020 as a watershed. A global pandemic, racial unrest and a bitter US presidential election filled the headlines. It was a time to pause and reflect on where we had come from and where we are going.

Women's Enterprise Organizations of Canada (WEOC) is an association of organizations that work directly with women entrepreneurs. Our goal is to build connections, create a community and provide resources that will support the work that our members do to assist women who are starting and growing their businesses.

WEOC is in the midst of a national survey of women entrepreneurs. It is comprised of an online questionnaire along with one-on-one interviews with more than 20 women across the country. Some early results have been a bit surprising... the participants in the video interviews are incredibly optimistic about the future of their businesses. Many used the 'pause' in the early days of the pandemic to develop strategic plans, enhance their knowledge through a variety of learning options, explore new lines of business and integrate ecommerce.

Looking ahead to 2021 and beyond, I remain excited, optimistic and hopeful. The speed with which we all moved from in-person to online meetings was amazing. That was followed by virtual conferences and more learning options than we ever imagined. Technology enabled us to easily



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Suzan Stupack,
The STAK Co.



tap into new ideas and perspectives, grow our networks, and expand our reach – all so necessary for business growth and success. While it is still wonderful to meet in person, we are exploring how to ensure

our virtual connections yield meaningful long-term relationships. Going forward, our goal is to build connectivity among the individuals and organizations supporting women entrepreneurs on their journey.

Technology enabled us to easily tap into new ideas and perspectives, grow our networks, and expand our reach – all so necessary for business growth and success.

While there is no such thing as a 'typical' woman entrepreneur, shared interests and experiences are strong foundations on which to build a community of women entrepreneurs. I have been so inspired by the communities of women we have met this year: Sedulous Women, Women in Manufacturing, Women in Mining, LIFT Circle, Canadian Small Business Women, and so many more. They are all doing amazing work and we look forward to being part of these communities and helping to build more communities in the women's enterprise eco-system in the coming year.

It turns out that 2020 was a year of emotions: exciting, sad, inspiring, worrying

and ultimately hopeful because women entrepreneurs and the organizations that support them have proven they are agile, adaptable and strong.

Carrie Schroeder
CME Manitoba

Building community is necessary to support people in all walks of life, and our focus is on women in manufacturing. We strongly believe the future of manufacturing lies with key ideas to drive innovation. These new ideas will be shaped by a diverse workforce, and a big part of this diversity will be women.

In 2017, only 28 per cent of manufacturing jobs were held by women in Canada - approximately 476,000

positions. By February 2020, this had grown to 512,500 positions in February, but that changed drastically come March.

COVID-19 has caused unprecedented layoffs, and women in manufacturing have been particularly impacted. In fact, nearly 60,000 women left the manufacturing industry across Canada for many reasons related to the pandemic, bringing us well below the 2017 figure.

The pandemic has brought disruption, made us change the way we work, and the way we communicate, but it has also brought us opportunity: Opportunity to rethink, remould and reimagine.

In late September, the CME Manitoba team reached out to 44 people representing 29 manufacturing

companies who participated to help define a path forward for the Women in Manufacturing initiative. With this input, a *Shop Talk* series has begun and is being delivered with a focus on operational skills development with presentations from company leaders and subject matter experts, virtual plant tours, discussions around best practices, and ample opportunity to network and build peer connections.

Our plans for 2021 include a symposium, *Untapped Potential - Manufacturing Our Future* (January 19-21, 2021). The WIM team is putting together a slate of interactive, uplifting, and timely topics - arranged in three themes: Strive, Drive, and Thrive! -

Perhaps this year is a challenge for all of us to take away: how do we manage through the disruption to come out stronger on the other side?

aiming to remove barriers for women in manufacturing and provide personal and professional development.

For me, 2020 will always stand out as the year of disruption, and also the year I had to let go and trust that my team, my community, my network had my back. Perhaps this year is a challenge for all of us to take away: how do we manage through the disruption to come out stronger on the other side?

Looking ahead, I know that 2021 will provide plenty of opportunity, including the opportunity to build a strong community to support the recruitment and retention of women in manufacturing. Plus, an opportunity to build our manufacturing community even stronger than before through diversity.

I've got your back, and I know you'll have mine. ☺



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A full-page background image of a winter scene. In the foreground and middle ground, there are several evergreen trees heavily laden with snow. The branches are intricate and white against a pale, overcast sky. Numerous white snowflakes are captured in motion, falling from the top of the frame, creating a sense of a heavy snowfall. The overall color palette is cool, dominated by whites, greys, and muted greens of the snow-covered trees.

And the storm rages on

*COVID-19 is exposing all our vulnerabilities,
and it's not done with us yet*

By Dr. Jason Kindrachuk

It's mid-November and I'm spent. It's been a horrendously long eleven months now focused solely on COVID-19 day in, day out.

I'm not a frontline healthcare worker (our heroes of the pandemic), just a virologist living in the middle of the scenario that we've talked about in roundtables and seminars throughout my career - the emergence of a new pandemic virus that exposes all of our vulnerabilities: no underlying immunity, no therapeutics, and no vaccines. The one that would test to the limits our healthcare capacity and public patience to an everchanging situation.

The last few days have been eerily reminiscent of my days in Liberia running diagnostics during the West African Ebola epidemic in 2014. I remember a day where my teammate and I processed about 140 blood samples in our makeshift containment lab and ran the PCR tests to check for virus. Nearly all were positive.

That feeling of emptiness and defeat has hit me hard again recently as the data from across Canada continues to provide a pretty bleak picture of what winter 2020 might look like as cases, hospitalizations, and fatalities all continue to climb. There are signs of clearing on the horizon, but we have to get through the storm first.

The moment

Reflecting on COVID-19 to 'the date' when all of this became a focal point in my life is quite easy: New Year's Eve 2019.

The vastly more talented Dr. Kindrachuk (a.k.a. my wife) was fast asleep as our toddler had been fairly rambunctious during the holiday break, leaving me to peruse social media instead of watching yet more 2019 retrospectives. I came across a fairly non-descript tweet about a SARS-like illness that had been identified in a cluster of patients in Wuhan, China.

This was one of those 'hairs standing up on the back of your neck' moments. Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) - the virus that causes SARS - had disappeared 15 years ago nearly as quickly as it had emerged, leaving many to ask if and when it might reappear.

As an emerging virus researcher, these moments are akin to a spit-take. I ended up in a thread with Dr. Meghan May, an emerging virus expert at the University of New England. SARS? Really? Maybe a highly pathogenic influenza virus? Something just felt different about this. By early January we had our first glimpse of what this was: a new virus called SARS-CoV-2.

Eleven months equals one decade


I have often said that the past eleven months have felt like a decade. This is really quite true from two perspectives.

Firstly, it's been a LONG eleven months of living through the ebbs and flows of the pandemic. It has felt like a decade in all that we have encountered. But it's also been a period where our understanding of this new virus has been arguably unmatched in human history.

From January to now, we have identified what the virus is, the likely origins of the virus, how it behaves, how it's transmitted, and where it goes in our body when it's transmitted. We've isolated the virus from infected humans and distributed those samples across the globe, enabling myriad infectious disease researchers to identify how this virus interacts with our cells during infection. We have created models of infection in animals that have allowed us to test vaccines and therapeutics that have and will continue to save lives.

Most importantly, in 11 months we've gone from first identifying a new virus to sitting on the cusp of the licensing and

Where the emergence of influenza in 1918 resulted in a century of data regarding influenza transmission, clinical disease, and therapeutic options, with COVID-19 we have had to start quite literally at square one.



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approval of multiple vaccines for this virus. In addition, there are dozens of COVID-19 vaccines in clinical trials and many in pre-clinical development.

As a comparative, it has taken well over a decade for a vaccine to be approved for the other virus I devote most of my research life to: Ebola virus. This is an unparalleled moment in our history where the worldwide research and clinical communities have come together so quickly to mount a united response to a global public health crisis.

But it's just the flu... isn't it?

It's not.
I cannot stress those words enough at this point.
If we look at this strictly from a numbers perspective and consider fatalities alone due to COVID-19 (more than 1.33 million deaths and counting), we are in comparable territory to the 1957 and 1968 influenza pandemics (about 1.1 million and 1 to 4 million deaths, respectively), and have far surpassed the range for seasonal influenza fatalities (300,000-600,000 deaths annually).
Of course, this only accounts for January to November 2020 in regards to COVID-19.

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently published updated data analytics demonstrating that patients hospitalized with COVID-19 had a 5-times greater risk of dying following hospitalization than those with influenza and were at increased risk for 17 respiratory and non-respiratory complications resulting from infection. These have been more pronounced in vulnerable and underserved communities which have been disproportionately affected by the virus.

Transmission rates appear to be higher for COVID-19 than influenza viruses

meaning that each infected person is able to spread the virus to a larger number of people. In addition, the infectious period - the time in which an infected person can transmit the virus - appears to be longer than that found for influenza.

Concerningly, this extends further into the pre-symptomatic period (the period prior to development of symptoms) for COVID-19 as compared to influenza, meaning that we are able to transmit the virus undetected for a longer period than influenza.

This has made contact tracing and epidemiological analysis exceedingly difficult for this virus as that longer period of transmission prior to symptom development increases the opportunity for an infected person to spread the virus before realizing they themselves are infected.

This also exposes an underlying weakness for us in regards to COVID-19: the lack of underlying immunity, vaccines or therapeutics for this virus. In addition, there are a growing number of reports regarding long-term health complications across COVID-19 patients of various ages.

This is an aspect of infectious diseases that is often lost in discussions where we focus on primarily on what the disease 'looks like' during acute illness or how many fatalities occur and neglect the longer-term health issues that survivors face.

With COVID-19 we are still trying to understand what these long-term issues encompass and how long they persist. Where the emergence of influenza in 1918 resulted in a century of data regarding influenza transmission, clinical disease, and therapeutic options, with COVID-19 we have had to start quite literally at square one.

Where do we go from here?

I'm writing this a day after the announcement that a second vaccine - the Moderna mRNA vaccine - was reported to

This is an aspect of infectious diseases that is often lost in discussions where we focus on primarily on what the disease 'looks like' during acute illness or how many fatalities occur and neglect the longer-term health issues that survivors face.

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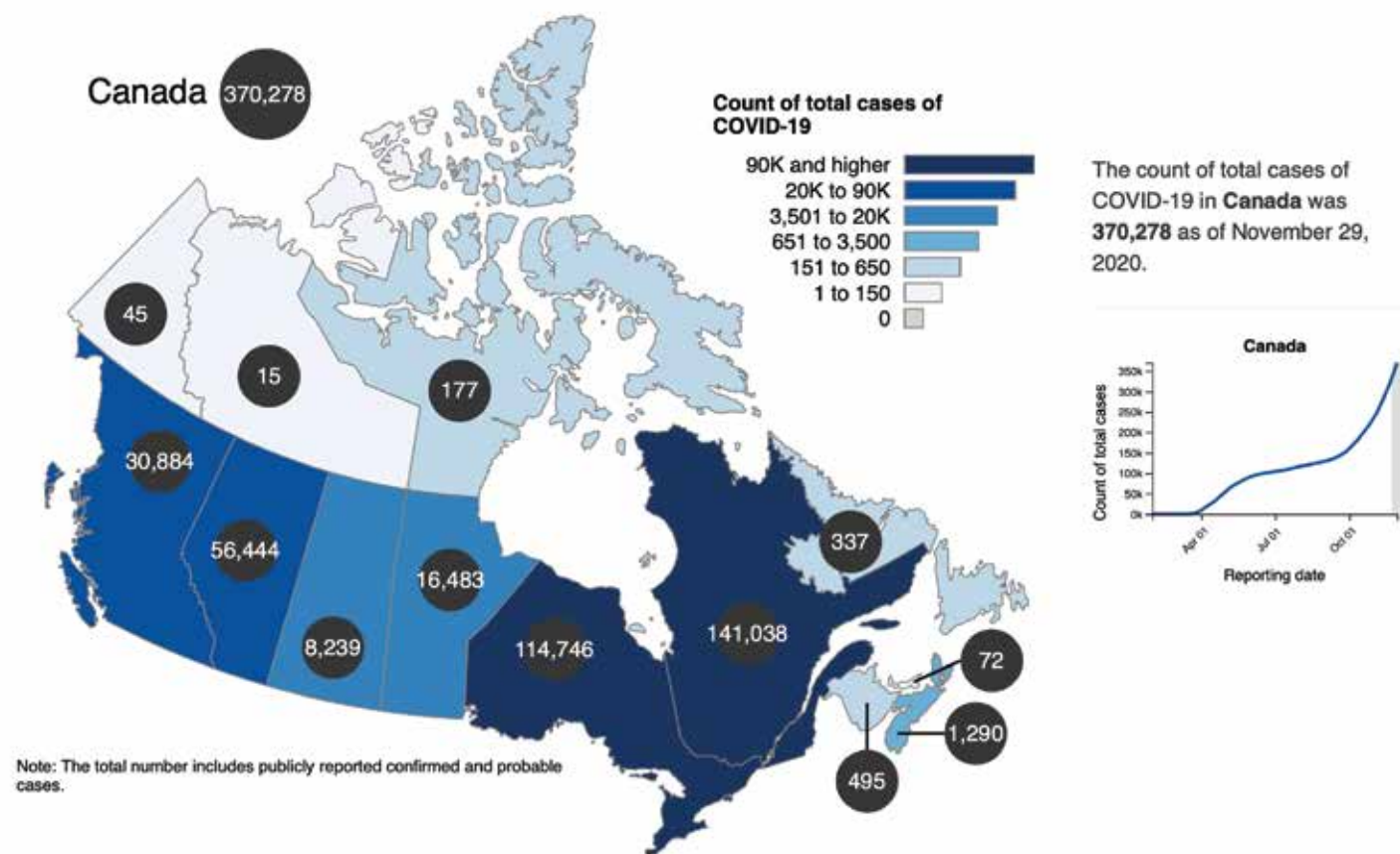
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The harsh reality though is that we are sitting in mid-November and have months to go until any vaccine is estimated to reach the general population.

have 94.5 per cent efficacy in patients, building off the prior announcement from Pfizer reporting that their mRNA vaccine had 90 per cent efficacy. In addition, the Moderna announcement gives some hope as far as distribution limitations due to cold chain storage that would impact vulnerable communities across the globe.

This is a ray of light in an ocean of darkness right now.

Is this an overly dramatic way of describing the situation? Perhaps. But this is coming on the heels of the escalating situation in Manitoba, where my primary laboratory and faculty appointment are located.

My family and I moved to Saskatoon in mid-July 2020 to help lead COVID-19 research efforts at the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization-

International Vaccine Centre (VIDO-InterVac) as part of a partnership between the University of Manitoba and University of Saskatchewan.

There had been 330 total cases of COVID-19 in Manitoba on the day we left for Saskatchewan. Today there have been over 11,000. At the start of October there had been 20 fatalities; the addition of seven today puts the new total at 179.

There will be an end... eventually

Yes, a vaccine or vaccines look like they are on the horizon and will inevitably help get us through this crisis. The harsh

Firstly, it's been a LONG eleven months of living through the ebbs and flows of the pandemic. It has felt like a decade in all that we have encountered.

reality though is that we are sitting in mid-November and have months to go until any vaccine is estimated to reach the general population.

So, we now have to weather the storm of the second wave of COVID-19 across Canada and find a way to do the things that we know reduce transmission: distancing, hygiene, decreasing time in enclosed spaces in close proximity, and masking.







As someone that grew up in Saskatchewan, I tend to be cautiously optimistic but acutely aware that we have a long way to go. ¶

Dr. Jason Kindrachuk is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Medical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases, University of Manitoba, and holds a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in the molecular pathogenesis of emerging and re-emerging viruses. His research focuses on the circulation, transmission, and pathogenesis of emerging viruses that pose the greatest threat to global human and animal health. Dr. Kindrachuk actively participates in training young investigators for careers in infectious disease research as well as with public outreach through the media to help provide informed knowledge dissemination.



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Pardon the interruption

Why business interruption should be a focus of every renewal with your insurance broker

By Scott Feasy & Darren Rondeau

For many manufacturers, a serious loss is often complex and the effects are long-lasting. One immediately thinks of the building, equipment, the work in progress, and the bills. While the property policy will have a significant part to play, one of the most important coverages to safeguard the financial integrity of your firm after a serious loss is Business Interruption (BI). Carrying the correct amount with an adequate period of indemnity and addressing your labour force are all keys to avoiding cash crunches, labour shortages, and solvency issues.

Business Interruption requires a deeper dive than just completing the worksheet every year - which should be an automatic. Two things that insureds/controllers dislike about BI at renewal are filling out a new worksheet and wondering if the cost-benefit of the coverage is really worth it.

Do the work

Filling out the worksheet properly each year is vitally important. It provides the blueprint for both yourself and the insurer to navigate all the costs involved in the loss. The coverage itself often carries a 100 per cent co-insurance requirement, which means that you have to be extremely accurate or risk creating a co-insurance penalty for yourself.

If your sales go up by 10 to 15 per cent and you say to your broker “we’ll just leave it the same as last year,” then the claim will get adjusted on last year’s limit, not your increased number. That may not be a big issue if you can get up and running again in a short time period, but it will have an effect if you are at the 10- or 11-month period and facing a BI limit shortfall.

You say no one is expendable

The biggest portion of your BI worksheet deals with salaries and payroll. Officers, executives, and key managers are accounted for and their annual remuneration are included in the salary

Given the current situation with interrupted supply chains, increasingly complex transportation logistics, and relentless pressures from creditors, will 12 months of coverage be enough time to fully restore your operations after a serious loss?

portion, but what about the rest of your team? In the past, most employers would choose 60, 90 or 180 days with respect to “Ordinary Payroll” coverage for this segment of their workforce.

Increasingly, we hear from employers that no one is really expendable. Those employees that make up the rest of your payroll likely have some special skills and training. They bring experience, expertise, and reliability to your company; characteristics that are perhaps not so easy to find these days. Have the discussion with your broker and the insurer about making this part of the coverage available for 365 days.

Presumption of resumption?

One of the most overlooked components of the BI coverage is the “Period of Indemnity.” Unless otherwise reviewed and re-evaluated, the period of indemnity is 12 months. This means your BI coverage is limited to 12 months from the date of the loss, regardless of where you might be in your recovery.

When you consider all the potential obstacles you may face in returning your business to normal, these obstacles can stack up. Here are a few to think about: lengthy investigation by various experts, delays in permitting (never!), developing reconstruction plans, zoning requirements and by-laws, the season and weather in which you are building, adjusting the loss from both a Property and BI perspective, ordering, installing and calibrating specialized equipment - these are but a few standard impediments one can expect on the road to recovery.

Given the current situation with interrupted supply chains, increasingly complex transportation logistics, and relentless pressures from creditors, will 12 months of coverage be enough time to fully restore your operations after a serious loss?

Benefits beyond the cost

You could be well-served by exploring a longer period of indemnity, such as 18 or 24 months. Is it going to cost more money? Yes, but there are clear benefits.

Take your current premium amount and divide that number against your total cost of sales. Now take that 18- to 24-month number, and divide it against your total cost of sales. In all likelihood, the increase is going to be minimal, and could make a significant difference in helping your business endure the disruption of a serious loss.

When you purchase the Profits or Extended form, BI coverage does not end when you are ready to open the doors again. It continues until your sales return to where they would have been, had you not suffered the loss. If it takes longer for your customer base to return and for your operations to be fully functional once again, you will still get paid for the shortfall in your lost profit. This could be the difference in failing or succeeding once you have re-opened for business.

Be thorough, be accurate, be covered

When an insurance loss goes sour on the insured’s side, specifically for Business Interruption, these are some common factors:

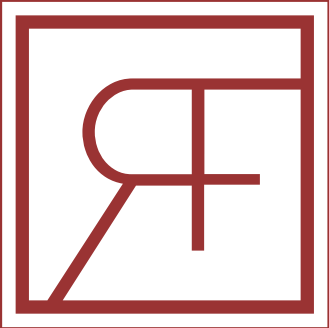
- you never carried the BI coverage (your historical percentage of reopening are quite slim)
- failing to accurately complete or update the BI worksheet which could result in insufficient BI limits (you are going to run out of insurance money before you’re up and running)
- not including your Ordinary Payroll (what is the true cost of training new workers, and what is their productivity rate when they start, when you have lost customers?)
- your indemnity period is not long enough (you got the Building and Equipment limits right but you are only operating at 70 per cent of pre-loss levels)

To ensure you are properly covered, here are a few questions to consider for the BI discussion:

1. Am I completing a worksheet and having the discussion every year?
2. Do I understand my type of BI cover?
3. Am I putting in my projected numbers for the upcoming year?
4. What is my period of Indemnity and if everything fell into place, what is the time period?
5. Am I covering my “ordinary payroll” and for how long?
6. Do I have a Disaster Recovery Plan in place to reduce my reliance on the insurance?

Another important part of the BI discussion is Extra Expense, but we’ll save that for another column. ¢

Scott Feasey is Senior Vice President Commercial Insurance – Prairie Region and Darren Rondeau is Vice President, Claims – Prairie Region with Gallagher Canada, a global leader in insurance, risk management, and consulting services. With more than 35 offices across Canada, and with client service offered in more than 150 countries, Gallagher provides local service with global reach and expertise.



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QUESTIONS

on mental health

With David Grauwiler, Executive Director of the Canadian Mental Health Association - Alberta Division

What's driving the mental health conversation?

Some of us will experience mental illness in the course of our lifetime, and almost all of us will experience mental health challenges (including addiction) as we work, live, and play in our communities.

Choosing to focus on health and wellbeing includes a focus on mental health. Visit your doctor, talk to a psychologist, use online resources and assessment tools. Health is health, illness is illness. We all have mental health, just like we all have physical health.

What do people need to know when they are questioning their mental health or the mental health of a loved one?

Mental illness is not a terminal illness nor the end of their career. A diagnosis simply pinpoints treatment options. Mental illness (including addiction) can be treated in various ways with recovery possible in almost every case. People experiencing mental illness tend to recover more rapidly if diagnosed and treatment started as early as possible.

We all need time to examine our mental health and the mental health of our loved ones. A simple suggestion is to listen carefully when those closest to you share input about changes in your behavior and/or perception. They know you best, so try to listen and not be defensive.

What are the basics that need to be in place to make sure people can take care of their mental health without getting lost in a complex system?

Mental health is not a single set of services based in hospitals and clinics. When we face a mental health challenge in Canada, we often find ourselves frustrated by the matrix of intersecting supports, both clinical and community-based.

- We need to know what mental health looks like and what mental illness (including addiction) is. Between health and illness lay the ordinary challenges to our mental health which all of us face. Understanding that changes in sleep patterns, high levels of anxiety and/or low mood are diminishing our mental health should move us to seek help before things become more serious.
- We need to know what resources exist in our community. Knowing when we need help is only relevant if we know where we can go for help. When we break a limb, we know to visit

an emergency department to be examined and x-rayed. We leave with a cast, and it cost nothing. Sadly, most Canadians when asked where they would go if they or a loved one was experiencing a challenge to their mental health did not know where to go.

- We need access to affordable, appropriate, and timely supports to mental health therapies and treatments. Most mental health interventions are not covered by our public health care system. In fact, many Canadians are unable to access the supports they need due to cost, lack of resources, and stigma. Health equity is needed in Canada.

What can the broader community do to build capacity for better mental health?

We all face challenges to our mental health in our workplaces, homes, and communities in which we participate. The truth is mental illness and related challenges are pervasive within our population.

Actions related to mental health are often placed only on an individual level, however to truly create a mentally healthy person, we need to think more broadly about mentally healthy homes/families, neighbourhoods, workplaces, and communities. The burden placed on individuals living with mental illness needs to be shared by all of us to ensure we reward help-seeking behaviours with access to timely, appropriate, and affordable supports.

What should we do when we find it all just too much?

Because of the COVID-19 disruption, we have all experienced fear, social isolation, and relational tension/grief. For the first time in many decades, Canadians have experienced collective trauma and grief related to death by disease, and grief related to reduced capacity, autonomy, and relationships.

Hard times call us to observe those closest to us. Check to see if there are signs of stress or changed behaviours. Watch yourself as well. Ask gentle questions and offer to be there when needed. Just don't try to 'fix' things.

Learn about mental illness and the practices which support mental health. Develop a plan tied to resources you would engage with in your community to seek help for anyone experiencing declining mental health. We need each other. Talk and take action. ♡



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