

## Technology Strategy Underway

At the outset of the year, BC TIA put forth a strong advocacy position to build and strengthen our industry. In May, we again had the opportunity to reinforce our platform in a submission to the Provincial Competition Council. I'm pleased to report that six months into the year; we're making significant progress on all fronts. For this column, I'd specifically like to discuss progress on the technology strategy, which is the piece that frames how we move forward. I also want to comment on plans to promote the industry and update you on the tremendous support of the BC Technology Scholarship fund.

**Framing the Strategy:** We've started to work with the Ministry of Advanced Education and the Ministry of Economic Development on a government/industry strategy. In developing the request for proposal, we've identified the following four areas the strategy needs to address:

1. Define the macro objectives for the industry as a whole. These are the broad issues that are common to all technology sectors such as employment, revenue growth, training and research.
2. Involve regions, technology sectors and other key drivers, such as University Liaison Offices, to create specific strategies that are tied to the macro objectives.
3. Develop a strategy to facilitate broadening and growing the industry by enabling the emergence of new technology sectors (ie: aerospace, ocean sciences, security, etc.)
4. Articulate the role of the technology industry in creating, fuelling and contributing to a knowledge-based economy.

Initially, the process will be driven by a broadly represented government/industry steering committee that will assist in the development of the draft strategy utilizing input from a larger industry stakeholder group.

The commitment to work with our industry in the development of a strategy and in the recent decision to appoint an Assistant Deputy Minister of Research, Technology and Innovation signals the Government's commitment to this sector and provides us with a means to heighten the profile of our industry. The ball is now in our court to come together as an industry to ensure we develop a strategy that works for the entire technology industry of BC.

**Promoting the Industry:** The wind down of Leading Edge BC -- the government-funded marketing organization that promoted the technology industry -- has led to speculation about whether the promotion of our industry will continue. The Ministry of Economic Development assures us that a focus on the marketing and business development activities for the technology industry will continue through in-market representatives. We believe promoting the industry outside the province and country is necessary and we'll continue to work with the Ministry to ensure this activity continues.

**Leading Edge Technology Centre:** Going forward the BC TIA will assume the management of the Tech Centre, previously managed by Leading Edge BC. We thank our colleagues at Leading Edge BC for their vision and hard work in making the tech centre a reality.

**Industry Recognition:** On a final note, by all accounts the 2006 Technology Impact Awards (TIAs) Gala were again a hugely successful event -- where we gathered to recognize the talent and accomplishments of our industry and to honour this year's finalists and winners.

The BC TIA was thrilled to have over 700 representatives of the technology and business community in attendance. The evening was fun, lively and optimistic with celebrations continuing into the night ending with the Winners Circle Celebration. This is definitely a night you won't want to miss next year!

During the gala an update was provided on the BC Technology Scholarship Fund, originally announced at the 2005 Awards Gala. This fund offers scholarships to university, college and high-school students who wish to pursue a career in a technology-related field. At the 2005 gala, companies showed their support of this new initiative through their spontaneous pledges totaling \$50K, and this year our community surprised us again with another round of spontaneous pledges totaling \$63K. This phenomenal show of support by our community will help us sew the seeds needed to grow and develop the needed technology experts of tomorrow.

I look forward to updating you on a regular basis and as always, thank you for your support and commitment to BC TIA and this industry. I welcome your feedback and comments.

Rob Cruickshank  
rcruickshank@bctia.org