



2009 Federal Budget, Provincial All Candidates, More...



2009 Federal Budget:

On January 5th the executive of your Chamber was invited to Chelsea to participate in a consultation with our MP for the Pontiac, Lawrence Cannon, to hear our comments and recommendations concerning the upcoming 2009 Federal budget. The Pontiac Chamber of Commerce, along with other chambers and mayors from the Outaouais region, had a unique opportunity to openly convey their ideas on how to provide stimulus into the budget.

The main focus of the Chamber's recommendation to our MP centered on increasing and expediting infrastructure spending. On this front the chamber advocated that the *Gas Tax Fund* allocations be increased to provide a greater infusion of money to offset the increasing burden placed on municipalities due to declining property values. Several municipalities in the Pontiac have seen their tax rolls decrease thereby limiting the revenue available to

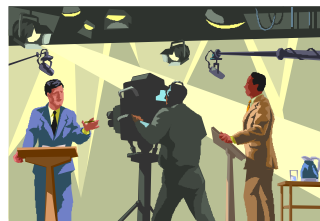
them in both maintaining and constructing infrastructure. Also, the Chamber presented concerns related to forestry industry relief, the status of rural communities, and access to credit for businesses which, we believe, should be considerations within the budget.

It was also stressed that the Chamber's support for existing Federal government infrastructure and relief programs was based on the condition that the allocation of federal monies circumvent the provincial 'middle man' as much as possible and be injected directly to the base level into the hands of the civic leadership in the municipalities.

The Chamber acted not only as a voice for the concerns of business on January 5th, but also, in the absence of any municipal leaders from within the MRC Pontiac advocated for the enhancement of existing federal programs for municipalities, which in the end benefits us all.

Provincial All Candidates

On November 30th your Chamber hosted and moderated its second All Candidates forum. This time around the forum was for the



contenders for the provincial election of last December 8th. Despite only two out of the six candidates attending the forum turned out to be a lively event that had 90 engaged members of the audience steered effectively and fairly by moderator and fellow Chamber member Dr. Isabelle Gagnon. The first half of the forum had the candidates, Carmine Levy of Solidarity Quebec and Charlotte L'Écuyer from the Quebec Liberal Party, field four questions posed from the Chamber. These four questions related to regional economic development, infrastructure, health care, and economic stimulus. After fielding these questions the floor was opened to the audience in attendance to direct questions to the candidates. The questions from the floor were diverse and covered such topics as the proposed Danford Lake dump site, the fuel tax, the decline of the forestry industry and transparency in government.

Upcoming Events

- BOARD MEETING ON THE 22ND OF JANUARY AT SONIA'S RESTAURANT IN PORTAGE DU FORT.
- BUSINESS MEETING WITH M.P. LAWRENCE CANNON ON FEB. 4TH AT SONIA'S RESTAURANT. \$20/ MEMBER, \$25/ NON-MEMBER.

- CHAMBER FUND RAISER LOVE IS IN THE AIR FEBRUARY 14TH, 2009 STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAIL FROM CUPID LATER ON THIS MONTH. L'AMOURRR, L'AMOURRR..

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- CONTINUATION OF PROVINCIAL ALL CANDIDATES
- CUSTOMER GROWTH TIPS FOR 2009
- LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

2009 Customer Growth Tips, Business Spotlight!

Volume 2, Issue 1



As with the Federal All Candidates Forum of September 24th the event of November 30th lived up to the Chambers goal of providing Pontiac businesses, along with the general population with a venue to inform themselves of all the prevailing political options.

Customer Growth Tips:

With the New Year now behind us those in business start thinking of what 2009 has in store. New Years is often a period for personal resolutions, but in business this philosophy of a fresh start, or in the honing of current strengths can also be pondered at this time as well. One thing that all businesses strive for is customer growth. Here are 25 essentials for consideration to help in achieving a prosperous 2009.

1. Always display confidence.
2. Be responsive to your customers needs.
3. Remember their names.
4. Maintain enthusiasm about your customers.
5. Listen to complaints your customer has about your product or service.
6. Fix the problem...not the blame.
7. Don't promise goods or services that you can't deliver.
8. Be respectful when dealing with customers employees.
9. Refer existing customers to other customers.
10. Use your customer's products or services.
11. Know your product or service.
12. Always return a customer's call.
13. Never turn away an opportunity to quote.
14. Ask your employees what the customer wants.
15. Visit your customer's facilities to gain an understanding of their operations.
16. Do not send invoices for insignificant amounts. (This will vary depending on your business)
17. Show employees, by example, the art of politeness and tact when dealing with customers.
18. Never keep customers waiting without acknowledging their presence.
19. Maintain a clean, neat and well organized shop and/or office.
20. Never quote so low on a job that quality is sacrificed.
21. Provide three months lead notice for price increases to allow customers to adjust their prices.
22. Weed out customers that are continually creating problems for your business in receivables, inventory returns, etc.
23. Be firm but fair concerning receivables.
24. Discourage voice mail as the first line of contact for existing or potential customers.
25. Always keep your customers in mind when business opportunities arise that they may be interested in.



Business Spotlight:

Tom Orr Cartage Construction is a general contractor, specializing in excavation and

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ground work, including concrete forming and civil construction.

Over the past 10 years T.O.C.C. has gathered together a very skilled group of trade people, ready to handle any project. T.O.C.C. is working hard to give customers the most value for their money. This team is very efficient and committed to customer service, and getting the job done on budget.

Along with their construction division they also have a small truck fleet, sand & gravel pits, topsoil screening equipment and their very own concrete plant. This, coupled with solid relationship between local builders helps your project go as smooth as possible.

Their goal is and remains to give all customers the best value for their dollar, and the best customer service before, during and after your project is complete.

Congratulations Tom Orr and staff on a job well done. Your service to the Pontiac is appreciated and the Pontiac Chamber of Commerce salutes you.

Next month learn about two more Pontiac based businesses that have made the Pontiac Chamber of Commerce 'Business Spot Light' section.

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