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eBulletin

Keeping the Ontario Public Service informed of our progress

No. 16 June 2011

OPEN for Business

Open for Business is Ontario's program to create faster, smarter and streamlined government-to-business services and to establish a modern system of government. Working with all ministries, Open for Business has three key areas of focus:

- 1. Modern Government** – create a streamlined and focused regulatory environment that delivers results for business, while protecting the public interest.
- 2. Modern Services** – deliver better products and services, including service standards that support the needs of business.
- 3. New Relationship with Business** – create an open and responsive working relationship between business and government.

This monthly **Open for Business eBulletin** will keep the Ontario Public Service up to date on new developments, progress and results as we all work together to make Ontario more attractive to business.



Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities: A Reason to Celebrate

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU) is proud to report that it successfully met the 25% regulatory burden reduction target set for the end of March 2011.

To meet this target, the Ministry identified and removed over 5,200 rules during the Open for Business (OFB) challenge. These rules or requirements set out in legislation, associated regulations and policy manuals are typically characterized as 'burdens' for the regulated community. By consolidating and updating policy documents and legislation, duplicated or obsolete requirements were removed.



Postsecondary education, apprenticeship and Employment Ontario are the main business lines of TCU and as such, the Ministry's regulatory framework is comparatively 'lean'. This led the ministry to face a number of challenges with balancing the need to reduce rules and the need for public protection and accountability.

TCU's success was a result of careful baseline analysis as well as fostering cross-ministry collaboration and, most importantly, persistence.

The first step was to analyse the baseline. The data revealed that 49% of our requirements were in policy manuals and directives and approximately 82% of all requirements were in three programs.

Next, the ministry focused on collaboration and building awareness. Discussions were held across the board to find out more about the requirements in the baseline. As ministry buy-in and understanding of the feasibility of the options grew, more opportunities for burden reduction were found.

Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities

A Reason to Celebrate (cont...)

Creating momentum was vital. Starting from zero reduction in fall 2009, it was important that the ministry begin to make measurable progress.

Lastly, senior management actively engaged in energizing OFB efforts across the ministry and allocated resources to help implement the most promising options. This led to a reduction of more than 15% in the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) policy and operational manuals used by student financial aid offices in colleges and universities. This all had to be done in a way that maintained harmonization of rules with the federal student loan program and ensured consistent application of rules for students across the province.

What began with a close look at the regulatory framework and recognition of the need for engagement across the ministry to find solutions, ended with achieving the burden reduction target.

Strengthening Our Services to Business

As many of you are aware, on April 1st of this year, OFB launched an online tool providing one-window, sortable and searchable access to over 500 business service standards from the 17 ministries that provide services to business: www.ontario.ca/businessstandards.

This initiative is a significant step toward delivering more consistent, predictable and transparent government services in response to the needs of Ontario's businesses. As a result, we're anticipating that these service standards will save businesses time and money, improve their ability to plan projects and enhance the relationship between business and front-line service staff, and with the government as a whole. But, what do Ontario's business leaders think?

We gained some valuable insights when MEDT Deputy Minister Wendy Tilford moderated a webinar entitled, *Strengthening the Ontario Government's Services to Business* during OPS Service Excellence Week. Joining Deputy Tilford on the panel were Emechete Onuoha, VP Citizenship and Government Affairs at Xerox Canada and Joe Vaccaro, COO at the Ontario Home Builders' Association.



(L to R) Joe Vaccaro, Chief Operating Officer, Ontario Home Builders' Association, MEDT Deputy Wendy Tilford and Emechete Onuoha, Vice President Citizenship and Government Affairs, Xerox Canada Ltd.

The panellists were asked to comment on service standards within their own organizations and to provide suggestions as to what government could do to address the service needs of business.

In sharing their insights, both guests complimented the government for creating structure and process. However, as noted by Mr. Vaccaro, "the government does 'process' so well that sometimes the process consumes itself. [Over the years] the process gets changed or added onto and suddenly you've lost the thread – the outcome that you are trying to achieve – because the process has become so complex." Mr. Onuoha observed that the government structure brings expectations that the process will ensure responsiveness and agility. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. He advised that the government should "stay connected [with business] and apply learning from these consultations to deliver the agility demanded from business."

Good advice. And reassuring to know that it is aligned with the three part business objective established when the project to modernize the government's business service standards was initiated in 2010:

- i. Improve the government's business service standards by making them easy to access and understand.
- ii. Ensure communication between government and business throughout the service process.
- iii. Publicly post an online one-window tool, making it faster and easier to access the government's business service standards.

Work continues on modernizing Ontario's business service standards. We've contacted over 9,000 Ontario businesses seeking their comments and suggestions on the service standards online tool and, over the following months, will continue to solicit business feedback through individual consultations, roundtables and presentations at business forums. Watch for updates in future issues of the OFB *eBulletin* and we'll detail the steps that are being taken to ensure continuous improvement in government's services to business.

Check out the new [business service standards](http://www.ontario.ca/businessstandards).

Business Sector Strategy Update – Hospitality

While the final roundtable for the Building and Development sector was held in late The business sector strategy process between the hospitality sector and the Government of Ontario began with the kick-off roundtable, held in the main Legislature building on March 28, 2011. At that time, host Sandra Pupatello, Minister of Economic Development and Trade informed business leaders that the business sector strategy is a “process that is working. Tell us how we can help your sector, impact your everyday life and get the answers for your business.”

And, 62 days later at the final roundtable, the hospitality business leaders saw for themselves just how well the sector strategy process works to deliver quick, responsive and tangible results. Deputy Ministers from the ministries of the Attorney General and Economic Development and Trade, along with the Assistant Deputy Minister from Health and Long-Term Care presented solutions in response to the top five issues revealed by hospitality business leaders in March.

In a two-month period, the Government of Ontario delivered real change to the hospitality sector. Of note were the regulatory changes that were made under the *Liquor Licence Act*, many of which respond directly to requests from the hospitality industry. The changes have enhanced the sector’s ability to more actively compete with other world-wide tourism destinations and better positioned to respond to the demands of both domestic and international travelers. This will surely deliver increased hospitality and tourism sales, and has the potential to positively affect other industries across the province.

In the words of ORHMA President and CEO, Tony Elenis, the process is “a recipe for success...a win-win experience.” He thanked Minister Pupatello for her leadership of the Business Sector Strategy process and congratulated political and ministry staff for their “tremendous effort and perseverance in delivering these solutions.” David Blades, ORHMA Board Chair and Vice President of Operations at Realstar Hospitality added, “We appreciate your time and energy. Together, we established a great level of communication and it will continue.”



¹ Statistics Canada, “Labour Force Survey” 2010.

² Statistics Canada, Service Industries Survey 2009 – Film, Television, Book, Periodical, Music, Commercial Performing Arts; Canadian Interactive Industry Alliance, “Interactive Industry Profile” 2009.

³ Ontario Ministry of Finance, 2010 Fall Economic Statement.

Advancing the Creative Cluster

With employment of over 200,000 people¹ and revenues exceeding \$15 billion², Ontario is home to one of North America’s largest and most diverse Entertainment and Creative Clusters.

There are six industries that comprise the cluster—film and television, music, interactive digital media, book and magazine publishing and commercial theatre. Together, these industries play an important role in Ontario’s knowledge economy and are well positioned to capitalize on global growth in new products and services and create jobs.

Ontario delivers enhanced programs and services to businesses through the Ontario Media Development Corporation (OMDC), the province’s central catalyst for growth in the cluster. An agency of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, OMDC’s programs and services drive investment, jobs and original content creation. In addition, the OMDC administers and certifies Ontario’s six creative cluster tax credits currently estimated to be worth \$315 million annually to businesses³. Cluster businesses continue to express confidence in the OMDC and its suite of supports to business.

“The OMDC has done a great deal to help our business grow,” said Tom Frenzel, President, Capybara Games. “Programs, like the OMDC Export Fund, have allowed us to form some of our most important business relationships.”

Another key OMDC program is the Interactive Digital Media Fund which in 2010-11, fund invested \$2 million in 19 interactive digital media content companies to assist with moving content projects (e.g. videogames) from development to production.

Other government accomplishments that support cluster businesses include:

- Launching the highly-subscribed Intellectual Property Development Fund to support research and development costs in screen-based industries.
- Enhancing creative industry tax credits, including the Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit to attract major game developers to invest and locate in Ontario and support Ontario-based companies in job creation and growth.

Two Open for Business Initiatives Win at Showcase Ontario 2011

An important aspect of government modernization is delivering government-to-business services in faster, smarter ways with more certainty and predictability. Two initiatives – the Toll-free Business Information Line and ONE-Source for Business – are making it easier for Ontarians to do business with government, and each initiative will be recognized with a merit award at Showcase Ontario 2011. We'd like to recognize our partners at ServiceOntario and in the Government Services Cluster for making these initiatives a success.

The [Toll-free Business Information Line](#), 1-888-745-8888, provides business with a single contact for federal, provincial and municipal government services. A joint effort of ServiceOntario and the Canada Business Ontario, the Info Line was created especially for small business. It seamlessly connects callers to 12 business-related programs offering information on paying taxes, hiring and staffing, licensing, approvals and publications. Customer service agents are available to help route calls to more than 70 government programs and hundreds of services that will help them do business in Ontario.

[ONE-Source for Business](#) is the place to start for small businesses. It's their Ontario government connection to services, forms and information from all levels of government to help them make their business work. The site enables business to search and access relevant services and information; fill in and submit forms electronically; and access additional government accounts via the My Account section.

Following on the success of the Showcase Ontario regional meeting held in Thunder Bay earlier this year, [Showcase Ontario](#) will be taking place at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre in Toronto September 7-9, 2011. Come and participate in career-focused education sessions, hear world-class presenters and see the best in public and private sector business technology solutions. And while you're there, be sure to visit the Open for Business, ServiceOntario and Government Services Cluster booths and participate in service modernization education sessions.



The banner features a word cloud on the left with '2011' prominently displayed. The main text on the right reads: 'September 7 - 9 Metro Toronto Convention Centre SHOWCASE ONTARIO Learning Recognition Partnerships'. Below this is a navigation bar with links: 'WELCOME News Register Learning Recognition Partnerships Downloads Contact Us'. The central message is 'MAKE CONNECTIONS at Canada's largest public sector education conference!'. A short description follows: 'Showcase Ontario is a unique opportunity to see the best in public and private sector business technology solutions. Taking place over three days, participants have access to career-focused education sessions, world-class speakers and a dynamic exhibition.' A link is provided: 'Stay tuned for the latest conference updates.'

Let's Share our Successes

Across the OPS, we're all working towards the goal of a modern government, with a more focused regulatory environment and faster, improved services. So let's share our successes. Tell us your stories about how businesses are benefiting from your ministry Open for Business initiatives.

Send your stories and photos to clare.faulds@ontario.ca or call 416-212-3284, so we can share them in future issues of our monthly Open for Business eBulletin.

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OPEN for Business

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