

Innovation Place Newsletter
January, 2002 Edition

Welcome, Regina Research Park!

Doug Tastad, Vice-President of Research Parks, Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation, is pleased to announce that monthly distribution of the Innovation Place Newsletter has now been expanded to Regina Research Park.

"We are pleased to welcome the Regina research park community to the Innovation Place Newsletter. Our objectives in expanding the distribution of the newsletter are to promote interaction and increase awareness about the activities of companies located in both the Saskatoon and Regina research parks," says Tastad. "Our goal is to foster the spirit of a province-wide research park community."

The Innovation Place Newsletter will now include feature articles, tenant profiles and announcements of interest concerning companies of both research parks. Saskatchewan's joint research park community is now 137 companies strong, employing about 2800 people in sectors including agriculture biotechnology, information technology, petroleum technology and health sciences. We invite tenant companies located in both the Regina and Saskatoon research parks to contribute news releases, announcements and events notices for publication in the newsletter. (See page four of this newsletter for details.)

"Over the past 12 years, the Innovation Place Newsletter has proven to be an effective communications tool for tenants, their employees and a wide range of interested parties on our distribution list. With the inclusion of Regina's research park community in the newsletter, the publication's circulation will now jump to 3,000 copies per month, distributed to readers across the province and around the world," says Tastad.

Information Services Corporation brings province's Land Titles system into 21st century

For more than a century, Saskatchewan's Land Titles registry has been a paper-based system, amassing more than 10.5 million documents and 50 million pages of records. The Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan (ISC) was established as a Crown Corporation on January 1, 2000 to automate the province's Land Titles system and integrate it with information in the province's Geographic Information System (GIS). ISC is the anchor tenant of The Terrace, the flagship building of the research park in Regina.

The decision to automate Saskatchewan's Land Titles system was first made in 1995, says Adrian Legin, Chief Information Officer with ISC. The following year, the scope and value of the project expanded significantly with the decision to integrate the Land Titles system with GIS technology, and deliver the system through the Internet. The result is the development of the Land Titles Automated Network Delivery (LAND) System, which moves the provincial Land Titles system from the 19th century to the 21st century.

According to Legin, the LAND system was developed with expertise from within the province. "The Land Titles system itself was developed and designed by people originally from Saskatchewan Justice; the prime contractor was EDS Saskatchewan. The Geomatics integration has been done by the people who were originally part of Sask Geomatics at SPMC, with help from local companies like GDS."

ISC is currently implementing the LAND System in the province. "Our website went live in March of 2001. In May, we turned up Plan Searches, so 125,000 survey plan images are now available online. In June, we turned up province-wide Internet searches for Crown grants,

which covers 200,000 records, and implemented the system in the former Moose Jaw Land Registration District. On December 3, the new system was implemented in the Regina and area districts," says Legin.

The conversion to the automated system is progressing district-by-district across the province, he adds. "As we implement the system in the 10 former land registration districts that existed in the province, they are being merged into one district. When roll-out is complete, there will be one land district in Saskatchewan.

"Implementation will first take place in Humboldt and Saskatoon in the new year. Battleford and Prince Albert will be completed in the spring of 2002. Province-wide implementation will conclude in the second half of 2002 in Yorkton and Swift Current," says Legin.

"Once the system is completely rolled out and our customers are familiar with the system, we are aiming for a province-wide turnaround of 24 to 48 hours for land titles transactions as opposed to a week or more under the old system."

As the LAND System is implemented, Saskatchewan is getting recognition for the technology that has come about with the development of the system. In addition to automating Land Titles, the LAND System also includes a suite of on-line management tools.

"These are e-business services that we had to develop in order to be able to offer the on-line services that are available on the LAND System," says Legin. These services include a front-end data entry management system; a component that facilitates the transfer, storage and management of images; a real-time, transaction-based billing service that tracks services charges and payments on accounts; and a comprehensive suite of distribution and output services in traditional mail, e-mail and fax-based delivery.

"These are reusable components that we will use to roll out future services that ISC develops in the areas of registries and GIS-related services," says Legin. "We have also developed a Systems Development Environment that we have already sold to a couple of clients. It provides a base functionality for developing a software system, including tools, standards, techniques and documentation."

The development of the LAND System has created an exciting marketing opportunity for ISC. "Both the system and the system components can be marketed to government and private-sector entities inside and outside of the province. We are also excited about international export market opportunities. To date, we have received numerous enquiries from around the world. And that will only continue to grow. With the Strategic Marketing Agreement we signed with EDS in Dallas during the Team Canada West Trade Mission, we will be able to significantly extend our marketing possibilities outside of the province through EDS' global network of customers," says Legin.

In creating a new superhighway for land information, ISC has attracted recognition from leading international financial institutions, including the World Bank and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

"They've recognized us for our core competencies, which include automation or business process re-engineering, the legislative and legal expertise that we have within ISC, the organizational changes we've implemented and the issues that are involved in basic land reform including the creation and management of the basic survey fabric," says Legin.

As custodian of Saskatchewan's survey fabric, ISC co-ordinates, maintains and administers provincial mapping systems. Among the products and services available are cadastral, topographic, orthophotos and thematic mapping.

The move to The Terrace at 10 Research Drive brings 240 of ISC's employees together in one central location, says Legin. "We needed to bring together previously dispersed staff. We chose this location because of the environment of innovation and collaboration that is being fostered at the research park."

ISC is teaming up with the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation (SOCO) to further promote interaction among the research park community by jointly hosting monthly noon-hour synergy sessions. "We bring in guest speakers to talk about very timely topics. Our most recent session included a presentation by representatives of the Canadian Light Source Synchrotron. The purpose of these synergy sessions is to generate new ideas for innovation and collaboration, both among members of the research park community and interested industries and educational institutions outside of the park."

Legin says that the relationships ISC has formed with its research park neighbours have proven invaluable to the corporation. ISC is looking forward to developing similar mutually beneficial relationships with companies at the Saskatoon park.

Media Matters: How to write a more effective news release

News releases are an effective way for technology-based companies to make the media, along with the public, aware of their achievements and advancements.

Owen Roberts, Director of Research Communications for the University of Guelph, recently addressed participants at the Biotech Communicators' Workshop organized by Ag-West Biotech. The topic of Roberts' discussion was "News Releases At Work."

At the workshop, Roberts shared tips for preparing more effective news releases, based on comments he gathered from a dozen news editors located across the country. The e-mail survey he conducted revealed that the majority of editors questioned do utilize news releases as a source for news leads and as background information for stories written by reporters. A smaller percentage of publications use releases as news fillers, and run the text verbatim to fill news holes.

Many news organizations receive 100 or more news releases per day by mail, fax and e-mail. Editors are busy people, with limited time. What can your business do to ensure that your news release attracts the attention of an editor, rather than ending up in the nearest paper recycling bin?

An effective news release will actually convey news, not just promotion and hype. "It has to be news," said the editor of the Manitoba Co-operator in response to Roberts' survey. "If it's clearly promotional, we're leery. The word 'excited' is the kiss of death."

"Identify the five W's and the H," says Roberts. "All news releases need to address who, what, where, when, why and how."

Keep your message concise, and make your news release look like a news story. Adopt the traditional 'inverted pyramid' style of writing. Start with the most important facts, then fill in with less important details.

According to Roberts, your lead statement should be no longer than 30 words, and should only be one sentence. "Begin with a brief description of the news, then distinguish who announced it, not the other way around," suggests Roberts. "The best news leads spare the reader a lot of detail."

Details appear in the second paragraph, including names and applicable statistics.

The third paragraph of your news release should include a quote from a key spokesperson.

"Quotes give a news release a voice. Avoid long quotes (no longer than 20 to 30 words each) and use quotes no more than two or three times in an eight- or nine-paragraph news release."

Roberts says a unique feature of science-oriented news releases is the "magical" fourth paragraph. "This is the paragraph where you explain the science or the technology you want people to know about. You don't need to explain it in the lead; it should be in the fourth or fifth paragraph to provide the 'meat' or technical information for the story," says Roberts.

News releases should be printed as single-spaced documents in a legible font. At one time, news editors requested that all releases be double-spaced, but in these days of e-mail and downloading of text, single-spaced documents are the current preference of today's editors. Always include the names and telephone numbers of one, and preferably two, individuals who can be contacted by reporters for interviews. Be sure that your contacts are available for interviews in the days immediately following the dispatch of your news release. Another important tip: make sure that your contacts know they have been named as contacts, and are prepared to be interviewed by the press.

Your news release can be printed on your corporate letterhead, and should include a dateline: (i.e.) SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN (January 15, 2002). Always provide a release date for your announcement, such as "For Immediate Release" or "Effective January 15, 2002".

"End your news release with -30- because in journalism, that's the equivalent to saying 'the end'," advises Roberts. "This dates back to the days when stories were transmitted by teletype and ended with three Xs, which is the Roman numeral for 30."

After the -30-, provide as much contact information as possible, including the names of individuals available for interviews, telephone numbers, website addresses, e-mail addresses, fax numbers and business addresses.

Contact local news editors and ask how they prefer to receive news releases, says Roberts. "Several editors suggested they prefer e-mail, because they can just download the text. Others prefer to receive news releases by fax."

News releases are really worth the effort, concludes Roberts. "Some publications stated that up to 50 per cent of their content utilizes news releases in some form. Over the years, preferred delivery mechanisms have changed, creating big time opportunities that probably didn't exist before to get your news release published."

UPDATES:

New tenants to our research park community

A warm welcome to the following new tenants of Saskatoon's research park:

- AMEC E&C (Engineering & Construction) Services Limited, located at 200 - 421 Downey Road. Contact Dan Brown at (306) 477-1155 (ext. 228) or e-mail: danbrown@amec.com .

- Canadian Food Inspection Agency Operations and Programs and Western Seed Lab, located at 301 - 421 Downey Road. Contact Al Klemmer at (306) 975-4987 or e-mail: aklemmer@inspection.gc.ca .

- Phenomenome Discoveries Inc. has opened offices located at 204 - 407 Downey Road. Contact John Hyshka at (306) 665-8351 or e-mail: info@phenomenome.com .

Join in welcoming the following new additions to Regina's research park community:

- Presagio Technology Group, located at 150.A & B - 6 Research Drive. Contact Paul Gebhardt or Peter Beaulieu at (306) 780-7493 or e-mail: paul.gebhardt@nrc.ca or peter.beaulieu@nrc.ca .

- FSIN eLearning: Indigenations.com, located at 150.C & D - 6 Research Drive. E-mail David Joyce at djoyce@indigenations.com .

- Edgewater Computer Systems Inc., located at 190 - 10 Research Drive. Contact Duane Anderson at (306) 586-4710 or e-mail: dla_ecsi@sasktel.net .

Discover the age-old art of yoga at Innovation Place

Beginning Monday, January 21, residents of Innovation Place will have the opportunity to participate in a new fitness venue. JNS Yoga Studio will bring professional yoga instruction to the park's fitness centre, offering one-hour classes from Monday through Friday.

JNS Yoga Studio has served the Saskatoon area for 11 years, under the direction of Jo-Ann Sutherland. She began teaching yoga 23 years ago in Winnipeg and has been instructing in Saskatoon since 1984. Sutherland has trained in India and is a certified teacher and a member of the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers' Association. Twice a year, she updates her training at the world-famous Yoga Center, developed by Aadil Palkhivala, in Bellevue, Washington.

The word yoga means 'union,' describing the discipline's connection between body, breath and mind. Yoga connects the body, breath and mind, helping to relieve stress and increase powers of concentration, says Sutherland. As a result, yoga helps participants improve their performance in all areas of life.

"We'll be teaching students of all levels, beginning with an introduction to Hatha yoga," says Sutherland. "The classes will emphasize deep and controlled breathing, posture and alignment, as well as meditation."

Yoga is of particular benefit to individuals who are in high-stress occupations or who work long hours at desks or computer work stations. "Yoga opens up the chest; it gets the heart centre open. It teaches students how to breathe properly. The main focus will be on yoga activities that will help to restore students during the lunch hour, to help get rid of tension and stress, to open the chest and hips, so that at the end of the class, students feel restored and ready to go back to work," says Sutherland.

Sutherland and her associates will offer five classes a week at the Innovation Place Fitness Centre: Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m.; Wednesdays from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.; and Fridays from 7:15 to 8:15 a.m.

Pre-registration for classes is required. Innovation Place workers can take advantage of JNS Yoga Studio's introductory special of: one lesson a week for 10 weeks for \$80, or unlimited attendance (up to five classes per week) for 10 weeks for \$120.

Proper attire for yoga class is as simple as a t-shirt, footless leggings and bare feet. "All the yoga equipment, such as mats, belts and blocks, will be supplied. The Fitness Centre also features a State of the Art Yoga Wall," says Sutherland.

Each class is limited to 10 participants; register early to avoid disappointment. For more information, call JNS Yoga Studio at 665-8133.

Nation-wide search for innovators

Every year, a Canadian invents a way to make \$100,000! Bright ideas make money, and if you have one that has been developed and marketed in Canada, the Ernest C. Manning Awards Foundation wants to hear about it.

Since 1982, the Manning Innovation Awards have recognized flashes of brilliance across Canada, including the development of the artificial knee, the flat electrical plug and the V-chip. The awards are presented to Canadians who have conceived, developed and marketed new procedures, processes or products of benefit to Canadians.

The 2002 program of saluting Canadian innovation is now underway and nominations of innovative Canadians are being sought from across the country. Nominees vie for two \$10,000 Innovation Awards, a \$25,000 Award of Distinction and the \$100,000 Principal Award.

Nominees must be Canadian citizens resident in Canada. Nominations close annually on February 15 or the following business day.

To receive a nomination form or more information, contact:

The Manning Innovations Award
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