

# Creating a Brand Makes You a “Price Setter” Not a “Price Taker”

## There's more to creating a brand than developing a fancy package or telling people how you treat your animals.

The concept of branding is all about creating a “character package”. When people see your business's name you want them to know exactly what your business is, what your reputation is and what level of service they can expect.

As an agri-preneur with limited resources, a brand can be your company's most valuable asset. Once established, a brand will let you charge a premium for your products while retaining market leadership. Brands are important to consumers because they represent attributes, values, benefits and personality. In your customer's mind, they provide your company name with a separate identity from the competition, making your products desirable, wanted and even needed.

### Marketing begins with the customer. Branding begins at home.

A brand = product + perceived character + promise.

It's a contract with the consumer which conveys a series of expectations and has a certain predictability. It's based on

the long term values held by the company executives.

### How do you know you have a brand and not just another commodity?

When you control price and demand, you have a brand. Commodities are supply driven. Typically with commodities as supply increases, price drops. Brands are demand driven and allow you to achieve a premium price even in times of good supply. A brand allows you to differentiate your products and services and take advantage of a loyal customer base.

### Begin by thinking like a brand, rather than a commodity.

#### Commodity:

- No unique features or difference
- Price is supply driven
- Easily substituted

#### Branded Product:

- Differentiated product
- Value added pricing
- Not substitutable
- Portrays image, personality, integrity
- Organization's culture with employees and with community
- Creates a benchmark for competition

So, what advantages do a strong brand offer? There are many, including:

- reduced marketing costs due to consumers' brand awareness and loyalty
- price premium because the brand has higher perceived quality
- protection against price competition from other products
- reduced day-to-day competitive pressure
- a profitable market niche resulting from product differentiation
- higher status with the consumer which serves as a launching pad for product line extensions
- increased value of the firm as brand values can be higher than other asset values in a business
- increased product recognition and probability of purchase

Every company should have a baseline branding strategy. The smaller the business, the stronger the brand has to be. If you don't spend money on branding the only criteria left to compete on is price. A larger company will almost always have the price advantage. A branding strategy is the foundation of all customer contact activities. Properly cared for, a brand symbol can bestow credibility, attract instant attention and increase profitability.

Karen Goad

# Changing to Serve You Better



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**Kathy Lowther**



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### RIP Northwest Processor

The Northwest Processor newsletter (NWP) hit a wall, met its maker, bit the dust... well sort of. We've published the Northwest Processor for 6 years, distributing 1600 issues quarterly. It's going strong but based on the growth of agri-preneurship in Alberta and client and staff feedback we decided it was time for a change. This issue brings the Northwest Processor a new name and a new look. We are refocusing the newsletter slightly to meet the changing priorities of our industry and client needs.

TA DA...Introducing the **Alberta Agri-preneur**, a newsletter for market focused agri-preneurs who create and develop new products & enterprises, access new markets and/or add value to existing products. NWP readers won't see a whole lot of changes. It's the same great stuff under a new name for greater audience appeal. This is our premier edition *and with that I'd like to introduce you to the other members of my gang!*



**Kerry Engel**  
Publisher



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*Inclusion of a product or service in this newsletter is not an endorsement by Alberta Agriculture, Food & Rural Development.*



# Creating Your Identity

## An interview with *Danie Hardie Creative Communications Ltd.*

As a business owner, creating your identity is really about portraying a visual message about yourself and your product to a target market. What do you want your current and potential customers to know and “feel” about you when they see your company logo? Are you looking for an old-fashioned, down-home image, or do you want to be seen as trendy and fast-paced?

Graphic designer Danie Hardie, President of *Danie Hardie Creative Communications* in Edmonton, works with a variety of agriculture and agri-food businesses to help them develop a look and feel for their business. “The most important aspect of this process is the customer,” says Hardie. “The more you know about the customers you want to attract, the more you can target your image or brand to satisfy their needs and wants.”

The *Explore Direct* conference committee was looking for an image to use in their promotions and public relations activities. Hardie was approached to help them design a logo and newsletter masthead. The process used to create this unique brand was much the same as it is when working with any business manager.

We asked Hardie to describe the process used in working with the committee. “In developing the *Explore Direct* logo, the process was enhanced by the upfront work done by the planning committee,” Hardie said. “This included a written description of their target audience and the anticipated outcomes. As well, some thought had been put into how and where the image would be used. For example, the committee wanted a logo to be used for brochures, letterhead, and other



printed material. They also wanted a coordinating masthead for use on the *Explore Direct* newsletter.

Initial design ideas were produced and e-mailed to a committee for critique and comment. Using computer technology, no face-to-face meeting was required which helped save time. The committee discussed the ideas and also tested client reactions. Comments and concerns were directed back to me for revisions,” Hardie continued.

“A second draft was produced for further review. With minor modifications to the design, the artwork was prepared for a variety of applications. For example, the logo and masthead were done both in colour and in black and white in several file formats. This allowed committee members to use the logo for both internal and external documents while keeping the images true to the original design,” said Hardie.

By getting a professional to develop a look that was both consistent with the target market and with the objectives of the event, the *Explore Direct* conference committee established a brand that could be used in a variety of mediums over a long time. The logo design allowed the promotions committee to be more creative in their approach to marketing the conference. It was used on printed materials, as an iced cookie decoration and a garment applique.

The *Explore Direct* brand was not only used for the 2001 conference, but will continue to be the brand for future direct marketing initiatives.

For information on developing your own business identity, contact Danie Hardie Creative Communications at (780) 944-9560 or e-mail [dhardie@cre8ivecommunications.com](mailto:dhardie@cre8ivecommunications.com)

Linda Hawk

## Branding Quick Facts:

- “A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol or design which identifies a seller's products and differentiates them from competitor's products”. (Times Newspapers and MBA Publishing)
- In your mind brands constantly compete for your attention and loyalty.
- Consistency and repetition is vital when creating brand awareness. People buy brands they know and trust!
- Branding enables you to capture *mind share* which translates into *market share*. There is a bond between your company and your clients because the brand conveys who you are and what they will get by purchasing your products.
- Customers form impressions of your company and your products every day. “If you want your brand associated with quality or other positive attributes, then take the upper hand.” (office.com)
- Remember brands happen with or without you. It is up to you to be pro-active in shaping the identity and strength of your brand image.

Janice McGregor

# Small Spuds Taste Appealing

## The *Little Potato Company* eyes the market.

In four short years since its inception *The Little Potato Company* expanded its market for branded spuds and it's no "small potatoes". Angela Santiago, General Manager, cites the success of her family owned business to intensive market research, a customer focus and close relationships with contract growers and breeders of small potato varieties.

With its distinctive logo and a unique marketing concept of two-pound bags of mixed, small potato varieties, the company tapped into a consumer demand for ingredient solutions. As Angela explains, "consumers are looking for meal solutions, not a raw commodity that takes time and effort to prepare". The *Little Potato Company* positioned their gourmet branded potatoes as a convenience food that can be easily cooked at home in short order. The little potatoes were a hit with consumers who had abandoned larger, slow cooking varieties in favor of rice and pasta. Angela predicts that in five to ten years the majority of potatoes sold will be small varieties.

Starting with just 30 acres in 1997, last year the company grew over 450 acres and contracted another 300 acres of five distinctive, small potato varieties. These "truffles of the earth" are grown to specifications spelled out in written contracts which advise growers on growing and harvesting conditions. The *Little Potato Company* pays a premium price for produce that meets their size specifications of 1 5/8" or less. Harvesting is completed with European machinery specifically adapted for gently handling the small potatoes with minimal bruising and scarring. This is especially important since the potatoes are often served whole without peeling. More than

10 million pounds of potatoes are handled annually in the company's new 30,000-square-foot processing facility.

While originally targeting the restaurant and food service market, the *Little Potato Company* now focus their efforts on the retail market. A just-in-time inventory system manages their products so retailers receive their stock when they need it and while the potatoes are at their maximum freshness. Delivery is usually within 48 hours. Represented by Bridge Brand Food Service Ltd., the *Little Potato Company* found space in the produce aisles of IGA, Safeway, and Co-op stores from Manitoba to British Columbia. The potatoes are also available in food service through Serca.

The *Little Potato Company* strives to "keep the customer" satisfied. By ensuring consistency of supply and price and selecting distinctively colorful and flavorful potato varieties, they have established a successful market for their produce. They are currently investigating other market options and researching new varieties and opportunities for microwave or sauced potato products. Keep an "eye" on Alberta's "10<sup>th</sup> fastest growing company".

Janice McGregor



## Explore Direct Summer Tours

This provincial initiative features five tours - Lethbridge/Pincher Creek, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Red Deer/Lacombe and Calgary. You will get a chance to see, feel and experience operations involved in direct marketing and agri-tourism.

If you are a farm manager currently involved in direct marketing who wants to learn more, or a farm manager interested in diversifying into a market-focused operation, these tours are for you. We will showcase four different direct marketing operations in each of the five regions. You will be exposed to "best practices" and receive information about innovative direct marketing and agri-tourism techniques. You will learn how quality and customer service can distinguish your product in the marketplace.

While on the bus, you will learn about agri-education. This growing North American trend helps direct marketers add value to their customers' "farm experience". These techniques can be used to add value to your farm direct marketing operation, too. Expand your network and stimulate your imagination!

Dates for the tours are as follows:  
Lethbridge/Pincher Creek:  
August 8 Edmonton  
August 15 Grande Prairie  
August 21 Red Deer/Lacombe  
August 22 Calgary  
August 29

For more information or a brochure, contact Eileen Kotowich at (780) 349-4465 or e-mail [eileen.kotowich@gov.ab.ca](mailto:eileen.kotowich@gov.ab.ca).

# Want Tourists in Your Town? Brand it, and They Will Come

## Regional branding is what rural Alberta communities need to make tourism a viable part of their local economies.

Marketing a tourism product requires agility, flexibility and creativity. Even the most successful tourism brands such as California Wine Country have to constantly adapt to keep up with cultural changes and shifting customer preferences. Owning a powerful tourism brand differentiates you from the competition and allows you to build and retain loyalty.

According to Liping A. Cai, tourism professor from Purdue University, tourism branding can be defined as “a process of building a unique destination image that evokes a specific set of travelers’ thoughts, feelings and associations, which in turn add value to their visiting experience.”

Cai says rural communities that decide to market themselves as a tourism destination often think too small. Sometimes even a county is too small. We have to remember that visitors don’t think about county or town boundaries. Regional branding is what communities need to focus on.

Regional tourism planning should also select target markets. “What attracts families may be very different from what attracts newlyweds, which, in turn, may be different from what retirees are looking for,” states Cai.

Needs of foreign tourists are another consideration. Many Alberta visitors have been to West Edmonton Mall and Lake Louise, and now want to see the ‘real’ Alberta. Too often we overlook the value of our own backyards. The answer is to “regionalize, plan and

brand”, says Cai.

Rural tourism is a growing phenomenon in Alberta. Three good examples of regional branding are:



## Kalyna Country Ecomuseum

What’s an ecomuseum? An ecomuseum invites visitors to experience history and nature in their original settings, while enjoying the modern-day communities of today’s inhabitants.

“Kalyna” is the Slavic term for the highbush cranberry, which flourishes in east-central Alberta. *Kalyna Country Ecomuseum*, a 15,000 square kilometer heritage district, showcases the natural and cultural history of eastern European farming settlements and Indian reservations within the drainage basin of the North Saskatchewan River.

Jars Balan, who was instrumental in pulling together the Kalyna brand, says they knew that they would be successful only if the brand was an authentic reflection of the region. Businesses and individuals accepted the identity as relevant and bought into the brand. The Kalyna brand acts as an umbrella for local promotions. Balan states that for a regional brand to succeed it’s imperative that you don’t have competing groups trying to brand.

For more information on Kalyna Country call 1-800-452-5962 (4KALYNA) or visit their website at [www.kalynacountry.ab.ca](http://www.kalynacountry.ab.ca)



This 700 km trail winds its way north through the foothills from Cardston to Mayerthorpe on

Highways 5, 6 and 22. Its brand is the western and cowboy heritage of the area. The Old West is still evident in the art, history, food, hospitality and culture of the foothills residents.

Part of the success of developing this Alberta tourism brand was taking the time to meet with stakeholders and allowing discussion about their common ground. Chuck Lee, Cowboy Trail Tourism Association chairperson says, “they chose collaboration over competition”.

For more information on the Cowboy Trail call 1-800-565-4418 or visit their website at [www.thecowboytrail.com](http://www.thecowboytrail.com)

## Jasper Pursues Branding

The Jasper Chamber of Tourism and Commerce recently voted to brand Jasper. Although they only needed 51% of votes, one of the keys to the initiatives success was its full and widespread support. “It’s a positive step towards working together”, says Chamber marketing chairman, Kelly Bossio.

Now that the business community has shown its support the next step is the research phase. They’ll need to learn why people come to Jasper, what they want, and how local operators can give it to them. The goal is to create a four-season brand that can help sell Jasper as a destination to tourists and visitors.

Sharon Homeniuk

# What Makes You Special, Unique and Different?

**“To be different is to be not the same. To be unique is to be one of its kind.” Jack Trout, *Differentiate or Die*.**

An essential step in building a strong brand is to position yourself, to set yourself apart from the competition. You need to find out what makes you special, unique or different!

You can't be all things to all people. Doing so undermines your uniqueness and your brand strength. You need to be different. If you can't explain what makes you different from the competition how do you expect your customers to?

One of the best books I've read on the topic is **Differentiate or Die** by Jack Trout and Steve Rivkin. There are many ways to differentiate your business according to Jack Trout. They include:



- *Be first.* Thomas Edison said “make it a habit to keep on the lookout for novel and interesting ideas that others have used successfully”. In other words, being first often just means being observant. Being first also means being different!
- *Attribute (n.) ownership.* Is there a distinct feature that you can attribute to your product? It can't be the same as your competition's. That defeats the purpose of trying to differentiate yourself. What you are looking for is a simple, “benefit-oriented” characteristic like: thicker, handcrafted, original, reliable...
- *Leadership* provides a forum for



differentiation. Using leadership as a differentiator requires you to brag. You can be a leader in a number of ways including sales, technology or performance.

- *Your heritage.* Do you have a long and noteworthy history in this business? What's your story? If you focus on your history in the business or past generations' involvement, you can differentiate yourself from others.

- *Market specialty.* By specializing you are differentiating. You are perceived as the expert. Being specialized allows you to focus on one product, one benefit and one message.

Trout tells businesses to “tell it like it is. Don't make the assumption that everyone knows who the specialist is. One of the things he advises is to position yourself as *the specialist in (whatever).*”

- *How a product is made* can differentiate it in the market place.

Many of today's new products use a variety of exciting nutraceuticals or organic ingredients. Perhaps your business focuses on the handmade, or traditional methods that consumers think are better than modern factory methods.

- *Being the latest.* By adding technology you can position yourself as “next-generation”. Just make sure the added technology solves a real problem.
- *Being the hottest* differentiates your business in a manner similar to leadership. Using industry ratings you can pick the parameters for your hotness. Sales over any time period or industry ratings can help define your hotness. If you've got testimonials from unbiased sources use them. If, for instance, the astronauts aboard the Mir space station say you're hot, you must be! An astronaut stationed on Mir requested BC Smoked Salmon be sent to her in space. It made the national news. I hope that company takes advantage of this “out of this world” endorsement!

**It's a Given!**

According to Trout, today's consumer expects several “givens”. They demand

quality. **Quality** is not an attribute to differentiate your product on because today's consumer has quality as a basic requirement.

The other given is low price. **Low price** has a limited life as a differentiator. Someone can always offer the same product for a lower price. High-quality products should be more expensive. People expect to pay more for a better product, but the quality should be visible in some way. High priced products should offer prestige.

### Where can you start?

#### 1. With the competition.

- Are you offering the same products as your competition?
- In what way can you make your product better than your competition's? To do this list the key differences between your product and the competition's. If you can't identify any special differences it's time to get a new product!

#### 2. Perform an internal audit.

- Look inside your business.
- Does everyone in your business know your differentiating feature?
- Everyone in your business dealing with customers had better know what it is that makes your business different.
- Some brand strategies focus on the attributes of a business. Does your business strive for innovativeness, environmental concern or are you a family business?

- These can all be a point of differentiation. Local businesses have the opportunity to participate in local activities and take advantage of regional attitudes, actions and "home-country" pride differentiating themselves from large multi-nationals.

#### 3. Review your marketing.

- Do your promotional materials tell your customers what makes you different? What do you offer that your competitors don't? Define yourself in as few words as possible.

- What personality, look or feel do your promotional materials project? From your marketing materials your customers should be able to conjure up an image of what makes you different.

#### 4. Communicate your difference all the time.

- Examine all the details. Where else can you differentiate your business? Consider everything from your delivery system to your bathrooms. Customers will make assumptions based on all aspects of your business.

Kerry Engel

### Key words & phrases to use:

- Regional/local/ grown especially for
- Delivered fresh from the farm this morning
- Why ours is different
- Alberta's first
- Alberta's only
- Rated #1 \_\_\_\_by\_\_\_\_
- Aged especially for
- Old fashioned
- Created especially for
- Made to order
- Made with\_\_\_\_\_
- Handcrafted
- One-of-a-kind (experience/product)
- Exclusively/only at

### The Oregon Country Beef Story.

Can you tell how they differentiate themselves?

*"We are Oregon Country Beef. A cooperative of family ranches scattered across Eastern Oregon. Our roots extend a century and a half deep to a time when most of our ranch families' ancestors were crossing the Oregon Trail. We have a passion to communicate our beliefs about the land through a beef product you can savor and trust. As part of our commitment to growing cattle in harmony and balance with nature, we have chosen not to use growth hormones or feed antibiotics. We feel our beef grown this "old fashioned" way has better flavor and texture and we invite you to... Taste the Oregon Country Difference".*

[www.oregonbeef.com](http://www.oregonbeef.com)

# Branding the Peace

## Businesses in the Peace Region are working together across the Alberta/B.C. border and diverse industry sectors to identify the region and its products and expand our market opportunities.

*Branding the Peace* is a two pronged project: promoting the region beyond the Peace and selling the idea of “quality first” to locals.

So far, our regional branding initiative includes both facets of the project. We’re working toward a visual “brand” with an agreed upon “story” description of the Peace region. Products and services identified under the brand will be

required to meet quality standards. The branding group wants the Peace to be known for the products they produce.

As often happens when people gather to collaborate, unexpected results occur. Businesses that previously felt they had little in common are now communicating. We are seeing agri-businesses partnering with tourism, natural resources industries and manufacturing. Even the media (who are always looking for good news stories) are involved.

Starting with the visionary who chose to share his dream, a group formed to talk about branding. After some months, a conference of international speakers opened our minds to the potential of a regional brand.

The rest will be history, but I predict that soon, the world will know where the Peace River flows and the people of the world will recognize products that once called the Peace “home”. I predict tourists will want to come see that place that crosses two provinces but is surrounded by vast stretches of nearly empty lands. Branding is the tool to make it happen more quickly. It will also preserve the pride that already calls the Peace “home”.

Susan Meyers

## An AFSC Commercial Story

### SLN Beverages, Inc.: Inside Knowledge, Outside Advice

So what if he’s been in the business since age 12? You won’t catch Steven Naccarato sounding like a beverage industry know-it-all. Naccarato, President of SLN Beverages, Inc., built a business by seeking the advice of people with expertise to complement his own.

“My best advice is to use others to grow through the learning process,” he says. “You don’t have to be an expert if you surround yourself with advisors who can assist you along the way.” This philosophy has paid off. Since SLN became operational in its current location in February 1999, the company has grown to 20 full and part-time employees, a capacity of approximately 3 million cases a year and 70% year-over-year growth. SLN Beverages, Inc. bottles private label brands of fruit juice and drinks, and herbal or vitamin infused water products for companies like Westfair Foods (Loblaws), Federated Coop and Overwaitea Food Group. Recently they launched their own brand, FruitDlicious, a lunch box product for kids made and custom packed exclusively for Costco in Western Canada.

Naccarato says their rapid growth required a unique lender that really understood their business. That’s when Naccarato discovered AFSC Commercial. They helped him not only with financing, but went the extra mile as well. “AFSC Commercial has been a great resource for us,” Naccarato says. “They approached our financing needs as if it was their own business, and took the time to learn about our business. They’ve truly been there for us.” AFSC Commercial put together a financing package with other lenders, a mortgage for buildings and equipment, and also helped refine SLN’s business planning processes. They provide consulting services on a month-to-month basis. “What started out as a financing discussion has grown into an advisory role,” says Naccarato. “They know enough about us that I can regularly bounce ideas off them. This kind of outside expertise makes a huge difference to small businesses like ours.” Naccarato’s advice for others in food processing and value-added products? “Work with AFSC Commercial – by the time you’ve finished the process, you’ve also learned a whole lot more about your business and about what’s possible.”

To contact SLN Beverages, Inc. call (403) 782-1610, or sales and marketing at (604) 940-1417. **For AFSC Commercial, call Edmonton (780) 415-1216, Calgary (403) 297-6281, Camrose (780) 679-1311, or Lethbridge (403) 381-5240, or visit their website at [www.agric.gov.ab.ca/afsccommercial](http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/afsccommercial).**

# Marketing Wild Blueberries: From Commodity to Brand



## “We were originally playing the commodity

**game.** Our website should have read [www.commodity.com](http://www.commodity.com)” remarks John Sauvé of the Wild Blueberry Association of North America (WBANA).

WBANA is the trade association that represents processors and growers of wild blueberries in Atlantic Canada, Quebec and Maine. This accounts for 99% of all commercial wild blueberry production in the world. In the past two years the association has set supply records through increases of 20 to 30 million pounds per year. The association’s logo appears on several food products including Betty Crocker packages. How did the association achieve this success? By thinking like a brand not a commodity.

Sauvé states if you are producing a commodity you are working on the supply side of industry. Your product is easily replaceable by a lower priced product. If you are producing a branded product, you are working on the demand side of the industry. Success depends on the perceived value of your product. Instead of price driven, your product is value driven. Your brand is a promise of value.

In 1994, the association accepted the mission, “to generate profitable demand for wild blueberries through strategic product promotion”. Key components to success were:

- **Knowing the marketplace** – They needed to know the key drivers in the industry and their competition. In North America, blueberries were viewed as generic, so their main competition was cultivated blueberries. Why would Kelloggs or General Mills pay more for wild blueberries? WBANA determined that wild blueberries were visually

superior, had a more intense taste and were grown in a natural state. The association had to change the perception of the product in order to increase it’s value. Different approaches were necessary in Europe where their key competitor is the bilberry.

- **Knowing their business** – WBANA needed to know where they were before they could know where they wanted to go. They determined that their core business was in the bakery market as an ingredient. They set about to protect and grow this core before they began opening up new market segments. Now that the brand is established in their core business, they compete with cultivated blueberries and fruits in other market segments such as retail frozen foods.
- **Creating a brand identity** – The association designed a particular look and feel to the wild blueberry. They need to create an emotional link between the consumer and the product to create a personality for their product. They built a logo, a “mini billboard” which captured the beauty of wild blueberries and carried with it the feelings of nature, peaceful, pristine, and safe. Their slogan is “Wild Blueberries, Nature’s great taste”. Campaigns have also featured the tag lines “The Wild Advantage” and the “The Wild One”. The logo is a licensed trademark and the association promotes its use on labels, point-of-sale materials and menus. View these items at [www.wildblueberries.com](http://www.wildblueberries.com)
- **Building demand** – In 1995, a combination of sound research, good positioning and luck created a demand breakthrough. Health became a driving force in the marketplace. The

USDA released a study indicating blueberries had the highest anti-oxidant ratings of all fruits and vegetables. The association began using both primary and secondary research to leverage health benefits of the berries. Priceless promotion included feature articles in Prevention Magazine on the “Miracle Berry”.

In order to bring more specific demand to the their berry, the association focuses on the “natural advantage“. Look for upcoming promotions focusing on the colour blue, as anti-oxidant characteristics are now being linked to the colour pigment.

Capitalizing on one of their strongest competitor’s research investments, WBANA linked their product’s health benefits with that of cranberries. Sauvé notes there is nothing wrong with competitors being successful as long as it is not at your expense.

Sauvé notes that brand marketing can change consumer perception and, therefore, the value of your product. It is also essential that you change the perception of growers, processors and sellers. You are marketing a demanded value-added product, not a price driven commodity. The key is that everyone involved become passionate about your product.

Lori-Jo Graham

# ReSolve: *Keeping A Valuable Business Asset*

## A young company asks: “How do I protect my brand image?”

### Case Study

Holly and her business partner, Cecilia, have been quite successful growing their fruit processing business, *Merry Berry Market Ltd.* They have a very loyal farmers’ market clientele and supply several specialty food outlets with their unique jams, jellies and pie fillings.

They know branding is important. Their customers tell them they associate the *Merry Berry Market* name with regional ingredients, superior taste and quality. They are very proud of their reputation and want to ensure their brand image is protected.

Holly and Cecilia are seeking advice on how to start the process.

### Analysis

Holly and Cecilia are correct in assuming that protecting their good name and image is important. It is part of working strategically in a fast-paced world. Actually the legal term for brand is trademark and the key way to protect their brand image is through a registered trademark. A trademark is a word, symbol, design or combination of these (such as a graphic logo with a slogan) used to distinguish the wares or services of one person or organization from those of others in the marketplace. (The Business Link Info-FAX # 1054)

Although it’s not generally required to register a trademark, it is highly recommended. For a nominal fee, registration of a trademark will give Holly and Cecilia exclusive right of use and legal proof of ownership in Canada for 15 years. A trademark is renewable every 15 years with payment of a fee.

### Step 1 Preliminary Search

The first step is to conduct a search of existing trademarks through the Canadian Trademarks Database. This will help Holly and Cecilia determine if they are unknowingly using someone else’s mark. It also allows them to do a little competitive intelligence by finding their competitors’ trademarks and learn more about them. The database is available free of charge on Industry Canada’s Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) website at <http://cipo.gc.ca>

Sometimes an existing *trade name* is too similar to the trademark being registered. In this case, a trademark registration may be deemed invalid. Contact the CIPO for a listing of trade and company name database sources. To ensure a thorough search, it is best to hire a trademark agent to do the job.

### Step 2 Considering Export?

Holly and Cecilia should be aware that registering with the CIPO *only protects their rights in Canada.* If they want protection of the trademark “*Merry Berry Market*” in other countries, they must make sure the trademark is not already registered in the country they plan to do business in and register it there.. Again, it is highly recommended they hire a registered trademark agent or contact the embassy for the country in question for more information. The trademarks office has a listing of registered trademark agents.

### Step 3 Accessing trademark registration and application information

The Canadian Intellectual Property Office publishes “A Guide to Trademarks”. It summarizes the information found in the Trademarks Act and the Trademarks Regulations (1996) and answers questions on what trademarks can be registered, the cost of registration and the five-step examination process. It also includes an application form.

### Summary

A recognized registered trademark on the label or packaging will help *Merry*

*Berry Market* stand out in the crowd. It gives Merry Berry Market strong presence, especially if used in conjunction with other marketing materials like business cards, brochures and letterheads. Preparing a trademark application can be challenging. Holly and Cecilia can file on their own, but may want to consider hiring a registered trademark agent, particularly if they plan to export.

### For more information contact:

Canadian Intellectual Property Office  
Industry Canada  
Room 725  
9700 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5J 4C3  
Phone: (780) 495-4782  
Fax: (780) 495-4507  
<http://cipo.gc.ca>

*The above information is intended only as a brief, general overview of some of the various types of intellectual property. If you have questions about these, or any other intellectual property issues, you should contact your legal advisor.*

If you have a specific business issue you would like to see addressed please e-mail the **ReSolve Team** at [kathy.lowther@gov.ab.ca](mailto:kathy.lowther@gov.ab.ca) or call (403) 948-8537. Toll-free: 310-0000

Kathy Lowther

# Networking

## Websites of Interest

- Canadian Intellectual Property Office  
<http://cipo.gc.ca>
- Micropatent - Patent Images and the Trademark Checker  
<http://www.micropat.com>
- The University of British Columbia Canada: Patent and Trademark Searching  
<http://www.library.ubc.ca/patscan>
- United States Patent and Trademark Office  
<http://www.uspto.gov/>

## Books

- Differentiate or Die: Survival in our Era of Killer Competition  
Jack Trout & Steve Rivkin
- Building Stronger Brands  
David A. Aaker

## Excitement is Building for *Progress North*

It goes without saying that Ontario is excited about the North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association Annual Conference coming to Toronto in January 2002. We started planning in March 2000!

When we began organizing this conference, we had brainstorming sessions with farm direct marketers and supporters. It became apparent we had so much to share with NAFDMA that the traditional format had to expand.

We have two separate pre-conference bus tours: one for on-farm marketers, such as roadside markets and entertainment farms and one for farmers' markets. Both are three day tours.

The speaker program on Friday and Saturday January 18 and 19, has also been expanded to allow eight concurrent tracts covering six different topics:

- On-Farm Functions
- Entertainment
- Specialties
- Innovative Blueprints
- Ornamental
- Enhancements
- Advanced Markets
- Rural Tourism
- Farmers' Markets

January 14 through 20, 2002 is going to be a great week in Ontario. We promise you warm hospitality, snow to make a snowman, lots of new ideas, plus a great opportunity to network and renew old friendships. We'll see you in January!!

For more information, contact Bob & Donna Cobble Dick,  
Telephone: (905) 945-9057 Fax: (905) 945-8643  
E-mail: [info@ontariofarmfresh.com](mailto:info@ontariofarmfresh.com) or Website: [www.nafdma.com](http://www.nafdma.com)

**Bob Cobble Dick**  
Toronto Conference Co-Chair



## Summer Tours

- Stimulate Your Imagination!
- Develop Valuable Networks!
- Avoid Critical Blunders!

(see page 4 for more details)  
1-800-387-6030 to register

- August 8 - Lethbridge/Pincher Creek**
- August 15 - Edmonton**
- August 21 - Grande Prairie**
- August 22 - Red Deer/Lacombe**
- August 29 - Calgary**

# Upcoming Events

## 2001

### Natural Herb Walk with Robert Rogers of Scents of Wonder

August 11, 2001, Grande Prairie  
 Contact: Grande Prairie District Office  
 Phone: (780) 538-5285  
 Fax: (780) 538-5288

E-mail: paul.laflamme@gov.ab.ca  
 A look at native aromatic, medicinal and culinary herbs; their uses and market opportunities

### Summer Herb Fest

August 11 & 12, 2001  
 Down To Earth Greenhouses, Sexsmith  
 Contact: Anita Schreyer  
 Phone: (780) 568-2915  
 Fax: (780) 568-2917  
 E-mail: cabd@telusplanet.net

### Alberta Gift Show

August 19 - 22, 2001  
 Northlands Agricom and Sportex, Edmonton  
 Contact Person: Cameron Dix  
 Tel: 1-800-633-8332  
 Fax: (604) 433-4807  
 E-mail: camerondix@ca.dmgworldmedia.com  
 Website: <http://www.canadiangiftshows.com>

### Travel Alberta Tourism Conference

November 4 - 6, 2001  
 Red Deer, AB  
 Contact Person: Rod Proudfoot  
 Phone: (403) 297-2955  
 E-mail: rod.proudfoot@travelalberta.com  
 Website: [www.tourismtogether.com](http://www.tourismtogether.com)

## 2002

### Growing Rural Tourism 2002

February 12 and 13, 2002  
 Camrose, AB  
 Contact Person: Sharon Homeniuk  
 Phone: (780) 963-6101  
 Fax: (780) 963-4709  
 E-mail: sharon.homeniuk@gov.ab.ca

## CALL FOR INFORMATION

### Study on Economic Diversification for Traditional Artisans, Cultural and Heritage Industries

The Extension Division of the University of Saskatchewan, in conjunction with Canadian Heritage is conducting a study to identify the needs of artisan entrepreneurs in the western Canadian region. The objective of the study is to identify means to improve the self-sufficiency of artisan entrepreneurs by promoting and marketing their products regionally, nationally and internationally through an organized infrastructure. The following are invited to register for the study:

- producers or manufacturers of all unique traditional artistic and cultural industries (i.e. pottery, leather products, beading, cane furniture, etc.)
- agricultural entrepreneurs who manufacture products relating to your farming operation (i.e. jams/jellies, cheeses honey, specialty animal by-products, etc.)
- industrial artisans who produce sculpted products: (i.e. foundries, blacksmithing, wood working, blown glass, print making, musical instruments, candles, garments, etc.)
- specialty craftspeople who produce products from rocks, minerals, steel, and ores or other mining products
- specialty artisans who manufacture and produce specialty products relating to arts and cultural industries and heritage entrepreneurship.

For further information contact:  
 University of Saskatchewan  
 Study on Economic Diversification  
 P.O. Box 1304, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3N9  
 FAX: 306-934-2570  
 E-mail: [heritage@sk.sympatico.ca](mailto:heritage@sk.sympatico.ca)



## Provincial Specialists:

### Rural Development Specialist - Business

- Kerry Engel, Westlock, (780) 349-4465  
 Eileen Kotowich, Westlock (special projects)
- Linda Hawk, Medicine Hat, (403) 529-3616
- Slav Heller, St. Paul, (780) 645-6301
- Sharon Homeniuk, Stony Plain, (780) 963-6101
- Lynn Stegman, Red Deer, (403) 340-7010  
 Lisa Houle, Red Deer, (403) 340-5369
- Kathy Lowther/Donna Fleury, Airdrie, (403) 948-8537
- Janice McGregor, Morinville, (780) 939-4351
- Leona Reynolds-Zayak, Vermilion, (780) 853-8101
- Jan Warren, Vulcan, (403) 485-5116
- Marian Williams, Camrose, (780) 679-1210

### Agri-food Specialists

- Karen Goad, Grande Prairie, (780) 538-5285
- Karen Hoover, Lethbridge, (403) 381-5814
- Sue Tenold, Airdrie, (403) 948-8504

### Rural Development Specialist

#### – Organization

- Susan Meyer, Grande Prairie (780) 538-5285

### Ag Business Management Branch

- Lori-Jo Graham, Olds (403) 556-4244

Dial 310-0000 first for toll-free access.

To E-mail these specialists: [firstname.lastname@gov.ab.ca](mailto:firstname.lastname@gov.ab.ca)