



## Leadership, Innovation and Recognition

Ron Gilbertson, President & CEO, EEDC

At EEDC, 2011 closed on a busy note, reflecting Alberta's capital city's dynamism.

Our economic outlook lunch for 2012 on Nov 15 highlighted Alberta's economic prosperity against a backdrop of worldwide economic uncertainty. Panelists were drawn from a cross-section of the region's economy, including business and government. Attracting over 800 people, the event was made possible with the support of the Edmonton Journal, The Brick and Productivity Alberta.

Occurring at the same time, we co-led with the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce a

15-businessperson mission to the nation's capital to raise awareness of Alberta's capital city and build relationships. Aside from raising Edmonton's profile Nov 14-15, we sought out key ministries and officials to discuss and advocate issues of importance to northern Alberta: energy, environment, research and technology, labour and growth challenges, and the military (a key contributor to our economy). Strong effective government relations are vital to our region's economic success. The mission wrapped up with a reception showcasing Edmonton's arts and culture scene, attended by members of Parliament and government officials.

Closer to home, more than 400 people gathered for a one-day symposium on downtown Edmonton developments and projects called Downtown X-posed on Dec 15, presented by the Downtown Vibrancy Task Force. The event was put together to inform Edmontonians about the importance of our downtown and highlight what is in the works and what is yet to come. Speakers came from across government, business and the community. Their presentations are archived at [www.edmonton.com/downtown](http://www.edmonton.com/downtown).

### Edmonton Research Park

- Positive work continues in the implementation and collaboration efforts with the **Greater Edmonton Regional Technology Alliance (RAlliance)**, Start-Up Canada, Greater Edmonton Nano Alliance, and Industry Early Adopter program. The current focus of the RAlliance has been on the AccelerateAB event to be held in late May 2012.
- SciMed, a tenant, received \$350K from Agriculture Canada to work toward the commercialization of its Vitamin D chip.
- Sinoveda, a tenant in the **Biology Business Development Centre**, recently won the Research and Innovation Award at Bio-Alberta's annual general meeting in November.
- Occupancy in the **Advanced Technology Centre** is now at 98%, the highest rate ever. It contributes to an overall weighted occupancy rate of over 85% for all three incubator buildings.

### Shaw Conference Centre

- Hosted the **Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties fall convention** Nov 22-24. This high-profile event included multi-use room set-ups and extensive catering needs for an annual general meeting, keynote speeches by the Hon. Preston Manning and Premier Redford.
- Partnered with the Victory Christian Centre for the **25th Annual Feed the Hungry Christmas Banquet** on Dec 25. The event provides free Christmas dinner for 4,000-plus Edmontonians who might otherwise spend the day alone.
- Completed a comprehensive external audit of its health and safety program that resulted in the centre achieving a **Certificate of Recognition (COR)** from the Alberta Hotel Safety Association. More than 50 staff participated in the formal interview component of the audit. The recognition demonstrates the centre's commitment to a culture of safety and maintaining a healthy workplace for staff.

### Quality of Life

- The **Downtown Vibrancy Task Force (DVTF)** was created in 2010, to develop strategies and action plans for accelerating the development of a strong and vibrant urban core. Twenty-one influential business and community leaders are members. Task force efforts continued with the following highlights:
  - The Awareness Committee's mandate is to raise awareness about why downtown is important, and to generate understanding and support for the principle that *"as goes your downtown, so goes your city"*. On Dec 15, the DVTF hosted a major event called **I <3 yegdt: Downtown X-posed**. The day included 21 topics and 39 presenters. 420 attendees enjoyed the day, including participants from the city, the region, Southern Alberta and BC.
  - **Partnered with the Downtown Business Association (DBA) to plan the DBA Fall Luncheon**. The DBA's annual fall luncheon was held on Oct 20, and the focus was the Downtown Vibrancy Task Force and its efforts to make Edmonton's downtown more vibrant and welcoming. EEDC worked directly with the DBA to plan and organize the event including creating a DVTF video about why downtown vibrancy is so critical to the health of our city.
  - The **7th ONEdmonton Leaders Forum** was held on Dec 16, with a focus on the downtown arena and entertainment district. Award-winning architect and urban planner Ken Greenberg shared his learnings and experiences with transformational projects. ONEdmonton leaders broke into smaller groups to address the question, "How can we ensure the downtown arena and entertainment district is an effective transformational project for Edmonton?" Approximately 75 community leaders attended.

### Economic Development

- Welcomed 1,600 international students to Oct 6 **Thanksgiving event** at Shaw Conference Centre, as part of EEDC effort to attract and retain smart people key to Edmonton's future and success. In addition to integrating them into a Canadian tradition, the event brought the students off-campus and enabled relationship-building and networking.
- Took part in **Pollutec** Nov 29-Dec 2, one of the world's largest environmental shows. EEDC partnered with several Edmonton firms, all active in the environmental industry or environmental research.
- Held the first in a series of **supply chain collaboration workshops** in Nov designed by Productivity Alberta. To learn how these low-cost workshops can increase your organization's productivity and bottom line, visit [edmonton.com/innovation](http://edmonton.com/innovation).
- Took part in **Federation of Canadian Municipalities** economic development and democracy program for Ukraine by showing how its officials can better plan for the future, improve local economic climate and build partnerships. EEDC addressed subject of organizational models for regional economic development. Edmonton is one of 13 Canadian cities participating in the program.

**Business Travel**

- A total of 88 conventions bids with a potential value of **\$7 million** were submitted by the end of Q4.
- Achieved 42 convention bookings representing a total of 32,592 room nights for future business and economic expenditure of **\$4.8 million**.
- Attended a “new” annual **Travel Alberta client event** Oct 23-28 focused on meeting with destination marketing organizations for one-on-one sessions, including SmithBucklin, American College of Cardiology, IMN Solutions and the executive director of International Fascia Research Congress. Client events were held in Washington DC, Philadelphia, PA and New Jersey. Resulted in one possible lead for a family program from J Oliva Trucking.
- Hosted **CHOTTO** (Chicago, Ottawa, Toronto) which kicked off on the week of Nov 7-10. This year the theme was “check out Edmonton festival city”, showcasing what festival city can do for client events. Featured two key local entertainers meet-and-greet station and a presentation on key facts of our destinations (from airport expansion to hotel and conference facilities to off-site venues). In total 209 clients attended the events.
- Partnered with Travel Alberta to host **client events** in Dallas and Houston, TX Nov 27-Dec 2. The first event was held in Dallas at Marquee Grill restaurant; 50 guests attended. Hosted clients at Dralion with Cirque De Soleil in Houston; 54 clients attended. The Canadian American Chamber of Commerce is looking to team up with Edmonton Tourism, Calgary and Travel Alberta to support events with networking and advertising opportunities for Alberta through its database of clients.
- Attended with Travel Alberta a hosted event with an annual booth at the **Holiday Showcase Tradeshow** in Chicago, IL Dec 13-16. Total of 85 clients name cards were received at the booth and will be contacted for follow-up.

**Event Attraction**

- A total of 31 event bids with a potential value of **\$7.1 million** were submitted by the end of Q4.
- Achieved a total of 20 event bookings representing 20,119 room nights for future business and an economic expenditure of just over **\$5.8 million**.
- Partnered with the City of Edmonton to travel to Lausanne, Switzerland in November to take part in the 2011 **International Federation Forum**. Edmonton was one of five sponsors (and the only city) allowed to participate in this event. The forum brought together over 80 international sport federations for a three-day working conference. This event will help Edmonton increase its profile in the international sporting community and help build the relationships necessary to secure events.
- Travelled to Vancouver to meet with Canadian Soccer Association regarding the **2014 and 2015 Women’s World Cups of Soccer** Dec 14. Host cities will be announced by the end of quarter one in 2012. FIFA will be travelling to Montreal, Edmonton and Vancouver in late Jan for stadium visits.
- Edmonton Tourism, the City of Edmonton, Athletics Alberta and the University of Alberta are in the process of putting together a bid for the **2015 Pan-American Junior Athletics Championships**. Bids are due in to Athletics Canada by the end of Jan with the final decision to be made early May.
- In August 2012, Edmonton will host the **National Ball Hockey Championships**. This event will bring in 16 of Canada’s top ball hockey teams (approximately 450 athletes and coaches) Aug 13-19.

**Leisure Travel, International**

- Participated in the **Canadian Tourism Commission - Asia Showcase** in Busan, Korea Oct 11-21. Edmonton Tourism met 42 delegates from China, 16 representatives from Japan, 26 delegates from India and 27 delegates from Korea. Discussions included Edmonton’s economic growth and opportunities, and educational advantages and tourism product.
- Hosted Travel Alberta representatives from both national and international markets, including China, Korea, Japan, Australia, UK, Mexico and North America on a **Taste of Edmonton educational familiarization tour** Oct 25-27. The objective of the tour was to further develop the relationship with Travel Alberta and showcase what Edmonton has to offer to each of these key markets.

- Supported Travel Alberta’s **Travel Journal MICE Business Development Trip - Japan MICE familiarization tour** Nov 4-6. Travel Journal invited buyer participants who deal with educational tours and meetings, conventions and incentive travel. Travel Journal sent a journalist who joined the tour, and two pages of coverage in TJ weekly magazine were secured.
- Hosted Travel Alberta’s **Japanese Receptive Tour Operator familiarization tour** Nov 20. An opportunity existed in reengaging senior level managers at the top five Japanese receptive tour operators to develop programs to Alberta. Providing Japanese-based wholesalers with more knowledge of our products and service will reflect in the development of new programs.
- Supported Travel Alberta **Pre-Canada’s West Marketplace familiarization tour** Nov 24-25. Travel Alberta hosted 13 Chinese buyers that were coming to Alberta. Edmonton Tourism was able to give the Chinese buyers an understanding of Edmonton product, hospitality and culture.
- Participated in **Canada’s West Marketplace** in Vancouver Nov 28-29. Met with a total of 45 buyers over 1.5 days representing markets from Korea, Japan, China, India, UK, Australia, Germany, Netherlands and France.
- Participated in the **Canadian Inbound Tourism Association (Asia Pacific) winter event** on Nov 30 which included a full morning of key speakers with market updates. The remainder of the afternoon included an open market place for sellers to display products.

**Leisure Travel, Americas**

- Met with buyers at several marketplaces to discuss program and itineraries for the next tour cycle including **Canada’s West Marketplace**, Vancouver, Nov 28-Dec 1; **National Tour Association Marketplace**, Las Vegas, NV, Dec 4-9; **United States Tour Operator Association**, Marco Island, FL, Dec 11-13.
- Hosted **familiarization tours** including American Tours International, from Los Angeles, CA; Ellison Tours from Vancouver; Collette Vacations Winter Wonderland Tour, US; YPS Fam, Travel Agents from the US; and Abreuteur Viagens e Turismo from Brasil.

**Film Commission**

- Built awareness of Edmonton as a filming destination, and actively introduced **Edmonton Film Prize** in conjunction with the Edmonton Arts Council. A \$10,000 annual award will be presented to acknowledge an outstanding film done by an Edmonton film maker. Criteria and timeframe to be finalized beginning of 2012.
- Attended **American Film Market** in California as an opportunity to begin promoting Edmonton as a horror genre destination, based on past success and reputation. [youtube.com/watch?v=E37jDPDODSw](http://youtube.com/watch?v=E37jDPDODSw)
- Sponsored **Alberta Media Production Industries Association’s** Billington Awards in Calgary, honouring Edmonton-based actor Shaun Johnson (Heartland).
- Finalized negotiations between EEDC and Kilburn Media, to launch and fund the **Edmonton Filmed Entertainment Fund** in Q1 2012.
- Met one-on-one with new **Minister of Culture** Heather Klimchuk to represent Edmonton’s position, needs, and interests in respect to the film/TV industries.

➤➤ Industry & Tourism Services

- **Homeless Connect VII** took place Oct 16 at the Shaw Conference Centre. 1,700 guests were offered free services by over 70 agencies.
- Edmonton Tourism celebrated **Edmonton-Jasper Friendship week** by hosting an industry mixer on Nov 22. This annual joint venture reinforces the importance of Edmonton and Jasper working together to offer both urban and mountain products to visitors.
- EEDC’s **Economic Outlook Luncheon** took place Nov 15 at the Shaw Conference Centre; over 800 guests attended. The luncheon explored our region’s economic future with five industry leaders from different sectors.

## External Relations

### Marketing, Communications

- Edmonton Tourism launched its annual **winter campaign** in Nov, using a multimedia approach targeting Alberta, northern British Columbia, and select markets in Saskatchewan, and Yukon and Northwest Territories.
- Various **e-marketing strategies** were executed, including optimization and distribution through online distribution channels, paid search advertising, online advertorials and text and banner advertising on various search engines and targeted websites. Recent highlights include:
  - Dec vacation packages newsletter to a 64,699-subscriber database with 17.02% open rate
  - River City Round Up e-direct to 64,284-name database with 21.32% open rate with chance to win \$500 gift card and Canadian Finals Rodeo tickets.
  - Visiting Friends/Relatives ad words campaign that delivered 125% of original target click-throughs and 4,216 page views. 43% of Edmonton's visitors within a day's drive are by friends and relatives.

### Edmonton.com

- **Edmonton.com** anchors all marketing and communications activity and we continue to invest efforts and identify key areas for enhancements. Ensuring Edmonton.com has up-to-date and relevant content is imperative to its success. We have been developing various sections of our site, including new content and a new home page.
- Edmonton.com had 531,282 unique visitors at the end of Dec, up from 457,220 during the same period last year. There were 48,960 returning visitors in Q4, up 10.5% over the same period last year.

### Edmonton Festival City

- **Edmonton Festival City in a Box presented by TransAlta** was represented at 26 events, including a festival city themed reception held in Quebec City to celebrate Communities in Bloom coming to Edmonton in 2012. CHOTTO is the premier sales mission for Edmonton Tourism's Meetings, Business Travel & Events team where they take a delegation to Chicago, Ottawa and Toronto. Each of these events was heavily themed with Edmonton Festival City in a Box performers and had record-breaking attendance. Another major highlight was at the 2011 Grey Cup in Vancouver with performances to over 3,000 people at the legendary Spirit of Edmonton breakfasts.
- **Edmonton Festival City media relations** program continued with e-newsletter distribution to a database of over 900 people, including out-of-market media in national and international markets. Monthly e-newsletter showcases upcoming festivals and other related product, provides story ideas, and raises destination awareness. Open rates have continued at over 15% with content postings on select websites, including top 10 search rankings on Google and Yahoo. The top five web clips include ABC (Raleigh), CBS Marketwatch, SFGate.com, Reuters and Yahoo Biz. Additional pick up on most recent issues include news.goldseek.com, www.skis.be, topics.pe.com, us.mc821.mail.yahoo.com and rss.wikio.com

### Media Relations Activity

- In partnership with Travel Alberta, Edmonton Tourism organized **nine media visits** for 21 participants representing, among others, Travel Channel China, Lonely Planet, Glitter Café (Mexico), and AAA En Compass magazine (US).
- Responded to **42 requests** for information, interviews and images.

Coverage included stories on World Hockey Championship in hockey and Downtown X-posed symposium.

- Earned media value year-to-date was **\$37.3 million**.

### Strategic Relations

- EEDC, in partnership with the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, led a delegation of Edmonton business leaders on a **mission to Ottawa** Nov14-15 where members met with high-ranking federal government officials. The objective of the mission was to raise Edmonton and northern Alberta's profile in a positive way, and to advocate on issues of importance to our region. Key messages were focused on Edmonton's quality of life; the energy, environment, and research and technology sectors; labour and growth challenges; and national defence. All members of Parliament and key government officials were invited to attend an evening reception on the first night where an attractive collateral piece showcasing Edmonton's vibrant quality of life was distributed.



- The **30th Annual Manning Innovation Awards** were held in Edmonton in Oct which provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the region's innovation community to national guests. External Relations provided marketing and communications support through website, social media, e-news blasts, and media activity. Community outreach was also leveraged to raise awareness of this event and the region's innovation accomplishments.
- **Thirty-seven external speaking presentations** have been secured since the beginning of the year. Speaking engagements provide an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of Edmonton and gain support for EEDC's strategic priorities. EEDC's president and CEO had the opportunity to be a panelist at the Complete Mobility event in October and moderator for the Symposium on Alberta's Economic Future "Imagining Alberta."

### Social Media

- EEDC registered for Sysomos Heartbeat, a social media monitoring and analysis database. This tool will allow EEDC to measure engagement which will be more of a metrics focus for the organization in 2012. EEDC had 1,663 online mentions in the fourth quarter. Followers engaged with EEDC on Twitter through 774 mentions.
- In an effort to raise awareness of Edmonton's innovation community, EEDC invited a guest blogger from TechVibes.com to visit during the Manning Innovation Awards in Oct. Knowlton Thomas attended the Manning Gala and Symposium, and toured the National Institute of Nanotechnology and Art Gallery of Alberta during his stay. Since Knowlton's visit, Edmonton has had an increased presence on this site that has over 375,000 unique page views a month.

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EEDC is a not-for-profit company owned by the City of Edmonton that is responsible for regional economic development and regional tourism marketing as well as management of the Shaw Conference Centre and Edmonton Research Park. This report is produced quarterly to update Greater Edmonton's business community on EEDC's key initiatives.

