

# Focus on Leadership

A SPECIAL SERIES ON CALGARY'S BUSINESS VISIONARIES

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Wil Andruschak photos

From left: Devitt & Forand construction vice-president Graeme Bunting, development vice-president Rick Andison and operations vice-president Bruce Ryan look over a site plan at a Devitt & Forand site in northeast Calgary.

## Leadership a team effort at Devitt & Forand

At Devitt & Forand Contractors Inc., leadership is a team effort.

For nearly 50 years, the Calgary-based company has provided design-build, construction and project management services for projects ranging from auto dealerships to hospital renovations.

In that time, and since current management took over in 1990, the company has built a culture of trust and professionalism that makes it a valuable partner in Calgary Economic Development's Action Calgary.

"For us, leadership is making sure we have a good team," says Bruce Ryan, vice-president, operations. "We have to make sure we support our people, and give them the tools, the equipment, the backing they need to complete a project in a quality manner, on time and safely."

Since 1990, Devitt & Forand has grown from a \$1-to-\$2-million-a-year company into a \$100-million-a-year company, Ryan says.

"We've had steady, constant growth, and many of the people we work with have been with us 10 to 15 years," he says.

Working at Devitt & Forand is very much a team atmosphere, adds Rick Andison, vice-president development.

"Everyone knows how everyone else works, and that creates a lot of enthusiasm," he says. "We've had very low turnover, even with new hires."

Devitt & Forand has been involved in projects ranging from long-term care and health-care facilities, to commercial sites and light-industrial buildings, plus fire-halls and Calgary Police Service sites.

"As the market has changed, we've been able to change with the market," says Ryan. "We've done quite a bit of light industrial for oilfield companies and manufacturing companies."

He cites the soon-to-be completed McPherson Place, a 160-unit housing development that will act as the anchor to The Bridges development near downtown.

McPherson Place is being built in partnership with the City of Calgary and the Bridges Attainable Housing Society.

Being involved in Calgary's always-busy construction industry means keeping up with the latest techniques and standards.

For example, management has significant experience with green-building techniques and LEED certification, as well as techniques such as structural-steel-stud construction, which allows for greater use of non-combustible materials.

Safety is also key to the success of Devitt & Forand's projects.

"We try to go above and beyond the legislation," says Graeme Bunting, vice-president, construction.

"We want everyone to go

home at night. We try to make them think of every job as the most important job they're doing."

Devitt & Forand brings this professionalism and work ethic to the table as a partner in CED's Action Calgary.

The partnership gives Devitt & Forand greater awareness in the marketplace and raises its profile, says Andison.

"A lot of people recognize our logo, but to associate it to exactly what we do on a day-to-day basis might be a bit of a challenge," he explains.

"We're just trying to connect the dots, and I think that's part of our success moving forward."

Getting the word out also involves networking, and Devitt & Forand has generated enough name recognition and, more importantly, trust in its many successful developments, that referrals generate much of the company's business.

"Each group in the project takes responsibility for what it does as part of a team for a successful construction project," says Andison.

"From field people to sub-contractors, you try to engage everyone through the project, so it's a collaborative approach to the success of a job, rather than a confrontational approach."

And in a large industry with a number of players, "your name, your performance and reputation are a constant," adds Ryan.

## Award-winning paper adapts to the digital world

Since 1883, the Calgary Herald has developed a bond of trust with Calgarians and has become a leader in keeping the community informed.

With the advent of tablets and digital media, this basic fact has never changed.

As a partner in Calgary Economic Development's Action Calgary, the Herald brings to bear its acclaimed editorial and advertising services in helping to promote the city's diverse field of businesses and investment opportunities.

"For both of us, the partnership makes a lot of sense," says publisher Guy Huntingford. "CED is very important to the city and we like to be involved in anything that has to do with the business of Calgary."

"I think what the Herald prides itself in, and what differentiates ourselves from other media outlets, is our ability to cover business. It's one of our premium sections."

And nothing says business in Calgary more than 'Calgary. Be Part of the Energy,' he says.

"We want to make sure we work with CED, not only on promotion of 'Calgary. Be Part of the Energy,' but for us to actually be part of that energy," he says. "I think the Herald could really benefit from that."

The news media field has seen a quantum change in the last few years, with digital joining print as the way many Calgarians get their news.

Huntingford says whether it's a news story read on an iPad or in print, the same high standards of quality content and journalism must apply.

"The Digital First mantra is absolutely in the long term the right way to go," Huntingford says, referring to the priorities set out by the Herald's owners, Postmedia Network. "Digital First is about the news cycle — making sure we are in that digital space as quickly as possible, albeit making sure we've still vetted our information and our editors have checked it."

"It comes from hiring great journalists and making sure our editors are in tune with what people want," Huntingford says. "That's why people turn to us first to see what's happening in Calgary."



Having a high-quality editorial team and innovative approaches have made the Herald the premier newspaper in the city, says publisher Guy Huntingford.

## 'Calgary. Be Part of the Energy' campaign launches to much fanfare

Calgary's energy exhilarates, invigorates and motivates.

There's opportunity here — to start a business, start a new life or start an adventure. And everyone is welcome.

With a looming labour shortage on the horizon in the city, Calgary Economic Development is leading 'Calgary. Be Part of the Energy' — a business development and marketing campaign to generate awareness about Calgary across Canada.

The campaign kicked off with a launch event in downtown Calgary on Stephen Avenue on Tuesday, June 21.

Phase 1 of the campaign will run until April 2012, and will target national markets where unemployment is high and economic growth is lagging compared to Calgary; these markets include Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax.

In order to attract more people to the city's employment sector, the campaign targets many sub-segments,

including experienced and aspiring professionals, as well as new graduates and motivated immigrants.

In addition, the campaign will also focus on drawing new businesses to Calgary, especially those in the logistics, technology and financial services sectors.

The 'Calgary. Be Part of the Energy' brand was built to be strong, innovative, creative and diversified.

It creates excitement and intrigue that there are oppor-

tunities for people to come to Calgary and take advantage of.

'Calgary. Be Part of the Energy' is an invitation and call to action targeted at people and business.

The brand, and supporting tactics, speak to people considering a change in where they work or where they do business.

It takes an integrated approach and utilizes multiple marketing channels including media relations, public relations, advertising, social media

and an interactive website where business leaders and high-energy Calgarians share their stories on why Calgary is the place in Canada to live, work and do business.

Phase 2 of the campaign will target international markets and is expected to commence in May 2012.

To meet, or join, the people who contribute to Calgary's energy, visit [bepartoftheenergy.ca](http://bepartoftheenergy.ca), and follow the campaign on Twitter at [partoftheenergy](http://partoftheenergy).

SUCCESS IS DETERMINED BY

# ACTION

Join Action Calgary at [www.calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com](http://www.calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com)  
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