



SOUNDING BOARD



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Transforming digital

EVOLUTION | Taking the digital game to the next level

Digital transformation is so 2010. Most businesses have automated manual processes, launched online sales channels and equipped their workforce to perform their duties from anywhere they choose. Business has transformed to digital. In 2022, it's all about elevating that digital experience to serve a broad range of stakeholders. Consumer expectations continue to rise as the population becomes more proficient with digital technologies and, dare I say, addicted to the instant access and ease of use that they enjoy from many of their day-to-day online interactions. Seamless integration across a business' channels and hyper-customized

experiences are expected for every digital interaction.

The last two years have put the mission criticality of digital capabilities front and centre for business leaders across all industries. Online data security and privacy, keeps everyone up at night. Momentum is high to embrace cloud technologies and harness the golden insights buried within each organization. And taking these capabilities to the next level is on every business leader's mind. So is true for the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. GVBOT has embarked on a journey to transform the digital experience for our members and our staff, and we are excited to take our digital game to the next



Kirsten Sutton

level.

With a focus on improving connectivity and personalization for members and productivity

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for staff, the team at GVBOT is hard at work transforming how we interact and engage our members. You have seen some of this

work already as we have adapted our events to virtual through GVBOTV and launched GV-POD, Greater Vancouver's Business podcast. Over the coming year, more enhancements are coming to our online channels to deepen our relationships with our members and increase the engagement across our member community.

We are so 2030. Transforming digital to what it needs to be not just now, but for the future of the Greater Vancouver business community. **ks**

Kirsten Sutton, ICD.D is 2021-22 Chair of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. She also serves as Chief Technology & Information Officer, Vancity.

One-to-one with Sophia Cote

LEADERSHIP | Embracing adversity and growth

Welcome to the latest installment of Q&A, our regular series of one-to-ones with some of Greater Vancouver's leading business figures. Our subject this week is Sophia Cote, Head of Public Affairs - Canada, REEF Technology

What was your first job?

My very first job was teaching dance to children between the ages of 5-10 when I was around 15. I was very seriously into dance, particularly ballet when I was a teenager, and so being able to spread the joy and discipline of the art to young kids was an absolute honour and privilege.

What inspires you?

Challenges can be very hard in life. Some see challenges as an obstacle, but for me, being challenged and going out of my way to push to the next level is inspiring. Sometimes life needs changes because things have become stale or too predictable. Challenges break that mould, and the ideas and excitement that come

with it create inspiration.

What is your most prized possession and why?

I know this sounds cliché, but I really don't care too much about material things. My husband always makes fun of me that I never want a new phone, watch etc. But I have realized that for me, the most important prize is travelling the world and experiencing different cultures. I am most at peace with myself and happy when I am in a new city, exploring the streets and alleyways by foot, and tasting new flavours and dishes. I find travel is also what makes me a better-rounded person and professional because it forces you to shift your worldview and question the status quo in your own country or city.

Where do you see untapped potential in Greater Vancouver?

Greater Vancouver has a growing tech scene, but I think we have only scratched the surface. Our proximity to cities like Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles

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puts us in an advantageous position and the fact that we are such a desired global destination to live in means that we can continue attracting the talent we need to build out the sector further. I really do believe that if we continue fostering talent (and make sure that salaries keep up with demand) and create business-friendly policies for home-grown tech companies to grow and expand, the region can become one of North America's top tech hubs.

What is the most important lesson, business or otherwise, life has taught you?

When faced with a crisis or adversity, it can be difficult in the moment to imagine the experience will eventually lead to some

type of growth. The most important lesson that life has taught me is to be resilient and to have the strength to bounce back from adversity and grow from the challenge. It's helped me feel like I have a little more mastery in my life and taught me to have more compassion and sensitivity for those around me.

What do you think makes a great leader?

Ultimately, a great leader creates and nurtures others. I believe that the best leaders are passionate about developing the emerging leaders around them, they constantly work to improve their emotional intelligence and know that a strong team culture is the foundation for accomplishing the mission.

What keeps you awake at night?

The current geopolitical crisis with Russia and Ukraine. My mother's side of the family all lives in Germany, and my time living in Berlin made me very aware of how fragile peace in

Europe really is, but also how much we take global peace for granted. The current crisis not only challenges western democracy and the rule of law, and destabilizes the current world order, but it also comes at a time when the whole world is vying to find out ways and means of reviving the economy and normalizing the growth trajectory post-COVID-19.

Where is your favourite place in Vancouver?

My happy place is a small, local Italian bakery, restaurant and wine bar on Commercial Drive called Livia. Every weekend, I go there for breakfast, and their incredible coffee and breakfast sandwiches just put me in the right mindset to enjoy some time off from a busy work week. **sc**

Sophia Cote is the Head of Public Affairs - Canada, for REEF Technology. REEF transforms static parking facilities into thriving mobility and logistical hubs, with the mission to be the ecosystem that connects the world to your block.

EDUCATION | New training program aims to fill ESG skills gap

Training the ESG leaders of the future

An inaugural class of Metro Vancouver business leaders spanning many sectors are accessing a new training program to put ESG practices into action.

The ESG Fundamentals Microcredential equips individuals to understand their environmental, social, and governance (ESG) impact and develop solutions to improve their measurement and outcomes. The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade launched the ESG Fundamentals Microcredential in partnership with the BCIT School of Business + Media, and today marks the launch of the inaugural offering.

“B.C. businesses are perfectly positioned to capitalize on the global appetite for products and services that meet the highest standards of ethics and sustainability, but they need knowledge leaders who can help them build on that success,” noted Bridgitte

Anderson, President and CEO of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. “Despite the B.C. advantage of a strong foundation in clean energy infrastructure, workforce diversity and governance transparency, organizations in our province want to do more.”

Expert instructors from BCIT and top-tier executives from the private sector have collaborated to provide a unique training program that blends theory and practical application. Geoff Pegg is leading the Governance Impacts session, drawing on his own experience as the Director of Sustainability and Environment at TELUS. “I think about how companies such as TELUS can work with citizens, communities, customers, Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders to make a positive social and environmental impact when executing on its purpose, while managing



associated risks with relevant oversight,” Pegg explained.

Participants in the program will work with instructors and industry leaders to craft an ESG Roadmap tailored to their

organization. The individually tailored plans will identify actions and create momentum to put that plan into action.

B.C. businesses have a long history of corporate social

responsibility and have consistently demonstrated an appetite to go further. The ESG Fundamentals Microcredential is designed to equip leaders with the knowledge to do just that. **sb**

UPCOMING | GVBOT events calendar

In-person opportunities to connect

The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade is one of the most sought-after events platforms in Western Canada, providing our members with unrivalled access to thought leadership and industry insights from a variety of sectors. With more than 100 events every year, Board of Trade members are able to connect with business leaders from across the region and form meaningful connections that can lead to partnerships and opportunities for collaboration.

With the return of in-person events, the GVBOT has announced two new hybrid events scheduled for the month of May.

Changing Mines, Changing Minds with Michael Goehring, President and CEO, MABC – May 5

B.C. mines are committed to continuous improvement and investing in further decarbonization, as they currently create fewer greenhouse gas emissions than their competitors, while simultaneously creating significant jobs and revenues for

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all levels of government.

The annual address to B.C.’s business community by the Mining Association of British Columbia’s President and CEO, Michael Goehring, will highlight some of the new and emerging technologies being implemented at B.C. mines, and the strong ESG credentials of British Columbia’s mining sector. As the President and CEO of MABC, Goehring brings B.C.’s mining sector his vision, passion and decades of experience providing public affairs and strategic communications counsel to leading natural resource companies in the province and Canada.

Transportation Forum 2022 presented by Deloitte – May 13 Vancouver is the most densely



populated city in Canada and home to the country’s largest port. Rebuilding critical infrastructure will be integral to the region’s future success. As we rebuild our supply chains, how can we plan and build more resilient infrastructure? As we rebuild transit ridership and the region continues to grow, we must

ensure we are forward-thinking in our planning, investment, and technological adoption.

Featuring government and industry leaders, our Transportation Forum 2022, presented by Deloitte, will explore these important issues through keynotes and informative panel discussions on the future of

transportation and mobility in our region. With sessions on “Supply Chains: Building the secure supply chain of the future” and “Urban Mobility: Innovation and technology for a better quality of life”. **sb**

Register for upcoming events at boardoftrade.com/events.