



Canadian
Chamber of
Commerce

Chambre de
Commerce
du Canada



Business
Data Lab

Laboratoire de données
sur les entreprises

Business Data Lab

Discovery Consultations

Summary Report

May 2022



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Government
of Canada

Canada

Report Contents

To inform stakeholders about the **Canadian Chamber of Commerce Business Data Lab (BDL)** and identify needs and opportunities to add value, BDL staff conducted multiple **Discovery Consultation Workshops**.

The BDL engaged Deloitte to consolidate the feedback received and make recommendations for future BDL activities. This report summarizes “**what we heard and lessons learned**” from the workshop discussions and attendees’ survey responses.

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Introduction

Overview of the BDL and report objectives



The Business Data Lab (BDL)

An Exciting New Initiative

Organizations in Canada and around the world are striving to **better use data to improve their understanding of market conditions**, in real time and with increased granularity.

The BDL will bring the Canadian Chamber's entrepreneurial approach to improve how we understand business conditions in Canada by a variety of lenses such as geography, industry, company size, firm ownership — including diversity and inclusion metrics — as well as international business activities.

BDL's Goals

The BDL will bring together data from a variety of sources to **track evolving market conditions**, providing businesses with critical information to help them make better decisions and improve their performance.

Working in collaboration with Statistics Canada and with financial support from the Government of Canada, the **BDL aims to become an essential source for real-time and future-focused data and insights for all companies of every size, sector and region of the country.**

Key Partners

01 Business Data Trust
The BDL will partner with Statistics Canada to develop and securely house its data assets.

02 Stakeholders
A variety of other organizations will engage with, and benefit from, the BDL's proposed outputs, including the Chamber Network, the Federal Government Advisory Council, Canadian businesses and diverse business communities.



Real-Time Data Revolution

The BDL will leverage traditional official statistics from Statistics Canada as well as the power of new, emerging and non-traditional data sources to meet the ever-changing needs of Canadian business for credible and timely information.



New business insights

Reliable intelligence about and for Canadian business that compliments the work of official statistical agencies



Real-time monitoring

Timely data on business conditions, expectations, opportunities for growth and obstacles to overcome to realize Canada's economic potential



Business-relevant granularity

Insights by industry; geography; company size; age; ownership; and international business activities



Inclusive consultations

Regular feedback loops that convene, consult and engage to meet the needs of Canada's business community and government stakeholders



Inform government policy

Building an evidence base to improve the effectiveness of government programs for business



Improve Business outcomes

Customized research to help Canadian companies make better decisions and improve their performance

Key Outputs

- 01 Business Survey Analysis**
- Quarterly analysis of StatsCan's CSBC
 - Leading indicators based on business expectations

- 02 Business Data Dashboards**
- Online up-to-date indicators to track business conditions

- 03 Reports and policy briefs**
- On topics such as: labor shortages; net zero transition; digital adoption

BDL Target Audiences

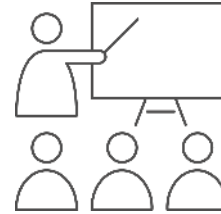
Consumers of BDL's outputs include Canadian companies, local chambers, governments, media, and the general public

Objectives

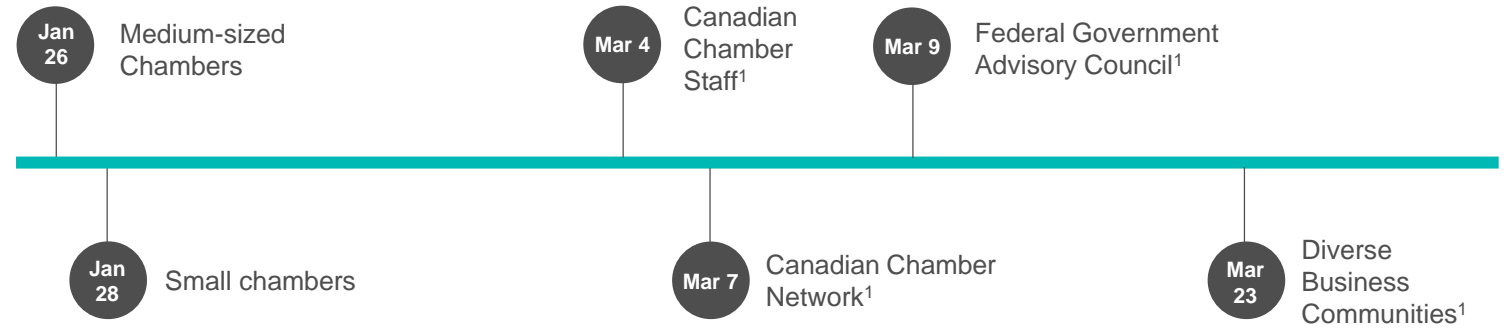
Discovery Consultation Workshops were held with various stakeholder groups in order to achieve the following goals:

- **Inform** stakeholders about the BDL
- **Understand** stakeholders' business data needs and research agendas
- **Identify** gaps and opportunities to collaborate
- **Obtain** feedback on potential outputs and research themes

6 Workshops



80+ Stakeholder groups

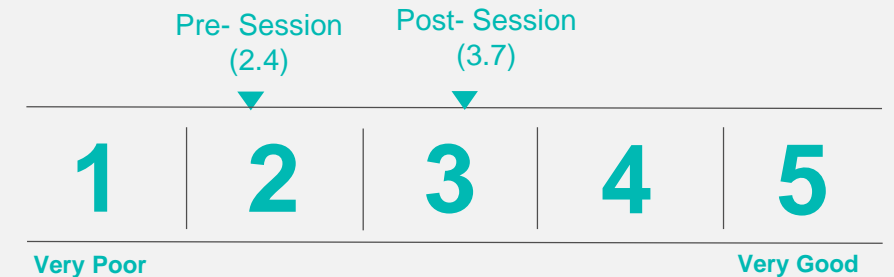


24 Unique survey questions

54%
 Increase in understanding of BDL



Summary: What's your level of understanding of the BDL?



¹Survey questions were posed and formal responses gathered from these workshops. Questions were tailored to the specific organizations in each workshop. As a result, not all organizations answered each survey question.



Executive Summary

Key insights pertaining to research themes, data collection, effective user experience and socialization





Key Insights

1 Data & Research

Business Conditions, Labour, ESG, DEI, and Digital & Innovation are top of mind for stakeholders



Many stakeholders rely on a combination of their own internal customer relationship management (CRM) data, along with publicly-available external sources (e.g. Statistics Canada releases with localized data, such as the Labor Force Survey). Moving forward, business conditions data, labour & workforce, ESG, DEI data, and digital/innovation data are important issues for stakeholders, some of whom have limited experience and difficulty accessing and analyzing data.

3 User Experience

Stakeholders are interested in easy-to-use tools to analyze data and generate their own insights



Of the various use-cases, participants are most interested in data dashboards that can quickly and easily help them analyze data and develop user-generated insights from key metrics. Stakeholders value data simplicity, effective visualizations, layers of granularity, interactivity, and business-relevant data.

2 Data Collection

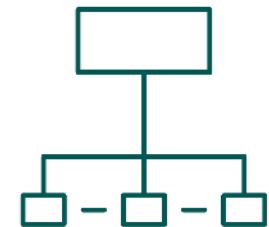
BDL could provide value by raising awareness, improving dissemination and reducing overlapping initiatives



Several government and Chamber network stakeholders currently conduct a variety of business surveys. A small minority of organizations are currently leveraging available data from Statistics Canada's new quarterly business survey. Government participants see opportunities for better coordination, cataloguing ongoing surveys, and value in cross-organizational collaboration. Furthermore, stakeholders are interested in obtaining localized insights by leveraging new, unconventional data sources.

4 Effective Distribution

Users want a multi-channel approach to consume business data



Users are interested in various ways to consume business information, and value having optionality on how they access data. Stakeholders' preferred mediums include live communication, offline communication, reusable assets, and a consolidated portal/hub to access information.



Strengths

- A core strength is the BDL's strong partnership with Statistics Canada, which permits collaboration on data collection, and potentially analysis, as well as promoting and enhancing the use of existing StatsCan data by businesses.
- The BDL has more latitude to collect, analyze and disseminate unconventional, unstructured experimental data, as compared with Statistics Canada who is mandated to produce official, comparable and consistent statistics.
- The BDL is able to leverage partnerships with key non-governmental stakeholders, including through direct links to Canadian business communities.

Weaknesses

- There are natural limitations on the BDL's ability to tailor data collection processes or outputs specifically to meet a diverse set of stakeholders' needs in a cost-effective way.
- The ability to extract and disseminate data quickly and easily, so that stakeholders can leverage data in a timely manner in both official languages.
- The potential duplication of surveying across organizations is leading to "survey fatigue" and reduced willingness of business owners to respond to future surveys.

Opportunities

- Potential to raise awareness of ongoing Canadian business surveys and research to reduce fragmentation and overlap of work across organizations.
- Enhance data knowledge, modernized collection techniques, storage, and consumption processes.
- Improving data accessibility and insights that can help address the "last mile data problem" experienced by stakeholders, such as SMEs and the Chamber network, with disparate, unique ongoing information needs.
- The BDL can provide novel data and evidence to support the Chamber's policy advocacy, and improve the design of government programs for businesses.

Threats

- The BDL may initially find it hard to establish, position and promote their value-proposition within the current landscape of Canadian business information.
- Hiring top talent could be difficult in a highly-competitive labour market for advanced computing and analytics skillsets.
- Disaggregated, private sector data is often expensive to obtain and sustain.
- Limited sample sizes for more local geographies or groups could lead to data or insights that are not necessarily representative or statistically significant.
- As data frequency and timeliness improves, achieving data equity across regions or groups could be a challenge.



Section 1

Data & Research

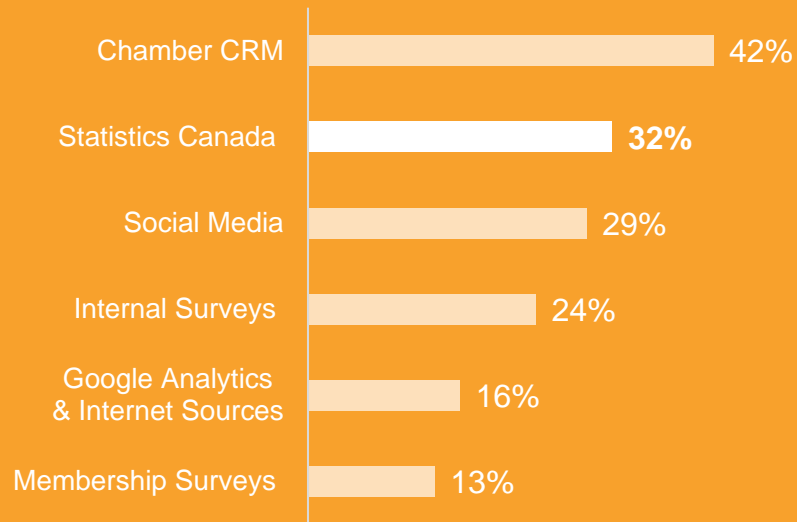
Key themes as prioritized by stakeholders





What We Asked

What data or data tools do you currently use?



Note: This report does not go into further detail to investigate the Chamber CRM and Social Media as data tools.

Aggregated responses. Additional data tools include but are not limited to: Alida, Constant Contact Surveys, Telephone Polls, etc.

What We Heard



Statistics Canada

Statistics Canada is one of the most-used data sources that stakeholders have confidence in.

Various reports leveraged from StatsCan include:

- Labor Force Survey
- Employment insurance data
- Census information
- Statistics Canada *Daily* data releases, infographics and research reports

Stakeholders are interested to see continuous updates from this foundational data source, and look forward to the potential to obtain more granular data at the municipal, region, or local levels, to make more informed decisions.



Third Party Sources

Further real-time data is collected from various third-party sources to create insights on the current state of the economy.

- Mobility data – allows for understanding traffic flows and footfall in/out of various districts
- Financial data – showcases changes in consumer spending over time
- Economic data – depicts how businesses are responding to on-going changes, such as COVID restrictions or program supports

By capturing these important activities in the economy, stakeholders hope to be able to quickly react to the changing landscape.



Additional Sources

Include the Bank of Canada's *Business Outlook Survey*, and various other business surveys. Stakeholders mainly leverage CRM for contact information, and Social Media for breaking news.



What We Asked

What research topics would be most beneficial?

- 01 **Business Conditions**
(including Formation, Growth, and Scale-up)
- 02 **Workforce & Labour**
- 03 **DEI** (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion)
- 04 **ESG**
(Environmental, Social, and Governance)
- 05 **Digital & Innovation**

Note: Respondents ranked their five highest priority topics from a list of 10, and provided additional open text feedback

Aggregated responses. Additional research topics include but are not limited to: Housing & Transit, Immigration, International Activities, Investment Trends, Rural Sectors, etc.

What We Heard

1. Business Conditions

- Consumer patterns such as spending, local tourism, travel and transit usage
- Housing and mobility data, to understand workforce responses to remote work
- Economic business indicators such as liquidity, solvency, and COVID-19 impacts
- Socio-economic data at the regional level to help inform chamber advocacy
- NAICS and NOC data to understand local output and employment patterns

3. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

- Demographic and psychographic information for local Canadian businesses, including ownership, leadership, financing, female representation, and impact of various programs
- Canadian small businesses that employ under-represented groups or visible minorities
- Perceived satisfaction of small and minority-owned businesses, to identify if they are content with their business performance

2. Workforce & Labour

- Information associated with the state of the local labour markets in Canada
- Employment, unemployment, population, wage and earnings changes
- Talent attraction, recruitment, job retention
- Education, training, and upskilling data
- Additional granular datasets that display indicators at the regional, municipal, and local levels
- Intersectionality data to identify individuals within multiple minority groups
- Employment information such as racial pay gaps, hiring practices, and promotion rates
- Robust, granular data is highly important to properly analyze local level indicators
- Indigenous and rural community statistics about internet access and overall growth



What We Asked

What research topics would be most beneficial?

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What We Heard

4. Environment, Sustainability, and Governance (ESG)

- Environmental practices and emissions for key industries
- Environmental patterns and emerging trends
- Climate change and net zero indicators
- Oil and gas opportunities, including low carbon diversification

5. Digital & Innovation

- Growth metrics associated with digital businesses and overall digital adoption
- Mobile and payments use as a proxy for the adoption for new digital technologies
- Innovation metrics specific to the energy and resources industries
- Access to funding and financing
- Online sales and e-commerce metrics

Additional Research Topics Heard

- **Housing** – Affordability housing statistics, vacancy rates and key market metrics
- **Immigration** – New immigrant metrics, migration statistics, and graduates compared to available job information
- **Industry Data** – Growth opportunities, investment areas, and key trends
- **Rural Sectoral Analysis** – Recovery, tourism, and growth support of the industry
- **Inflation/Cost Indicators** – effects on Canadian businesses and individuals



For future data and research opportunities, the BDL should consider the following:

01



Granularity

- Currently, the level of aggregation and data collection is constraining policy makers in their ability to perform analysis and make informed decisions at the municipal and local level.
- Data may be collected at a more granular level, so insights can be directly used for localized analysis.
- Increased volume of data collected can improve the overall statistical significance, and confidence in the insights generated.

02



Frequency

- Additional capabilities could be created to keep up with changing data needs, and allow stakeholders to rapidly collect and merge relevant data sources.
- Chambers are interested in a continuous feedback loop where they can provide input on their evolving needs, as well as impact the data and research that the BDL prioritizes and conducts.
- Stakeholders want high-frequency data, where available, so insights can be generated in a timely manner.

03



Quality

- Some skepticism is required for new forms of data, and quality should be investigated to ensure stakeholders are not making decisions based on overly-noisy information.
- Users should be aware of the ultimate data sources for all metrics they use from the BDL.
- If the BDL is unsure of data quality or the statistical significance of the data, sources could be identified as experimental, with more caution needed when used for business decision making.



Section 2

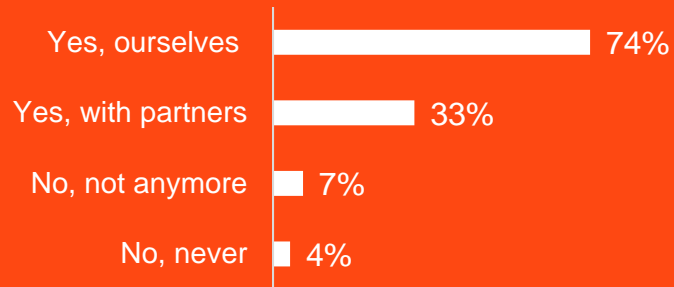
Data Collection

Current practices for business surveys and areas for improved coordination and collaboration



What We Asked

Do you conduct your own business surveys?



Note: Multiple answers were permitted from respondents

Current Surveys Conducted¹

- 1 Business Outlook Survey
- 2 Business Leaders Pulse
- 3 Trade Commissioners Survey
- 4 Credit Conditions Survey
- 5 Canadian Accelerator (Start-up Survey)
- 6 National Angel Capital Organization

¹This is a partial list; a full catalogue is being developed.

What We Heard

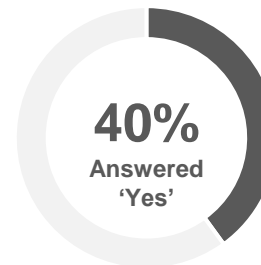
How stakeholders currently survey:

- Statistics Canada conducts various surveys including in collaboration with other government departments, such as ISED
- Stakeholders work with other third party organizations to conduct business surveys
- Some industry associations have internal capacity to perform surveys
- Several chambers conduct surveying on an ad-hoc basis as requirements arise

Best practices:

- Stakeholders have received positive feedback when using short, closed-ended surveys that are easier for businesses to quickly answer
- Statistics Canada field tests its questions for answer efficiency, finding that survey topics that are top of mind and non-financial are easiest to answer
- Quarterly surveying may be an appropriate frequency to capture changing surveying needs without creating additional fatigue

Do you use the Chamber's analysis of the Statistics Canada Business Survey?



Reason's stakeholders voted "no":

- Unaware that it was readily available or that it was an ongoing analysis that could be accessed
- Not relevant for their specific region or municipality, or content was too broad



What We Asked

Do you see opportunities for **better coordination** of business surveying?



Are you currently participating in **cross-organizational** meetings with federal stakeholders?



Do you think BDL should develop **in-house capacity** to conduct business surveys?



■ Yes ■ Don't Know ■ No

What We Heard

Areas of improvement

Survey Fatigue

- There are many overlapping survey initiatives. Reducing the duplication of work can be effective.
- Some survey participants reported response fatigue and burden due to many surveys
- By leveraging the internet or other automated data collection sources, surveys could become less burdensome, less frequent, and more targeted

Cross Organizational Initiatives

- The Labour Market Information Council is developing a “data hub” as well as assisting with building the back-end data pipelines, and aims to be a data provider that various users can leverage for front-end applications

Data Granularity

- Focus groups can be leveraged with targeted sub-populations to gather more granular quantitative and qualitative insights, after a high-level understanding has been achieved

Last Mile Data Collection

- Stakeholders have trouble accessing and analyzing data available to them

Potential Research & Data Collaborators

- **Financial** – Banks, Bank of Canada, payment providers
- **Consumer** – Shopify, Salesforce, Mobile, Amazon
- **Transport** – Ports, UPS, Fedex, Canada Post



For data collection, the BDL should consider the following:

01



Surveying

- We first recommend conducting a thorough Business Survey data catalogue, which would provide strong value in understanding the current state of surveying and data collection within the Chamber, and its stakeholders.
- New surveys should be purpose-driven and minimize questions where possible to reduce survey fatigue.
- Although internal surveys allow more timeliness and flexibility, in the near-term it may not make sense to develop in-house BDL surveying capacity. This could create survey repetition, without solving the gaps on more granular data.

02



Collaboration

- Data collaborations may prove to be extremely beneficial as the BDL can allow data collection experts to do the heavy lifting. High quality data sourcing, streaming, and organization can be costly.
- Data collaborations may be the quickest and easiest path to improve the frequency at which the BDL can source and publish data.
- Cost-benefit analysis should be performed to evaluate the outcomes of possible data collaborations with external partners.

03



Data Collection

- The Chamber Network struggles with leveraging available data from Statistics Canada, and there is an opportunity for the BDL to compliment the ad-hoc surveying they are currently conducting.
- Federal stakeholders and the Chamber Network support the use of new data assets, such as payment and mobile, and therefore the BDL should explore those avenues in the near term.
- By leveraging external data partners and third-party sources, the BDL can generate faster and localized insights.



Section 3

User Experience

Methods to drive use through effective user experiences and data visualization techniques





What We Asked

What functionalities are important when building a use-case?

Data Simplicity Granularity
Interactivity
 Effective Visualizations Data Relevancy

Potential BDL Use-Cases



Infographics
 Charts, diagrams or shareable digital content that illustrates a clear, thought-out story to highlight key data insights



Reports
 Organized concise documents for business audiences that provide in-depth information about specific topics



Dashboards
 Interactive informational tools that can be used to track, analyze, and display key indicators

What We Heard

From our discussions, we understood the top priorities for our stakeholders in relation to dashboard functionalities:

Data Simplicity

- Including too much data can make it harder to interpret and consume the information
- Straight-forward, aggregated metrics would allow users to quickly gather insights at a glance

Effective Visualizations

- Charts and time series data improve the ability to consume and analyze trends
- Use of graphs, color coding, and top line metrics
- Grouping of like information helps users to follow the story

Levels of Granularity

- Comparisons by province and other jurisdictions
- Ability to drill down to municipal or local level
- Data sources and confidence levels should be clearly labelled for users

Interactivity

- Ability to alter filters to see effects
- Ability to download, save, and share visualizations to use in reports, and socials
- Abilities to search through the data
- Ability to compare data by various features
- Stakeholders are interested in creating profiles that personalize their dashboards

Data Relevancy

- Dashboards with relevant data on topical issues
- Data frequency should be as high as feasible
- Providing information not currently available from StatsCan
- Stakeholders ultimately want both StatsCan data and third-party data



Considerations

For effective user experiences, the BDL should consider the following process:

Step 1: Align User Needs

- Review and document user(s)/team(s)/stakeholder(s) needs, current state, pain points and responsibilities
- Alignment of goal(s) and expectations for the future
- Analyze current workflow through the lens of **user needs**

Outputs:



Persona Canvas



User workflows

Step 2: Map Requirements

- Capture and organize the specific requirements (e.g., KPIs, required data, metrics), goals, and desires of the report through a **story map**
- **Prioritize MVP** based on user needs, data availability and build complexity

Outputs:



Inventory of Needs

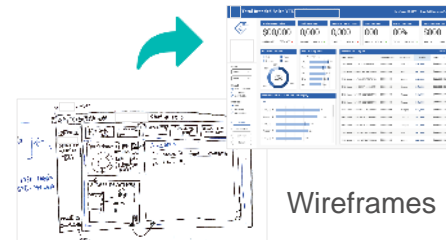


Desired Prioritization

Step 3: Visualize

- Visualize and **illustrate the functionality** defined by the story maps for each report/use case
- **Playback, iterate, refine** and finalize wireframes to the desired state with users

Outputs:



Final product:

Development of Dashboard Designs



Section 4

Effective Distribution

Effective socialization and insight dissemination approaches to raise engagement and increase use of BDL assets





What We Asked

Are you interested in accessing the Business Data Trust¹ in the future?



Would you be interested in presenting your organizations research to the following audiences?



Note: Multiple answers were permitted from respondents, and this question was only posed to the federal governance advisory council members

¹The Business Data Trust is the back-end BDL data.

What We Heard

“It will be critical for the Business Data Lab to ensure that the research, dashboard and tools become well-known by SME owners, institutions, researchers and the media.”

Many stakeholders note that users are often unaware of the tools that are available for their use, and therefore the methods of spreading awareness and distribution of BDL’s outputs are critical.

Effective Distribution Methods

Surveys show that users are interested in a multi-channel approach to distribution, and value having options with how they consume information.

Live Communication

- Webinars and virtual workshops allow for users to retain knowledge in an engaging manner

Other Communications

- Newsletters, emails, and social media communications all play a role in allowing users to consume information at the level of detail that is important to them
- Recordings and key takeaways from webinars are valuable for individuals that may not have been able to attend live

Consolidated Portal

- Stakeholders value having all information accessible in one place, such as a portal or hub that can be accessed as needed

Assets

- Stakeholders are interested in directly accessing and downloading key datasets
- Published use-cases and outputs so stakeholders can access and download content on an ad-hoc basis
- Creating social media friendly content that stakeholders can leverage in their day-to-day work and communications is important



Appendix



Canadian Chamber Network

Workshops held on: Jan 26, 28 and Mar 7, 2022



Stakeholders

Alberta Chamber of Commerce
 Amherst & Area Chamber of Commerce
 Atlantic Chamber of Commerce
 Barrie Chamber of Commerce
 Burlington Chamber of Commerce
 Calgary Chamber of Commerce
 Chamber of Commerce Brantford-Brant
 Chambre de commerce de Lévis
 Comox Valley Chamber
 Creston Valley Chamber of commerce
 Delta Chamber of Commerce
 Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce
 Edmonton Chamber of Commerce
 Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec (FCCQ)
 Fort St John District Chamber of Commerce
 Fredericton Chamber of Commerce
 Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce
 Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce
 Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce
 Greater Vancouver Board of Trade
 Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce
 Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce
 Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation
 Halifax Chamber of Commerce
 Hamilton Chamber of Commerce
 Kamloops Chamber of Commerce
 Lacombe Chamber of Commerce
 Langdon & District Chamber of Commerce
 Lindsay & District Chamber of Commerce
 London Chamber of Commerce
 Manitoba Chambers of Commerce

Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows Chamber of Commerce
 Meaford Culture Foundation
 Medicine Hat & District Chamber of Commerce
 Milton Chamber of Commerce
 New Westminster Chamber of Commerce
 Newmarket Chamber of Commerce
 North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce
 Oakville Chamber of Commerce
 Ontario Chamber of Commerce
 Ottawa Board of Trade
 Parkland Chamber of Commerce
 Ponoka and District Chamber of Commerce Society
 Port Hope and District Chamber of Commerce
 Portage la Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce
 Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce
 Red Deer & District Chamber of Commerce
 Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce
 Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce
 Sechelt & District Chamber of Commerce
 Sherwood Park & District Chamber of Commerce
 Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce
 South Surrey & White Rock Chamber of Commerce
 Stettler Regional Board of Trade
 Strathmore Wheatland Chamber of Commerce
 Surrey Board of Trade
 Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce
 Timmins Chamber of Commerce
 Toronto Region Board of Trade
 Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce
 Vermilion & District Chamber of Commerce
 Whistler Chamber of Commerce

Key Takeaways

- 01 Localized and Timely Data**
 The Chamber Network places high value on granular data, and is supportive of alternate data sources that capture this information
- 02 Complementary Data**
 New data, analysis, and dashboards should complement and build on what is currently available to Chamber members. Increased accessibility and consumption for current data sources is also valuable to members
- 03 Accessibility**
 New data analysis, reporting, or dashboards must be accessible and consumable for stakeholders

*Canadian Chamber Network stakeholders were consulted across three separate workshops



Appendix

Canadian Chamber Staff

Workshops held on: Mar 4, 2022

Stakeholders

Canadian Chamber of Commerce

- Communications & Operations
- Member Relations & Services
- Policy
- Communications & Social Media



Key Takeaways

01 Support Canadian Businesses

We need to better understand the needs of Canadian businesses in order to support them

02 Data Driven Insights for advocacy work

There are significant opportunities to integrate data, analysis, and storytelling into the Chamber's advocacy and policy work

03 Consumable Insights

Stakeholders want to be able to use insights in a variety of ways, and there is desire to leverage various outputs within communications and publications to strengthen messages



Appendix

Federal Government Advisory Council

Workshops held on: Mar 9, 2022



Stakeholders

Bank of Canada
Business Development Bank of Canada
Finance Canada
Global Affairs Canada
Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
Invest in Canada
Labour Market Information Council
Statistics Canada

Key Takeaways

- 01 Support Canadian Businesses**
There is also significant interest from this group in better understanding Canadian business conditions, trends, and insights in order to make data driven decisions
- 02 Empower Canadian Businesses**
There is a strong desire to provide Canadian businesses with relevant insights that allow them to better operate and grow their business
- 03 Significant Progress**
Considerable activity is already underway to generate timely business insights using alternative data sources



Appendix

Diverse Business Communities

Workshops held on: Mar 23, 2022

Stakeholders

Canadian Chamber's BIPOC Leadership Council
Canadian Chamber's Council on Women's Advocacy
Canadian Council of Aboriginal Businesses
Women's Chamber of Commerce
Black Wealth Club
Black North Initiative
Canadian Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
Canadian Black Chamber of Commerce
Indigenous Chamber of Commerce



Key Takeaways

01

Accessibility

It is critical for the BDL to ensure that data, analysis, and dashboards are well known by internal and public stakeholders, so they can extract value from the new tools

02

Opportunities

A range of opportunities exist for collaboration on stakeholder and community led data consolidation, research, and story telling

03

Data Improvements

There is significant desire to improve data definitions, address data gaps, and collect new, statistically significant data in order to generate missing insights