

# ACCESS

## MANITOBA

July - September 2003

### Can We Talk?

by Lee Gregg

Yes we can! In over 110 languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Welcome to **CanTalk Canada Inc.**, a global telecommunications service and call centre specializing in comprehensive language and cultural services to the business community.

President Maureen Mitchells, winner of the Building Business 2002 Women Entrepreneur of the Year Award, took her experience as a marketing professional dealing with international language issues to launch CanTalk Canada. By combining Canada's rich linguistic resources with the talents of accredited interpreters and translators, the company provides high quality, customized language communication services in a growing global economy.

"It's important for all businesses to understand that their client base is ethnically diverse," stressed Mitchells. "We have found that you achieve a uniquely competitive advantage when delivering your services in the language of your customer's choice. By offering people the opportunity to respect their customer's culture and language, you attract new customers and maintain customer loyalty in Canada and abroad."



*"CanTalk liberates communications through innovative personalized solutions," commented President Maureen Mitchells.*

Launched in 1995 with four part-time staff, CanTalk today employs 200 language specialists, contracts with 2,000 interpreters and translators, and has 250 remote operator agents. With this team of language specialists and Mitchells' technology experts, CanTalk offers one of the most comprehensive value-added service portfolios in the industry.

Along with hard work and perseverance, Mitchells had some help along the way from the **Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre**. "I found the biggest piece of gold walking

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# INNOVATION

## CanTalk Speaks Your Language

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*Operations Director Randy Yablonski (L) with language specialists. "The only way to grow in a global economy is to speak the language."*

into the Business Service Centre," said an enthusiastic Mitchells. "The Centre had sources of information that were difficult to find anywhere else."

Innovation is key to CanTalk's success. Expanding on the initial focus of translation services, the company has branched out into calling cards, directory assistance, business consulting, billing services and e-business support.

Among the innovative products developed by CanTalk is a software program that tracks over 35 customer-specific call details and content for marketing and/or technical purposes. Another program tracks, analyzes and then forecasts call

volumes and language requirements. The benefits of these programs provide CanTalk with the ability to handle over 600,000 calls a day from 82 different countries with half the staff of other call centres...and pass along significant savings to their customers.

The company also developed an innovative fraud detection and monitoring system to protect clients from the large number of fraudulent telecommunications calls. This proprietary software was developed specifically for the telecommunications industry. Capable of identifying 98 per cent of all fraudulent calls, it offers clients protection from Internet credit card fraud.

### ***Where in the world would you like to do business?***

With over the phone interpretation, translation services, telemarketing services in the language of choice, telecom billing and collections, long distance services, and more – anywhere you like!

For information on the services offered by CanTalk Canada, call 1-800-480-9686 or visit their Web site at: [www.cantalk.com](http://www.cantalk.com).

The Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre is a member of the Western Canada Business Service Network and is financially supported by Western Economic Diversification Canada. For additional information, visit the Centre's Web site at: [www.cbcs.org/manitoba](http://www.cbcs.org/manitoba).<sup>✶</sup>

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# ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Winnipeg Success is All Fun & Games!

by Lee Gregg

Michel Durand was scouting for ideas to start a home-based business, when visiting friends from France brought him the game, *Settlers of Catan*. A game fanatic, he was hooked and a business idea began to take shape.

A computer technician, Durand developed an e-commerce Web site for game enthusiasts. JogoCanada.com was launched in February 1999, but the business quickly outgrew his home. As a Francophone entrepreneur, Durand visited the **Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities (CDEM)** who helped him develop a business plan for a storefront operation.

Winnipeg game aficionados can now visit a spacious retail store that incorporates an innovative concept for a 'toy' store — *Try it, you'll like it!* Durand developed a 1,300 square foot dedicated gaming area complete with five large tables where customers can try out the more than 1,000 multilingual games and puzzles they sell. They also host league nights for enthusiasts to challenge competitors in games of *Settlers of Catan*, *Lord of the Rings* and *Yu-Gi-Oh*.

Durand is particularly proud that **Jogo Canada** won the right to host the Canadian championships for *Settlers of Catan*. The winners participate in the international championship held in Essen, Germany, every fall.

"The services provided by CDEM's Suzie Lemoine and Isabelle Déry are really valuable when you are starting out in business," said an enthusiastic Durand. "You [Francophone

entrepreneurs] should take advantage of CDEM's services, as the more people you can bounce your ideas off, the better. You can't do it alone, and CDEM is there to help."

For more information on Jogo Canada, call 1-866-666-5166 or visit their Web site at: [www.jogocanada.com](http://www.jogocanada.com).

CDEM is a member of the Western Canada Business Service Network and is financially supported by Western Economic Diversification Canada. For more information, visit their Web site at: [www.cdem.com](http://www.cdem.com).♣



*Michel Durand hard at work at one of the Jogo Canada play tables.  
Photo courtesy of La Liberté.*

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## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

# Village Reclaims Its Beach

by Lee Gregg

Derived from the Cree *winnipi* for murky waters and *osis* for little, the Village of Winnipegosis has a history rich in natural beauty and heritage. From furs, lumber and fishing, to agriculture and cattle, Winnipegosis has continued to redefine itself since the area was first settled in 1741. Now, this charming town has turned its attention to tourism.



“This project would not have been possible without the financial assistance we received from the Parkland Community Futures,” said Terry Tomlinson, Winnipegosis town secretary. “It was an excellent partnership between the town, Elks Lodge and the CFDC.”

With \$5,000 in financial assistance from the **Parkland Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC)**, the **Elks Lodge** has turned their run-down beach into a community and tourist location. The charity group works for the betterment of the community and considered the beach a focal point for the area’s residents, day-trippers and campers.

Situated close to recreational facilities and campgrounds, the beach had become littered with stones, broken glass, weeds and an eroding shoreline. Months of hard work have restored a wonderful beach that complements the town’s campgrounds, park, golf course, tennis courts and museum, which houses the *Myrtle M*, one of Manitoba’s last wooden freighters.

“We are currently looking at other projects for 2003 that will include developing a beach walkway with rest spots and upgrading our marina to include a boat launch,” added Nestor Barsewsky, the Elks Lodge member who initiated the restoration project.

A remnant of the glacial Lake Agassiz, Lake Winnipegosis is an ideal location for camping, boating and fishing holidays. For additional information, visit: [www.onlinepro.com/wpgosis](http://www.onlinepro.com/wpgosis).

Parkland CFDC is a member of the Western Canada Business Service Network and is financially supported by Western Economic Diversification Canada. For information, visit WD’s Web site at: [www.wd.gc.ca](http://www.wd.gc.ca). 🍁