



Private Investigators' Association of British Columbia

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President's Message

PIABC Initiatives for 2010/2011

July 3rd, 2011

Your Board of Directors of PIABC has been working hard to accomplish a number of initiatives designed to meet the needs of our members. These initiatives were voted on and accepted at our Strategic Planning session in the fall of 2010. They focus on providing more:

- business opportunities
- employment opportunities
- learning/training opportunities

for PIABC members while at the same time, reducing the associated costs to our members.

To help us make better decisions, we ask for your input on the following initiatives by emailing us at president@piabc.ca. Thoughtful comments and helpful suggestions will be shared with the entire Board.

Reducing Membership Costs

We are considering revising our dues structure to make membership more affordable. However, reducing costs of dues without a concurrent increase in membership (company as well as individual PI) is not a viable proposition.

Any proposed model should focus on *encouraging businesses to join PIABC and have their PIs enrolled as members.*

Reducing costs of dues will give less money to PIABC, something your Association can ill afford, UNLESS we also get a concurrent increase in company and individual memberships. We cannot reduce fees unless a significant membership increase is realized.

Our free membership drive of 2010 worked reasonably well. Our 2011 membership has increased approximately 15% over 2010 pre-promotion levels. However, 85% of those that joined for free did not renew. We need to do better. Those that are inclined to join because something is free tend not to renew when it comes time to pay. We need to have people pay to join because of what PIABC offers them, not because it's free.

PLEASE GIVE US FEEDBACK AND SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW WE CAN DO THIS!

New Media Campaign to Generate Business

Our member Firms are receiving referrals from PIABC's 'Find A PI' search tool and tell us that they want more such referrals. As a result, your Board promised two years ago to create a

publicity campaign to encourage Clients to hire PIABC member firms by publicizing how PIABC Firms and PIs provide value to Clients. The intent is to encourage Clients to visit our PIABC website and select PI Firms from our 'Find A PI' search tool. This will have the result of driving business to our PIABC member Firms (as opposed to non-member PI Firms) and provide more employment opportunities for PIABC member PIs.

We intend to drive business to our member Firms by educating potential Clients about how the services of our member Firms can benefit them using 'real stories' amended to protect privacy. We will be stressing the expertise and service that our members offer, their ongoing compliance with our code of ethics, PIABC's role in investigating complaints regarding ethics and our commitment to ongoing professional development of PIs.

We intend to start our publicity campaign in September pending Board approval at our meeting in July. We are investing significant amounts of our members' money for this initiative and we need to ensure that all our members benefit, including individual PIs. We want PIABC Firms who benefit from this increased marketing exposure to use and hire more PIABC PIs. We need your suggestions as to how we can use this campaign to benefit our member PIs as well as member Firms.

We will have a PIABC website tool that potential Clients can use to confirm a member's status and report false advertising. We will actively pursue PI Firms and PIs who falsely claim to be members either by displaying the PIABC logo or falsely stating that they are members. They will receive notice advising them to remove our brand from their material within 30 days. We are also considering using our website to identify such firms and advise website visitors looking to hire firms that they should assess whether they would want to hire a firm that provides misleading or inaccurate information. This should encourage firms to remove our branding from their marketing.

Finally, we may take legal action and pursue recovering legal costs associated with having non-members remove our logo and branding as well as seek compensation for the negative impact such misleading advertising has on taking away business from our true members. We have engaged a lawyer, Mr. Michael Hewitt at Singleton Urquhart, as our official PIABC counsel to represent all our Associations interests. This is an issue where we may engage his services.

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR SUPPORT OR SUGGESTIONS!

PIABC Website

Our website will be redesigned soon. We will be incorporating 'e-commerce' tools to make registration and payments for membership or conferences more convenient, as well as less costly and time consuming to administer, thereby saving our members' money. Communication between members as well as between the Board and our membership will also be enhanced.

'Find A PI' Search Tool

We will be re-engineering the 'Find A PI' search tool by having search fields such as type of service (full service firms will be promoted as well as firms specializing in limited services such

as surveillance, relationship improprieties, background and pre-employment, people finding, computer forensics, document examination, polygraph, electronic surveillance countermeasures, forensics, loss prevention, asset recovery, vehicle accident investigation, insurance fraud).

We will identify PI firms by parameters such as the regions that they service, their general office location, and market them as either 'full service' or niche firms offering a few specialized investigation services. Firms will be able to choose whether they are marketed as specialized or full service businesses.

As an example, a Client searching for a firm that specializes in relationship improprieties and doing business in a specific region will be directed to firms identified as 'full service' as well as those that specialize in this service. These firms will offer services in the region selected by the Client, and there will be a disclosure of whether the firm is a full service entity or specializes. The Client will be advised of the general location of one office registered on the business license issued by the Registrar. Search Regions will remain the same as currently in place and will be Vancouver Island, South Western BC (renamed from Lower Mainland), Central BC, Eastern BC, Northern BC.

The search results will return information about the general location of the Firm in the Region. Each business will be able to name their general location as long as it is as or more specific than the Search Regions. As an example, a Firm in South Western BC can identify their general location as South Western BC, or be more specific such as Greater Vancouver, Tri-Cities, Surrey, or Eastern Fraser Valley. The exception is a firm with multiple registered office locations throughout BC. Such firms can choose to have the term 'Multiple Locations' returned in lieu of one specific location.

This search design will promote large, multi-location, full service firms as well as small local firms by providing accurate information about the firms for Clients to assess. Larger full service Firms are promoted as full service along with a general bona-fide registered office location or non-descript 'multiple office' notice. Smaller or specializing Firms are promoted by identifying their presence in a local community and/or their specialized services. Each member firm is free to choose one of these methods to their market themselves.

Two examples of a search return for a PI firm offering injury investigations in the Vancouver Island region are:

Smith PI Services; Service Region: All BC; Office Location: Multiple Locations; PI Services: All Services; Phone 1-800-999-9999; email: sPI@me.ca ; www.me.ca

Jim's Injury Investigations; Service Region: Vancouver Island; Office Location: Greater Victoria; PI Services: Injury Investigation; Phone 1-250-333-3333; email jll@Injurys.ca ; www.injuries.ca

Firms subscribing to this marketing tool must agree to certain requirements which will focus on abiding by our code of ethics and PIABC's complaints process. The specifics of these requirements will be developed in time for discussion and voting at our AGM.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS!

Investigators' Manual and Course

Our new PI manual is progressing slower than anticipated but will be completed by the AGM in October. We are very grateful to the volunteers who devoted their time and efforts to this project. They will be formally recognized at our Conference at Whistler in October.

We have yet to decide on the format of our course offering. We will discuss that with our members at our Conference. The obvious options are licensing our manual and course curriculum to PIABC 'endorsed' schools or delivering the course ourselves via a third party.

We will be promoting PI training schools on our website so that those who wish to train to become PIs or become more knowledgeable will be informed as to the good choices available to them.

eLOG Book

We have engaged some professional IT programmers to create our eLOG book, a long awaited tool that allows PIs Under Supervision to track their work experience and training. This will help them to successfully obtain their Unrestricted PI license and reduce additional information requests for corroboration from the Registrar. Our objectives are ensuring that business and personal information privacy are respected. This project is anticipated to be completed by September and be live by October.

Listserv

Listserv has been live for eight months. It has proved to be a success and there is significant communication regarding news and employment opportunities by Firms looking for PIs. We will be asking PIs to indicate their desire to subscribe to Listserv and which email address to use when membership application renewals are submitted. That way, only those who want to receive these emails will get them.

Conference and AGM

Our Conference will be held at the Fairmont Chateau Whistler on October 21st and 22nd, 2011. This is an outstanding venue offered to our members at a great value price of \$149 with Friday reception and Saturday breakfast and luncheon included. You can stay just for the day or spend the weekend. You deserve a break and you need to be informed. Accomplish BOTH by coming to our Conference. Of course, our AGM will be held at the Conference. Another great reason to attend.

We have tentatively booked the president of the California Association of Licensed Investigators to speak about how their association has grown and helped its members to prosper, a very timely and important topic considering today's state of business. We also have tentative confirmation for Mr. J. Corey Friedman to present on pretexting techniques and their application at various scenarios. We hope to have a lawyer follow up with a presentation on

privacy and other legislation affecting the use of private investigation techniques and tools such as pretexting. BCIT, the Justice Institute other organizations and private schools offering investigation courses will be presenting about what they offer, then asking to hear from you about your ongoing training/professional development needs. Mr. Sam MacLeod from Security Programs will be speaking about new licensing changes that will soon be coming. As well, we will have a presentation on the latest gadgets and tools available for private investigation work. Finally, PIABC will be updating you on our latest initiatives such as the eLOG, completely revised PI manual and business promotion strategies; all designed to help you succeed!

Read all about the conference and register at <http://www.piabc.ca/current.cfm>.

Request for Volunteers!

Your Board of Directors have worked diligently to represent your interests. Some volunteered to stay on for multiple terms but some of those expire at this year's AGM. We need new volunteers to step up and nominate themselves for the various Director and Officer positions. Please do your part! It's time for you to pay it forward to your Association and fellow members.

We need leaders with the ambition to improve service to our members to step forward. Please consider nominating yourself or accepting a nomination for a PIABC Board position. Contact me or any of our Board members if you wish to discuss how you can help!

Best regards,

Taras Hryb

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