

Toward Prosperity

Nova Scotia Cultural Network Consultation

June 27th, 2000

Notes:

- None of the success stories in the document are related to the cultural sector.
- Need visible/obvious recognition of the cultural sector in the Strategy.
- Must put together the numbers existing for the value of the industry.

Government Role:

- Need to have a dialogue about the appropriate level of support that government can provide.
- Cannot be all things to all people.
- Quebec has a very high level of expenditure on its cultural sector (\$60 million in the budget for the Arts Council)
- Perhaps could have more staff at Intergovernmental Affairs in order to devote more energy towards promoting Nova Scotia interests with Ottawa.
- A lot of people in the cultural industry are working independently and thus have a hard time accessing government.
- There are many independent groups that act as liaisons between artists and the government, but their grants keep getting cut.
- It is very important that the economic development of the cultural industry be accorded the resources available through the Department of Economic Development.
- There is poor planning and understanding of the craft industries by those working with industries in government.
- It is extremely difficult to bring knowledgeable people together for decision-making so that decisions are informed.
 - Should look at existing success stories to use as models for what to do.
- Government must come out and say that culture is important and then back it up with actions.
- Need financial assistance (without too much expenditure) in tracking the impacts of culture.
- Should use the model of working artists being seconded to work with government to provide their expertise and knowledge of the industry.

Business Climate:

- Nova Scotia has a bad reputation.
 - This can be fixed through the promotion of our success stories.
- The Film Production Tax Credit has been extended to new media in Ontario.
- There is an opportunity for Nova Scotia to position itself in new media as a place for the repackaging of what is already out there.
- Quebec is an excellent example of incentives provided for new media adoption.
 - Ex: tax credit for businesses to go on-line.
 - Generates business for the new media production companies that put up their web-

sites.

- Many people do not equate new media with culture - the bias is at the business level.
- All of the gatekeepers etc. are in Toronto, Ontario. That despite this we have the 4th largest film, TV industry in Canada says a lot about the level of entrepreneurship in this sector.
- We must look for a way to value culture that will include the crews, training etc. in addition to ticket revenues.
- It is a challenge to identify revenue sources in the music industry.
- Very few documents focus on the business aspects of culture - it is hard for the industry to figure out how it fits in.
- Culture should be one of the key sectors focused on in the Strategy.
- Many cultural organizations are starting to speak of themselves as businesses in order to gain recognition.

Export Development:

- Must recognize the cultural industry as an export commodity.
 - Ex: touring musical groups
 - WinExports, Strategis
- In the cultural industry, often it is the idea itself that is the product and should be allowed to export that prior to production.

Labour Market:

- There is not enough recognition given to the 3rd (volunteer) sector. Need more investment in this sector.
- Need a better system of utilizing those willing to volunteer. Should the Regional Development Authorities be dealing with this?
- Must place more emphasis on the cultural education of youth.
- There is too much attention being paid to job training (technical knowledge) and not enough to job creation (generation of ideas). Will soon have more cameramen than ideas for films.
- Training is a short-term solution.

Infrastructure:

- Nova Scotia has very poor venues for performers.
- We lack a 2000-2500 seat venue and stadium with multi-media capabilities.
- There was an article in the Globe & Mail saying that Canada does not have a single first rate cultural city - this is due to the lack of infrastructure.
- Communities are incubators of talent.
- The funding requirements that call for all aspects of a project to be done in Nova Scotia act as limits for artists.
- On the other hand if there is strict implementation of that requirement then it will serve as an impetus for the development of the necessary infrastructure.

Competitive Advantages:

- Our quality of life is also a result of the cultural life in Nova Scotia.
- '93/'94 study of festivals as a tool for economic development:
 - Festivals are a source of Community Development
 - Festivals are 90% volunteer driven and generate considerable revenues for the province. Ex: the direct impact of the Canso festival is estimated at \$1 million.
- Festivals are growing so that now require a full-time, professional staff rather than just volunteers.

Strategic Priorities:

- Need to address broader issues than just film and TV.
- Ex: Alberta - government underwrites loans to the cultural sector.
- Need to identify organizations that can speak for the industry.