



June 18, 2007

**SUBJECT: EMBRACE THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY TO YOUR COMMUNITY,
ORGANIZATION, OR PROJECT**

Dear potential client, partner, and collaborator of Tom Tresser:

In mid 2006, I engaged in a dialogue with Tom Tresser on behalf of my team organizing the 2007 Business Retention and Expansion International (BREI) conference to be held in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada in mid-2007. We were exploring a provider to add content and a workshop dealing with (1) explaining and applying the concept of the Experience Economy to local economic development, and (2) create a workshop on the arts and local development. Tom was of particular interest to our team because of his vast experience in the arts performance field; but as I quickly learned, his experiences and knowledge in the realm of the Experience Economy would be of most benefit to our project.

The conference producing team in Regina set ourselves an unusual challenge: we set out to build the greatest, one-day, hands-on, experiential, world-class training event of all time. Seems like an impossible task, right? Through on-going brainstorming and ground-level meetings with stakeholders, Tom inspired our team to think-outside-the-box and truly produce and deliver on this goal. We built the workshop "Building the Ultimate Experience Economy -- Little Chicago on the Prairies: How the City of Moose Jaw Builds the Ultimate Experience to Create Growth". This was a full-day highly facilitated and immersive expedition to the city of Moose Jaw, which has used creativity, the arts and WOW! experiences to anchor their development program. Tom designed and led the expedition, which visited seven sites and included tours, interviews with local leaders, including the mayor, behind-the-scenes analysis a wine tasting and an thorough introduction to set it up and debrief to provide closure. Participants were not only blown-away with the quality and professionalism of the workshop and the facilitator Tom Tresser, they also expressed that it truly was the best workshop they had ever participated in.

Tom also gave a more traditional presentation on creativity, culture and local economic development that he did in tandem with the world-renown local economic development expert, the Australian-based Peter Kenyon. Tom's material provided a fantastic grounding and offered a framework for approaching creative local economic development.

On behalf of the 2007 Business Retention and Expansion International (BREI) conference team, as well as my organization, Saskatchewan Regional Economic and Co-operative Development, I would like to recommend Tom Tresser to any organization, community, or project team with the goal of incorporating the value of creativity, arts, and culture into their planning. I am a huge advocate of linking arts and culture to economic development, especially relating to the engagement, retention, and attraction of young talent to an organization or community.

Tom has been doing that with passion and creativity for many years and his expertise and professionalism will help you achieve your goals and they helped me achieve mine.

For an in-depth testimonial, please contact me by calling 306.787.8188 or by emailing me at dallas.gislason@gov.sk.ca.

Sincerely,

Dallas Gislason
Provincial Coordinator – Business Development
Saskatchewan Regional Economic and Co-operative Development