

Welcome: This is the inaugural issue of the monthly newsletter, *Blackberry Pie*. While the idea for this newsletter has been around for some time, the moment for its inception has required a good deal of patience. Right timing and placement – in baking pies and every new venture – makes all the difference.

Spotlight: Is your business a destination or just located on an off-ramp? Pondering this question may give you some insight into the direction that you want to take.

The advertising slogan for an Ontario business is “It’s worth the drive to Acton!” emphasising the reward of driving two hours from Toronto to their location. Whether it is because of product, price, or people, this business has chosen to make itself a destination.

In the fast food industry, the proliferation of outlets on every corner aligns the delivery vehicle with the product. Immediacy and proximity are aimed at satisfying the anytime, anywhere impulse or craving. Very little differentiates one chain from the next so the goal is to be the first point of contact.

Both destination and off-ramp businesses can be financially successful. There is a very different feel to these styles of businesses, which is why it is worth examining more than the bottom line. Creating an enterprise that fits you requires matching your philosophy and values to the outcomes you are targeting.

Tools & Tips: Viruses and Spam (unsolicited email) are the main concerns of most email users. The technology exists to stop both at their source (email servers), so ask the company that provides your email to implement these technologies or switch to one that already has.

Links: At www.thehungersite.com, you can feed the hungry, save the rainforest, fight breast cancer, and rescue animals all before you finish your first cup of coffee.

Quotation: In 1988, Aung San Suu Kyi returned to Burma to care for her dying mother. At that time, she felt the call to become the leader of Burma’s struggle for democracy. In speaking of herself, this remarkable woman says:

“I have very ordinary attitudes towards life. If I think that there is something I should do in the name of justice or in the name of love, then I’ll do it. The motivation is its own reward.”

Just For Fun: This summer, Paris spent \$1.5 million to truck in palm trees, beach chairs, umbrellas, and nearly 200 cubic yards of sand, to create a public beach in the middle of the city. The city’s residents love it! Every day this summer, the roadway has been packed with Parisians and tourists, sunning themselves, playing volleyball, and throwing Frisbees. At night, cafés set up tables and jazz musicians start playing.

Lexicon: “The bitter end.” If you think that this phase has something to do with a bad taste in your mouth, think again. To track this one down you have to go to sea!

First, a bitt is a vertical post, usually one of a pair (the bitts), set on the deck of a ship and used to secure ropes or cables. Second, the bitter is a turn of the cable (anchor chain) that is round the bitts.

Therefore, getting to the bitter end requires an extraordinary effort as all the cable must be spooled off the windlass on to the vessel’s deck or a dock if the vessel is berthed.

Musings: What is the significance of the name *Blackberry Civil Works* and how did the name arise? The first impulse was a play-on-words, *Civil Engineering*, where civil relates to citizens and their interrelations with one another and engineering relates to the application of scientific and mathematical principles to practical ends. The intention of that impulse being to emphasis that building interactions between people is what drives business.

An enquiry into the Companies Act made it clear that *Civil Engineering* was not a valid candidate for a company name. A company name requires wording that makes it unique and the qualifier *Blackberry* presented itself as the ideal means for providing that uniqueness.

On the West Coast, where it can take as few as four berries to fill a cup, blackberries are a prized late summer harvest. The low-hanging, peripheral fruit disappears first and what remains requires a more dedicated approach. Willingness, discipline, commitment, understanding, and courage are the qualities required to venture into the heart of the bramble. Master blackberry pickers require a certain carefulness - an attention to their intention.

The melding of these thoughts yielded *Blackberry Civil Works* as a name that captures the essence of this enterprise.