



PETERBOROUGH ECONOMIC ECOSYSTEM
by
Dawn M. Wivell, Firebrand International LLC

When I came to Peterborough to work on a marketing and branding project for the Town and the EDA, I was taken aback by the sheer potential, in great part because of the unique citizens I encountered. Lots of amazing things going on and so many talented people and cutting-edge ideas. Quite incredible to find such a hotbed of diverse activities and potential in a small New England town, frankly. On the flip side, everyone was so busy wearing so many hats and working towards great things that communication was lacking. In fact, when I ran a SWOT analysis, that was the biggest complaint. People felt that they did not know what was going on in their own community and why, and, in some cases, that their voice was not being heard. This is where a good ecosystem comes in.

What is important about the concept of an ecosystem, and its growing usage, is that it shows a shift in how society thinks of economic value. It shows that individuals matter and that their actions can transform industries and even the entire world; however small. An ecosystem is about dynamic interactions. It's about how people meet, talk, share, collaborate, team, experiment and grow together. When an ecosystem thrives, it means that the people have developed patterns of behavior or a culture, that streamlines the flow of ideas, talent, and capital throughout a system. The Peterborough Economic Ecosystem is blossoming, and it is contributing to the distinctive brand of the town. It is being organized to focus on everything that is critical to developing, growing and sustaining a vibrant economy and one that is unique to the special culture of Peterborough. There is a system for communication, cross marketing, leveraging of resources and branding, and it represents a cross section that is inclusive, diverse, compelling, and will drive growth as well as innovation.

The Peterborough Economic Ecosystem follows a hub and spoke model. The spokes represent important aspects of the economy and they are thriving. The hub brings all the spokes together along with important stakeholders at monthly meetings. Spokes will come and go as needs and opportunities are identified, and the citizens of Peterborough are welcome to advocate for a new spoke at any time. There is a playbook, a consistent schedule of meetings and a platform primed for a new industry, an existing industry, an economic challenge, or anything that can contribute to the economic health and well being of the greater Peterborough area and, indeed, the region. The majority of the spokes have expanded to a regional membership already.

Don't miss the coolness factor here. We have established a unique culture where innovative, diverse, and disparate individuals ranging in age from Gen Z to Millennials to Baby Boomers are developing and sustaining a structure that supports collaboration and enhanced connectivity to invest in the long term health of their shared ecosystem and from which all can derive mutual benefit.