

Manitoba means business

BizPaL simplifies permits and licences for Manitoba businesses

By Stephen Ishmael, BizPaL Manitoba Project Manager

In Manitoba, starting or growing a business just got easier thanks to a new, cross-jurisdictional initiative called BizPaL. Gone are the days of making calls to three levels of government departments just to find out what the license and permit compliance requirements are for a business start up or expansion.

BizPaL is a partnership between the Government of Manitoba, The Government of Canada and participating municipalities. BizPaL is an online service that benefits both domestic and international businesses by helping them to identify which permits and licences they will need in order to start or grow a business in Manitoba, and how to obtain them. There are currently 8 provincial governments and 73 municipalities across Canada participating in BizPaL. In addition to the business end-user, municipalities and government front counter staff are also using BizPaL to provide an end-to-end service fulfillment for clients who walk in or telephone their office looking for business compliance information.

For the business entrepreneurs accessing BizPaL directly, they simply select the jurisdiction that they want to start their business in, then answer a series of questions based on the type of business they want to start or operate and the activities they plan to undertake. BizPaL then automatically generates a list of all required permits and licences

across three levels of government, along with basic information like costs, waiting periods, inspection requirements, links to available forms and links to government sites where the entrepreneur can learn more and, in some cases, even apply for the Manitoba Retail Sales Tax License online. The entire process takes about 10 minutes.

For business, BizPaL helps save time and money because the information is available from a single authoritative source 24/7. For governments, BizPaL:

- Increases compliance as businesses will know what permits and licenses they must comply with in order to start or operate their business;
- Helps municipalities to remain competitive by streamlining the permit and licensing process in your jurisdiction;
- Leverages existing web forms into BizPaL; and
- Helps municipalities to provide an online service to permits and licenses without making the additional information technology investments.

Innovation is a key driver of BizPaL and addressing the delivery of informed compliance requirements for business is crucial so that Canada stays competitive. In this regard, BizPaL in the future will be expanding its service delivery to include activity-based compliance requirements, certificates, registrations and approvals. In Manitoba, the

immediate focus of BizPaL is to work with municipalities who want to have this service available to business in their jurisdictions and for use by their municipal staff.

The BizPaL service is available through the current municipal partners: Town of Morden, RM of Stanley, City of Thompson, City of Winkler and City of Brandon. In addition, The City of Winnipeg, The City of Portage la Prairie and 28 additional municipalities have decided to join the Manitoba BizPaL service. The BizPaL staff will be working in the coming months to help these new partners roll-out this service within their municipalities and to increase the coverage of industries.

Recently, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) has strongly supported BizPaL as being of benefit to both business and government. In Manitoba, BizPaL is accessible through the Manitoba government web site at www.bizpal/manitoba.ca and through participating municipalities.

To find out how your jurisdiction can participate, please contact:

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“Any initiative that streamlines the process that is required for business to comply with necessary government regulations will save time and money, not only for business owners and entrepreneurs, but government agencies as well. The Brandon Chamber of Commerce is strongly in favor of not only this partnership, but any future partnerships that might develop that will help sustain the pace of business development in our community and throughout our Province.”

Shane Robins, General Manager
Brandon Chamber of Commerce

Update: New service for business announced for manitoba municipalities, towns and cities

On October 12, 2007, Minister of Competitiveness, Training and Trade **Jim Rondeau** announced that small businesses in 11 Manitoba municipalities, towns and cities are going to benefit from BizPaL.

BizPaL will soon be available to the nine member communities of the Parkland Agricultural Resource Cooperative (PARC), which consists of the Towns of Roblin, Gilbert Plains and Grandview, the Village of Ethelbert and the Rural Municipalities of Dauphin, Gilbert Plains, Grandview, Ethelbert, and Hillsburg. The two cities announcing their participation in BizPaL are Dauphin and Portage la Prairie.

“We are looking forward to introducing BizPaL as part of our economic development portfolio and using this significant tool to increase our business development efforts” said Mayor **Ken Brennan** of the City of Portage la Prairie. “As it has done in other communities, BizPaL will make doing business in Portage la Prairie easier.”

“BizPaL is a great opportunity for the City of Dauphin,” said **Jana Schott**, Manager of the Dauphin Economic Development Office. “We are pleased to be working with BizPaL in making it easier and more efficient for entrepreneurs to find accurate information about starting or expanding a business in Dauphin.”