

# Challenge Dialogue System

## Examples of Where It Has Been Used

### Government Agencies

**Alberta Economic Development** — use of CDS first to assist in the transformation of this government department to help it engage leaders throughout the organization in creating a strategic plan. Following that CDS has been used to guide the work of an internal scouting group charged with developing a world-class knowledge management system for a government agency.

**Northwest Territories — Premier and Cabinet of the Government** — use of CDS to rebuild trust and spirit of collaboration among the cabinet who are functioning in a consensus form of government (no political parties). The unity of the cabinet had been shattered by a conflict of interest crisis and the CDS was used to create renewed collaboration around major initiatives that the government needs to initiate over the next two years. Included was the need to balance an economic agenda with an energetic social agenda being driven by community groups. The challenge was successfully completed in three months.

**Alberta Energy Research Institute (AERI) leading to the Energy Innovation Network (EnergyINet)** — This Challenge Dialogue of national scope is on-going originally sponsored by AERI with the intention of building an EINet that would launch the development of an integrated national energy strategy. The process involved two Challenge Dialogues starting in January 2003 with 52 participants. The second Dialogue was launched May 2003 with the distribution of a new Challenge Paper to close to 80 participants. The final report laid out the arguments and the operating principles for launching an EINet with 6 specific innovation programs that needed to be highly integrated in order to achieve maximum success. The EINet is now being designed and developed.

**Calgary Regional Health Authority** — use of CDS to synthesize, integrate and disseminate efforts of the unit on public health and community based medical services into the large work of a regional health authority.

**BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection** — CDS was used to address the complex task of developing an Action Plan for a Biodiversity Monitoring and Reporting Strategy for British Columbia. A short-timeframe mini-Challenge Dialogue helped move a diverse working group from concepts at the strategic level into action planning. One of the Co-Champions stated — *The Challenge Paper was an excellent way to get all workshop participants on the same page prior to attending the workshop. At the workshop I found this helped focus everyone and allowed them to express their thoughts better. I think this part of the process saved a day of [workshop] time. I really don't think we would have made this kind of progress at the workshop without this process.*

**BC Ministry of Forests** — The mountain pine beetle epidemic in the forests of central BC continues to have a significant affect on the currency of forest inventory and monitoring due to its unprecedented rate of change. Existing information systems are not designed to provide the information needed for this kind rapid, informed decision-making by industry and government timber supply analysts and ecologists. To address this challenge, an inventory and monitoring strategy was developed that engaging a broad suite of professional stakeholders across the BC in government, industry and other key organizations using CDS (see [http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hts/mpb\\_strategy.htm](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hts/mpb_strategy.htm)). CDS continues to be used by the Ministry of Forests and Range for an Inventory Program Review and development of an Inventory Action Plan for the Mountain Pine Beetle affected areas.

#### **Alberta Research Council / Forintek**

A three stage dialogue aimed at the development of a roadmap for the bio-economy for Alberta. First stage, using a small group of participants to identify primary domains which should be better understood so as to build a sustainable, profitable and effective bio-economy. Second stage, using both CDS and 2-hour tele-workshops (one per domain) to identify specific economic opportunities which may form part of the strategy. At the end of this stage, a workshop of some 80+ persons will look at strategies emerging from this process. Stage 3 will involve a select group undertaking a systematic review of the strategies.

#### **Alberta Sustainable Resource Development**

Use of CDS for a rapid improvement project aimed at leveraging ICT technologies (including geomatics, e-learning, e-commerce and EIM) to improve organizational performance. Some 400+ persons responded to a challenge dialogue in a 10 day period.

#### **Alberta Human Resources and Employment**

Use of CDS to assess the potential of a new service offering – an information portal. Sixty people participated in a seven day period.

#### **BC Government Initiatives Currently Undertaking Challenge Dialogues or Using the CDS to Improve the Organizational and Innovative Performance of Teams and Diverse Groups**

- **Mountain Pine Beetle Inventory and Monitoring Action Plan Development** — building upon the formal Challenge Dialogue in the late winter-spring of 2005, this assignment has involved a mini-Challenge Dialogue in December 2005 – January 2006 following by a CDS-based Workshop at Mesachie Lake in mid-January.
- **BC Ministry of Environment — Development of Ecosystem Restoration Planning Framework and Regional Plans** — Challenge Paper has been prepared with workshops planned for March. Workshops will be designed to reflect the feedback and priorities identified from the pre-electronic dialogue.

- **BC Ministry of Forests and Range** — an Inventory Program Review prompted by recent organizational changes regarding land and resource information within the provincial government, the Forest Analysis and Inventory Branch (FAIB), BC Ministry of Forests and Range, has initiated an Inventory Program Review. The results of this review will form the basis for preparing a three year business plan for the inventory program. The Challenge Dialogue System is being used to support the review process.

## **Business Firms**

**AVCO Financial Services** — use of CDS to guide a 2 ½ year transformation process in this financial services company that took them from the bottom rung of companies in a global operation to first in customer, employee and shareholder satisfaction. A key factor was development of a process and culture to support co-creation of new strategies, products and operating principles (which involved all 1,100 employees in the process in weeks).

**Maple Leaf Foods Int.** — use of CDS to create from scratch a global leadership team to develop and implement a new global strategy built around relationship sales. (Key focus here was quickly creating a team and helping them build a new global plan in weeks rather than months.)

**Canadian Occidental Petroleum** — use of CDS to create an innovation group that identified, and initiated a number of breakthrough innovations that took this declining Canadian subsidiary and built it into an independent global player in the energy business.

**Syncrude** — use of CDS as one of the tools utilized by a turnaround team that engaged employees in determining priority actions to dramatically reduce the costs of mining oil from the tar sands. The results saved the company and led it from threatened extinction to one of the major players in the world energy sector. (Key focus here was empowering teams and helping them to practice breakthrough innovations.)

**Textron** — use of CDS to create a Continuous Improvement movement (including global leadership development and an internal mentoring system) that helped this Fortune 500 company integrate 44 independent subsidiaries into a collaborative 4 sector business with an internal change leadership team of 100 mentors.

## **Non Profits**

**Peter F. Drucker Canadian Foundation** — use of the CDS to assist in the creation and start-up of this foundation and then to help a large number of non profits in one community quickly build a collaborative plan of action for community development initiatives.

**AfriAfya** — use of the CDS to assist 12 non profits working in the health sector in East Africa to quickly create an action plan for creating a web enabled African Health Network dedicated to support Change Agents concerned with community health. Following that to help them create a pilot online mentoring program for Change Agents.

**Medecin sans Frontieres** — use of CDS to mentor the international president of MSF in his efforts to improve the operating performance and collaborative efforts of the various MSF national movements.

**Education of Future Physicians of Ontario** — use of CDS to help the EFPO group determine learning priorities, develop new products and share them with their members (practising physicians, medical professors, and medical students) who were dedicated to integrating high quality healthcare initiatives and social responsibilities in their communities.

**Council on Health Research for Development** — use of CDS to mentor the senior leadership of this special non profit within the UN system. The intent was to improve the collaboration and performance of their virtual global network including creation of a simple but effective Knowledge Management System.

**Regional Asian Forum on Health Research for Equity in Development** — use of CDS to mentor 350 scientists, government officials and community leaders in 17 countries to create an Asian voice for input into shaping the agenda and operation approach of the International Conference on Health Research for Development in Bangkok in late 2000.

**Food Innovation Network** — use of the CDS to assist a diverse group of senior executives, researchers, educators and sector specialists in food, nutrition, human biology, agriculture and health systems and across the innovation spectrum refine the concept of and proposition to form a national food innovation network. Through a series of progressive electronic and face-to-face dialogue a Food Innovation Network is being launched as — a catalyst to shape the future of agriculture, food, health and well-being through fostering collaborative approaches to food innovation. Ultimately it is envisioned that this will generate health, economic, social and environmental benefits for Canadians. The Network brings together governments, universities, industry and non-government organizations to foster dialogue, develop a shared vision, align resources and take determined action through innovation in food.

**National Dialogue and Growing Innovative Enterprises** — a national Dialogue on the challenge of Growing Globally Competitive Innovative Enterprises. The Dialogue was initiated by a Federal/Provincial/Territorial Task Force as one of many follow-up actions to the recent national consultations and the national summit on innovation. Launched in November 2003, the Dialogue explored the issues surrounding the growth of innovative enterprises in Canada and identifying action initiatives that could support such growth. Over 80 individuals from industry, research centres, academia, government agencies and a variety of support groups for R&D were engaged in an electronic Dialogue.

**Solid Oxide Fuel Cells Canada** — grew from the early recognition of the Western Canada Fuel Cell Initiative for the need to establish a collaborative and inclusive Canada-wide SOFC research network. SOFC representatives from Alberta visited other well organized networks in Ontario, Quebec and the NRC in early 2005, followed by an expanded meeting with interested parties in Quebec. With broad agreement to proceed, ten senior individuals led a *Challenge Dialogue* process, structured and facilitated by the Innovation Expedition, that was designed to engage most of the Canadian SOFC stakeholder community, sponsored by EnergyINet (see above) and the University of Calgary. Their challenge was — *to establish a national network to foster the coordination and funding, on a sustainable basis, of research, development and commercialization of solid oxide fuel cells in Canada, with the goal of serving the world market.* After a process that involved a series of electronic dialogues and two workshops, the participants agreed to establish a formal network to facilitate SOFC R&D and commercialization — from bench research through demonstration and market introduction. This network will be financially supported based on real and measurable progress in an international context. The Network is now formally established and has released its Strategic and Operations Plan in January, 2006.

**Developing a Bioenergy Strategy for Canada** — this national Bioenergy Challenge Dialogue, now in progress. The Champions for this Dialogue include David Layzell, CEO and Research Director of the BIOCAP Canada Foundation and Doug James, Director, Alternate and Renewable Energy, EnergyINet—supported by Champions from a variety of sectors (biotechnology, oil and gas, power generation, biofuels, chemicals, energy from waste, academia, NGO, and government). The current electronic Dialogue is to set the context and the agenda for an action-oriented national workshop on Bioenergy, held in Ottawa in April 2006. After the initial response the Challenge Paper, the Key Challenge accepted at this workshop is — *To align and coalesce the interests of multiple bioenergy initiatives in order to form a comprehensive Canadian strategy that will stimulate the development of an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable and viable bioenergy industry; an industry that supplies 10% of Canada's energy needs by 2012 and 20% by 2020.*

**Northern Interior Vegetation Management Association – NIVMA** — In Alberta, the Challenge Dialogue System was used in the spring of 2005 to help the Northern Interior Vegetation Management Association – NIVMA—Alberta stakeholders assess options for realigning NIVMA's silvicultural objectives more closely with the Alberta forestry setting.

**Canada as an Environmentally Responsible Energy Superpower – EnergyINet Dialogue** - EnergyINet is planning a dialogue which aims to look at Canada's role in the development and support of environmentally responsible energy strategies, covering all aspects of energy and all technologies – hydro, nuclear, bio-energy, SOFC's, hydrogen etc. The aims of this dialogue: (a) to explore and reach alignment on the vision of Canada as an environmentally responsible energy superpower ; (b)to determine strategies for inspiring and supporting various key stakeholders to commit to actions that will help the country achieve this vision; and (c) to determine an appropriate action plan for initiating collaborative efforts to support innovative interventions so that the appropriate corporate innovation strategies, public policies and fiscal regimes will be incorporated into the business plans of industry, research and innovation organizations and government. Dialogue due to start in the fall of 2006.

## Public/Private Partnerships

**Alberta Value Added Agriculture (AVAC)** — use of CDS to mentor the founding Board to develop a strategic action plan, operating principles and a knowledge management system to guide this breakthrough initiative in nurturing innovations in value added agriculture.

**Alberta Science and Research Authority (ASRA)** — use of CDS to mentoring the founding Board to develop its operating principles, its strategic plan and its processes for initiating this breakthrough initiative involving CEOs from the private sector, heads of major research centres and senior government officials and ministers. ASRA not only provides strategic advice to the government, but actually determines the allocation of major strategic investments of public monies.

**Alberta AgSummit** — use of CDS to shape a 5-month dialogue process for transforming the Ag Sector. The process engaged 3,500 Albertans from business, non profits, research groups, educational institutions and government agencies. Ten major themes and 17 strategic issues were identified. Twelve public/private task groups (self organized) were created that then built and implemented action plans dealing with the 17 strategic issues. The Innovation Expedition's public/private team won a *Premier's Award for Excellence*. The department is still advising agriculture ministers from other provincial departments on this Ag Summit process (using CDS).

**Exploring Modern Day Renaissance Cities** — use of CDS to initiate and guide a three-month global scouting party (25 leaders from the Foresight Network in 8 countries) exploring the concept of modern day Renaissance Cities – those communities exhibiting a particular capacity to nurture innovations across their community and to support the new style organizations being created to nurture success in the knowledge economy. A three-month online dialogue was followed by a four-day workshop in Stockholm.

**Global Innovation Network** — This new initiative is using CDS to shape the creation of a global virtual network of influential innovators concerned with collaborative efforts to create breakthrough solutions aimed at nurturing sustainable prosperity and quality of life. The intent of this project is to position Alberta as a “Living Laboratory for Innovations” and to share their results with innovative leaders from at least eight other innovative regions. The intent is to nurture collaboration to create new breakthrough solutions to a number of complex challenges identified by both the Albertan and the global participants.