



TŁIČHŦ ARTISAN AND ARTISTS STRATEGY



Tłıchō Ndek'áowo



Tłıchō Government

Tłchq Artisan and Artists Strategy

Tłchq Region Economic Development Working Group
Client Services Department
Behchokò, NT



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Tłıchq Artisan and Artists Strategy

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Executive Summary



The *Tłjchq Artisan and Artists Strategy* (the Strategy) is a document commissioned by the Tłjchq Government on behalf of the four Tłjchq Communities and the *Tłjchq Regional Economic Development Working Group* (Working Group). The document provides recommendations focusing on how each Tłjchq community, can work independently and together to:

Develop collaborative partnerships in the Tłjchq region for the development of a long term, ongoing framework, and strategic economic development plans that meet client, community, and regional goals and objectives.

Mission Statement of the Terms of Reference of the Working Group states:

A foundational understanding of this project is captured through the framework of two key objectives which state that:

The traditional economy of the Tłjchq First Nation should be maintained and strengthened; and

The Tłjchq First Nation should be economically self-sufficient.

In order to develop strategic recommendations suitable for this initiative, it was essential that the observations of the Tłjchq community and regional leadership be included in the plan. These observations provided context to the activities and approaches recommended herein. As such, a number of interviews were completed, utilizing the knowledge and expertise of a cross-section of Tłjchq representatives from each of the four communities, and the regional leadership. Each of the representatives were contacted in order to collect feedback about the business of traditional Tłjchq Arts and Crafts, and their observations, experiences, and ideas relating to their specific areas of expertise.

It should also be noted that while each of the representatives interviewed play leadership roles in the economic, cultural, and social well-being of the communities, a percentage of the representatives are also personally active in the creation of arts and crafts products and therefore, their shared comments

represent both a professional and personal interest in the overall success of the Strategy. Interviewees for this study, included those working in the following roles (in alphabetical order):

- Business Development Officers;
- Community Directors;
- Community Training and Development/ Tłjchq Government, Project Manager;
- Economic Development Officers;
- Program Development Officers;
- Senior Administration Officers;
- Superintendents and the;
- Online Store Coordinator.

TREDWG would like to thank the participants for their valuable insights, which provided opportunities for further investigation, and the clarification of challenges and opportunities; both helpful in the identification of strategies for success.

In addition to the indicated interviews, information from the *Tłjchq Training and Economic Development Strategy (April 2016)* was referenced, with additional research focusing on Artisan and Artists strategies undertaken by other indigenous communities across Canada and internationally; investigation of products originating with indigenous artisans and crafts people, and some of the unique Arts and Crafts success stories of the north. Research was further supplemented with ideation exercises; and a business approach intended to address challenges specific to the Tłjchq Communities and the unique northern geographies where the Tłjchq people live and work.

It is anticipated that every Tłjchq citizen, regardless of what role they play in the business of traditional Arts and Crafts, is committed to the achievement of positive outcomes through their ongoing support of the industry, and the execution of recommendations identified by the Tłjchq leadership team for implementation.

The draft of the Strategy is intended to be a living document. It is expected that the proposed plan may be: adapted, modified, and/or revised to reflect a changing economy, funding opportunities, existing and future stakeholders, products, communications, training and education, promotion and marketing, staffing and sales channels. Included within the Strategy, is the underlying desire for the Tłjchq people to achieve economic success through self-sufficiency.

The Working Group submits the attached report and recommendations for the review and consideration of the Tłjchq Government, and wish to thank them for the opportunity to participate in this exciting initiative.

Process

The process for compiling information for this report included four distinct phases:

- 1) **Phase One** of this project consisted of gathering information from key individuals living and working in each of the Tłıchq communities, and the Regional Leadership;
- 2) **Phase Two** included grouping together similar types of information into themes, or the creation of Artisan and Artists strategic pillars for actionable planning;
- 3) **Phase Three** consisted of additional research to identify solutions, examples of success, lessons learned, the development of new ideas and activities specific to this plan; and
- 4) **Phase Four** of the project included preparation of the report and following up with previously interviewed Tłıchq representatives, or other individuals whose comments required clarification or additional context for knowledge sharing, and the development of final recommendations appropriate to the lessons learned throughout the previous three phases of the project.

The structure of this report represents key areas of discussion resulting from consultation interviews, additional learnings that were developed in relation to research associated with Arts and Crafts business development, challenges unique to the north and the Tłıchq Communities, Canadian and Indigenous business development success stories, potential business models and commercial business practices that incorporate a variety of platforms and potential solutions.

Brief Environmental Scan:

The Tłıchq communities of Behchokò, Whatì, Gamètì, and Wekweètì have specific challenges, and while not unique to the Tłıchq, or those living in the north, they are unique and highly personal to those affected by them. In comparing the Tłıchq communities* with statistical averages for the overall Northwest Territories*, here is what we know:

Area of Focus*	NWT*	Range for Tłıchq Communities*
Unemployment	10.6 %	19.4 % - 35.3 %
Income	\$ 58,329	\$ 34,406. - \$ 38,536
Graduation Rates	74 %	35.9 % - 45.4 %
NWT Bureau of Statistics		

Similar to other Canadian geographies, Elders born prior to the “baby-boom” years (1946-1964), are passing away at a disproportionate rate, taking with them traditional arts and crafts knowledge.

**Training and Economic Development Strategy – February 2017*



Figure 1 - photo by Pat Kane

However, the Tłıchq Government has made initiatives for the Arts and Crafts industry in the Tłıchq communities, by:

- By reaching out to existing partners to problem solve (Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), Arts, retailers, northern mines, and others);
- Recognizes that artisans should be fairly compensated for the work they do;
- Acknowledge that there is a need to create products that sell well (as evidenced by the collaborative approach to the development of an Artisan and Artists Strategy);
- Acknowledge that an inconsistent inventory of arts and crafts products is a barrier to economic success;
- Develop local capacity;
- Willingness to expand the existing product offerings, and exploring both traditional and new inventory items for sale;

Tłıchq citizens are committed by

- There is a desire to learn more about the successful operation of a traditional arts and crafts business;
- Elders are committed to sharing their traditional skills and knowledge;
- Between 21 – 31 % of current employment in the communities relate to some form of the production and the creation of goods;
- Workshops and mentoring programs have already been established;
- The biggest age group in each of the four communities is a population between the ages of 15-44; a group now in their prime working years; and

According to the *Canadian Council for Indigenous Business (CCAB)** and *EnviroNics Research**, Indigenous self-employment and entrepreneurship in Canada is on the rise. There are more than 37,000 Metis, First Nation and Inuit persons in Canada who have their own businesses - a 65% increase since 1996. The majority (88%) are small businesses, (based on the Industry Canada definition of less than 100 employees). <https://indigenousworks.ca/en/about/business-case-inclusion/increasing-market>

Traditional Tłıchq Arts and Crafts products have long been respected as being: functional, high quality and esthetically pleasing. There are however, opportunities to reinvigorate the industry in the Tłıchq region, with a goal of increasing sales by way of a growing demand for Tłıchq Arts and Crafts products, within and beyond the Northwest Territories.

Like any good business, strategies need to be explored to support sales growth and include: pre-planning, efficient production processes, ongoing communication with key stakeholders, mutually beneficial partnerships, and a more effective purchasing model leading to consistent access to quality and in-demand inventory, and improved promotions, marketing and public relations.

There are a number of indigenous arts and crafts groups in Canada who have been recognized nationally and internationally for their success; and with these success stories come a sense of pride, and encouragement in the work being done by Indigenous peoples, and economic, cultural and social self-sufficiency.

Emerging Themes

12 themes emerged through interviews, research, ideation exercises, and consultation with other organizations these themes include:

- 1) Tłıchq Online Store
- 2) Product Purchasing
- 3) Product Quality/Pricing
- 4) Product Mix/ Inventory
- 5) Materials
- 6) Education
- 7) Distribution/Retail Locations/Places to Showcase
- 8) Marketing and Promotions
- 9) Communication, and Information Sharing
- 10) Potential New Staff Role(s)
- 11) Tourism and Partnerships
- 12) Cooperatives/ Collaboration

One of the areas identified for greater partnership involvement includes initiatives associated with tourism in the Northwest Territories (NWT). While some recommendations relating to tourism activities are included in this report, it is suggested that due to multiple levels of government involvement, associations, funding programs, and various tourism initiatives currently in progress; a more detailed examination be undertaken in this area.

A brief section has been included in this report, addressing Co-operatives versus Collaborations. As there are many types of Co-operatives, with most including significant upfront business development planning, legal fees, business re-organization and structural set-up, as well as the determination of membership fees and rewards; it is recommended that a more in-depth feasibility study would be required. This discovery may be suitable as an addendum to the creation of a business plan.



Figure 2 – Tłjchq Online Store

Recommended Approach:

Arts and Crafts products produced by the Tłjchq are developed by uniquely talented artisans and artists, and/or small groups of individuals working together, and distributed by way of a variety of platforms and individual sales efforts.

While individual efforts to create Tłjchq Arts and Crafts products do provide some economic, cultural, and social rewards, a small business approach does not maximize opportunities consistent with a long-term sustainable self-sufficient economic growth model. However, it is clear, that very specific skill sets are needed to create products, that these skills are respected and honored, and that there is a real desire to maintain the traditional knowledge that supports the sharing of these skills.

It is therefore, essential that business development ideas, include recommendations that support economic and cultural growth, and respect for the culture and skills of the Tłjchq.

In order to better define a sales platform that will be used as the primary distribution point for product that meets the needs of the Tłjchq communities and region, we review here, some of the characteristics that a primary sales platform should include:

- Offers a central distribution point for merchandise that is available to great numbers of people, in the north and south;
- Reduces turnaround time for payment to artists and crafters;
- Provides artists and crafters with a fair and reliable source of income in exchange for consistent in-demand quality product which has been approved for sale by the administrator of the distribution platform;

- Provides shoppers with an assortment of inventory purchasing options;
- Offers a steady supply of inventory for purchase;
- Presents the purchaser with firm product pricing (no discounts unless identified by the administrators of the program as a pre-planned promotion);
- Provides the highest monetary return for time invested by the Tłjchq Art and Crafts sales platform administrators;
- Offers extended hours of operation, without extended hours staffing costs;
- Presents additional Tłjchq information – supporting the development of relationships and awareness of the Tłjchq community, culture and products, therefore increasing engagement with consumers and respect for the Tłjchq Nation;
- Offers administrators and shoppers secure and timely payment for products purchased;
- Displays products for sale in a consistent, attractive setting;
- Offers clear communication to Artists and Crafters about the product-for-payment model, and how it works;
- Removes the marketing/sales burden on artists/crafters who are outstanding artists and crafters, but not necessarily comfortable with selling their merchandise;
- Model is not wholly dependent upon the success of a third-party brick and mortar retailer (thereby, eliminating the risks related to a retail store closing);
- Offers a platform where business activity can be easily recorded and tracked;
- Offers a platform where tracked activity provides knowledge about shoppers, and the ability to potentially reach out to shoppers for future sales;
- Consistently delivers an outstanding experience, so that (over time) support is lent to building the Tłjchq Arts and Crafts brand, and brand expectations; and
- Platforms and processes align with current Canadian shopping trends

Returning to the foundational understanding of this project, and the two key objectives which state that: the traditional economy of the Tłjchq people should be maintained and strengthened; and that the Tłjchq First Nation should be economically self-sufficient; it is recommended that the key to success for the traditional arts and crafts economy of the Tłjchq is the achievement by dependable and ongoing access to an inventory of quality products, through a well-supported primary distribution point for sales items.

It is recommended that the primary distribution point for merchandise be supported by select secondary distribution channels. In other words, establish a primary method of offering products for sale, but explore other organized approaches that also work to support the primary channel.

Ideally, the primary distribution channel will be accessible to vast numbers of people from a variety of geographic regions, and utilizes a method of guaranteed and consistent payment. The primary distribution channel should also offer stakeholders a high degree of confidence in the process on the front-end (for customers), on the back-end for traditional artists and crafters, and for administrators of the primary distribution channel.

According to an April 27th (2017) report from Statistics Canada, retail shopping in Canada is once again down in 8 of the 10 provinces year-over-year. However, retail e-commerce shopping has gone up 27.4% over the same period. This is a considerable increase in online shopping, with continued growth anticipated in the e-commerce sector.

The single channel that offers all of the defined characteristics noted above, is the Tłjchq Online Store.

While designation of the Tłjchq Online Store as the primary sales channel does not limit the acquisition, retention and/or growth of partnerships with external companies, agencies, organizations, and/or individuals; it does suggest that serious consideration be given to the Online Store being utilized as the primary sales channel through which most or all of the Arts and Crafts products be directed for sale.

To ensure the likelihood of success for this sales and distribution channel however, a number of adjustments are required. The recommendations included here, position the Tłjchq Online Store as the central shopping and distribution point for the pooling of talent, and products, and where consistent, quality, attractive, traditional Tłjchq merchandise can be purchased. It is also the hub of activity for sales relating to artists and crafters who can (and should) expect to be fairly compensated for their work, in a timely fashion.



Figure 3 - Tłjchq Online Store

Recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION # 1 - DEVELOP CLEAR MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS:

While a foundational understanding of this project is captured through the framework of two key objectives including, that: *“The traditional economy of the Tłıchq First Nation should be maintained and strengthened”*; and that, *“The Tłıchq First Nation should be economically self-sufficient”* – no clear Mission or Vision Statements have been identified specific to a traditional Artisan and Artists Strategy.

It is highly recommended that key stakeholders work together to define Mission and Vision statements for the Tłıchq Arts and Crafts industry, with specific consideration given to the unique selling proposition (USP) of Tłıchq products. Through the creation of Mission and Vision statements, the Tłıchq leadership can define the path of the business venture moving forward, and in relation to the Tłıchq Governments overall portfolio of products and services. The Mission and Vision statements serve different organizational purposes, and while a Mission statement describes what a company wants to do now, a Vision statement defines what a company wants to be in the future.

To further assist in the creation of these defining statements, a two-column chart is included at the end of this report which defines Mission and Vision Statements.



RECOMMENDATION # 2 - TŁJCHQ ONLINE STORE – UPFRONT ARTIST PAYMENTS:

Comments gathered from participant interviews indicated that the Tłjchq Online Store is well managed, and that the website is functioning well. However, feedback clearly indicated that many artists and crafters are bypassing partnership opportunities with the Online Store as a venue for product distribution due to barriers created by the time-lag between product acceptance for sale at the store, and payment to the artist for product sold.

Currently, artists providing product for sale in the Tłjchq Online Store do so, on a consignment basis. Depending on the actual sale date of the product however, there can literally be months between the date the product is first offered for sale on the website, and the date the product is sold. Adding to the timeline, is the date an artist receives payment, with cheques traditionally being distributed on a monthly basis.

Consequently, it could be three or four months (or more) between the time an item is delivered for sale, posted on the website, sold, and the artist receives payment. Until then however, the artist may not have access to resources to purchase new materials, which can be used to create new products which can then be sold, and provide much needed income.

As the current online consignment model leads to some artists regularly by-passing the Tłjchq Online Store with the artist choosing to sell their products by way of an in-person “quick sale” (often at a reduced price); the momentum of driving traffic to the Online Store is lost. Consequently, the artist may or may not receive a fair price for their product, the Tłjchq Online Store is bypassed as a central distribution point for the purchase of merchandise, and the Tłjchq Online Store never reaches its maximum potential as a sales destination with a fully stocked inventory.

It is therefore recommended that the Tłjchq Online Store have access to a set annual or monthly budget to purchase merchandise from the artists and crafters outright, before the merchandise is posted on the website.

Suggestions for a proposed start-up fund for product purchasing vary between

\$20,000 - \$50,000. It is recommended that the start-up budget be reviewed annually, and ideally decrease each year based on improved processes and self- sustaining growth. While some of those interviewed indicated an overall budget spent at the discretion of the Online Store Purchasing Manager (generic management title only), others indicated that a sum of funds be equally allocated between the four communities for product purchases.

A pre-established purchasing budget will provide the Online Store Product Purchasing Manager with an opportunity to immediately reimburse the artists for their work at a mutually agreed upon purchase price, and ensure that the Online Store has a consistent inventory of product to draw from throughout the year.

New and returning Tłjchq Online Store customers will be offered a wider selection of products to purchase, inventory gaps would be reduced or eliminated, and artists would be paid a negotiated price for their work in a timely fashion.

An additional advantage of access to a pre-established product purchasing budget is an increase in the number of Tłjchq Artists and Crafters selling their products through the Online Store. This lends support to a well-stocked inventory, making this platform more desirable to shoppers. By encouraging purchasers to return to the website on a regular basis, and potentially purchasing additional items, the entire Tłjchq Arts and Crafts community benefits by indirectly cross-promoting each other's efforts, and supporting sales momentum, while recognizing the Tłjchq Online Store as a unique shopping destination.

RECOMMENDATION # 3 - TŁJCHQ ONLINE STORE - ARTIST PAYMENTS - DIRECT DEPOSIT:

In the past approximately 12-24 months, a change was implemented in the payment process for Tłjchq Online Store Artists and Crafters. Previously, cheques were direct deposited into the bank accounts of individual Arts and Crafts artists. In an effort to promote safety and provide a sense of personal security, comments were received from interview participants, indicating a desire to return to the Direct Deposit payment process rather than cash payments.

RECOMMENDATION # 4 - THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRICING AND QUALITY:

Much of the feedback from those interviewed indicated that the Tłjchq product sold online was of high quality, there is however a small percentage of respondents who indicated that the quality should be higher for the prices requested. This is an important observation, as while some businesses sell products on a high-end niche market basis, others sell on a volume basis. Generally speaking, higher prices are assigned to higher quality merchandise however, this can also be a challenging formula, as the tactile experience of both high and low quality items may not be immediately apparent to customers who do not have an opportunity to see, smell or touch the related purchase as it is, portrayed by photograph only.

On an anecdotal level, it is understood that product returns to the Tłjchq Online Store are very low, which is a positive indicator of customer satisfaction. It does not however tell the whole story, as it does not specifically address pricing and quality alone. Some of the factors to be considered include; the cost of return shipping to the customer, time required for the customer to deal with returning a product, and whether the product is being used as a practical application, a gift, or for decorative purposes only.

While no customer information is currently available in association with the relationship between price and quality for Tłjchq products, this is an area which should be tracked on an ongoing basis.

It is also recommended that price and quality should be considerations in payments to artists and crafters supplying the products for sale on the Tłjchq Online Store.

It is recommended that “Quality” and “Price” be areas identified for additional research, along with information providing a better understanding of current and past customers.

RECOMMENDATION # 5 - THE TŁJCHQ ONLINE STORE - WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Plenty! Similar to a website identified as “Bob’s Online Store”, the name alone - “Tłjchq Online Store” - provides little in the way of information about what the store sells, and therefore what people can expect if they follow the link or type in the URL. Further, reference to the “online” aspect of the store is redundant, as the website is the only way to access products for sale on this platform.

Due to the fact that there are no explicit reasons given as to why people should click the link, this could be a missed opportunity, especially for potential shoppers residing outside the north, who may not be familiar with the current online store, or the Tłjchq community.

It is recommended that consideration be given to a name change for the online platform. However, “Tłjchq” remains as an essential component of the name.

Separate from how the online platform is named, consideration should be given to how the online store is positioned. For example, should the online store name be enhanced to read: “Tłjchq Traditional and Contemporary Arts and Crafts”, “Tłjchq Arts and Crafts Gallery”, “Tłjchq Gallery”, or another name?... or should the name be modified, slightly, with a positioning slogan added? A slogan positions the arts and crafts experience that people can expect to find when they go to the website, and is especially important in consideration of future marketing efforts, and in reaching out to affluent customers who may infrequently, if ever, actually travel to the north to purchase products. This means that the website is their primary means of product purchasing.

Here is one name and slogan consideration.

- Name: Tłjchq Gallery
- Slogan: Authentic handcrafted items designed and created by indigenous artists in the Northwest Territories.

While the name and slogan noted above is a suggested sample only, the positioning is intended to support the pride of the Tłjchq people in their history, culture, creativity, and workmanship devoted to the products they produce. The above example also allows “additional room” to accommodate an expanded portfolio of traditional, and contemporary products to the Gallery, which could be added as the demand for specific

inventory evolves. Further, the word “Gallery” speaks to an assortment of products available for sale; and is intended to appeal to a higher end audience with additional financial resources.

RECOMMENDATION # 6 - MAXIMIZE EXISTING PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- 1) A partnership currently exists between the Tłjchq Government and NWT Arts through various funding, promotion, supplier, and information sharing programs. While the support that NWT Arts provides cannot be overstated, it is suggested that a review of existing references to Tłjchq Arts and Crafts be carried out on the NWT Arts website in order to ensure that all opportunities are maximized; a complete list of current artists is included, and photos of work samples, and links to the Tłjchq Online Store are included where available. Further enhancements could be made through the confirmation of updated bios, and unique or specialty skills attributed to individual artists.
- 2) Another partnership area which could be more fully explored is Aurora College’s sewing and traditional arts programs. Interest in the sewing programs appears high, with some of the participants very interested in pursuing contemporary sewing skills to complement their already significant knowledge of traditional sewing skills. Utilizing both traditional and contemporary sewing skills could produce new and creative offerings which benefit the individual creating the item(s), and the community, by increasing demand for products available for purchase on the website. Further, when shoppers are looking for a particular product on the website, they will also be exposed to other products available for purchase.
- 3) In order to maximize partnerships with the artisans and crafters, it is suggested that a list of “Tłjchq Artists/Crafters” be created and updated annually by community Economic Development leaders. A current list would be forwarded to a Tłjchq Online Store representative who would be responsible for managing the list. Individual lists would include the particular specialties of each artist and their willingness to sell their products commercially (or not). Those who are unwilling to sell their products commercially, may or may not be removed from the list, depending on the feedback preference of the Artists/Crafters to the Tłjchq Online Store administrator.
- 4) Additional recommendations to support new partnership opportunities are included later in this document.

RECOMMENDATION # 7 - TŁJCHQ ONLINE STORE – PRODUCT STAMP OF AUTHENTICITY:

While it is recommended that in the next 12-18 months, a full rebranding of the Tłjchq Online Store take place, there are a number of steps which can be taken, before that project begins. A Promotional tag or sticker could be placed on each Tłjchq Online Store item sold, and include reference to the item being an “Authentic Tłjchq product created in the NWT”, as well as the web address. Working with an external vendor, tag designs could be created which are complimentary to the size, colour palette, and primary messaging of the majority of products purchased.

Note: the reference to “authentic” positions products as being genuine, and somewhat exclusive, and having a unique Northern cache. The use of the word “authentic”, also lends credibility to the product not being created in a mass production environment.

RECOMMENDATION # 8 - TŁJCHQ ONLINE STORE - CONSISTENT PACKAGING:

Building the Tłıchq Arts and Crafts brand is in part, about creating expectations in relation to the customer experience, including how products are packaged and shipped. It is recommended that pricing be investigated for collapsible shipping boxes, and protective bags for small items all of which include a prominently displayed Tłıchq Online Store logo.

Having consistent and professional packaging for all purchased items creates a positive impression of the company, builds the Tłıchq Arts and Crafts brand, and protects Online Store products from undue wear and tear during the shipping process. It also creates customer excitement in the opening of a Tłıchq shipped item, and positions orders as “a gift” to the the shopper, even though they may have ordered the item(s) for their own personal use.

While a Thank-you note is traditionally included with each item packed and shipped for delivery, consideration should also be given to design consistency between the product packaging, product tags, product letters and other items representing purchases available from the Tłıchq Online Store.

Additional information relating to the development of the Tłıchq brand is included later in this document.



RECOMMENDATION # 9 - PORTFOLIO OF PRODUCTS FOR SALE AND INVENTORY CHECK:

It was suggested by interview participants that there are a number of popular arts and crafts products that are traditionally well received, but not currently available for sale in the Online Store due to inventory shortages. Some of the products frequently mentioned as having high demand but low availability include; miniatures, as well as actual size drums, snowshoes, moccasins, naturally sourced beauty and relaxation products, paintings, belts, blankets, gloves, mittens, jackets, slippers, and quilts, jacket pulls, luggage tags, passport and business card holders, wraparounds, baby rattles, along with specialty beaded items including jewelry, vests and bags.

Particular interest was expressed in relation to miniatures for tourists looking for souvenirs, but having an unwillingness to spend hundreds of dollars on a single item. Another advantage of small items is that these keepsakes do not take up a great deal of room in a traveler's suitcase.

Enthusiasm was expressed for items such as bracelets, rings, hair accessories, scarves, and even wedding and prom dresses, as well as preserves and teas - and for the holiday season – unique Christmas tree ornaments and Tłjchq specialty decorations.

Additional comments were received in association with a desire to carry products which are contemporary in nature, but made in a traditional way. An example of such products could be cell phone wrappers, lap top bags, and others. Tłjchq artists and crafters may wish to create a small number of sample items, then make them available at the Online Store, and/or events specifically catering to that particular user audience (for example: lined moose-hide laptop bags available at conferences attended by numerous business delegates).

The first step however, is having a clear understanding of product sales: what is being sold, how many, and at what price? Individual tracking of similar products will no doubt provide valuable insights into the demand for specific products and therefore, how the Online Store should be stocked and with which products, and create a benchmark monthly, and year-over-year to track audience preferences.

RECOMMENDATION # 10 - TŁJCHQ ONLINE STORE – SHIPPING COSTS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

For people who purchase items on the Tłjchq Online Store, there is still the matter of shipping fees. In order to keep costs down and reduce barriers to purchase, administrators of the Tłjchq Online Store are encouraged to look for ways to reduce shipping costs where possible, but not set costs so low as to increase the duration of shipping times, and therefore create extended delays in arrival times.

It is recommended that Canada Post and courier services offering shipping to/from the NWT be contacted for discounted rates based on the average number of monthly/ annual products shipped, along with sizes

and weights. A lower negotiated shipping rate could improve the overall cost of item(s) shipped, and also decrease delivery times. This adjustment could lead to higher customer satisfaction, and therefore, an increase in the number of customers returning to the site to purchase additional products.

A further shipping consideration is the use of animal materials when shipping products internationally. For example, according to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Info Centre, “finished items are allowed if they are not made from endangered species”, however, “original art and most items made in Canada are duty free, but if a package is shipped with a commercial courier they may charge a custom paperwork fee”. Additional fees could result in packages being rejected by the customer, unexpected delays and unnecessarily complicated transactions.

It is therefore recommended that should the Online Store choose to actively promote products for sale in the U.S. or beyond, Tłjchq administrators be familiar with the product and shipping requirements prior to the promotion of products for sale.

RECOMMENDATION # 11 - TŁJCHQ ONLINE STORE – TIMING OF PRODUCT PROMOTIONS:

The old business plan formula includes the identification of the “the Four P’s”: product, place, price and promotion. While it is important to maintain a well-balanced inventory of products, at a fair price, which they can be easily accessed; it is also important to maximize sales opportunities that connect specific items with specific audiences. For example: it may not be the wisest use of space to feature full priced snowshoes on the website – in July. Conversely, featured items such as relaxation teas, and bath bombs may be the perfect fit leading up to the Christmas gift giving season, and Mother’s Day. Being attentive to these types of opportunities increase the likelihood of sales, by offering the right products at the right time.

RECOMMENDATION # 12 - TŁJCHQ ONLINE STORE – BUNDLING TŁJCHQ PRODUCTS:

Returning to Recommendation # 11 and the “Four P’s”, it is suggested that consideration be given to the bundling of various Tłjchq products to create packages of similar or related products that appeal to a specific type of shopper.

This is where research relating to online purchase tracking is particularly helpful. It becomes easy to see which products customers are ordering and therefore, which products could be bundled together with some anticipated success.

Traditionally, a small discount is offered to encourage the purchasing of multiple products, but not so much of a discount as to halt sales momentum on products purchased individually.

It is suggested that product bundling may be an option leading up to special holidays, when customers are more likely to purchase multiple items, with a higher overall spend.

RECOMMENDATION # 13 - RETAIL LOCATION:

Significant interest was expressed by interviewees in relation to the creation of a brick and mortar retail location where visitors can purchase Tłıchq items, as well as materials to make finished products. It was also suggested that the retail location include a portion of the floor-space be dedicated to an area where local artisans and crafters could work independently, or as a small group on various products to be sold in either the retail store, or online. While some suggested a small retail location in each community, the overwhelming response referenced a single brick and mortar location in Behchokò; at the Sportsplex or the Community Government offices where staff is onsite throughout the business day.

RECOMMENDATION # 14 - RESEARCH (KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER):

The Tłıchq Online Store has been active for a few years however, little is known about those who actually shop at the Online Store. This includes answering such questions as: where are the majority of customers coming from (geographically), which products are the most popular? How much are shoppers typically spending per visit? What percentage of purchasers are return customers? How old is the average customer? And how are customers landing on the Tłıchq Online Store website – are they accessing from a link located on another site, typing in the URL, etc.

Answers to these questions and others will lead to greater understanding of the existing customers, and just as important, how the Online Store can be better positioned to increase sales with both existing customers, and new customers in order to expand the reach of the Online Store’s overall customer base. While some of this information is easily accessed through monthly Google Analytics reports, an external supplier may be able to provide valuable assistance in the development, distribution and compilation of results relating to a customer survey.

RECOMMENDATION # 15 - MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – KEEP YOUR CUSTOMERS IN THE KNOW:

One of the first steps in building a business – is creating “awareness”. In other words, is the customer aware that your products and/or services exist? If so, the goal is to keep building on this awareness in order to support “interest”, “engagement”, and “product purchase” decision making.



One easy and relatively inexpensive way to increase interaction between the customer and the product supplier is to communicate with customers, in order to keep products top-of-mind, by way of the regular distribution of a newsletter.

While the high cost of advertising makes regular contact with customers challenging, a monthly (opt-in) newsletter becomes much more manageable - if the newsletter is a templated design that supports the overall visual brand, and is full of interesting information that a customer looks forward to receiving and reading.

Newsletters can be issued on a regularly scheduled rotation, and include interesting information about the history of the Tłjchq people, skills, culture and other items of interest – in addition to any special items soon to be available online and/or at upcoming events such as craft fairs, hand-games tournaments, conferences, etc.

The newsletter would be colorfully designed and be as brief as one page. It is also recommended that the newsletter be distributed on a monthly basis, and include a catchy name that references the purpose of the newsletter, relates in some way to the name of the online shopping platform, is easy to read, and for those who do not speak the Tłjchq language, but are potential Tłjchq Online Store customers – easy to understand.

In order to maximize the impact of the newsletter it is recommended that an editorial calendar be created to plan monthly topics 2-3 months in advance, each month, and that special time limited offers are included in the newsletter occasionally. If a customer wishes to take advantage of a special offer, there should be time to think about the purchase, actually purchase the item(s), and have the item(s) packaged, shipped and delivered well in advance of special occasions such as: birthdays, holiday gift giving season, graduations, and other celebratory events.

The monthly newsletter would in no way replace activity currently taking place in other social media forums. The newsletter is simply an inexpensive way to increase interaction with customers, keep them informed about upcoming items on the website, and as a method of encouraging artists and crafters to sell their products through the Tłjchq Online Store - due to the ongoing support they receive through this secondary media platform.



RECOMMENDATION # 16 - AVAILABILITY OF RAW MATERIALS AND TOOLS:

High quality products traditionally begin with high quality materials. However, the regular sourcing of high quality materials is an ongoing challenge. While one of the interviewees indicated that hides and furs are purchased locally from the community wherever possible, they are not always available and materials are regularly accessed from outside the Territory, including Edmonton. Although beaver pelts and moose hides have been donated in the past, this is not a regular occurrence, and a lack of materials ultimately halts the production of items available for purchase across all distribution points.

Unless reliable and ongoing sources of quality materials is found, inventory gaps (and therefore income for residents of the four Tłıchq communities) will continue to be issues.

There are a number of ways to address this issue, for example:

- Establish a Payment-for-Hides-&-Fur-Program, whereby an individual or select group of individuals is financially compensated for preparing locally harvested hides and fur from the freshly skinned state to-the-point of being ready to deliver as raw materials for arts and crafts production.
- While this process may add cost to the item being purchased, there are also a variety of ways this pricing model can be designed.
- One way to address this, is for those preparing the hides to work with the Administrator of the primary distribution platform (the Tłıchq Online Store) to understand more about which products are most in demand (based

- On historical product sales) and deliver pre-cut materials to the store Administrator for distribution to artists and crafters for assembly and finishing.
- Then, either a percentage or specific dollar value is deducted from the sale price of the finished leather product when it is delivered to the primary distribution point (Online Store), where it then becomes available for purchase. The Online Store, then uses the clawed back portion of the material funds to pay for additional materials.
- Those who choose to access raw materials through the pre-cut materials supply chain and bypass the Online Store for merchandise to be sold, would be removed from the program.

In order to share the benefits of a healthy Arts and Crafts business plan with each of the four Tłjchq communities, it is suggested that the pay-for-hides-&-fur program be located in Wekweètì, or Gamètì.

Just as important as accessing the raw materials which go into the finished products, are the tools necessary to make the products. It is suggested that contacting distributors of these tools be approached about money saving bulk purchases, and or other purchasing options such as whole-sale pricing. This could be particularly helpful if reduced pricing can be negotiated, and the savings passed along to individual artists and crafters.

This program may provide additional savings if raw materials such as thread, beads and other items are also purchased from the same suppliers, in addition to the wholesale pricing of any tools purchased.

RECOMMENDATION # 17 - EDUCATION AND WORKING COOPERATIVELY:

Interviews with community and regional representatives indicated a desire to maintain traditional knowledge in a number of areas such as making snowshoes, drums and beading, as well as enhancing these skills with knowledge in other areas, such as:

- Accessing a business license;
- Pricing strategies - fair work for fair price;
- How to run a business;
- Contemporary sewing skills - various “How To” booklets;
- New product development;
- Advertising;
- How to promote your products;

It was also acknowledged that some individuals have outstanding skills in certain areas, but they may not be interested in all areas of products development. In such cases, it is recommended that consideration be given to the creation of mini working co-operatives in order bring together those who may have single or multiple skills which can be used in the creation of certain products.



While individual artists and crafters would in no way be required to participate in a mini-working co-operative, one of the advantages is; that by working together, a higher number of finished products could be achieved in a shorter period of time.

While payment for finished products would be allocated amongst the participants, achieving higher numbers of finished products could offset the time it takes a single individual to complete all aspects of making a single product.

A mini working co-operative could also support a positive social environment, leading to a better work experience, mentoring, increased productivity, and therefore a better selection of product inventory, as well as offer opportunities to share knowledge and techniques relating to the creation of specific products.

Mini working co-operatives are by no means limited to sewing projects and could be applied to the creation of a variety of products.

There are however, a number of considerations to keep in mind with this business model, for instance, what if a person responsible for beading chooses to take a vacation, or out sick that week? If the Tłjchq choose this strategy, consideration should be given to built-in redundancies to ensure that more than one person can immediately step-in to the process to ensure that production doesn't stop and that artists and crafters be compensated according to work delivered.

In order to create a transparent working model for a mini working co-operative, it is suggested that products, projects, materials, pricing, compensation and deadlines be clearly defined before the first production cycle begins. This will ensure that all parties have a clear understanding of expectations, responsibilities and rewards.

RECOMMENDATION # 18 - INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SHARING:

No matter how big, how small, the type of business, or where an organization is located; “communication” is typically identified as one of the top areas for improvement.

In the case of the Tłjchq traditional Artisan and Artists strategy, there are a number of areas where the impact of communications can be felt. For example, there is communication between:

- Artists and crafters
- Artists/crafters and community government
- Community government and regional government
- Regional government and Tłıchq arts and crafts shoppers
- Regional government and GNWT
- Regional government and retail partners

Shared observations to improve ongoing communication, include (in random order) the following:

- The best way to share information is at a public meeting, especially if there is a desire for the organizer to gather feedback;
- Don't hold public meetings on Bingo night;
- People want more encouragement;
- More communication with the artists;
- Regular communication with the artists;
- Create a newsletter for the artists;
- A monthly newsletter to artists, to identify upcoming events;
- Should work to improve communication between artists – work together to mentor and teach skills or just network;
- Need more notice to prepare and create products for upcoming events;
- Feature artists in the newsletter, good for requests that come in for products;
- Communication concern between the communities and regional;
- Be helpful if there was a centralized person in the regional office to handle or support communications;
- Should communicate better so products and programs are not duplicated between communities;
- Make traditional skill "how to" booklets available at government offices;
- Posters in hotels;
- Share information on social media, website and posters;
- Not everyone has a computer or knows how to use one;
- Flyers in the mail for older people;
- Posters in schools for younger people;
- Need to know more about our customers;
- Not enough sharing of ideas on products.

It is recommended that efforts be made to reach out to establish closer working relationships between the artists, the communities and regional offices, and that as a primary sales platform, it would be helpful for the region to share high level web statistics about purchasers and a forward-looking plan in relation to inventory requirements for the upcoming year; recognizing that the addition or cancellation of a single large event can have significant consequences for overall sales figures.

RECOMMENDATION # 19 - MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Investigating a variety of business strategies to increase traditional Arts and Crafts sales, improves the likelihood of success. While pricing, product, and place, are essential areas of consideration, so is promotion as expressed through media and public relations.

It is suggested that a media calendar be created identifying key dates, topics, audiences, and messages. The media calendar would provide media outlets with content worth sharing (with their audiences), and potentially posting on their own websites for additional awareness sharing.

Examples of topics which could warrant a media release include:

- The confirmation to a new business partnership;
- A major enhancement to the website, and how this change it will better serve customers; and
- Promotion of a major fashion show, and what people can expect to see.

It is also recommended that the media and public relations calendar include other categories of activity, such as purchased social media, advertising dates, promotional campaigns, etc.

It is further recommended that a media release template be created to support outgoing releases, and that a boilerplate be created and placed on every release to ensure consistent messaging and overall brand building.

To compliment media and public relations efforts, It is also recommended that a small number of individuals (1-2) be media training and identified as official spokespersons for the Tłıchq Arts and Crafts industry.



RECOMMENDATION # 20 - TOURISM AND OTHER PARTNERSHIPS:

Tourism is a significant contributor to the financial, cultural and social well-being of the Northwest Territories, recording 93,910 visitors, and spending \$167.1 Million in 2015-2016 alone. While it is suggested

that a more detailed study be carried out to explore specific partnerships, here are 16 ideas to begin the process of building partnerships in the area of Tourism.

- 1) Ensure the Tłjchq Online Store has a fully stocked inventory of products available for sale on the website at all times;
- 2) Confirm with NWT Tourism how permission can be granted to include a brochure (or standup card) in each of the Visitor Information Centre's (VIC's) throughout the NWT, including the VIC in Yukon. Brochures or cards, should be appropriately sized and designed in an attractive way so as to appeal to those stopping at the VIC's, while standing out from other brochures and encouraging people to visit the website and or retail location. The website address should be prominently displayed on the card, and be similar in look and feel to other Tłjchq materials such as the tag on items purchased, thank-you letter included with shipped merchandise, and the Tłjchq Online Store website;
- 3) Cross promote the website through small social media budget during key tourism months;
- 4) Contact major tour operators in the NWT focusing primarily on those within a 2-3 hour car/bus ride away from any one of the Tłjchq communities. Discuss with them, the possibility of including Tłjchq communities in their list of stops, and what they require as tourism operators to make visits an outstanding experience for their guests;
- 5) If the communities are too far away or impractical as stops for bus visitors; discuss with tour operators the likelihood of scheduled visitor stops at the Tłjchq Arts and Crafts product retailers partners;
- 6) As a follow-up to number 5 (above), if retail stores will be visited, contact the store owners/operators to discuss potential in-store signage or other ways that Tłjchq products could be more prominently displayed or acknowledged to encourage sales during visitor stops;
- 7) Contact tourism operators on an individual basis requesting that they include a link to the Tłjchq Online Store on their website;
- 8) Approach Yellowknife City Hall to explore the possibility of displaying and selling Tłjchq products onsite (in advance of Indigenous Day, as well as Canada Day 150);
- 9) Contact municipalities located throughout the NWT to discuss bulk pricing for items to be gifted to visiting dignitaries;
- 10) Contact all major associations, unions, mines, and other representative organizations who purchase gifts for their staff, senior management, visiting guests, and their memberships;
- 11) Create a list of all major events including: Annual Gatherings, conventions, conferences, sporting events, concerts (Folk on the Rocks) and other festivals throughout the NWT for the upcoming 12 months. Then contact the organizers to request information about selling Tłjchq products on-site throughout the event, or during key time-periods;
- 12) Attend the NWT's highest attended Arts and Craft shows and sales, and where applicable, arrange and demonstrate the necessary skills onsite;
- 13) Contact the gift shops of major museums (for example: Ottawa, Banff, Winnipeg) to discuss selling products onsite, providing information cards showcasing the website (similar to the VIC's);
- 14) Contact local taxi companies and ask if they have a "recommended retailer" program. (Note: this could be particularly helpful to those travelling to and from the airport);

- 15) Confirm status of retail space at Yellowknife Airport post planned upgrades:
- 16) Contact NWT Film Commission as a supplier of traditional products to be used in upcoming movie shoots, and as a supplier to visiting film crews who may wish to purchase items to remember their “northern adventure” (brochure).

RECOMMENDATION # 21 - BUNDLE PRODUCTS WITH EXTERNAL HOSPITALITY PARTNERS:

In addition to bundling Tłıchq Arts and Crafts products together, there are opportunities to bundle Tłıchq merchandise with the products and services of tourism/ hospitality providers such as B & B's, hotels and motels, as well as on-the-land programs and other cultural experiences.

As it is unlikely that accommodations providers will wish to add extra costs to their room booking rates, it may be appropriate to investigate partnership opportunities with accommodation add-on services, such as convention room bookings, and day-trip providers.

In order to create a bundled package, the cost of products will need to be added to an existing external service, yet, allow the service to remain as attractively as priced as possible. It is therefore recommended that packaged Tłıchq products are small in size and relatively inexpensive.

An example of a bundled package could include booking a spa experience and receiving a complimentary lip balm or other Tłıchq beauty product, or a 3-4 day-trip provider/offering a miniature jacket pull moccasin as a parting gift/thank you to those who participated in the tour. Costs of the miniatures could either be built into the cost of the tour, or products simply offered for sale onsite at the end of the tour.



RECOMMENDATION # 30 - ONSITE SIGNAGE AND POP-UP BANNERS:

Whether promoting Tłjchq Arts and Crafts products onsite at festivals, arts and crafts shows, conferences, sporting activities, museums, or other events, pop-up banners and signage can be used as methods to draw attention to the specific retail location, and create visitor interest and anticipation in the products available for purchase.

Onsite signage and pop-up banners can also be used to funnel or guide traffic towards a specific destination (depending on placement), as well as operating as an attractive backdrop to an otherwise plain or distracting sales environment.

Further, messaging on the signage and pop-up banners can inform potential shoppers of other helpful information such as reinforcing the website address, location of communities, and visually represent a similar look and feel to the product tags, collateral, letters and other branded materials

An area suitable for static signage display includes the highway (both directions) leading to a staging area along Highway #3 near Behchokq. Highway signage could include promotion of a retail location in Behchokq, as well as the online store. Over time, highway signage could be adjusted (based on appropriate sign design) to include promotion of a Visitor Information Centre, conference centre, campground, pool, and wilderness trails.

It is also recommended that the availability of signage could be investigated for the community of Whati (both directions) promoting product availability at the Hotel and Café (if space can be negotiated), as well as a Visitors Information Centre, and museum.

RECOMMENDATION # 23 - STAFFING REQUIREMENTS:

Growth brings change, and with that change, comes the requirement for any organization, including stakeholders in the Tłjchq traditional Arts and Crafts business to revisit available resources.

One of the key considerations for any change, is ensuring the right people are positioned in the right places, with the right skills, at the right time.

Based on the information shared by Tłjchq representatives during interviews, as well as details culled from the Tłjchq Regional Economic Development Working Groups Training and Economic Development Strategy (April 2016), and external research completed on other indigenous businesses, there is a need to focus additional time and attention on new areas of business development.

At this time, we recommend the addition of two new full-time permanent staff members. The duties of the proposed new staff members include dual roles in:

- Communications and Events, and
- Sales and Marketing.

It is recommended that individuals assigned to each of the proposed new roles work closely together to focus on different but complementary areas of business development and support. The two new roles are as follows:

1) Title: Communications and Events Coordinator

Recommended Areas of Focus:

Timing, planning and execution of fashion shows, showcases, and partnerships with festivals, and events. Responsible for web updates, monthly Google Analytics reports, media releases, interviews, political and protocol opportunities in co- operation with Sales and Marketing representative, create and execute monthly

communications calendar, content creation and distribution of monthly newsletters, work with Sales and Marketing and Community Leadership to research and develop product trending reports, work with artists and crafters to share and collect relevant information, update bios, photos, share requirements for tourism opportunities, identify opportunities and challenges, work with Tłjchq Online Store Administrator to determine monthly/annual product inventory requirements, and payment schedule for products.

Representative to speak both English and Tłjchq and be culturally sensitive, good general knowledge of traditional arts and crafts (knowledge not limited to Tłjchq products), while also being open to new product sales options and good basic knowledge of traditional skills and new skill and education requirements.

Working with the Sales and Marketing Coordinator, the Communications and Events Coordinator, would also be able to advocate for funding and support programs on behalf of artists and crafters, Tłjchq Online Store, communities, region and Tłjchq Government.

2) Title: Sales and Marketing Coordinator (1)

Recommended Areas of Focus:

Investigate and negotiate materials, tools suppliers, and bulk purchasing prices, create annual sales and marketing plan with input from Communications and Events Coordinator, oversee inventory levels, manage payment process to artists and crafters, oversee collateral, “Authentically Tłjchq” tags, letters, packaging and inventory of shipping products and pricing discounts, investigate national awards opportunities, overall responsibility for website operation and, oversee research and strategies to increase the acquisition and retention of customers, and, reach out to create potential relationships with tourism operators, museums, hotels, festivals, large employers, others and develop strategies to support increased sales. Working with the Communications and Events Coordinator, the Sales and Marketing Coordinator would also be able to

advocate for funding and support programs on behalf of artists and crafters, the Tłjchq Online Store, communities, region and Tłjchq Government.

RECOMMENDATION # 24 - FASHION SHOW(S):

During the interview phase of strategy development, a number of references were made to an annual Tłjchq Fashion Show. It is recommended that prior to the organization of a fashion show, the Tłjchq senior management team clearly define the purpose of the fashion show. In other words, is the event being used to showcase the skills and craftsmanship of the Tłjchq designers? Is to break into new markets? Or is it to sell clothing?

If the purpose of the fashion show is to sell clothing, then it is recommended that organizers ensure a variety of the items showcased in the fashion show are immediately available for sale onsite following the show (as well as other potentially suitable products for the audience and occasion), ideally in a variety of sizes.

The immediate availability of featured clothing will encourage potential buyers to purchase items while they are enthusiastic about the piece(s), and allow them to complete the transaction. If selling is not permitted onsite immediately after the fashion show, it is recommended that the fashion show attendees be directed to an individual able to take orders, confirm sizing, colours, and other details which can “close the sale”.

It is also recommended that photos of clothing be taken during the fashion show and added soon after to the Tłjchq Online Store indicating that the items are available for purchase. These photos (pending model and designer sign-offs), could also be used in the creation of promotional brochures and other collateral to promote fashion items at museums and other potential high end distribution points.

Should budget permit, it is recommended that a professional Fashion Show Coordinator be hired to manage major shows for the Tłjchq - with the understanding that the contracted individual will also be mentoring a local Tłjchq person to manage future events (suggestion: Communications and Events Coordinator), over a 2-3 year period.

RECOMMENDATION # 25 - BRANDING AND VISUAL STANDARDS:

What is a brand? A brand is the sum total of associations, feelings, attitudes and perceptions related to a company, product or service. It is a relationship with the customer and a promise to deliver a specific set of features, benefits and services. According to McGraw Hill Corporation, customers and external audiences exposed to a strong brand, should be able to answer the following:

- I know who you are;
- I know your company;

- I know your company's products;
- I know what your company stands for; I know your company's customers;
- I know your company's record;
- I know your company's reputation. Why invest in brand building?

A brand is one of the few things a company can own forever. Without patents, insulation or barriers to entry, a company's brand is one of the few assets it can rely on to extract value and enhance margin over time.

A facilitated branding exercise will assist in defining key audiences, how the Tłjchq intends to position the Arts and Crafts industry as part of its overall portfolio of business investments, who its internal and external influencers are, and that all aspects of business operation and experience support that direction.

Many companies who view their brand initiatives in terms of communication or design only, fail to effectively link their branding efforts to the overall business strategy.

Final Observations:

In the process of researching other traditional arts and crafts businesses, interviewing community and regional representatives, and compiling ideas and suggestions from a variety of stakeholders, it is clear that "success" for the Tłjchq Artisan and Artists Strategy can be, and is expressed in a variety of ways.

In some cases, success is described as the positive contribution of programs and education, employment opportunities for young people, continued support for the Tłjchq culture and the sharing of traditions and traditional knowledge. For others, it's the ability to make and sell products that earn revenue for Tłjchq artists and crafters, which can be shared with their families, strengthen communities, and provide for a better future.

Ultimately, the goal is to ensure that all members of the Tłjchq Government, region, and communities are working together to define and execute strategies that support economic, cultural and social growth and self-sufficiency. This is done through: timely and fair compensation for product sales, the on-going availability of quality materials for in-demand products, an unshakeable primary distribution system which is supported by quality relationships with partners and media representatives, and a growing awareness and respect for the Tłjchq people, products and culture. The 25 strategies included here, are intended to support and strengthen all aspects of the traditional arts and crafts business, and encourage forward looking growth that goes beyond Tłjchq people, selling Tłjchq products, to Tłjchq people. The intention of this report is to provide strategies that assist in expanding the awareness and opportunities of a proud northern heritage, while celebrating the skills, economic, social and cultural growth of the Tłjchq Nation.



Appendix- Item A

MISSION STATEMENT

A mission statement talks about how you will get to where you want to be. Defines the purpose and primary objectives related to your customer needs and team values.

It answers the question, “What do we do? What makes us different?”

A mission statement talks about the present leading to its future.

It lists the broad goals for which the organization is formed. Its prime function is internal; to define the key measure or measures of the organization’s success and its prime audience is the leadership, team and stockholders.

Your mission statement may change, but it should still tie back to your core values, customer needs and vision.

What do we do today? For whom do we do it? What is the benefit? In other words, why we do what we do? What? For whom? And why?

Purpose and values of the organization: Who are the organization’s primary “clients” (stakeholders)? What are the responsibilities of the organization towards the clients?

VISION STATEMENT

A vision statement outlines where you want to be. Communicates both the purpose and values of your business.

It answers the question, “Where do we aim to be?”

A vision statement talks about your future.

It lists where you see yourself some years from now. It inspires you to give your best. It shapes your understanding of why you are working here.

As your organization evolves, you might feel tempted to change your vision.

However, mission or vision statements explain your organization’s foundation, so change should be kept to a minimum.

Where do we want to be going forward? When do we want to reach that stage?

How do we want to do it?

Clarity and lack of ambiguity: Describing a bright future (hope); Memorable and engaging expression; realistic aspirations, achievable; alignment with organizational values and culture.

