

in ITALics An Important Pillar

Today, not only is authentic corporate citizenship foundational to successful operations, strategic plans for dealing with issues like employee health, energy conservation and the environment, open the door to real business opportunities and bottom-line savings that contribute to the financial health of the business.

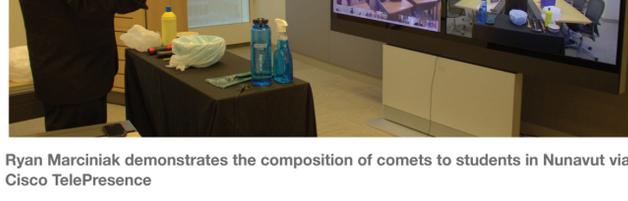
Tata Consulting Services is an excellent example. The IT services arm of one of the world's largest corporations sees social responsibility as a key pillar to its success. As Canadian Country Head Akhilesh Tripathi explains, TCS's decision-making model includes a set of core values that include philanthropy and environmental protection.

Partnerships often play a significant role in helping companies meet their CSR objectives. Lloyd Bryant, Chair of the Electronic Products Recycling Association, explains in this issue how the industry's e-waste industry flagship operation has grown to include 6,400 stewards and more than 1,340 permanent collection sites since its founding in 2011.

Making Connection

For young people in Canada's North, getting a high school education means overcoming more than homework assignments.

The numbers — especially for Aboriginal and Inuit youth — are staggering: the high school dropout rate for Aboriginal teens is about three times that of non-Aboriginal Canadians; 75 percent of Inuit teens do not complete high school; and in Iqaluit, the average student will miss the equivalent of two full years of classes by the time they reach high school.



Ryan Marciniak demonstrates the composition of comets to students in Nunavut via Cisco TelePresence

With economic opportunities growing in the North, Aboriginal and Inuit young people are not showing the educational outcomes they need to take advantage. Even worse, underperformance of young people is exacerbating the serious social problems in Northern communities.

In 2011, Cisco Canada undertook to develop Connected North, a program designed to bring education services to remote, underserved Aboriginal and Inuit communities across the North. The goal was to create a pilot project to study the impact of technology to engage students and increase both attendance and performance.

A longer-term aim was to use the findings of the pilot project to develop a program that would cross numerous schools, provinces and territories to create meaningful change in Aboriginal and Inuit education.

Through consultation with the Conference Board of Canada, Inuit Taparit Kanatami and others, Aqsarniit Middle School in Iqaluit was selected as the location for the pilot, which launched in September 2013.

The focus of the program was on science, where video technology could bridge key gaps, due to the lack of access to classroom labs and the ability to conduct experiments.

To overcome the common challenges of distance and digital bandwidth, Cisco installed four high-definition collaborative video TelePresence units at the school. These enabled users to have face-to-face, immersive and interactive sessions in real time with teachers, experts, museum personnel who guided "virtual field trips" and other students throughout Canada. SSI Micro donated prioritized satellite bandwidth to make it work.

The program's backbone is Partners In Research's Virtual Researchers on Call, which inspires students by taking experts directly into the classroom through two-way video for 5-10-minute sessions, hour-long presentations or semester-long mentorship relationships.

Through the use of TelePresence, students experience live, virtual science demonstrations and lab experiments, eliminating missed opportunities for learning because of the lack of on-site facilities. The program also helped to introduce exciting new methods of learning.

As a result, a York University study of the program reported that 89 percent of students felt that the remote learning experience "made science more enjoyable," and 81 percent said they "learned more in the virtual sessions" than through traditional classroom learning. Teachers reported that the technology represents a fresh approach, exposing students to new people, experiences and ideas.

Acting Locally, Globally

Established in 1968 as a division of Tata Sons Limited, an India-based trading company founded 100 years before that, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) was incorporated in 1995. Since then, the IT services, consulting and business solutions supplier has grown to become one of the world's top 10 technology firms, and part of the Tata Group of companies, which is a global conglomerate comprised of more than 100 operating companies across six continents, operating in multiple business sectors, and in more than 100 countries. Known worldwide, the Tata Group has ownership of well recognized international brands such as Jaguar Land Rover, Tetley and Taj Hotels, to name a few.



Akhilesh Tripathi
Country Head-Canada
Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)

Like its parent company, TCS adheres to a set of core values that includes philanthropy and environmental protection.

In Canada since the 1990s, TCS is focusing on growing a strong cadre of technology workers to meet the demands of the future. We addressed some questions about TCS' Canadian initiatives to Akhilesh Tripathi, Country Head-Canada.

ITAC Online: Clearly, CSR is a big part of the organization's core. What's at the root of that? Why is it so important to the company?

Akhilesh Tripathi: The Tata group's core purpose is to improve the quality of life of the communities it serves globally, through long-term stakeholder value creation based on leadership with trust. Good corporate citizenship is part of the Tata group's DNA. Today, 66 percent of the equity of Tata Sons (the promoter holding company) is held by philanthropic trusts, thereby returning wealth to society. As a result of this unique ownership structure and ethos of serving the community, the Tata name has been respected for more than 140 years and is trusted for its adherence to strong values and business ethics.

Established in 1968 and now building on more than 40 years, TCS' promise of 'Experience certainty' means that people can count on results, partnership and leadership as the company's mission is to reflect the Tata Group's longstanding commitment to providing excellence both in the marketplace and in the communities it serves.

How does the company determine where to focus its attention?

The core areas for TCS' CSR programs are: Health – Nutrition & Wellness, Education – STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) Awareness & Literacy and Planet – Environmental Citizenship

Here in Canada, what is TCS focusing on?

TCS has a 20-year history of operating in Canada, and is ranked among the top 10 largest IT Service Providers in Canada. STEM awareness is the main focus for TCS' CSR programs in Canada, as it supports and leverages one of TCS' core competencies as a company – innovative technology services and solutions.

Today, Canada struggles with an acute shortage of information, communications and technology (ICT) skills and leading companies from coast-to-coast have been contending with this issue. In addition, Canada also currently faces serious challenges filling the multitude of ICT jobs opening up in the coming years. Some relevant statistics:

- according to Canada's Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC), Canada will struggle to fill the more than 106,000 IT jobs projected to open up by 2016;
- Ryerson University's Rogers School of Business Management estimates there is a current skill gap of 78,000 workers;
- 75 percent of students and educators report a moderate to major gap in their ability to meet the demands of the market. (Source: Fast track to the Future, IBM);
- according to the Conference Board of Canada, a shortage of more than one million skilled workers is forecasted by 2020, with an estimated 40 percent of all new jobs in the skilled trades and technology industries; and
- the economic impact to the Canadian economy of not filling these ICT positions that will open up is projected to be between \$15 to \$21 billion.

To help address this pressing issue, TCS has designed a student technology awareness program named goIT, and this program is one of the ways that TCS is working to be part of finding solutions to Canada's skills gap. goIT is a key TCS initiative to inspire interest and excite passion for STEM and reach students at the stage they start making career choices. Over the last couple of years, TCS has been working with Canada's Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC) to develop an innovative program to spark interest among Canada's grade 8-9 students to pursue careers in the STEM fields.

In Canada, the projection of participation rates of young people in IT programs at the secondary and post-secondary levels is pretty distressing. Does TCS have specific targets of what goIT what be able to accomplish here, and how it can help turn around the current trends?

Youth are not choosing ICT careers as they do not view them as fun, viable or profitable; they are also unaware of the plethora of opportunities available in ICT. TCS' goIT program intends to spark that interest and get Canadian students engaged in project-based learning that is appealing and utilizes engineering, creative and innovative learning skills. This experience will supplement the teachers' existing curricula, supporting core skills and capabilities and providing additional inspiration in the classroom.

The program will be initially rolled out to 10 schools within the Greater Toronto area starting this 2014-15 school year, targeting more than 1,000 students, with the intent to expand to more school boards and regions across Canada. In this pilot year, the program will be led by TCS professionals and will involve multiple in-school workshops throughout the entire school season on some of the latest technology topics, such as designing mobile apps and programming robots.

By working with educational partners, such as ICTC and strategically engaging Canada's various school boards, TCS aspires to create an open platform/ecosystem that can bring together industry/academia/government to collectively raise awareness about STEM career opportunities, improve employability of future STEM workers and create new STEM talent. TCS aspires to help build a stronger pipeline of future talent and more employable STEM professionals for Canada.

Device Diversion

In the workplace or at home, there are few things as invigorating as the arrival of new electronics. And yet, as full of promise as a new laptop, smart phone or tablet device is, there is always a moment of reflection as you unplug your old machine and consider what to do with it. Fortunately, if your machine is at the end of its useful life, the Electronic Products Recycling Association (EPRA) is able to provide safe and secure recycling; easing your concerns and protecting our environment.

In fact, taking care of the environment is one of the pillars of corporate social responsibility. As electronics abound, the importance of the EPRA service in taking appropriate care of our electronic waste also becomes increasingly valuable.

Now serving close to 90 percent of Canadians across eight provinces coast to coast, EPRA is our industry's flagship entity to provide accessible options for responsible recycling of unwanted end-of-life electronics. As an industry-led and voluntary initiative, EPRA administers a rigorous recycling standard that prevents the illegal export of electronic waste and ensures adherence to environmental, health, safety, and data security criteria.

"We have significantly expanded our program and our capability to deliver an effective, cost-efficient and environmentally-responsible electronics recycling program," says Lloyd Bryant, chair of EPRA's board of directors and ITAC's vice-chair. ITAC has been a long-standing supporter of industry-led environmental stewardship for our products.

The overall expansion of the EPRA programs and greater program efficiency and effectiveness benefit both electronics consumers and stewards. Businesses and individuals have more access to recycling programs and drop-off locations. Stewards are supported in their regulatory compliance responsibility, a task made easier for them with the roll out of a national registration, reporting and remitting (3R) program. Businesses — large and small — looking to bolster the environmental component of their commitment to corporate social responsibility now have an easier way to comply with provincial regulations, a guarantee of improved data security, and support from a bilingual steward services team.

Lloyd points to EPRA's achievement of registering 6,400 stewards and certifying more than 1,340 permanent collection sites as an example of the organization's rapid growth since its 2011 founding.

Almost 500,000 tonnes of electronic waste — representing millions of devices — have been diverted since Canada's first industry-led and regulated electronics recycling programs started in 2007.

In the past year, EPRA doubled the number of provinces in which it operates regulated programs, launched websites related to its eight provincial programs, and increased its education and awareness initiatives. One of the major educational initiatives was the development of a video, targeted to consumers, that explains *what happens to end-of-life electronics* after they are dropped off at an EPRA collection site. This video can be viewed on the eprasociation.ca website. Also launching this fall is EPRA's new education and awareness campaign that encourages the public to "Extend Nature's Warranty. Recycle Your Electronics." The advertising reinforces the fact that "technology advances fast, but we only have one earth" and "committing to our planet's future, means properly recycling our electronics of the past."

Together, by returning our end-of-life electronics to an approved EPRA drop-off location, we are helping to make sure that using and enjoying electronics of today includes responsibly recycling them for a cleaner tomorrow.



Committing to our planet's future means properly recycling our electronics of the past. That's why the EPRA, an industry-led not-for-profit organization, works to keep 100,000 metric tonnes of end-of-life electronics out of landfills each year through convenient and regulated e-recycling programs. Technology advances fast, but we only get one earth.

Learn more and find out what you can recycle and where, at: recycleMyElectronics.ca

epra.ca

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