

Submission Document for the consideration of

# Bayside Centre

For the  
Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce  
25th Anniversary Outstanding Business Achievement Awards  
Customer Service, Large Business  
2014





"Customer Service is not a department it's an attitude."

- Unknown

A common quote, unable to be traced back to its originator, but a fantastic guiding principle that Mike Service, General Manager of the Bayside Centre claims has guided his actions over the years and it shows. Customer Service begins with the *internal* customers, the team members. Mike maintains that management must show the same respect towards the team that we are encouraged to show our customers. This creates a culture of pride and accountability leading to team members consistently performing beyond expectations of both management AND the customer. When every employee believes their actions have an impact, a sense of ownership develops and a "customer first" frame of mind emerges transforming the interactions between everyone that comes in contact with the team into positive experiences.

Attitudes are contagious. Are yours worth catching?

- Dennis and Wendy Mannerling

The key is feeding the positive attitudes of both team members and customers by delivering value, nurturing pride and building relationships with a foundation of trust and respect. When positive attitudes prevail everyone's frame of mind shifts from how it won't work, to how can we make it work best.

**The formula can be broken down simply:**

**Address customers' needs in a timely manner + Execute the solution on schedule = Relationship**

These four easy management objectives can help transform the customer - supplier relationship:

Everyone feels they are a valuable team member.

Everyone is proud of where they work and the job they perform.

Everyone feels their input and observations are not only listened to but utilized.

Everyone knows how their actions impact the company and the lives of our customers.





Bayside Centre is a business with multiple layers of clients (owners, investors, tenants and their customers) Developing, maintaining and spreading positive attitudes becomes even more important as it trickles down the lines of communication to the community. If customer service is approached with a "Pay it forward" frame of mind, the stage is set in advance and we are prepared to build positive relationships within all layers.

### [Bayside Team Members Go Above and Beyond...](#)

It is difficult to identify specific examples of actions that shine above the rest. Our team's actions viewed by someone else might very well seem "above and beyond" but we see it as the way things are done every day. Everyone who steps into the Bayside Centre is our guest and is treated with the respect and concern we would afford a guest in our own home.

We are however extremely proud of the transformation our team has achieved in just little over one year. In December of 2012 The Bayside Mall Ltd went into receivership. The receiver awarded Larlyn Property Management Ltd. ("Larlyn") the contract of managing the mall. It was a difficult time. Even though all staff was retained during this transition, it was the FIFTH manager in as many years. Needless to say morale was at an all-time low for the team and the tenants as well. Working at Bayside mall was not a source of pride but one of survival producing little more than a paycheque. Larlyn's task was monumental; repairing a neglected building, motivating a neglected staff and increasing traffic for neglected tenants. But this is where we shine!

Using a combination of sound human resource tools and operating procedures, the staff were given the proper tools and training to perform their job well and learned quickly that they were a valued team member. This gave birth to a new energy and purpose. Upon completion of this monumental first step the team was reintroduced to the building. The challenge was given to turn this Centre from a lump of coal to a diamond of customer service with specific attention given to correcting maintenance deficiencies. The team was now empowered and held accountable for our respective departments with the first seeds of pride firmly planted. When important systems were repaired and began to come back into service the tenants and visitors noticed the changes. This fostered a new respect for the staff and transformed daily interactions between the team and all layers of



customers we came into contact with. Positive attitudes developed and Customer Service was re-born.

It started with the little things... tidying, cleaning and repairing BEFORE our clients and their clients notice. The safety and comfort of all layers of our guests became the focus and this contagious positive attitude spread throughout our work place. Before long we started to notice the visitors telling other visitors to pick up their garbage or to use the handle when entering the door instead of the glass. With a community of respect developing, the path to consistent customer service that goes above and beyond became the norm, not the exception. Now the mindset is "whatever is not impossible must occur." This team will descend a ladder to open a door for a visitor. They will work tirelessly until systems or deficiencies are corrected and all while offering a warm smile and "may I help" to anyone that requires assistance. There are so many occasions throughout the workday that pride overwhelms me as I witness our team interact with the visitors and tenants. The stance of every employee is standing tall and straight with their pride spreading to their next interaction. We all have to work, but if you respect what you do and who you do it for, life becomes an adventure and just going through the motions no longer seems acceptable.

### Recognizing the past but refusing to dwell or make excuses

Bayside Centre, formerly Bayside Mall going all the way back to the days when it was called the Sarnia Eaton's Mall has a history rich in variety. The 60's saw downtown Sarnia as a trendy place to shop but due to suburban growth and construction of the Lambton Mall in 1978 the core area was experiencing economic decline - sound familiar? The strategy during the 80's of the original anchor department store, Eaton's was to partner with urban core centres in Ontario's smaller cities with population under 100,000. This was the perfect answer to Sarnia's Downtown Revitalization. Eaton's featured 3 levels connected by escalators and an elevator with access to underground parking. Lochiel Street was cut in half making way for a grand entrance on Christina Street opening to an indoor intersection featuring a gorgeous fountain, clock with bells and several ways to reach parking and the food court. Besides Eaton's, the other major tenant was the A&P Supermarket and an adjacent Cineplex Odeon movie theatre with 3 screens.



However, Eaton's strategy of targeting smaller cities was unsuccessful and they failed to adjust to new competition in the Canadian retail market, notably when the discount-store behemoth Wal-Mart entered the scene. The retailer's losses and bankruptcy in the '90s was the turning point for the Sarnia Eaton Mall, which counted upon Eaton's to stay much longer than it was able. After Eaton's left, the shopping centre was renamed Bayside Mall after the Sarnia Bay it neighbored. But the adjacent movie theatre and the A&P supermarket closed down a few years later, leaving the mall without an anchor. Eventually the entire department store was converted to government offices, bringing an end to the stylish facade on Christina Street leaving only a shadow of its former glory.

### [At the heart of Sarnia's Downtown Revitalization](#)

As Mike Service continues to illustrate daily, attitude is everything. He believes it is a community that lives, dies or thrives TOGETHER in today's post-recession localized economy.

According to the City of Sarnia's Official Plan, "the revitalization of downtown Sarnia as the most significant social, cultural and entertainment centre of Lambton County" is supported. The viability of the downtown depends on continued efforts that provide a mix of residential, institutional and community activities to meet local, regional and tourist needs. Bayside Centre, bordered by Christina, George, Vidal and Cromwell Streets represents approximately 20% of the land mass in the 4 main blocks of Sarnia's downtown core. We believe that Bayside Centre has a responsibility AND capability to play a vital roll in Sarnia's current Downtown Revitalization.

The area with such a diversity of uses already has so much to offer including the Theatre, Art Gallery, Museum, Library, beautiful waterfront parks, unique shops and restaurants, as well as transit connectivity. Not only is it a government hub and employment centre, it's an entertainment district waiting to explode! Under the proper marketing and management program, we would like to position Bayside Centre as a Public Services and Corporate Business Centre. With a contagious, positive attitude, customer service that businesses will brag about and a little creativity, Bayside will be at the centre of it all – a coveted place to do business. We truly believe and already see it starting to unfold.



## It takes a village to raise a business ...

The influx of working population to the area will increase traffic to the local businesses during business hours but with the addition of hosting local events during nontraditional business hours, the traffic will come to work downtown in the day and stay to play. We have demonstrated how the mall can be utilized by the community with these recent examples:

- Big Sisters Show & Sell with record attendance
- News Year's Eve Party warming station and parking venue
- RayJon Eyeglass donation drop off centre
- Jingle Bell Walk - an annual event for children to collect donations for the Inn of The Good Sheppard
- 1 Billion Rising, Rage Against Violence
- Rotary Annual Book Sale
- Business After Five - with participation offered to all downtown businesses
- New 24/7 access to parking for downtown residential population

We are always willing to discuss what the Centre can offer organizations wanting to host successful, well attended events. Bayside Centre's participation in the community will help in the process of breathing new life into the downtown and waterfront area with a domino effect of decreased vacancy rates, increased business and employment in a desirable location for both the residential and business communities.

"The goal is to have Customer Service  
that is not just the best but legendary."

- Sam Walton

In the words of Larlyn Property Management Ltd., we are "continually raising the bar for customer service." I look forward to reading tomorrow's history where the Bayside Centre and its **legendary customer service** will be mentioned as a driving factor of restoring Sarnia's downtown to a trendy, desirable place to work, play, shop, dine, heal and connect. We have been asked how we stand out among our competition but again, that is another difficult question. Like a successful marathon runner we do not focus on those building their success around us but instead how we can improve the experiences and build the success of our customers and their customers.



I like to consider Bayside Centre in a category of one with the only true competition being ourselves. We strive every day to be better than we were the day before, to improve attitudes, surpass expectations and develop deeper relationships with those around us. Property and facility management is about listening to our current and prospective clients, understanding their challenges and offering solutions and assisting with the implementation. If we work every day to help achieve the goals of our clients, our own goals will naturally be met.

### But don't take OUR word for it ...

We are humbled to share some of the words of our clients as examples of the impact the members of the Bayside Centre team have made on their business and, in turn, their attitude illustrating once again how a positive attitude can be “caught” and spread throughout our building and community.

*“I wanted to take a moment to provide some feedback regarding the changes that I have witnessed in the past year with the overall atmosphere in the Mall. First and foremost your staff; this is truly the most impressive change. They are the best support team I have ever worked with. They are helpful, positive, responsive and a pleasure to work with. There have been many times when I have asked for assistance and within a blink of an eye by problem has not only been recognized but resolved!*

*The Mall environment has a new feeling of purpose and energy that has not been present for a long time. It is such a pleasure to come to work each day to an extremely clean (parking garage included) common area.*

*PS - the music is another nice touch!*

*You and your team deserve a lot of recognition for the many positive improvements that have made the Bayside Mall a more inviting place to work! Thanks from the team at Sun Media for all you do for us, we appreciate you.”*

Jennifer Calvert, Director  
Sarnia Sales & Service Centre



*"This past year we found ourselves in the position of not having a location for our 41st annual Big Sister Show and Sale. Sarnia Collegiate, our location for the event for the past 7 years was not available due to a major school event. We were extremely fortunate to approach Bayside Centre as a possible location and they agreed to host this major fund-raising event for us and since our agency is a charity they agreed to host it for free.*

*Mike Service and all of the staff at Bayside Centre did everything they could to assist us in making this event by far the best this agency has ever hosted. Relocating to Bayside resulted in a sellout of vender space and a significant increase in the number of patrons (47% higher than in 2012) that visited the show over the two days that it ran.*

*Since then we have had the pleasure of working with Mike and his staff again. I can't say enough about how well they took care of us and all of our needs for both of these events. We hope to continue to work with them in the future.*

*In our opinion Bayside Centre should be chosen as this year's recipient of a Sarnia-Lambton Chamber of Commerce OBA Award "Best Customer Service" Large Business category. "*

Michael Hurry, Executive Director  
Big Brothers Big Sisters

*"Thank you for the great help you have been this past year letting us have the units both to sort our books and then have our Book Sale. We certainly appreciate all the Mall does with your Maintenance and Security men. They have been extremely helpful to us.*

*Our Book Sale was an enormous success. With the help of all our supporters we are able to generously continue our projects in the Community like the ongoing Flag Project at the Bluewater Bridge and to begin our newest project the Memorial Garden at Newton Park. We also can support Rotary International in the ongoing race to eradicate Polio, help in a global disaster with our Shelter Tents and water filtration kits.*

*Again our sincere thanks to you."*

Nancy Dease, Secretary  
Rotary Club of Sarnia Bluewaterland





*"I would like to share how very pleased we are with the service by Mr. Mike Service, Mall Manager here at Bayside Mall. He is always there for you and never hesitates to go out of his way to find a solution and to address any kind of problems faced by the tenants.*

*I have been a tenant at this mall since the year 2000. Ever since Mr. Service became the Manager the property has become spotlessly clean and the attitude of the entire staff has become very friendly and helpful. The security at the mall has also taken a good turn. He is also very friendly and courteous to the customers and is very open to suggestions and recommendations of the customers.*

*We see more life and activities ever since Mr. Service took over. He has improved traffic in the mall by having different events. He took the cake when he brought in the annual Business After Five event to the mall. He achieved maximum turnout for the event. The Big Sisters Sale was also a very successful event.*

*As a result of Mike Service's efforts and dedication the mall has shown a big increase in the flow of customers. Increased events held in the mall have greatly helped out the businesses. Proof is in the increase in sales at our store.*

*Mr. Service has proven himself to be a top notch manager. Larlyn Property Management made the right choice in hiring him for this job. In one year he has turned our business around and the mall."*

Kalwant Mamak  
Mini Accessories

*"On behalf of the Corporation of the City of Sarnia and the Centennial Celebration Committee, we would like to thank you for helping make the New Year's Eve Party event a tremendous success! It was an incredible kick-off to the City's Centennial Year.*

*The successful community event would not have been possible without the patience and co-operation of our downtown businesses and residents for which we are grateful."*

Mike Bradley, Mayor of Sarnia  
Liz Kenny, Chairperson, Sarnia Centennial Celebration Committee



No father, using only his own resources,  
would be able to bring up a child."

- Leo Tolstoy

As proud as we are of what we provide for our customers, we are part of a larger team. Bayside Centre would like to give credit to the Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce for the part it has played in our transformation. The multiple workshops and seminars offered through the Chamber allowed our team to renew and refresh their skill sets – part of a valuable collection of tools required to transform the Bayside Centre into what it is today and help to envision what it can become tomorrow. We believe that, as in life, it is not what is handed to you, but what you can accomplish from the tools at your disposal that matters. The Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce provides these tools and more for all of its members and we recognize the valuable role they play in the local community and its economy.

Thank you for your support in our quest to be legendary and for the opportunity to share our success and our vision with our community during this exciting year for the Sarnia-Lambton Chamber of Commerce celebrating 25 years for the Outstanding Business Achievement awards and over one hundred years of outstanding business support.

Mike Service, B.Com (Hons), on behalf of the Staff at Bayside Centre  
*General Manager*

**Bayside Centre**, Professionally managed by Larlyn Property Management Ltd.  
150 North Christina Street | Sarnia, ON N7T 7W5  
Direct (519) 336-6012 | Fax (519) 336-6774  
mservice@larlyn.com | www.baysidecentre.ca