About BBB
A trusted source of information in the region for nearly 60 years, your BBB Serving Southern Alberta and East Kootenay is a non-profit, non-government organization dedicated to fostering a marketplace where buyers and sellers trust each other.
Funded primarily through our Accredited Businesses, your BBB offers numerous free services including our robust website, consumer education program, dispute resolution services and more.

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On behalf of the Board of Directors of your Better Business Bureau Serving Southern Alberta and East Kootenay, welcome to the 2013-2014 Annual Report. BBB is currently in its 102nd year of advancing marketplace trust, with your local BBB celebrating 59 years of community service.

Led by President and CEO, Sandra Crozier-McKee, our team of hardworking staff, volunteers, and community partners work together towards achieving BBB’s mission to be the leader in advancing marketplace trust.

How do we advance marketplace trust? BBB’s values of excellence, integrity, teamwork, trust and respect are a solid framework for our Standards for Trust, which are:

- Build trust
- Advertise honestly
- Tell the truth
- Be transparent
- Honour promises
- Be responsive
- Safeguard privacy
- Embody integrity

BBB was built upon these pillars of trust. These guiding principles allow BBB to foster a trustworthy business community, promote, and support honest business practices and honour marketplace role models, while denouncing substandard marketplace behaviour.

Today, more than 50,000 companies do business within our service area and your BBB provides more than 1.2 million instances of service each year. Thank you for choosing BBB as your source for objective, unbiased and trustworthy marketplace information. We look forward to another year of bringing the community closer to BBB’s vision of an ethical marketplace where buyers and sellers can trust each other.

David Steele, Chairman
Board of Directors
THE YEAR IN REVIEW

with President & CEO Sandra Crozier-McKee

When the waters receded, we joined those same people on the front lines.

Our 2013-2014 fiscal year has been filled with challenges as well as celebration. From the frontlines of the devastating 2013 floods to reaching an important milestone with our Accredited Businesses to expanding our own BBB family, this year has been one of our most rewarding yet.

When the destructive flood waters ripped through the communities of Southern Alberta, BBB joined the businesses, consumers and citizens on the sidelines, silently watching their homes, businesses and dreams being washed away. But, when the dust settled and the waters receded, BBB joined those same people on the frontlines of the road to recovery.

Armed with more than 4,000 storm-chaser flyers, our BBB-Bandwagon filled with food, water, music and information, your BBB hit the streets of Calgary and High River. We also attended multiple post-flood citizen information sessions, including the Bowness Community Centre, Christ Church in Elbow Park and one at the Sunnyside Community Centre, to help answer questions and guide residents through their flood recovery journey.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that our work during the 2013 floods earned your BBB the Outstanding Bureau Award from the Council of Better Business Bureaus in the Outreach category.

It was also a year of growth as we welcomed two Vice Presidents: Director of Marketing and Communications Camie Leard was promoted to VP of that department, and we welcomed Shane Strebchuck as our new VP of Operations.

Together, we reached an important milestone in that we now represent more than 4,000 Accredited Businesses who share and operate according to BBB’s values and Standards for Trust throughout the Southern Alberta and East Kootenay service area.

As we look forward to another successful and active year, BBB would like to thank its team of committed staff, volunteers, Board of Directors and Accredited Businesses who continually work to advance marketplace trust and strive to establish BBB’s vision of creating an ethical marketplace where buyers and sellers can trust each other. Together we look forward to providing businesses, consumers and the community with relevant, timely and trustworthy marketplace information.
This past fiscal year saw a tremendous amount of change within the Business Relations department, which is now known as Accreditation Services. We are pleased to say the changes have been positive.

For one, our consistently professional approach in inviting prospective businesses to apply for accreditation resulted in a milestone achievement of now having more than 4,000 Accredited Businesses in our service area. 697 of those Accredited Businesses were welcomed in 2013-2014.

With a new department name came the promotion of former Accreditation Services Manager, Frank Guido, who became Vice President of Operations. Taking his place was Margaret McKaig, former Accreditation Services Consultant.

Our team of Accreditation Consultants operates as a cohesive unit to seek out ethical businesses that share and operate in compliance with BBB’s core values, which include: excellence, integrity, teamwork, trust and respect. Our consultants also gather relevant information about prospective candidates including licensing, time in business, history of complaints and other factors that determine eligibility. Together, the team educates businesses about ethics, the accreditation application process and how to become a part of BBB’s family.

As usual, our team regularly attends trade shows in the Calgary, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat areas. These trade shows help consumers and business owners of the southern Alberta community put a face to the name behind the phone calls and provide a platform for face-to-face engagement, increasing visibility and sharing of objective and trustworthy marketplace information.

We’ve continued production of our printed bi-annual consumer guide directory, Trusted, which features more than 2,000 Accredited Businesses each issue. Distributed via The Calgary Herald, The Calgary Sun and 450 Calgary newsstands, we are providing nearly 160,000 consumers with another resource to find trustworthy businesses.

Your Accreditation Services team expresses its sincere gratitude to our Accredited Businesses and prospective businesses for contributing to and living our vision of creating an ethical marketplace where buyers and sellers can trust each other. BBB looks forward to another successful year of advancing marketplace trust and reaching more than 1.2 million people in the Southern Alberta and East Kootenay region.

Interested in accreditation? Call (403) 531-8784.
ACCREDITED BUSINESS SERVICES
Helping businesses drive their accreditation on the road to ethical enterprise

Our Accredited Business Services (ABS) team is responsible for taking care of our newly Accredited Businesses. Once a business is granted accreditation, they are provided with the support they need to successfully maximize their accreditation benefits to their full potential, as well as receive customer service throughout their accreditation journey.

With a steady retention rate of approximately 88 per cent, your BBB’s ABS team regularly performs in the top percentile of all mid-sized North American BBBs. Factors contributing to our success include a strong brand in our marketplace, great Accredited Business benefits like discounts on credit card processing, insurance, employee benefits and more as well as some great advertising opportunities offered only to accredited businesses, including:

- Trusted publication twice per year to 160,000 consumers
- Featured listings on our popular website
- Google Adwords program through special relationship with Google

ABS continues to offer its 30-day follow up with newly Accredited Businesses as well as its ad-review service to ensure a smooth start to their BBB-Accreditation experience.

Our ABS team also ensures Accredited Businesses continually uphold their commitment to ethical enterprise and maintaining alignment with BBB’s Standards for Trust which include:

- Build trust
- Advertise honestly
- Tell the truth
- Be transparent
- Honour promises
- Be responsive
- Safeguard privacy
- Embody integrity

Each year these and other ethical businesses within the Southern Alberta and East Kootenay area are honoured through our Business Ethics Awards, now known as our Torch Awards for Business Ethics held in both Lethbridge and Calgary.

Each day your ABS team continues its pursuit of advancing marketplace trust by developing and implementing services to better assist new and existing Accredited Businesses. We thank all of our Accredited Businesses for their interest, dedication and support of ethical enterprise and value-based service in our community.

Are you getting the most out of your accreditation?

Shine Online with Search Engine Solution
For just $200/month, harness the power of the BBB’s exclusive partnership with Google to put your business’ name near the top of your customers’ search results.

Rise to the Top with Featured Listings
For only $75/month, bring your business to the top of the list where an average of 100,000 consumers look for trusted businesses every month.
BBB rang in the new fiscal last April year with a new addition to its family, a Director of Marketing of Communications, Camie Leard, marking the first time your BBB invested in a senior-level marketing and communications position to effectively build the brand throughout Southern Alberta and East Kootenay.

With a limited marketing budget, the new plan had to use resources carefully and focus on low-cost/high-impact strategies like media relations, partnerships, community outreach and other grassroots activities while achieving the goal of growing the brand and awareness in the region.

**The Plan**

- A robust media relations plan that saw the addition of a communications coordinator to help execute the plan
- Digital marketing including the launch of a new website and a much-expanded social media program
- A community outreach program that saw the addition of a community relations coordinator to help execute the plan
- A partner development plan to help leverage the support of like-minded organizations
- Development of Key Performance Indicators and baseline measurements of success

**The Results**

- Nearly 29 million media impressions through more than 200 media stories
- The launch of the new system-wide BBB website
- A 64 per cent increase in Facebook likes and increased Twitter following
- 1,082,400 website visits with 2,829,434 page views
- 37 speaking engagements and community events reaching about 1850 people
- Attendance at tradeshows in Cranbrook, Cochrane, Medicine Hat and Calgary
- Working relationships with organizations like:
  - Bank of Canada
  - The Electronic Recycling Association
  - The R.C.M.P.
  - The Medicine Hat and Lethbridge Regional Police Services
  - The Calgary Police Service
  - The Alberta Motor Association
  - The Alberta Securities Commission
  - The Alberta Community Crime Prevention Association
- A set of detailed KPIs that help us to measure our progress and make adjustments to the plan as necessary
How the BBB torch burned bright during the 2013 floods

On June 20, 2013, record rainfall and the spring melt combined to send a surge of water through the river basins of southern Alberta. An estimated 120,000 people were evacuated, 22 communities declared a state of emergency and the Bow River hit 1,700 cubic metres per second - six times its normal volume and it’s highest recorded level since 1897.

As the flood waters began to recede and Albertans emerged to assess the estimated $3-$5 billion in damage, BBB Serving Southern Alberta jumped into action to ensure those who were victimized by mother nature, did not suffer the same fate at the hands of storm chasers.

This is the story of how the BBB torch burned bright in the wake of a devastating flood.

Grassroots Communications
As soon as flood waters broke the banks, our president and CEO, Sandra Crozier-McKee was armed with her steel-toed boots and storm chaser flyers. It was hard to convince her to wait until the water subsided to safe levels before venturing out into the flood zone.

Headed directly for the most affected communities, Sandra spoke to dozens of flood victims personally - encouraging them to stay vigilant as they rebuilt their homes and their lives.

Having printed more than 4,000 storm chaser flyers, Sandra and other staff members personally distributed them to community re-entry points, emergency shelters and places where even those who have lost their homes have to go - grocery stores and banks.

We distributed e-mail versions of the flyer to city officials, councillors, and Members of the provincial Legislative Assembly (MLAs) to share with their constituents.

We also visited the flood-relief headquarters in High River south of Calgary - one of the most devastated communities in the province. We left storm chaser flyers and Trusted magazines in the resource centre for flood victims to access as the need arose.

Public Information Sessions
Building on the momentum of our intense media presence following the flood, we received invitations from the City of Calgary to attend post-flood citizen information sessions to help answer questions and guide residents through the contractor hiring process, filing complaints, avoiding storm-chasers and more. We attended two at the Bowness Community Centre, one at Christ Church in Elbow Park and provided information to a third at the Sunnyside Community Centre - all three areas were heavily impacted by the flood.

BBB Events
Our annual Torch Awards are held at the end of October and we wanted to find a way to tie the event to the cause on everyone’s mind. Our team decided to make the event a fundraiser for small businesses affected by the floods.

Calling the event Flood & Fire, we also introduced a silent auction and raffle component to our event that year.

Advertising
We have been very fortunate to work with some great vendors who jumped in to help us get the BBB message out to consumers post-flood. Pattison Outdoor Advertising donated nearly $2,500 worth of digital billboard space giving us four prime locations coming into and out of the downtown core as well as in the centre city itself. The message was simple: Be sure. Check before you buy at bbb.org.
We were able to secure some great “advertorial” space in the Calgary Sun for a two-page spread on rebuilding after the flood. The feature ran each Wednesday. We provided the editorial content and our ABs and RenoMark contractors support it with advertising. The piece garnered nearly 160,000 media impressions a week for six months and was heavy with BBB messaging.

Our Torch Award media sponsorship nearly doubled in 2013 giving us about $25,000 worth of advertising for the event in support of small businesses affected by the flood - on radio, in newspapers and in our business magazine. We also created a custom postcard and set up our tent on a busy outdoor mall during the lunch rush to distribute them.

Outreach
One of the most amazing and inspiring things to happen in the wake of the floods were the thousands of people who simply showed up in haz-mat suits and hepa masks to help strangers in need. As people cleaned up their mold-ridden homes, an army of volunteers came out to help - sometimes by the bus load.

In the midst of all of our “official” work following the floods, the BBB Serving Southern Alberta and East Kootenay team wanted to do a little more on the personal side. So, we hatched a plan to bring a little music, a little food and a little information to the homeowners and volunteers working hard in one of the most devastated communities in Alberta: High River.

We loaded up with 300 hot dogs, 300 buns, fixin’s, 50 apples, 50 bananas, 200 bags of chips and 420 bottles of water (thanks to donations from our staff and grocery store Sobey’s Okotoks). Half our staff (even one of our daughters) headed 100km south with a BBQ and our BBB Bandwagon - a branded minivan that pumps out the tunes as it goes.

After dropping off some info at the flood relief headquarters, we fired up the grill in the back of a pick-up truck and we set off with food, cold drinks and music.

It was a truly inspiring afternoon. Seeing how resilient the people of High River were as they rebuilt their homes helped by friends, family and strangers. Grateful for the break and the refreshment, many people told us they had heard our message and were grateful for the tips.

Social Media
With only one person in our communications department at the time, our BBB limited its social media efforts primarily to Facebook and then Twitter. Each of our press releases was Faceboodked and Tweeted and we let our followers know about Accredited Businesses who were offering help to flood victims.

The biggest social media piece was an in-house video we created outlining the BBB’s work following the floods including our trip to High River. The video allowed us to reach more than 12,000 people on FB that week - increasing our weekly reach 800 per cent. Our page likes also steadily rose after the flood as did our Twitter followers.

Our work during the 2013 floods earned us the Outstanding Bureau Award from the Council of Better Business Bureaus in the Outreach category.
2013 TORCH AWARDS

Business community celebrates ethical enterprise in Southern Alberta

Gasoline Alley at Heritage Park was transformed into a place of celebration and support for the 16th Annual BBB Torch Awards for business ethics held on October 30th, 2013.

With close to 150 guests, a champagne reception and silent auction, a fully catered gourmet meal and our honourary emcee, Ward 11 Councillor Brian Pineott, the evening was a success.

This year, the BBB chose to dedicate the Torch Awards to the businesses of Alberta impacted by the devastating June 2013 floods. The event was dubbed “Flood and Fire” and made into a fundraiser to generate monetary donations to benefit a small business through a silent auction and a 50/50 draw prize. The total number of proceeds raised is still being calculated and will be split between a small business and the BBB’s Savvy Consumer program.

Each year the BBB recognizes businesses for regularly demonstrating ethical business practices including value-based decision making and social responsibility. Nominate a business for next year’s Torch Awards.

Lethbridge Torch Awards

The 2013 Lethbridge Torch Awards luncheon was held at The Coast Hotel and Conference Centre in Lethbridge October 16, 2013. BBB President and CEO, Sandra Crozier-McKee and Ron Riemann, accredited business services consultant, attended the event and recognized the Lethbridge business community on BBB’s behalf.

BBB is pleased to announce the winners of the 2013 Lethbridge Torch Awards:

- **Management Practices** – Avonlea Homes
- **Community/Investor/Stakeholder Relations** – Inter-Faith Food Bank Society of Lethbridge
- **Communications and Marketing Practices** – Family Centre Society of Southern Alberta
- **Industry Reputation** – Blocks & Rocks Landscaping Centre
- **Consumer Award** – Once Upon a Bride
- **Marketplace Award** – Avonlea Homes

Gerry Simons of Avonlea Homes accepts the Marketplace Award from President and CEO Sandra Crozier-McKee
And the winners are...

Maxgreen Windows and Doors Ltd.

MAXgreen Windows and Doors Ltd. is this year’s winner of the Green Award. In addition to possessing the drive and ambition to achieve its business goals, this organization takes care to focus on the planet and charities. They have made the effort to become as paperless as possible in order to conserve natural resources and are mindful of carbon emissions. The business donated its services to some of the residences affected by the June 2013 floods and has donated services to some of Calgary’s buildings in need of repair.

MAXgreen Windows has been an Accredited Business with the BBB for the past three years. They offer a variety of window and door installation services as well as vinyl siding and other general contracting services.

For more information visit max-green.ca.

VistaVu Solutions

VistaVu Solutions is this year’s recipient of the Marketplace Award. They are one of Calgary’s business management software providers to organizations in Canada as well as internationally. The business has been accredited since its doors first opened in 1996, and according to Lamb, accreditation was necessary in order to develop a strong brand as a new business.

“The BBB represents and embodies the ethical standards of business that we want to associate with,” he says. “Being an Accredited Business has helped us gain customer and marketplace trust over the years and that is something we want to continue in our years to come.”

With office locations in Calgary and Houston, TX, as well as partnerships in the U.K. and Australia, VistaVu Solutions has become one of the leading businesses in business management software solutions.

Chinook Landscaping and Design Inc.

Ethics, passion and excellent customer service are the ingredients for a rock solid foundation for one of Calgary’s landscaping businesses. Chinook Landscaping and Design Inc. is this year’s winner of the BBB Consumer Trust Award.

Owner and Calgary native, David Abbott, explains that his customers are the heart of his business because they are the true measure of success. “To us, the concept of ethical enterprise involves completing jobs as advertised and agreed, without unduly stressing customers and ensuring that they are happy with the finished product,” he says.

Chinook Landscaping and Design Inc. has been established since 2005 and has been an Accredited Business since 2009. They offers a variety of landscaping construction services including: residential landscapes, paving stones, retaining walls, outdoor kitchens, decks, pergolas, water features as well as trees and shrubbery.
MARKETPLACE SERVICES
Building marketplace trust through standards

Service Statistics*

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<tr>
<td>Web Inquiries</td>
<td>1,183,957</td>
<td>1,106,961</td>
<td>852,253</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complaints</td>
<td>3,551</td>
<td>4,038</td>
<td>4,042</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mediations/Arbitrations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emails, walk-ins, phone calls</td>
<td>19,439</td>
<td>12,600</td>
<td>9,856</td>
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<td><strong>Total Instances of Service</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,206,949</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,123,605</strong></td>
<td><strong>866,160</strong></td>
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* In previous years, we counted media instances in our Service Statistics, these are now counted in Marketing Communications outcomes

More than three million businesses and consumers interact in the Southern Alberta and East Kootenay service area every day, and your BBB served them more than 1.2 million times this year. This is made possible by the variety of free services your BBB offers the community, including those of our Marketplace Services (formerly Trade Practices) team.

From general inquiries to complaints to advertising reviews, investigations, maintaining BBB Business Reviews and license checks, the Marketplace Services team provides businesses and consumers with objective and trustworthy marketplace information.

More specifically, this year all Canadian BBB’s joined multiple American BBBs in publishing complaint details. This change was made to ensure BBBs remain true to its Standards for Trust, which include being transparent to the people, businesses and consumers we serve. In the interest of remaining objective, BBB verifies the legitimacy of complaints and allows businesses to respond prior to publishing. For more information about complaint detail publishing, visit bbb.org.

Marketplace Services Co-Managers Alison Peltokangas and Kyle Sims also welcomed Nirmal Ghosh as a full-time marketplace services consultant to help handle general inquiries and complaints.

As your Marketplace Services team looks forward to another successful year of growth and advancing marketplace trust, it would like to thank the volunteers and contributors for their dedication to BBB’s mission, positive attitude and workplace efforts: Veronika Koschewski, Derek Webb, Brad Clements and Shaheed Mollah.
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures

Revenue

- Membership Fees: $1,680,759.00 (2014), $1,567,612.00 (2013)
- Advertising & Programs: $580,669.00 (2014), $438,728.00 (2013)
- Interest income: $16,172.00 (2014), $20,639.00 (2013)

Total Revenue: $2,277,600.00

Expenditures

- Staff Expenses: $1,525,270.00 (2014), $1,209,289.00 (2013)
- Advertising & Programs: $399,176.00 (2014), $296,388.00 (2013)
- Rent: $144,270.00 (2014), $152,132.00 (2013)
- Meetings Advertising & Travel: $70,180.00 (2014), $59,786.00 (2013)
- Amortization: $29,965.00 (2014), $40,198.00 (2013)

Total Expenditures: $2,498,063.00

Excess revenue over expenditure: $220,463.00

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