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Our Commitment to Supporting Indigenous Digital Outcomes

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Introduction

In the modern digital era, digital transformation is a driving force behind the evolution and progress of various markets, in both the public and private sectors. Private sector consultancies, particularly those focused on digital transformation, play a pivotal role in shaping this evolution.

The collaboration between Button, a prominent impact-oriented Digital Transformation consultancy and Takoda Consulting, an Indigenous, Women-owned service consultancy, presents an innovative approach to supporting Indigenous communities.

For Button, this is a journey of listening, learning, and understanding.

We take this process and our commitment to our Indigenous communities seriously, welcoming all thoughts and feedback on our continued path of improvement serving all the diverse communities across Canada.

We are grateful for this partnership with Takoda Consulting and the privilege to support Indigenous communities across our country.

Button Acknowledgement

We acknowledge our presence on the ancestral lands of Canada's Indigenous Peoples, who have nurtured and inhabited these territories for countless generations, fostering a rich tapestry of diverse Indigenous communities.

With deep respect, we honour the enduring legacy of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples on these lands. We recognize their profound connections to this territory, their custodianship of the land, and the invaluable depth of their cultural heritage.

We are resolute in our commitment to fostering understanding and collaborative relationships with Indigenous Peoples. Together, we aim to build a more equitable and inclusive society. In our pursuit of reconciliation, we hold in high regard the significance of acknowledging Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty, history, and contributions.

We express profound gratitude for the privilege to live, work, and gather on these lands, and we strive to be conscientious stewards of this place. We pledge to actively listen, learn, and take meaningful actions to advance reconciliation, recognizing the collective responsibility we all share in this ongoing journey.

Understanding Cultural & Historical Context

Expressing cultural and historical awareness

Button had a seat at the table in the first draft of the British Columbia Government's 10 Digital Principles, demonstrating the significance we place on cultural and historical awareness in digital transformation. Recognizing and respecting the rich tapestry of Indigenous histories and cultures is paramount, especially when supporting communities with digital initiatives.

By Nokomis
translation: "the great mother"

An Ojibwa artist and storyteller who grew up in the bush north of Lake Superior

Indigenous communities often reside in remote areas, so principles that promote digital infrastructure development and connectivity can help bridge the digital divide and improve access to essential services.

Digital principles and best practices are universally applicable and can offer significant advantages to Indigenous communities when developed with a strong commitment to respecting Indigenous rights. It is imperative that these principles uphold the rights and sovereignty of Indigenous communities, particularly in matters concerning data ownership and information control. We must ensure that digital services and communication are inclusive and culturally sensitive.

Understanding Cultural & Historical Context

Understanding through certification, training and empathy

Jaimie Park's Certification for **Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples from the Indigenous Relations Academy** stands testament to the commitment to understand, respect, and act on the specific needs and histories of Indigenous communities.

The Vancouver Island-based course touched on core policy and ethical engagement practices to empower Indigenous communities to participate in the co-creation of government services.

Jaimie is also an accomplished public speaker, delivering an important international speech at FWD50 in Ottawa, Canada, titled "**How Public Trust is Won & Lost Through Service Design.**"

Her experience and empathetic approach to understanding user needs and blending them into digital design is a truly valuable process that helps deliver meaningful digital outcomes for all.

Jaimie Park
Service Designer, Facilitator & Public Speaker

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Collaboration & Partnership

Button's alignment with the 2022 BC First Nations Climate Strategy and Action Plan emphasizes the importance of parallel goals and objectives between private sector consultants and the Indigenous communities they serve.

Empower local communities

We aim to empower the community with skills and knowledge, ensuring that initiatives are sustainable and can be managed locally now, and in the long run. We welcome ways to give back to communities and uncover potential learning and employment opportunities for community members.

Consultation and collaboration between Indigenous communities, governments and business, when done with intent, can engage in meaningful conversations with Indigenous communities when developing and implementing digital principles to ensure that their unique needs and perspectives are considered.

Collaboration also helps in establishing principles for responsible data collection, storage, and usage, which includes protecting Indigenous data sovereignty, can be of significant benefit to these communities. At the end of the day, the goal is to foster economic development that supports Indigenous entrepreneurship, and the development of local digital economies can empower these communities and improve their overall well-being.

Empowerment Through Open-Source Initiatives

Data accessibility and contribution

A default approach to open-source work ensures that Indigenous communities can access data freely. This democratization of data also allows these communities to contribute back, fostering an environment of collaboration and shared growth, as well as career opportunities.

What is open-source?

Open-source technology refers to software, hardware, or other technologies that are released with a license that allows anyone to view, use, modify, and distribute the technology's source code and design.

USING TECHNOLOGY
for
THE GREATER GOOD

In simple terms, why keep reinventing the wheel?

Open-source code is so important because it promotes collaboration, transparency, cost-efficiency, security, flexibility, innovation, and the ethical sharing of knowledge. Open-source has become a driving force in the software industry that we have embraced and has been instrumental in the development of many of the technologies we use today.

Internal policies that reflect external commitments

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Policy

These policies serve as a bedrock, ensuring that actions taken externally mirror a deep-seeded commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

A <u>Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Commitment</u> (DEIB) policy can have several benefits for Indigenous employees in the workplace. These policies are designed to create a more inclusive and equitable environment for all employees, including those from underrepresented or marginalized groups.

Why do we support a DEIB policy? Cultural sensitivity has been a widespread corporate issue and a DEIB policy can promote cultural sensitivity and awareness within an organization. This leads to a more respectful and understanding workplace where Indigenous employees feel valued for their unique cultural contributions. This results in improving anti-discrimination and harassment as well. With this growth, improvement and awareness, training and educational programs aimed at increasing cultural competence and awareness will blossom. It will help non-Indigenous employees better understand Indigenous perspectives and experiences, leading to a more inclusive environment.

Internal policies that reflect external commitments

By partnering, our commitment is to support and empower Indigenous communities and workers, with impactful digital transformation solutions.

Our commitments to delivering solutions is tied directly to our values:

- We are dedicated to transparency and open communication.
- We seek impact, applying technology in new ways, pursuing projects that have social value.
- We ensure our digital solutions are created with empathy.
- We solve problems first, using data & science.
- We believe in building the *right* thing, while building the thing *right*.

Button aims to establish a precedent for private sector companies to follow, ensuring that we set the benchmark for fostering more inclusive and respectful relationships with Indigenous communities and businesses.
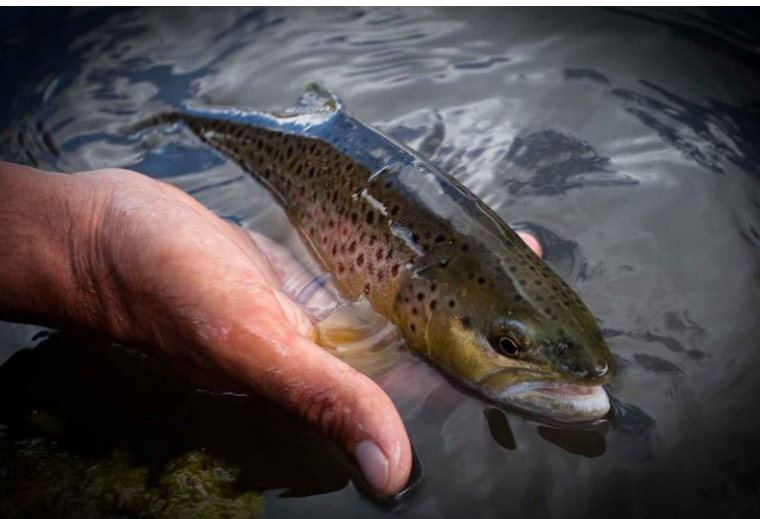
Building Trust

Building trust with Indigenous communities in Canada is crucial, and we want to openly address why it matters to Button:

Historical Injustices: Indigenous communities in Canada have endured a long history of colonization, forced relocations, discrimination, and broken promises. Trust-building is essential to address these historical injustices and foster a sense of justice and fairness.

Reconciliation: Trust is fundamental to the process of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Acknowledging past wrongs and working collaboratively to address them requires a foundation of trust.

Collaboration: Effective collaboration between Indigenous communities and governments, institutions, and non-Indigenous individuals is critical for addressing issues such as land rights, resource development, economic opportunities, healthcare, and education. Trust is necessary to ensure that these collaborations are meaningful and respectful.

Sustainable Development: Many Indigenous communities are located in resource-rich areas. Building trust is vital for sustainable development, ensuring that economic activities on traditional lands are carried out with respect for environmental and cultural considerations.

Building Trust

Cultural Preservation: Trust is essential to protect and preserve Indigenous cultures and languages. Indigenous communities need to trust that their cultural heritage will be respected and supported in their interactions with non-Indigenous entities.

Social Harmony: Trust contributes to social harmony by fostering positive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. This can lead to a more inclusive and just society.

Building trust with Indigenous communities is not only a moral imperative but also a practical necessity. It is the foundation upon which meaningful partnerships, reconciliation, and the well-being of Indigenous communities should be built. Trust is essential for addressing the historical and ongoing challenges faced by Indigenous peoples working towards a more equitable and inclusive future.

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The Compelling Collaboration: Takoda & Button

Shared Vision

Both <u>Takoda and Button</u> share a vision of digitally transformed Indigenous communities that are informed, empowered, and have a say in decisions that affect them.

Common Values

Takoda and Button's partnership thrives on shared foundational values prioritizing transparency, collaboration, and open communication. By placing emphasis on genuinely listening to understand the unique needs of communities, we will build trustworthy relationships and lead with an ethos of diversity and inclusion. This congruence in values is an ideal environment for effective consultation and transformative solutions for Indigenous communities.

The Compelling Collaboration: Button & Takoda

Unique Strengths

While Button brings a wealth of experience in end-to-end digital services for the government, Takoda's Indigenous and Women-led structure provides a unique perspective that enriches the consulting process.

Addressing Specific Needs

With Takoda's intimate and more nuanced perspective, and Button's expertise in digital transformation, the collaboration is tailored to address the unique digital needs of Indigenous communities.

Haleigh Callison
Founder & President, Takoda Consulting
Hwlitsum First Nation

Conclusion

Digital transformation in Indigenous communities isn't just about implementing technology; it's about understanding, respect, collaboration, and empowerment. Button and Takoda's collaboration embodies these values, setting an example for best practices in private sector consulting for Indigenous communities.

For a business to be welcomed in a community, we understand this takes immense trust that must be earned.

Building positive relationships to operate with these communities is essential to gain and maintain their support.

Sustainability and environmental concerns are top of mind for many Indigenous communities and have a deep connection to the land and prioritize environmental sustainability. Collaborating with them can help businesses adopt more responsible and sustainable practices.

We understand the impact and important contribution of Indigenous communities to the overall Canadian economy. Our vision is to help to identify opportunities where we can support and foster continued economic growth, with a goal of working towards reducing disparities in income and living standards.

Canadian businesses have a moral, legal, and economic imperative to support Indigenous communities. By engaging in respectful and mutually beneficial relationships with these communities, businesses can contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable future for Canada while also reaping various benefits for themselves.

Get in Touch!

We love to have conversations with decision-makers, technology leaders, and product managers from government and industry.

If that sounds like you, and you have a digital project you'd like to let us know about, let's connect.

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