Speaker 1 ([00:00:00](#)):

Welcome to our town hall, our very first one, actually in a virtual environment. We tend to have a very interesting remote world. So I'm excited to see everyone here in attendance, and I really appreciate that coming to you from across all our tech communities in Saskatchewan. So we've been planning this town hall for several months now, and I'm pleased that it's finally happening. It's an interesting journey, and I'm glad that enrolled, looking forward to the next couple hours of some really good conversation here. Just a brief little history, I know that there is people that know that it's our 20th anniversary Sask Interactive has an industry association in Saskatchewan and it's it's actually a momentous milestone for us. Some of you may not know our services or understand our work or our advocacy and our varied expertise in the Interactive digital media space, but we look forward to presenting who and what we are and the voice of our members and the public over the past couple of years, we've had an industry association that's been changing and that effect of what and how we organize programs and support today, for example, COVID, it is a global change.

Speaker 1 ([00:01:41](#)):

Yeah, we move forward to understand these changes in our industry, and we try new ways of supporting our members and look to a future where we're able to work together to achieve some common and collaborative goals. So let's have an engaging and constructive town hall, and I look forward to all your comments and suggestions, and most of all, to fully have a nice full dialogue.

Speaker 1 ([00:02:18](#)):

So we've got some slides that we put together on the piece that we are hoping to have as part of not just these opening remarks, but some of us are here know, have a new perspective and the opportunities for Sask Interactive and engage with the communities that we serve. It's going to give Sask Interactive an opportunity to hear your voice. It's about being transparent on the services we provide. A key one for me is is to nurture and grow the greater interactive digital media ecosystem in the province. And another one that's I think got very positive is the visibility to other provinces to Canada and world on the resources and the talent here in Saskatchewan. These are some of my opening remarks, but I also want to make sure that as we go through tonight's slide presentation that we have the ability to answer the questions in the surveys that we have, put out there to the community and also to have those responses noted here tonight.

Speaker 2 ([00:03:45](#)):

So my name is Shaye Ruecker. I own a marketing company in town called Marsh Digital. I'm also a board member of Sask Interactive and I'm going to be the moderator for tonight's. So just want to touch on a couple of points. This is going to be an open and transparent town hall, all of the answers and communication that we give, are to the best of our current knowledge right now. And we're going to try to be as open and honest with anything we possibly can. Anything that we might need to go back to the drawing board to get some more questions answered. We're going to be communicating that after the fact, you know, if there's something that we don't quite know, all the answers to right now, we'll get that. We're going to try to respond to all the questions to the best of our knowledge and ability.

Speaker 2 ([00:04:27](#)):

Now since there's only two mics right now, just to make things simple you're going to be able to send messages in chat or send chat messages directly to me. And then that way I'll be able to kind of go through them hopefully get to every question. There might be some overlap. I might not get to your

question directly, but something adjacent but feel free to poke me and message me this whole time with some other questions there. So we're open to getting some questions, comments, anything you guys want to say or bring up that's why I'm here in the chat.

Speaker 1 ([00:05:05](#)):

Thanks, Shaye. Really appreciate that. So, as we did a pre-survey or survey results, we sent out to you folks looking for feedback on seven questions that we approached, all with the varied interest in, for us Sask Interactive, but also an interest to the industry as well. Here we'll have seven slides - they are going to be designed to add the responses from individuals who replied, but also the ability to say or add more to each of these questions. Some of them, some of them have been, I think, a bit tailored questions to what's happening in the industry what's happening in the province what's happening as part of a COVID era. So question one how do you think COVID has affected Saskatchewan's interactive digital media industry and the responses here are not limited to, so we in our process, we took a selection of the responses that we had in the survey, and we added them here for the benefit of discussion. Starting off - "negatively affected the creation and development, although positively affected the push for more online projects", "neutral to positive", "there seems to be increased interest in the industry, perhaps due to more remote work positive since work from home is more accepted now", "gives increased opportunities".

Speaker 1 ([00:07:08](#)):

It has been, there has been seen a bit as a boost and less opportunities to network and increase demand for digital media. Some of the pieces here that we saw as a consistent message throughout these seven questions from the survey is yes, there has been effects of COVID on the IDM (interactive digital media) industry. And some of the responses I found more positive that yes, it has changed the ability to look at how we conduct work. I really thought the second bullet "neutral to positive" was very interesting to see that based on what is happening in the industry. And "there wasn't"...I really appreciated the candid responses, but I also appreciated that this town hall is designed for us to have discussion and us to have comments and feedback on not just COVID but on our industry as a whole. And I really appreciated the opportunity to share these responses, because I'm part of that with our ability to say, you know, this is what we're doing in this space, but this is also what we're doing as part of a network or a key network in that space around the digital media.

Speaker 1 ([00:08:56](#)):

Particularly question two, this one was an interesting question to have responses to designed around video game industry in Saskatchewan and what are the impacts facts and that was what we need to be addressed. Again, these are responses included, but they're not limited to - I really enjoyed this response: "the game industry in Saskatchewan with the exception of a small handful of successes stories, is a lot more like a hobbyist club than a real industry." That one and again, I will note that the survey responses have been noted all as anonymous. So this one kind of made me chuckle, but it also made me reflect back to, yes, there is a small handful of successes in the process, but I really liked the idea that it needs to also be a real industry and the problems, which it is, point to.

Speaker 1 ([00:10:00](#)):

"It would be great to see it grow potential business opportunities could be communicated and encouraged." That was a very positive one. This comment was an interesting one as well: "I feel comfortable with the game industry, although we need more funding for non incorporated and small

indie game studios." A really an interesting piece of it. And again here as part of the video game industry in Saskatchewan and the impacts of that need more educational opportunities for schools to offer game development programs, perfect example, of the work that's being done at RDIC in Regina the work that's being done over there with that group and too, have a great 10, 11, 12 educational opportunities in the grade school system. That's a prime example, where it really does start from the beginning with young and youth in that space it's small and unsupported and seen as not legitimate need, easier access to startup funds without predatory contracts.

Speaker 1 ([00:11:19](#)):

Like again, I found that one, it was a consistent message through the majority of these survey questions. And finally "the industry is growing, which I like, I support the industry and would like to see more jobs". You know, that one I really was interested in that response from that individual, because it had several things to it. Yes, the industry is growing and yes the support of the industry needs more jobs. And I think the labor market or the talent pool in area definitely is something that is on our radar as a board it's asking direct report and myself so that I'm appreciative of that comment as it has a positive and an interesting caveat to looking for more jobs in the space.

Speaker 1 ([00:12:14](#)):

But as an FYI, we're going to go through three slides, or I did a little bit of housekeeping, but we're going to go through three slides and then we're going to have a five minute break. Shaye is kind of going to moderate that. But I'll continue on with our third slide. And then as the chat feature, please, let Shaye know if you, if there's questions from there. Question three, and then again, this one was, very strong question. We wanted this question as part of this survey hope to the community, and how do you feel about current or future funding initiatives for the internet digital media sector? And, again, these responses, were not limited to these, there are several in here that really I enjoyed reading the responses, but I also understood the responses as far as our ability to look at what is the funding and what is funding and grant funding and what are those models in the province?

Speaker 1 ([00:13:28](#)):

First bullet there, "I personally would accept the past and current funding terms". "I didn't know funding terms of what, so that one was a little big, but I am open to possible possibly being interested in them in the future". I took the spin on that and I would like to know the funding terms of what current or past or future did that response mean? Provincial funding would help the industry grow and create employment. That was a second consistent message throughout the survey questions was the provincial funding, and how it has the opportunity to create employment. "Needs more variety, although a great start and a big push for Saskatchewan". I didn't understand stand that response, but I eventually had to read a couple of times to know what that actually meant as part of putting Saskatchewan on the map or in the space for the IBM for the sector.

Speaker 1 ([00:14:43](#)):

"I'm not familiar with current funding. I would like to see digital media be a regular funded sector, very powerful statement." I think that one, really speaks loudly to the digital interactive space, but also digital media space. And again, that one, has been resonated throughout these questions. "I feel hopeful that these initiatives would based on feedback of the community and will ensure that potential here has a chance to grow and thrive, if not, I feel disappointed and that there is no reason to stay in Saskatchewan." This was a really interesting response to this question. The responder of this one I would

like to reach out and get a bit more understanding of of the response, based on the community first in the response, but also what the potential for the chance to grow and thrive.

Speaker 1 ([00:15:50](#)):

And there is that, of course. And if it isn't the remaining part of that response was it left me a bit discouraged to hear that if it can't be initiatives or feedback and or funding and or grants there's no reason to stay and stay in Saskatchewan and that, I think that's a pretty powerful statement, so that one will give us work to do. Here in the future, as we move forward, we do not want people to leave the province, but I would like to know more about the feelings there. And finally the last bullet on this slide. "I am optimistic that more opportunities will be coming". That one was I was happy to see that response. There is optimism and given that it's a COVID era and given that we are here to as part of our work in the IDM is to be open-minded and create those opportunities and to be that champion in the space for that. I wanted that included on here, because and again these were responses that the good, the bad and the ugly, that we wanted to include in here.

Speaker 1 ([00:17:19](#)):

This was, this was the most interesting one that I saw and I really enjoy because it ended off, we'll be coming. So, you know, that that's something that is shows success in a future, given that, you know, it is a COVID era and our abilities to manage and work within what we are changing with the COVID. But I do believe that that's a pretty powerful.

Speaker 2 ([00:17:51](#)):

All right. Okay. So as Darcy kind of said, we're going to take a small break, and that doesn't mean that we're not going to be here. This gives everyone a chance to grab some water and Darcy clear his throat, so it's not so dusty from talking so much. So if you guys want to go back to any of those questions to, you know, you didn't see response in there, you want a little bit more clarification, just let me know in chat. And we'll be trying to get through this stuff kind of as quick as possible, cause we do have a Q&A towards the end of the last question here. One thing I did want to touch on too, is that you may not see your response to these questions here, because we did a prep a couple of days before this, just so we can go in and look at each of those questions more specifically and we did get a couple after that and those ones we will be addressing in a follow-up communication after this as just kind of come up general information as well as we'd like to get your feedback too, on the town hall on how this is and how you felt the communication was, or if you'd like to see different questions or whatever that might be, but that's kind of coming up after.

Speaker 2 ([00:19:13](#)):

So we'll just get a couple of minutes here, let everyone just kind of settle in again and yeah, be good to go.

Speaker 1 ([00:21:16](#)):

I think that's enough time. I did get a few messages here but it's something that we can kind of review and then look at towards the end. So, okay. I just wanted to add one note here on - the future current or future funding initiatives. I had some research done that I would like to just briefly comment here and there are several grant funding resources available to access for interactive digital or video game development startups. And I think that there are some solid examples in the majority of, you may know them already or may not, but I wanted to share a couple of them with you. And we will note these in the

final docent where we are going to be delivering a docket after this. What is the Canadian media fund? It is an interesting fund that the Canadian media fund is support to the federal government.

Speaker 1 (00:22:29):

The Conuxus has venture capital Creative Saskatchewan. They have a fund, it's called the digital gaming gamified e-learning equity fund innovative solutions Canada. They actually have a really interesting startup, Funtrepreneur fund innovation Saskatchewan. They have their maiden Saskatchewan technology fund M I S T mist. They also have the Saskatchewan technology startup incentive, S T S I, fund through Innovation Saskatchewan and Funtreprenuer is is another interesting fund that we just recently researched, or I have just recently looked at and it offers financing and mentoring for new startup businesses. It's a loan, not a grant. So just to add a couple pieces to this slide here, question three, and also I ave been appointed the chair of the digital consultation committee.

Speaker 1 (00:23:46):

We are here we established the committee to review and provide recommendations to Creative Saskatchewan, the digital game and gamified e-learning equity fund. So as that new chair I'm also working with an advisory committee to help establish companies, emerging companies and startups and educational members part of this committee. And that would be a revised program to the creative Sask fiscal year of 22/23. It's a status quo for the current equity fund, but as the new chair I will be sitting with a advisory committee to provide recommendations and revamp that program. So that's just a little bit of information on you know, what's out there for grant funding resources, just to add add to this slide. All right. Go run here.

Speaker 2 (00:24:59):

Sorry. We did, we did have someone just asking about a quick reminder what the current initiatives are. Hopefully that did answer the question, but if there's any other kind of like nitty-gritty details you're looking for we can follow up after, you can send me a message after too, if that met your expectations.

Speaker 1 (00:25:20):

Yeah. Good. Thanks. moving into question four these next three questions are to help Sask Interactive myself and the Sask Interactive board. And how can Sask Interactive support and benefit you as someone in the Interactive digital community? And again, these are not limited to, I really enjoyed the comments here as part of the responses from the survey. And I really took them as a positive spin. There was some neutrality, but there also was some negative responses, which again, this is what this town hall for is to do is to respect opinions and feedback from the community that we serve. The first bullet here, "training funding, advocacy, awareness of careers expos job fairs. "That was a very powerful one on how we should be more in the public eye. And I took it as that angle to support into benefit.

Speaker 1 (00:26:48):

The second bullet was an interesting one. The person mentioned, "In my opinion, the thing that would most help the community here would be a digital media incubator workspace for people to both have somewhere to get assistance, moral boosts, work as a team." All I could think of right away was the Conexus, cultivator and Regina. But this one seemed to be designed around digital media and you know, that's a great opportunity. Why isn't there an incubator designed around that space. The third bullet here, "I need help finding services outside my knowledge area. I.E. marketing, legal advice specific to game law funding." You know, I can reflect back to the workshop series that we did in October,

November of last year, the webinar, the five webinars series on level up business gaming there Joe Gill, Mckercher partner he talked about IP law.

Speaker 1 (00:27:54):

If you're interested in that five webinars series, we can also give you that link and you can find it in our Sask Interactive website advocating for our industry, being visible in the public, being transparent, both in policies and financials, very powerful statement here. That is an interesting one for us to acknowledge as part of our transparency to the membership that we serve and to the public that we serve. And that is both on the policies that we are governed by and the acknowledgement of financials we do and we have posted our financial statements on our tasking track.com. And that is part of the responsibility that we do if you have a public notice to our AGM and et cetera. So that was one that we wanted to definitely say here as part of our benefit and then our support to the industry make it feasible for people to get into the industry and stay in it.

Speaker 1 (00:29:06):

"Same for studios. People need livable and competitive wages and opportunities." I found this one to be really powerful and a positive one as well. There is that need and that talent pool and et cetera for people to stay here and to create and grow opportunities here. So I think that one's one of the more powerful ones that I read through the responses and to make sure that the industry is thriving is growing, in that it it can continue to be an ecosystem here in the province. All right. And that was slide four question five, again, this one has the Sask Interactive, how we find that we are engaging or not engaging. And what are the initiatives around that helps membership in the public? See what interests is engaged with? And again, these are not limited to. One interesting question that I found here was in the responses "With COVID there isn't too much happening, but again, I think the most important thing is for small teams businesses to get support, to be able to expand their talent pools instead of the community being fractured", fractured a very very strong word here. And we commission the labor market economic impact study May of 2020. You can find that report on our Sask Interactive website. And it does talk about items here, for example, retaining a talent pool, having people come here and having community ties the cost of living, et cetera. So this question it can be supported and acknowledged through the the labor market economic impact study that we we had commissioned.

Speaker 1 (00:31:22):

And we shared that as part of an opportunity to enter, or have a dialogue around the the labor market in Saskatchewan, in the tech sector first ever study commissioned by us ,Sask Interactive and Sask tech, and funded by Western Diverse, Economic Canada, and Innovation Saskatchewan who are also partners in it. And I suggest you take a look at, the read of that, that steady PR there's pretty powerful data in there.

Speaker 1 (00:32:10):

Question or bullet two - "is there any room to partner on a federal level for funding in this highly creative and artistic sector?" Great question. I just gave, you know, six examples here as part of that, but on a federal level, yeah, for example, the Canadian Media fund. For response to this question: "grants would be nice. Networking would be good." Again, a very calm and then consistent message throughout the seven survey questions was around funding grant funding et cetera, which we'll share with you just in the examples I gave, but also, the grants and fundings that are available that has a part of a provincial piece. Again, Creative Saskatchewan and Innovation Saskatchewan could acknowledge that the

networking one here. I found that the little twist there to be interesting because,,our role as advocates and champions, we would bring together the networking piece, you know, Peers and Pints, that we used to hold.

Speaker 1 (00:33:25):

But since that world has changed, maybe one day, we'll get back to hosting Peers and Pints, and then more networking is something that I totally look forward to. "Once we combat COVID that would be a really good thing to have more networking - work harder, to understand and communicate more with the game development sector and creative tech sector." In general, I found this one this response to be more it was, I wanted to accept the words that were used here to understand and communicate with the game dev sector that turned around to me as part of us being that advocate as being the voice to support that, and also to support other voices that are out there in the game dev community and to collaborate, I saw that word in my mind when I read this response, and I saw that as part of working as both tech and the ecosystem in the game dev and the video game dev system and the sector I should say. And and collaborative. I really appreciate that, that response from that individual, because it resonated throughout the work that we're doing within Sask Interactive the final point here - "lobby government for programs that donate into artists and therefore the rules that preclude us from eligibility" really again, another, another strong response from this individual. And I enjoyed reading it because there are lobby groups out there like Sask tech, there, they are a lobby group and they do lobby government, but also we have Sask Interactive. We are able to access programs through creative statue, one through Innovation, Saskatchewan, for example that doesn't necessarily do not take a certain status of an artist in that vein, but also have eligibility to apply for grants and funding from government and against some of these these video game development startups, for example there are funding and granting programs out there that are designed specifically for the game game dev area. We do video gaming. So that was a question five continued to move on here as we're getting more into the -

Speaker 2 (00:36:24):

If you're okay to go, I think we can go all the way to the end of card seven, and then we can have a break a little more.

Speaker 1 (00:36:31):

Well, I'm good. Let's hit head through and we can keep the momentum going. Question six. Do you feel Sask Interactive could be doing anything different with the initiatives we currently are involved in? This was it wasn't a generalized question. It was really, I wanted this question to help us understand from our membership and from the community on the work that we're currently doing, but also where should we be more involved? Again, these are not limited to - "I really enjoyed the webinar series last year." This respondent's response to the survey. Again, I just briefly touched on that in the previous slide, but you know, that webinars series with one are very prominent. It was a very powerful webinars series. We had a really good time putting that together and there will be more of those coming up in the future and in our plan for 2021.

Speaker 1 (00:37:51):

So I really appreciated this person going back to some of the work that we had done last year and being acknowledged for that scrapping the equity program and rebuilding it to get it into the hands of many creative and support many creatives and support them. I acknowledged that briefly as the new chair of the digital advisory committee, that program we have emerging and then established and educational

members on that committee. And our role is to revamp that program and provide new recommendations to Creative Sask. Who's the funder of that program. So that program and happy to say that that's currently got an advisory committee around it and we're looking forward to our future steps to revamp that program. "Keep doing your great work. Thank you to that respondent. I think we've done some really good work last year, given that it was the beginning of a pandemic and the world pretty much shut down in those early years of 20, or early months of 2020, but I really do appreciate the thoughts in this remark here.We can do more work and we're looking forward as we haven't active as of our AGM in August of 2020. We've got some young, vibrant people who are directors on the board that are looking forward to creating new ways of getting initiatives out there. "Looking at programs, program support the community that we work with." And so really appreciated this this statement. The next one "I wish I knew what Sask Interactive was involved in, I couldn't seem to find or get much information on your services. "This kind of really turned the light bulb on. And I enjoyed the question because we sometimes are challenged out there in the press or in the public. And I was very happy to see this response that if it's not found on our website, what else do we do as part of our services and or what is our membership, or where do we find programming? How do we access funding? You know, those are very, again, a consistent message. And in this town hall that we have been very cognizant of as a board. And we want to make sure that as we move forward in 21/22 in this fiscal year, that part of those services people understand and know what Sask Interactive is about in, out in the street, in the press and in the collaborative community that we serve.

Speaker 1 ([00:41:01](#)):

Part of that for me, is to make sure that the visibility of Sask Interactive is out there is acknowledged. And again, this, this bullet really helped me understand that, well, maybe we're not reaching an audience, maybe we're not in the community and in the community enough. So I really appreciated this response from my own perspective as the executive director, but also this was an interesting communications piece that will be shared on the board, but also it tells us that maybe we're not out there enough. And that's one thing that I have as a goal of mine is, is to change that and to acknowledge that. And that makes me a little bit more to be part of the, the community that we're serving the fundamentals here. "The initiatives are terrible, terribly designed grants and funding that has been very poorly received by a large majority of the people it was designed to access."

Speaker 1 ([00:42:05](#)):

I had to really think about this one and understand the meaning behind grants and the design of grants and how they don't fit an eligibility, which goes back to the previous slide. But this one, I appreciate it because again, a consistent in common message around funding. We need to do more in that space as part of an association that we a nonprofit association, but we do have access to provide grant and funding resources to the community that we serve. And, and again, some of those I've mentioned, but there, there are probably more up there that we haven't done enough research on or ability to say, Hey, I don't think that fits this group, or, Hey, you should probably just give it out there. Cause maybe someone does fit that grant. I think the one that the first part of this response that threw me off was the initiatives are terribly designed.

Speaker 1 ([00:43:06](#)):

And I could only reflect back to the creative Sask gamified grant digital game gamefied grant that they are the sponsor of that background also supports our industry Sask Interactive Interactive Digital Media IDM sector. So it's not designed right. And if it's not accessible and if it's just not something that is received by an X group or the majority of something, then we really need to look at that. And that's on

our radar as part of our communication space, but as part of our abilities to look at more of the common message here at Brown, what is accessible as part of a funding funding model.

Speaker 1 (00:43:59):

All right, then, we'll move into question seven and we should be able to wrap up these slides and get into some more interest area. Question seven: what could Sask Interactive do differently? This this survey question I designed and I wanted it to help me in my role, but also to help the board and also to help our objectives to be more inclusive in the community. And again, these are not limited but some of these responses I really enjoyed because it it was kind of on the full scale, negative, neutral, and positive. And so that's what I was hopefully looking for. And how did they respond out of the 20 plus responses that we received for these questions? This one, question seven, was the critical one - "basically run helpfully events programs, and provide support for a small interactive media businesses coming out of COVID" - very good statement that that response is a strong one. And I really enjoyed it because yes, we will come out of COVID and yes, there will be need to, hold more back to the other side, more networking pieces. We look forward to a stream of events and programs that we want to do. We definitely know that it's probably still a very virtual world that we'll be conducting these in, but, again, that's just part of the business that the model that we are doing today.

Speaker 1 (00:45:58):

"I would really love a community jpstart or a way to get the community excited about a project and involved in our local indie games." Great great, great response because the jpstart one was kind of exciting because something like that gets more people engaged in, and there's a lot of collaboration to that. And the community excitement was very interesting as part of the twist that this respondent put in there, "because I found that indie games that they do not get the justice that they deserve." So I really appreciated the respondent's statement on, on, on this one in particular, because of it was community related, be visible, transparent advocate for the industry. Yeah, this was actually a common and and a consistent message that we've been hearing from the communities in the member membership in the members that we serve around visibility and transparency.

Speaker 1 (00:47:07):

I think that one is something that we will definitely work more on bringing to the forefront as part of the role that we serve to the advocate and the champion out there of the industry and not just IDM, but the industry and the communities that we serve. I think this was a very powerful, statement and I enjoyed that that coming from our survey, providing funding for local game development companies and support startup startups new companies, and encourage larger companies to expand in Saskatchewan. Yeah. You know, and when you be soft ended up going to Manitoba and know that they looked at at Saskatchewan and as a forerunner, you know, I think that would have definitely changed the landscape as a very large company. And I think that there's more opportunity here to not just look at our sector, the IDM as the Interactive digital media sector, but I think it's also, goal that's was one of the key words that I gleaned out of this response for local game dev companies and how that can be supported.

Speaker 1 (00:48:25):

"There is in, in some of these funding grant funding resources interactive digital video game development, startups, entrepreneurial this, this comment definitely fits that as part of what can we, as advocates ask Interactive advocate for bringing larger companies to the province. And again, I don't think it was sector specific. I took this across several sectors in Saskatchewan." So I really appreciate that

comment because it sheds a different light on what's happening in the local versus other companies that are right here and the final bullet here. Really this one was I enjoyed it because we are, Sask Interactive and we do support, we do sponsor. And this one really kind of cap that off, listen to the game, dev community, better grants and funding, helping with exposure and growing the community, helping with more events, conferences, game jams or the global game jam, et cetera getting the public more involved, but that was a key message, that we would be able to sponsor and support.

Speaker 1 ():

And as part of the game dev community, one of them is for me, is to be in front of these communities a bit more. I'm in Saskatoon here. There's a lot going on in Saskatoon. I would love to be on the street in Regina doing more the the community engagement. I look forward to that when the room comes back to some sense of normalcy I'll see, but I also look forward to doing the growing of the community online engaging through press you know having the ability to be a sponsor of the global game jam, which we have supported in the past, and conferences you know, someone told me a while back that now those are, those are things of the past I don't believe so. I think,,I think the world would bring back the ability to hold a symposium on virtual reality, your AI, or AR, or, bringing in events like we did with the, the five webinars series.

Speaker 1 ():

And we brought Jason Delarocha in and Joe Gill. And you know, we had the ability to bring in some prominent folks in the industry to talk about that, and it was all virtual. And so, but I do look forward to the day and I did counter that friend who made that comment about, I think those are the things of the past. I really don't think they are. I think they will eventually come back. And then the last piece there, "you know get the public more involved" is going to be a key message, a key driving message for Sask Interactive and myself. And I think that's a really good way of looking to close this piece off. I really appreciate this individual's comment around the public piece. And that was something that I really honed in on because, just because it's a cool and it's a removed and it's a virtual world, I really appreciated the thought around, you know, keeping the public work. All right, Shaye.

Speaker 2 ():

Okay, go get some water. You're going to go rusty here. So what we're gonna do is we're going to set it up for another, like five minutes, maybe a little longer kind of, depending I am getting some people sending me messages now, so shoot them my way. And don't worry, like your name's not gonna be shared with anyone. What we're doing is we are all kind of discussing this as a group and trying to figure out what the best answer to give is. And if making sure we're not missing anything before we do send that out. So we're reading all the comments that are public. We're getting all the comments that are private here. ,There's going to be a couple of questions that we just get asked in general that we're also going to touch on. But yeah, no. So if everyone just start shooting me messages and we can all have a little bathroom break, get some water, all that fun stuff.

Speaker 2 ():

Well that stuff's rolling into there's one of the things I wanted to touch up on. So, two outcomes from the town hall that we wanted to do is, we wanted to kind of figure out what the best way to communicate to you guys is, and then what is a way that's going to be most comfortable or easy for you guys to communicate with us? Cause honestly that's got to be one of the most important things is making sure that we're addressing and communicating with members effectively. So if you have any

comments or questions on that, let us know too. Now the other one too, is this is a weird situation. Cause you know, COVID times usually town halls are set in a public place. So what we would like to do is kind of figure out how, until we can all be in the same room together would you like us to, in these town halls again, if you have any feedback or, things that you liked, things you didn't like, any of that information is great as well.

Speaker 1 (00:54:40):

Yeah, Shaye, thanks for saying that. I can echo that back because this for is designed for that constructive criticism and I think we're we would be very appreciative of this first town hall and we had we had a few glitches in the beginning, but I think the in particular would be interested in having feedback from the group regarding about the platform that we're using. We were going to do this to Twitch tonight but we couldn't get a bug worked out to have it go to Twitch, but, and just as a recap as well, we're going to do a lessons learned. And part of that lessons learned is comments from the lower, from the responses that we've received today. And, nd then in my closing remarks, here is there is a survey that we will post a feedback survey that we're going to share in the chat. And so I definitely want to, ask that comment, but once we get down there, I'll post it in the chat, but we'll have a few closing remarks here and your ad hoc or floor floor questions from the floor.

Speaker 2 (00:57:22):

We've kind of got a lot of messages sent back and forth. So I'm just going to keep on going, I'm going to keep going through this. So just, yeah, like everyone just, just hop on chat and, and we'll discuss things a little more too.

Speaker 2 (00:58:40):

Okay. I think we kind of have a lot of stuff ready to go, and this is just all the way back from the beginning. So we had a question earlier about what initiative Sask Interactive is currently involved with. And we did discuss some of those if I don't think we had any follow-ups to that, that that question wasn't satisfied feel free to let us know. So we had a question. This is a very broad one. I think it's a good one to answer is that who is Sask Interactive and what are some examples of what Sask Interactive is doing? And then there was also a followup of that - he asked because there were some questions and responses I've referenced past past initiatives no context as to what those initiatives are. So Darcy you could probably speak to that.

Speaker 1 (00:59:32):

Sure. Yeah. So past initiatives are things that we support or have been involved with recreative Saskatchewan program, they call it programs. So if we have access to funding from Creative, Saskatchewan, it is part of their funding model for workshops lunch and learns webinars, et cetera. In Sask Interactive past, we had put on several workshops, several lunch and learns, webinars. I think WebEx is around those times in the space of VR, AR, youth workshop we put on video game development. So some of those initiatives, we've never brought any of those types of things back, but as part of a virtual space, yes, we would be looking at hosting more of those programs that we can give to the community and access to funding dollars to put those on for that community. So I think that a lot of those, a lot of those initiatives, again, it was a very different world, but we would look forward to hearing is part of our post survey response, is suggestions on what are, what are people, what are the community looking for as part of future initiatives that we that we can support and that we can put on?

Speaker 2 ([01:01:15](#)):

Okay. it was a lot harder than I thought it was going to be just juggling questions. What are your future plans to help grow the industry and create more opportunities and jobs?

Speaker 1 ([01:01:34](#)):

Yeah. Good, good, good question. Now that the labor market economic impact study is out there is a public docent. There's really good data in there. It's a census year, as you know, in 2021 here. We were looking at having an addend to that study which, well next month will be a year since we commissioned it and inaugurated it. So the funding partner and the research partner decided that since it's a census year, that we should wait till early 22 once they can analyze in stats can, can analyze the data from the 21 census, that also could support us in what's happening in the tech sector, because that studies is designed on the tech sector in Saskatchewan. So which leads to, more jobs, job placements, labor market information.

Speaker 1 ([01:02:44](#)):

If you take a look at Vendetta here in Saskatoon, you know they're a huge player in the province and their hiring practice. You look at noodle cake, you know, all those types of things are what's growing in, what's nurturing the industry and there's jobs, there's jobs there. People want to come here because of the cost of living in Saskatchewan is low. There's a talent pool already. We've got two universities. We have Sask Polytech, you know, the educational educational institutional piece is well-renowned here. So that spins off into academia, but also spins off into jobs. And that's what we wanted to do with the addend that we'll do for 22, for the labor market study, because it will change what those outlooks are for job creation, jobs, sustainability, and the ability to have, Saskatchewan on the map to people to come here because of that cost of living though et cetera.

Speaker 2 ([01:03:55](#)):

Can we actually add a follow-up question to that just now - "how does this study help? This is it sound like it's helped and won't for years people graduating SSE find it hard to find tech jobs and Regina and Saskatoon game jobs aren't as easy to find?"

Speaker 8 ([01:04:13](#)):

The purpose of the study as a very first study ever done in the province was to look at the industry that the tech sector industry it's itself there is been us two that EG tech health tech FinTech. A lot of those are going to be spinoffs for sure, but this LMU study was designed to bring acknowledgement and awareness on what's happening as part of the data in the province jobs supporting the GDP in this province, et cetera. So, yeah, the study is very sound, it's very accurate data. But I think we also can leverage the pieces of it that go a little bit in depth in the need of having this study support, big business, small business, entrepreneurial startup look at colabs here in Saskatchewan, cultivator connects to cultivate and Regina, you know, there, there is those those organizations are helping to bring jobs to bring more people to the province to even set up shop here. So I think that itself does support that as part of a data piece, but it also opens up the markets for us to talk about what can we do in Ag tech and other tech. So it does support the industry and it, and it does support the industry as part of growing what's in Saskatchewan and bringing more people to Saskatchewan.

Speaker 2 ([01:05:50](#)):

I'd like to just touch on it a little bit more too. It is a long, like huge docent, and it's not necessarily the most fun to read, but it's up on our website. If anyone wants to take a look and read and anything you guys want to talk about on that, you know, take a look, bring some specifics about it. And like, we want to be able to help translate that to anyone who wants to extract some information from that.

Speaker 1 ([01:06:17](#)):

Good segue. Thanks. Because it is designed to and it was commissioned to bring more of that to the table for government. It does support the Premier's 20, 30 growth plan in the tech sector. So when it got onto the Premier's table, that was something that I was so happy to see because it had been, we had championed it so much to get it in front of the premier and it does support its plan. So part of that is still the offshoots in the economic development of creating jobs, keeping jobs here, et cetera. So yes, please. The, the study is is up on our website, but we also if you're interested in a hard copy, we have a hard copy to send you as well. So if you want to let me know after this town hall, we can definitely ship you out of copy. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([01:07:16](#)):

Okay. So I just want to address one thing too. I'm getting a lot of stuff all over the place. So if I miss anything you guys want to talk about, like let me know, cause I'll definitely double back to it. So there's one here. Can we do anything to help people find remote industry?

Speaker 1 ([01:07:35](#)):

Say it again.

Speaker 2 ([01:07:39](#)):

Can we do anything to help people find remote industry jobs?

Speaker 1 ([01:07:44](#)):

Remote industry jobs? Well, I would say yes for sure. I guess being the advocate of that as part of the growing community in the, in the startups that we have here, just naming those cool labs connects us, but re remote. Yeah, I think that if it was small town, Saskatchewan, you know, again, there's there's to expand that work. And I think that if there was something that we needed to do, you know, the alni could probably support that, but I would like to know a little bit more, but what does say, what do you think remote means in that regard?

Speaker 2 ([01:08:31](#)):

There's a lot of stuff that's that could really relate to that. So it's just a matter of finding out how those opportunities can be present for anyone who's living in Saskatchewan. And the, so the two-pronged approach that would be to help people and schedule and find those opportunities and then help people in Sask prepare, and then be able to except or work towards those opportunities. So you know, and whether it's out of province or out of country there, there's, there's a lot of questions that even we might have on that issue because it's very new, it's happened in 2020, it's changed the landscape of everything. So that's definitely one that we can go back to the drawing board and find some information for Mixmax is Fiverr.

Speaker 1 ([01:09:23](#)):

Well, that's where I was down. That those remote communities, it is on, it is on the previous plan to expand wifi, et cetera, to remote communities and, or a small town Saskatchewan. So Shane, could you capture that question I'd like to kind of maybe take that one on and do a sidebar on that? Yeah,

For sure. Okay. There was a, there was a couple of comments and messages that I got in with regards to game jams. And then I saw some, a little bit of discussion about it. "Can you speak to any of the game jams that we have funded the past or any initiatives to those that fund more in the future?" And then as a followup, someone else said "how do you guys decide what initiatives get funded?"

To answer the first part? Yes, we have supported the global game jam three years in a row. So we we have sponsored it as part of a an acknowledged sponsor that came to us from the group that game dev group, John Mauritian and Kai Hutchinson and that group, and we have supported them with funding dollars, monetary funding, and then we also can get a - pardon me, excuse me - we also get acknowledged as a sponsor fund or to that group. I believe it's a it's a good piece that we should be supporting because it brings in a, a different awareness around global game jam. And we've continued to fund that when the request comes through from that group. What's the last part of the question, Shaye?

Sorry, how do, how do we decide what initiatives get funded and how, like, I think there was a couple ones that people were talking about different ones that we're not funding currently. So what decided that funding?

Sure. So the program funding that we access through Creative Saskatchewan as they're our funding partner. We have access to a a fund that we can go to ask for funding for X sponsorship to support a X program. So we go to that when we are acknowledged as part of a proposal to sponsor it, to fund it that goes as part of our operational piece to the program and the support through Creative Sask. Those we've supported those in the past. We've supported those funds as part of those funding programs as part of that. When we were approached by our request, we look at it as part of how does it fit in into the criteria of does it support the industry? Does it support the community et cetera, so that that gets not so much screened out, but then once we go looking for that funding, if someone wants us to support that we do that.

We go and look at those initiatives that supports our community that we support, but also, we go back to that as part of our funding model. And we, Sask Interactive, we are also able to compete with those funds with nine other industry associations for that funding model through Creative Sask. So, when Sask Music, you know, if they want to put on the next Gino's you know, they have to go look convert, program dollars. So, that's just an example of who's who gets to tap into that funding model to our funder, which is Creative Saskatchewan. We can also fund our own programs and initiatives through the work that we're doing. And that's one of the pieces that we want to also acknowledge here, Shaye and or whoever gave this question or the questions too. That there is there is that ability for us to fund an organization, for example, global game jam or the film pool. So we do want to acknowledge that it is the

media, the digital interactive media we want to support the communities that I think we should be in local local game jam stuff. So I think that's a very positive question. I hope we can continue to support that we do.

Speaker 2 (01:14:45):

I think one thing too, that needs to kind of be addressed is if there is any initiatives that you guys feel need funding or need government supports or anything that we can do, like our, our job is advocacy for that. But we don't know what to advocate for, unless we have people talking to us about it and letting us know. So what we can do is, is help you with that first step or help you kind of understand how that step works. And yeah, so let us know, let us know what's important to you guys. And, and what do you feel like we could be doing on a specific basis, right. In terms of like very specific projects or, but if you want to get something funded or you want to get funding looked into the best time to talk about it as now. So we can, we can try to.

Speaker 1 (01:15:41):

Yeah. And just to add another little comment to that piece that these funds and grants that are available, you know, it adds growth to the ecosystem that's in Saskatchewan. So when there is an initiative that we are asked to support or sponsor, you know, the Google game time, I think it's really a good piece here because it has a following. It does have a really good way of promoting the industry. It gets, you know, hundreds of people involved. To me, it's exciting to see something like that come across my desk as an initiative and our ability to support it. And I think that that supports the growth of that in the province. So, and like Shaye says, if there's something that I think it might come back to more of the visibility yeah. Let us know and, and acknowledge us, or, and, or you know, let's jump on a zoom call to talk about it, because I think some of that is pretty important to share and collaborate on.

Speaker 2 (01:16:52):

As a, as a followup, Kai is talking about the global game jam with a limited funding of $500 per event. So that's one thing that I can probably touch on. There, there are a lot of you know, initiatives that we necessarily haven't funded too well, we think could be the best opportunity for the, for those. But that doesn't mean that we don't want to engage with any of these initiatives that we've funded prior, or any new engagements going forward with, you know, more funding as we can possibly give it. So I don't know if you can speak to that a little more Darcy.

Speaker 1 (01:17:34):

Yeah. I think that in particular, in this example we definitely supported them, and I think that there's always the opportunity to $500 request. Great. you know, I, if I was asked for a thousand dollars, I would go and ask for a thousand dollars, or if it was 2000, you know, it depends on what the audience wants to see as part of that development in that space. So Battle Snake came to us and asked us to support through Innovation Saskatchewan. Let's just share some of the costs. They're great. I've never heard of Battle Snake, but we wanted to support it because it was going to bring a different voice to the space. And that's just another example of us supporting where we can, and also access to that programming funding dollars from Creative Saskatchewan. Now, if someone's been asked for a million dollars to support, you know, that would be an extreme, but in our abilities to advocate for that. Yeah, for sure. Come and talk to us, you know, get in front of us for that type of grant and funding. And I'm not just not going to weed out, go game jammer or battle snake. Those are just examples of where we can sponsor where we have been asked to sponsor and support that community.

Speaker 2 ([01:19:06](#)):

One quick thing too, Evan did bring up a really interesting point that we have discussed a few times before funding. Isn't always dollars. It could always be additional sponsors, prizes, et cetera. Advocacy also means just a relationships with people that can make things like that possible. And, and that is something that as a board as director that's an extremely valuable thing that we can do. And we can add towards any of these projects, you know, the community, isn't just the members, that's everyone. We can connect to the members as well. Okay. We touched on that one. Again, you got to poke me, I'm kind of getting to the end of my questions. I'm kind of aggregating them together. ,I'll Try to go through it again and just sweep through some more - "will there be any town halls in the future?" with a comment added - "This has been informative. I like the transparency opportunity for feedback."

Speaker 1 ([01:20:08](#)):

Yes. Indeed I'm going to jump right in on that one because we we've been planning this one - Ryan Hill and I we've been planning it for...oh, I would say late last year. And we eventually were looking at, you know, what does a town hall do, you know, how should we support one? You've never done one before. It's a virtual world. Yeah, let's do it. When we started crafting these seven survey questions that we wanted to touch on funding. What does the COVID room look like? What's the future of, space? And so, yes. This happens to be one that you were excited as part of myself and part of the task and drag the board to do engage. And I really appreciated the work that was done behind the scenes.

Speaker 1 ([01:21:09](#)):

But we are looking forward to another one in June. We are looking forward to holding one every quarter and we are looking to expand and grow each one as we progress forward. So yes town halls, fireside chats, whatever we want to call them, are going to be a a future standing community engagement for us. And we will learn and progress forward as we close off this town hall, but in all, I really wanted to appreciate the people that gave us the responses in the survey and also, the candid responses in the survey. You know, some of them were negative. Great. That's what I wanted. Some of them were again neutral, but some of them have a positive spin and, you know, the world just isn't all looking through rose colored glasses, right? We want to make sure that we're acknowledging the community that we're in and the community that we serve either tech or the larger ecosystem, game dev. So we want to be part of that and want to still, as part of our mandate is to be that voice, that advocate and that champion. And we continue to do that.

Speaker 2 ([01:22:36](#)):

Hey I I'm kicking myself for missing this one, cause I think this one's like an awesome question. "There've been a lot, or there going a few game releases last year," - and I'm guessing that means like in Saskatchewan, locally that they're talking about - "as far as I know media coverage was not large, but how would Sask Interactive be able to help getting the word out on such things?"

Speaker 1 ([01:22:58](#)):

Oh yeah. Great question, Shaye. I - did you have your blinders on or what?

Speaker 2 ([01:23:04](#)):

Yeah, I got so much stuff coming out at me, man.

Speaker 1 ([01:23:06](#)):

I've given you a hard time. A great question. Yeah. part of our approach in our board is we have a communications committee Brooke. She's on our board, she's the editor in chief of Industry West magazine. And, Brooke is online here tonight. But part of the mandate of the communications committee is to have more press off ads editor letters to the editor, et cetera. Some of that is the spinoff to good press I E , games being released in Saskatchewan. But as part of me understanding that, yes, we will be there to put a press release together. We've got a press kit format that we've adopted, not just press for Sask Interactive, but press for the community that we are that advocate and that champion.

Speaker 1 (01:24:12):

And so, yes. Shaye, could you capture that question so that I can do a follow up on that as part of that process, we definitely want to make sure that our logo, our stamp of, and our approach to having that go out to the beta kits, to the CVCs, to the Mark Mill and Chuck's of the world from the leader post, you know, that's exactly what we want to do. We want to make sure that that acknowledgement is received out there in the press. So, absolutely. We will definitely be a proponent of that and, again, getting that piece out there in whatever form it is. Yeah. We will support that.

Speaker 2 (01:24:55):

Okay. so we got a lot of really heavy questions that I think are going to have a lot of time kind of going into them. So the first one, this, this should be a pretty quick one though. "I would like to know what would make the industry more actively engaged with Sask Interactive. So how can people more engage or what would get the community to engage more?"

Speaker 1 (01:25:19):

Yeah. Well, good question. I think what it is is partnerships. We refreshed our own SaskInteractive.com website with it early in the year here. And we've beefed up some areas we've rested. It's not on there yet, but we've created a mentorship section in our website. We want to be the proponent of that. So any of that can be done through, those mechanisms, but I think being out there and being shared in the community and that transparency think it was a common message throughout the responses from the survey, but also from here, Shaye, I think it's it's our ability to look at, and when we can do and, and how we can do that. And I think that's I think that's the role of a boss, ,a part of this our, our association is, and as part of this community that we're serving is to get that message out there. Was there a second part to that question?

Speaker 2 (01:26:36):

No, there was a, just a comment just talking about their own experiences in that. We had one that was kind of a long question. "So you've spoken to the idea that we need to be more visible to the public and made a comment that you really like to see that comment. Can you please speak to what the plans are going forward to address that will you have more frequent website updates and more frequent updates through social media? How are you planning on reaching those connected to the industry?" I could speak to this one a little bit here. Yeah, there's, there's definitely more work we can do in terms of content on the website and news and updates and social, and that's something we really want to drive, focus on going forward.

Speaker 2 (01:27:18):

And, and you'll see that in the coming months, but one of the things we want to do is we want to engage directly with people and have them engage directly with us. A lot of the times we won't know about a

lot of the small news bits unless we, we get informed by people who are involved in any communities or engagements, initiatives, all that stuff. So we would also like to make it easier for people to reach out to us as an open book, open communication of, Hey, I got this thing going cool. That's not really something that is going to take a lot of time for us to give you props on social or do whatever. And we want to be able to do that. We want to give shout outs. We want to have an active community in terms of helping whatever person with the projects big or small. And that was, that was a large like group full of questions. So if I didn't answer all of that, like, let me know

Speaker 1 (01:28:13):

You did good, but I'm going to add as well, part of this, the communications committee, which is a brand new struck committee on my board is designed around social media press and a newsletter. I know we have not done justice to our newsletter and,,the communication as part of that. ,And I'm breathing life into some of these pieces. , think the other one that you mentioned the most important one that you mentioned, Shaye, is the community engagement. You know, I'm here in Saskatoon. Yeah. There could be something going on in Regina that Shaye you've mentioned that you can be part of that. So I think that the social and it's a very social world, right. You know, I try to tweet as much as I can. We did the back end of this town hall. We did LinkedIn. We did, we tweeted it. We put it on Facebook and Instagram. So the, the key social pieces, we did acknowledge out there, but local day-to-day, you know, really good stuff. Let us know. My final slide on here is all of our details on how to connect with Sask Interactive.

Speaker 2 (01:29:40):

I just wanted to touch on one thing too, and I'm glad that I haven't brought it up here this last little bit. We we've seen lots of comments on discord. That's something we're definitely gonna engage in right away here. We were looking at some other things that didn't necessarily get traction. But discord is definitely one that we want to, we want to pop on and engage more. I use discord all the time just for general stuff too. So no reason why we can't engage in that as well.

Speaker 1 (01:30:04):

I'm good for adding that one. Discord is is key out there. Cause a lot of people are in those chat rooms and in discord is a good one.

Speaker 2 (01:30:12):

Okay. So I, you know, I don't want to put words in your mouth here, but I think since we started 10 minutes late that's fine if we go over 10 minutes. And then that's our a lot of time, but we want to continue to communicate with people after. So all of the resources on the last page, reach out to us, we're going to be sending out a like a follow-up to this as well. Hopefully it's going to reach everyone if it doesn't reach everyone, that's a, that's a great opportunity for us to realize, okay, this is something we have to step up and get into the hands of more people. So there are okay, so this, this was the one that was a really heavy duty, big question. And it had like followup of 20 different questions. "How does the level of funding of the Saskatchewan industry, does industry receive compared to other the provinces in terms of funding from Sask Interactive, as well as direct to industry from organizations like CNF, are we getting a share, if not, is there a plan to change that or increase that?" And then some of the follow-ups to that were kind of all over the place, everyone has their thoughts on that.

Speaker 1 (01:31:24):

Well, I'll jump in on it. Yes. The level of funding in Saskatchewan has remained status quo in the last budget that was released a month ago. Our funding partner, Creative, Saskatchewan, hey let us know that funding for the industry associations has remained as a status quo for 21/22. They had no net new funding, so we can get net new funding, I E , operational or program my counterparts in like Interactive Ontario, ,Lucy. She is the CEO. She's a one woman show, but I think she has some contract people, but, ,they get their funding from industry in Ontario. The Atlantic provinces, my counterpart there, they are funded by the government provincial government, and they're also funded by industry. You take a look at B.C., they are funded by ministry and huge industry, such as studios.

Speaker 1 (01:32:45):

There's very big studios in BC production houses, et cetera. Manitoba is very similar to us. They are mandated and funded by the provincial government and they have my counterpart. There has remained status quo for several years in that. Alberta - they're called DG. Alberta did UBC that they're the same. They get their funding by both industry and by, and I think it's small industry, but it's also funded by the government. And of course, you know, as I acknowledged earlier, you know, the CMF, yes, we have access to funding from the CMF. In my capacity, I've never gone to the CMF for funding but there is that opportunity, to look at the CMF because there's several areas in the CMF that are specifically designed for a sector, a film, a film and TV digital. So there is that opportunity to access federal funds.

Speaker 2 (01:34:04):

So that kind of touched up on how do we go about increasing that funding bridging the gap between other provinces? So you kind of spoke to that there. The other one here. I think that was good though. I know that one's definitely one that we can touch on as a follow-up and you know, allocate some more time to talking and communicating about that. Cause that is an important subject. And we don't have the figures for every province right at our fingertips right now, but that's something that we can definitely share with people.

Speaker 1 (01:34:37):

Yeah, yeah. We can definitely share. And if you could capture that, that question or there, or the corresponding chain of questions there, I would definitely look at that one bit more. Okay.

Speaker 2 (01:34:48):

"Is there anything I can do to help Sask Interactive in their work going forward? Can I help with any of the projects?"

Speaker 1 (01:34:56):

Absolutely. I'm always Looking for new ways new opinions, new ways of looking at things for sure. My details are on the website and please just reach out to me. I'm always looking for committee members to join. We have four new committees struck on the board. We have a communications committee, we have a finance audit committee. We have a membership committee and we also have a programs committee. So I would be more than willing to have or audience here or, and or members who would like to participate in helping us in that, in that regard, always open to open to that.

Speaker 2 (01:35:47):

Okay. And then chat kind of erupted with some accolades going to Kai. Just wanted to address that too. Hi, Kai. We can see you there. No, we appreciate Kai, especially I think was was a big help in helping

everyone kind of come out to this events and we appreciate all that support and what's coming from there. So because great for what the industry is looking at right now. And we need like a lot of heads all just kind of coming together and from different sides of the coin. And so it's, it's, it's good to, to kind of have that here and we see the support for sure.

Speaker 1 (01:36:33):

Yeah, no, for sure. Shaye, thanks for bringing that question to the forward because you know, I do acknowledge Kai and has worked in gaming Regina and Saskatchewan game dev and the discords in the chat rooms that are there and the voice that he has in that community. And it's all about being collaborative. I think that that's a very key message that I'm trying to deliver is we need to be in that collaboration mode and and understanding each other's abilities. And I would love to experience more on what's happening in the, in the game dev space in particular those those pieces. But I also want to make sure that our voice is also up there and received by other organizations as well. You know, we are not one voice that, or the only voice. So I want to make sure that part of those statements and those voices are clear and the transparency is is shared amongst us all as one. And I think that's that's going to be a key message moving forward is it's collaboration, I'm closing my comments off and then I see collaboration is the key word there.

Speaker 2 (01:37:59):

So I'm going to speak to communication a little more, but what this is, and I think this is my adult brain right now. I think we're towards the end of all the questions, the ones that I've aggregated or been able to pull. So this is like a last call. Submit your questions now. We're going to be closing things down at the latest in 10, just cause we started a little later. But as far as communication goes, we want to hear feedback. We want to hear feedback of how to you know, reach out to you guys, how it's going to be easier for you guys to reach out to us. If it is uncomfortable for you guys to talk to us, we'd love to break that barrier down. We don't want there to be any discomfort or, anything that makes you feel like you can't talk to us or we can't reach out to you or whatever that might be like, that's not why we're here. We're here to promote the industry. We're here to advocate for its members and community.

Speaker 1 (01:38:57):

Yeah, Shaye, I think it's a good segue on our abilities to talk about communication and collaboration. And, you know, some of those things we might've said a little bit too much, but I don't think we can say them enough in this space. And I think that part of our role in knowing where we can support and help and be transparent and all those other good things that comes back to our ability to hear what the community is saying. We're not shutting the door. We don't have blinders on, we're here to bring it's a different world and it's a different world of communicating. It's a different world sharing things, and I want to make sure that, and so you've reiterated it that everyone's voice is heard and it's just not listening to one voice.

Speaker 1 (01:39:58):

I don't know if I can say that enough these days. And I just wrote an op ed talking about what we want to do in the community and where we want to be in the community, how we want to support the community. And you know, some of that just comes back to very grassroots stuff. Right. And, you know, tell us if we're doing something wrong. You know, I will be the first proponent to say, I would love to hear the negative. Yeah. And share thoughts with me. That's what I'm here to do. I'm responsible to a board of directors, and I want to make sure that they're representative, that that voice is heard as well.

And I think that's very key here and and moving forward. Absolutely. You know I think we need to work together and I'm, I'm all about them.

Speaker 2 (01:40:51):

People are asking about the MSOC model and the op-ed can you speak to that a little bit or - sorry, the op-ed sorry. I saw two different things scrolling by there.

Speaker 1 (01:41:07):

Yeah, so the op-ed, I wrote that, and it was based on really the ability to talk about Sask Interactive. I, in the regards of what we are doing as part of our services to the community, I really talked about working with organizations such as Creative Sask and Innovation, Saskatchewan and other stakeholders as part of that. I talked about our vision and our mandate that we have as part of our long standing organization. I talked about growing and influencing public recognition and increasing our membership and to best position us to foster growth in the industry in Saskatchewan. I was taking pieces of that from the LMI study, which was one of our groundbreaking pieces. And then I talked a bit about funding, the STSI and Misty funding through innovation to Sask on and some other noteworthy investments in the tech sector, here we are the champion to help connect investors with business, small startups, young people interested in starting technology related to entrepreneur ventures, such as video game development.

Speaker 1 (01:42:30):

And then I closed off with the revamping of the digital gaming, gamified learning equity fund. And so that was an op-ed that I wrote that went out to the press in Saskatchewan. And basically is whoever used it and used it in their in the CBC, the newspaper print. Yeah, so I really wanted that as being a starting point of, you know, who we are, what we support and where some of our key initiatives around funding supporting the community gain, it was heavily leveraged off the game dev community. There will be future op-eds, not to challenge or to butt heads with other organizations, but op-eds that I want more of the press to know what we're doing in this space, in the community in Saskatchewan, you know, it's just not Regina and Saskatoon, right? So there's a lot of other things that we can be doing. And I think that the medium we need to use is obviously, maybe some press, just because it's a very virtual world.

Speaker 2 (01:43:45):

I just wanted to address there's some people talking about well, how we're doing town hall this time. I know it's weird. Usually what happens is there's a big room, a mic, at the other end of the hall, people get up and they get the chance to speak. We didn't have the time to allocate enough time, or we didn't know how long that was going to go. And it actually probably would have gone way over. We wouldn't have been able to address everyone here. So, t this point we're not allowing anyone else to talk from a vocal perspective. Chat is completely open right now. And that's something that we're probably going to do and make time for and address everything for the next town hall. When we can maybe sort of things out a little more set aside some time, this is a good opportunity to take a look at how much time was allocated, how much interest and it's awesome. We had so many people show up, so that's great to hear, but as of right now, it's just us chatting, but the, the chats on fire right now, just as soon as the Q and A went up. So, discussions in there, for sure.

Speaker 1 (01:44:49):

I'm glad Shaye because yes, we didn't know what for for format to have this town hall. We knew it was going to be virtual there, of course, is other software pieces that we can use. We've garnered and surprised subscribed to zoom. So in this instance it'll be the platform that w we'll probably use a game, but we're, we're open to looking at what other formats we can re use. And you know, we use Eventbright. We used a Survey Monkey, MailChimp. So we use the tools that are accessible to us to, to do this tonight's down town hall. And I do acknowledge that, you know, seeing 30 at the top of your 30, at one time 36 people were in here joining us as participants. And I'm looking over here at the chat. There is 99 still sitting in there. So, you know, and I know you've acknowledged some, a majority of them shaped, but I do want to open up that I'm opening up to review, or our next one that we're going to have in June. What kind of a format works best so that we can have maybe an open mic, and have discussions from participants and attendees versus having them go through the survey format. Right.

Speaker 2 (01:46:21):

Yeah. One thing I've kind of seen just in messages that I've gotten you know, and this is also just another call for like a last call for questions too. I think I've addressed everything, but I as shown before and I'm missing some stuff, so poke me again. But I think there's probably a need for people to just have an opportunity to communicating with us directly. Now one thing we did before the pandemic hit was we had Peers and Pints, which happens in, in some frequency and Regina whether it was a monthly meetup. And there was a couple of times where that faltered, but it was an opportunity for people to get together with the community. The director was always there to show up and chats and hang out and kind of meet one-on-one with the peers. And that's something that we definitely just need to look at doing more things, obviously, because this is something that's is a really cool opportunity for everyone to chat. And it doesn't have to be everyone in a giant room where everyone's kind of stuck here on zoom. But if you guys have any suggestions for things like that, let me know.

Speaker 1 (01:47:34):

Yeah. You know, I, we have one Peers and Pints at Rebellion there, and then the world kind of closed and I really enjoyed it because, you know Mike McNaughton came out. I heard of Mike, I met Mike once and he came and had beers. I met your wife at the very, at the first Peers and Pints, Shaye. So, you know, they are, they are a really social way of physically being with people. And I hope that comes back because I really enjoyed that night. You know, buying round of food, buying around the drinks is, is something that people tend to enjoy. Right. And I would love to get back to an environment like that and, and support local brewery.

Speaker 2 (01:48:18):

Okay. Can I just sorry - Steven just said Peers and Pizza, you know, so having something outside the bars, I think that's, that's totally fine. I don't know - do they still have like the the arcade at a pizza hut or a Chuck E cheese? I know that means you're on a Chuck E cheese anyway, but yeah, like, like more opportunities like that. So peers in pizza sounds good. Like I do like the feedback there that says it's blocking out people that are under 19. And we do workshops and we reach out to to mostly we've been working with in the past. But we'd like for more opportunities to sit down and kind of chat with people who are younger high school age, something like that. Yeah.

Speaker 1 (01:49:05):

And then back to one of the early comments in the town hall and how are you reaching people or, or how are you getting to, to acknowledge people in in what initiatives have you done? We did a youth it

was a bootcamp for lack of better words. I can't think of a title of off, and, but we did a boot camp for young people to do some VR, Oculus kind of AR stuff. And, you know I didn't attend that and that was in Regina, but you know, that, that would be something that would be kind of cool to hit that, that group, that age group, but also at 1831 college Avenue where our headquarters and our offices we have access to a huge boardroom. We could put on any event like that. We're, you know, we're social distant and you're talking about VR AR getting the youth engaged. And you know, we've talked about that here earlier tonight, a book engaging young people in the community, in that, RDIC knowing their video design program that they're establishing, et cetera, you know, that that's great. 10, 11, 12, right? So you're, you're hitting that audience. I would love that.

Speaker 2 ([01:50:20](#)):

I do have two questions that I think were the last ones that were here that definitely should be addressed. "Well, if the statement of liking here in critical feedback is true, may offer some?" Yes, we would love some. "I feel though, was all I've heard tonight is fluffy political speak in platitudes with what real action is Sask Interactive taking to help game developers in Saskatchewan are random educational events, the most you are able to do?" And, and if you can take only five minutes max with that, we have another one I want to address.

Speaker 1 ([01:50:55](#)):

Sure. Well, you know, this, this town hall was designed to acknowledge some of the things that we've been hearing out in the community some more vocal voices than other others. This was designed to not be fluffy. I don't think it was fluffy by any means, but I also don't think it was political. I mentioned the premier twice. So I don't think there was that angle here, the angle that I wanted to project and Shaye as moderator here. And there is board members here, you know we could solicit comments. But tonight wasn't designed on that. We wanted to lay out some of the work that we have done in the past. We wanted to lay out the plan that we have in this COVID era. We wanted to acknowledge the work that we're doing as part of supporting programs, such as global game jam.

Speaker 1 ([01:51:52](#)):

You know, I acknowledged that heavily here in this discussion that was designed to one person to Kai Hutchens. So I wanted to acknowledge that as part of an industry association that supports all, we want to support everything that we're doing as part of game development. That's part of video game development, and that is just one. So if I took a look at any other pieces here that wanted to support, let's talk about game development, game jam video development. I think it's it's a key piece obviously, and it might be on more people's minds. What are we doing in that space? And I think we have the opportunity now to kind of look at more things about that. I think there's an opportunity here, Shyae, as you know, in your company, in your space, about video in game development. Yes. I acknowledge that and I think that's part of what we want to do here as part of the mandate to grow forward.

Speaker 2 ([01:52:54](#)):

And that, that is like a really heavy question again like kind of towards the tail end. What I would also like to do is I'm going to take a screenshot of that. We're going to directly address that to further degree. And we want to open up a public discussion on that because we, again like the critical public feedback, like we want it and we want to address it. We want to work towards whatever concerns we can kind of help out with as much as possible. So so the last one I saw here - "do you have any plans to support students coming out of high school or post-secondary who are looking to enter the industry?"

Speaker 1 ([01:53:44](#)):

It has been a question that has surfaced more recently. I'll use the RDI program that that trades program I just heard about the new video game design program that they're looking at. And they've asked us to support them as in a form of they're looking for an Oculus, they're looking for the software that to support the Oculus and in that program which I use the check sign, go, go get, get one. I, I think that's an example of where we're supporting the youth and then the younger programming people in in, in the high school system also university. Yeah. You know Sask Polytech here in Saskatoon, you know, they they've got their acknowledged program and video game design. There's, I don't know what it's called that don't quote me, our AIs in recording arts institutes here in Saskatoon - Doug and his team over there.

Speaker 1 ([01:54:52](#)):

They're, they're doing 3D developer, they're doing animation. So these are young people that can come in and take these programs that may have a grade 12 and maybe have some early university. So those are just examples of youth and the younger crowd that we would like to be more supportive of. I've met with several times now. And they are looking to expand their, their their portfolio of programs now that they have not announced it yet, but they're looking to do a new company that's going to help the Disney's of the world and bring Disney designers and developers here to to create animated, more advanced animation keep your ear to the press for that one. And that one will be announced. So yes, there is there is a mechanism for us to be part of that as part of the youth piece.

Speaker 2 ([01:55:57](#)):

Okay. I think that's probably we have enough time for closing remarks. And then we'll talk, talking about how we can put forward stuff.

Speaker 1 ([01:56:08](#)):

Closing remarks are not closing off this town hall. I want to reiterate that we will make sure that you know, I've got two pages of notes already as part of the town hall tonight. But you know, I really do want to thank everyone for participating in this virtual town hall. I was having some anxiety, but I was also having some excitement about being in front of, you know, 35 participants who had registered for today. I will begin by saying that I was honored to hear the feedback and comments from the questions and the responses that we had Shaye as you know, that came through the survey results. And again, you know being clear and hearing those voices, I think we, we have tonight, and as as myself and as the board, I think we're we've got some interesting work ahead of us here.

Speaker 1 ([01:57:11](#)):

So, and thanks to the attendees here, but I also think that you know, it's, I call it a new journey, but it's really not that it's really revitalizing that journey. I think COVID has been a huge depression for the industry, but also there is greens at the end of that. I see the work that's being done in some of the industries, chairs, the twisted payers, the noodle cakes of the world, you know, that's here in Saskatchewan and those young startups, you know, Sam Ramsey's online here tonight. You know, I'm happy to see her. Sam sits on this advisory committee that I chair, you know, what I wanted to talk to her and bring her on because of what she's doing and as a female in the industry. So it comes down to that transparency. And, you know, I know I can't say enough of those words, but I think, I speak on behalf of Sask Interactive as that voice and being those champions to what we're doing and what we can do in the future. But I think, I thank everyone for the responses tonight in this, in the survey responses

and for the chat here that, Shaye so graciously championed to monitor and track. So, will close on, on those comments, but again, it's not closing this town hall by any means. It's only promoting us to be more progressive as we move forward.

Speaker 2 ([01:58:48](#)):

Yeah, I I'm, I'm really happy to see all the responses that are there. And I hope to see all of you guys at the next town hall and going forward what we're going to do is we're going to be sending out a follow up for some feedback. We'd love to get any feedback in terms of the talk, what you like to hear, what you didn't like to hear, what you didn't hear what you'd like us to touch on. And also, I know there was a lot of concerns with kind of how the town hall was. It is important for me to make sure that we have enough time to leverage people to speak more at the next one and speak vocally. You know, everyone's got mics nowadays. We can do that. So, that's definitely in the plan for the next one.

Speaker 1 ([01:59:36](#)):

Thank you, Shaye. Appreciate that. Ive got a contact slide up here. You want to take a screenshot of that folks? Also I think there is another slide that then going to forgive me here. Yes. I will post this link into the chat and it is just a second. Shayee

Speaker 2 ([02:00:42](#)):

We have in the communications. We have, let me just double check there.

Speaker 1 ([02:00:53](#)):

Not too sure. One quick second here.

Speaker 2 ([02:01:33](#)):

Did not, did not get a link. Did you send that somewhere else?

Speaker 1 ([02:01:37](#)):

Oh, it's in the chat.

Speaker 2 ([02:01:40](#)):

I do not see it on the chats. I might be wrong though. Did you send it directly to someone else? I think you might've. I think I put it to everyone. There we go. Is it there now? Yep.

Speaker 1 ([02:01:56](#)):

Okay. All right. That link that I just posted this story it was buried in an email that is our survey monkey host town hall feedback survey. So grab that link everyone and please I I've kept it kind of short, but I'm looking for feedback from tonight's posts townhall, and that I'm looking forward to everyone. Everyone's comments in there. So whatever you have and any other comments that maybe Shaye didn't get through, or maybe that I didn't cover enough on or that I didn't go in-depth enough, to please et me know in the survey, and those will be compiled, there'll be shared with the board and we'll be using them to.

Speaker 2 ([02:02:48](#)):

Thank you very much, guys.

Speaker 1 ([02:02:51](#)):

Everyone have a good night, take care all and be safe out there.