

# SM2 CAPITAL PARTNERS

## Company Newsletter



*Our Business is FAMILY.*



## A Message From Our CEO: Naim Ali

Dear SM2 Valued Employees, Partners and Directors,

As I write this letter on a warm fall evening, I must reflect on the unpredictability of the human experience. At the start of 2020, our leadership teams were excited to embark on a cultural and strategic transformation of our organization. The team was focused on painting a picture of what our organization could be in fifteen years and how we could care for our people over the course of their careers.

Then, on March 15, 2020, COVID-19 locked down the world. Airlines stopped flying and the Calgary International Airport came to a halt. Consequently, all businesses, especially those related to travel and tourism, including the SM2 portfolio, suffered devastating impacts in every facet of their operations. Suddenly, our focus was on the concerns around the health of our employees and our fears about the present economic uncertainties.

Eight months later, the world has changed in ways few of us would have predicted. It has also had a profound effect on us, both at an organizational level and as individuals. In this inaugural newsletter for SM2 Capital Partners, I would like to share with you my thoughts around how we dealt with the crisis and what we must do looking forward. After all, we are navigating this together, as a big family.

First, words cannot capture the immense pride and gratitude I have for each of you, our employees and our partners, as you demonstrate support for one another, your customers and the communities that we serve. I have been inspired by your resilience. During this overwhelming and difficult time, you have shown up and stayed true to the core values that we stand for. For this, I am forever grateful. It is these core values that we all must strive to embed in the decision-making process of our organization. We must continually be clear about what we stand for and what those values are. I won't ever forget all the people from all our business units, Budget Rent A Car, Calgary Park & Jet, Cash Casino Calgary and Red Deer, Fortress Insurance and the Regency Suites Hotel, who came together to triumph over incredible obstacles. What truly stands out for me is the way that each of you showed how much you CARE about each other and our SM2 family. I hope you will enjoy reading the incredible stories around our core values as much as I did.

Second, I whole heartedly accept that I do not have all the answers. Great questions come from our front-line employees and senior leadership. We should all recognize the importance of being open to ideas and change. Our core value: Be Courageous means to ask each other questions. This is complimented by another core value, Humility. This means that we listen to one another and support each other, especially when we are vulnerable. Let's think and talk about what our company will look like as we emerge from the effects of the pandemic. How can we work together to develop and make each of our business units the best in their sector?

Lastly, there is no doubt that the pandemic triggered tragic loss, intense anxiety, and disruptive economic consequences. However, it also brought out the best in humanity. I have seen it in your continued demonstrations of resilience and commitment to supporting each other, our customers, our stakeholders and our city. Now, we are all adapting to this new reality. It is my hope that by approaching this new reality thoughtfully and with our core values in mind, we will grow stronger as individuals and as a company. This is just the beginning of an extraordinary journey for all of us.

With gratitude,  
Naim Ali



*"Words cannot capture the immense pride and gratitude I have for each of you, our employees and our partners, as you demonstrate support for one another, your customers and the communities that we serve."*

*– Naim Ali*

## Core Value Stories

Clear company core values ensure that all employees are working towards the same culture: our core values shape that culture. Over time, our values are our company's DNA and the very building blocks of the company organism. When everyone in the organization is aligned to our core values, imagine how easy decision-making is at all levels. Imagine people who feel like they finally found a company with the right fit and now spend their energy trying to help reach the goals of the company rather than just job security.

### Be Courageous

**Ask tough questions. Be bold. Be optimistic. Be vulnerable.**

"Mr. Harpreet Hiro from Calgary Park and Jet is the leader on our health and safety committee. It takes a lot of courage to put our measures in place to talk to our customers and to talk to our employees about how we can be safe. Mr. Hiro does that and he's courageous in that. Another, more literal example, is a story about Mr. Hiro taking pictures of an intruder on the lot attempting to break-in to a car. We want everybody to be safe, but that is an example of being courageous." – Naim Ali, CEO, SM2 Capital



"One of the side effects of Covid has been the increase in demand for courier services to keep up with everyone ordering online, and one of the major players in this industry is Amazon. Through a team effort including Jamil and Margo, we were able to connect with a few of the different delivery service providers, independent operators that are contracted by Amazon to deliver items throughout Calgary and the surrounding area. The availability to purchase new cargo vans has been a challenge over the past few years with limited production by the manufacturers. Our value to Be Courageous was displayed by Vinh Khau, who was bold and optimistic to reach out and ask our dealer network if they had any cargo vans available, even if it was just one van at a time. In doing so, Vinh was able to source and purchase brand new cargo vans within a couple of weeks which essentially doubled our fleet in this category. We have since successfully created a new partnership with Amazon." – Gurdeep Singh, General Manager, Budget Rent a Car



"Joe Chapple from Cash Casino goes the extra mile. Joe used to own the casino but that doesn't stop him from being seen carrying around a dolly to move furniture and garbage out of the building. Joe was instrumental in helping to get the casino ready for the public and for helping to clear out some old storage areas in the building. Joe exemplifies the Aspire to Excellence value." – Lisa Fraser, HR Manager, Cash Casino Calgary

### Aspire To Excellence

**Be great in everything you do. Accept failures and learn the lessons. Slow is smooth, and smooth is fast.**

"Princess Manuel is a valuable employee of Cash Casino, because every day she aspires to achieve excellence. Princess always greets customers with a smile and great attitude. She is willing to help our customers or fellow coworkers without question. Princess is a leader with very high working standards and always completes any tasks given. Way to go on being a valuable strong employee at Cash Casino Calgary." – Lynnea Rye, Server, Cash Casino

"Two months ago, Calgary experienced a strong hailstorm that caused extreme damages to houses and vehicles. Car rentals went up and our location got busy. Our team knew that people needed vehicles badly and we responded. We made sure that every renter will have a vehicle, we provided quick service and showed that we care by giving them a reasonable price; telling them that we were sorry for what happened and encouraging them that everything will be alright. It was a team effort and I'm proud that I'm part of it." – Mercy Esposo, Counter Agent, Budget Rent a Car

## People Matter

**We care and respect each other. We celebrate our differences and diversity.**

"Isolated but not alone: Zlata Trbojevic at Regency Suites is taking People Matter to the next level. On our two self-isolation floors we have several guests from Italy. Communication has been a struggle but with the help of our multilingual staff (and Google Translate!), Zlata has checked on the guests daily to ensure they know they are not alone and has gone above and beyond to make sure they have everything they need." – Shelley McMurray, General Manager, Regency Suites

"We are a team that works together for the benefit of all. We meet each day for lunch where we discuss business/family issues and successes. We pride ourselves in this team/family environment as it makes us more efficient and productive but also adds to the positive workplace environment. We can ask each other for help. We depend on each other and our staff have learned from our example that they can do the same." – Len Howland, Security Manager, Century Casino Calgary

"Sikin has demonstrated that People Matter and Aspiring to Excellence by providing outstanding customer service that customers are leaving 5-star Google Reviews and positive feedback on a daily basis." – Wade Stender, Operations and Revenue Manager, Budget Rent a Car



"With her kindness, Emma Xu from the Regency Suites exemplifies the core value "People Matter." When she is serving guests in our breakfast room she makes guests so happy first thing in the morning! Also, when we were short staffed, Emma ensured a great first impression for our guests by helping with the landscaping outside, including picking up garbage." – Shelley McMurray, General Manager, Regency Suites

## Do The Right Thing

**Go the extra mile, especially when no one is looking. Be personally accountable. Our values and ethics are above self-interest. No excuses.**

"Tia Tilly noticed something amiss in the casino and decided to check what was going on and when she realized what she had found, she called on her fellow employees to help out. By being observant of what is going on around her she insured that the company and staff were protected." – Aly Bhimji, Operation Manager, Cash Casino Calgary

"A few weeks back, at the end of a very long day, I received a breakdown call from one of our customers. She got a flat tire. She was told it would be a few hours until a towtruck was available to assist with the tire change. Our customer called us back and explained that she couldn't wait that long as she needed to get to the hospital ASAP as her mother was there ill. William Hawes overheard the conversation between myself and our customer, and immediately volunteered to meet her and quickly change the tire for her. William's shift was over for the day, but he went the extra mile to make sure our customer was taken care of." – Adam Sassano, Service Manager, Budget Rent a Car



"I would like to nominate Aly Bhimji as an outstanding employee. Aly always promotes the company values and vision and has had an enormously positive impact on the casino since he started in June 2020. Aly often exemplifies Do the Right Thing as a core value. Specifically, he was instrumental in reorganizing the Cash Casino Calgary [as the Operations Manager]." – Lisa Fraser, HR Manager Cash Casino Calgary



"Together We are Stronger: this value could not be more accurate during these uncertain times. As a team, we reopened the hotel just in time for what would have been the Calgary Stampede. Even though the Calgary Stampede canceled all events this year, this fantastic team kept their spirits up and joined other businesses in the industry, dressing up [in Stampede gear] for the whole ten days. A company is only as good as its people, and we sure have THE BEST TEAM IN TOWN!" – Maria Guerrero, Sales and Marketing Manager, Regency Suites

## Humility

**Be caring and compassionate. Freely offer praise and recognition. Admit our mistakes. Never let personality or style get in the way of working well with others.**

"I would like to recognize our CEO, Naim Ali, for exemplifying the core value of Humility. It is not often that you have a kind and compassionate leader running a corporation. From the beginning, he recognized that his leadership of the company throughout the pandemic was crucial. In doing so, he made sure that each and every employee was supported by sending out regular memos and notices from his desk. This line of communication made employees feel that the leadership of this company freely offers praise and recognizes their efforts, especially throughout such a tumultuous time." – Deepkiran Kainth, HR Generalist, SM2 Capital

"David has always taken the time to talk and meet with each one of us to discuss how certain things are handled or completed. He has always allowed each member to carefully showcase their work and see the process from start to finish, all with positivity and an open mindset. An example of this, that can be seen very clearly is when he has worked with Anh on several deadlines and documents. The two of them help each other and have improved the past system. As a new member, he has allowed me to implement and learn my Excel skills to further help Anh finish reports. David has encapsulated what it takes to be a leader in my eyes and continues to take the time to help each team member." – Raghuwar Dutt, Junior Accountant, Accounting

## Together We Are Stronger

**We make problem solving a team sport.**

"Month-end, deadlines, struggles: all of these are resolved when we share food together at lunch time and put a smile on our faces. Just like "ACCOUNTING", no matter how small or how big problems are, they can be solved if we are working together and helping each other. Together We Are Stronger!" – Nerissa Agullano, Payroll Administrator, Accounting

"Along with several other Budget Rent a Car employees, Amadou and William were an instrumental part of the team to support our casino operation to hang up hundreds of curtain barriers overnight for the successful reopening of Cash Casino Calgary. The team worked collaboratively with our casino staff, and even stayed extra late that evening to ensure it was successfully completed." – Jamil Ali, COO, SM2 Capital

"When casinos reopened and we had about three days' notice. The managers all banded together to get operational again and get a plan in place so that our employees felt supported despite coming back during unprecedented times. All managers were on the floor for what ended up being a busy opening weekend, helping across each department wherever we could." – Stephanie Tang, Marketing & Guest Service Manager, Century Casino



## Photo Contest - We Have a Winner!

Thank you to all those that participated in the photo contest for the Newsletter. We are happy to announce and congratulate Chef Paul as the winner of a \$50 Gift Card with his delicious dinner design and philosophical caption:

*"This is my dinner design at Cash Casino [with] pan-seared cod fillet, baby shrimp, white wine tomato basil sauce and asparagus, crispy sesame ring and garlic mash potato. I designed this interesting [dish]: no matter where we work, the company is like a crispy sesame ring, we are like the cod fillet. When we enter this ring, you have to work hard to add flavor and color to yourself. Tomato white wine basil sauce is the flavor and color we need. If the cod fish has no flavor and color, it becomes meaningless in this ring."* – Chef Paul, Cash Casino



## Resilience Award

In September this year, our business units under the SM2 Capital Partners umbrella were selected as a finalist for the Calgary Chamber of Commerce Resilient Business Award. We were shortlisted down to the final 3 out of 100 companies in the Corporate category (defined by companies with more than 175 employees). Although we did not win the award this year, this nomination is a true testament to our core value: Together We Are Stronger. I won't soon forget employees from Budget Rent A Car who helped open the casinos by hanging homemade shower curtains with our casino team. Or the team from the Regency Suites Hotel who worked tirelessly to open on June 29, laying out a new breakfast buffet that can be accessed safely by our guests, and our housekeeping staff use of innovation using Google Translate to communicate with our Italian guests. At Calgary Park & Jet, shuttle drivers are continuing to take travellers safely to and from the Calgary International Airport. Being a finalist recognizes you and your contribution to the SM2 family. During these trying times you have continued to make our businesses better by staying true to our core values. And that is the best example of what resiliency truly is. – Naim Ali, CEO, SM2 Capital

## ★★★★★ Google Reviews

We are proud of our team for all of their hard work and commitment to our customers. Below are some samples of our favorite reviews on Google from the past few months. We look forward to receiving and publishing more of your fantastic reviews in coming editions of the newsletter!



"We use Park and Jet when we are flying out of Calgary. Recently I had broken my leg and I called to see if they had a handicap bus. They made arrangements and I was easily transported to the airport and back. I appreciated the service and care I received. It made the trip much easier. Thank you very much Park and Jet!"



"I am here to recommend Budget Car rental @ 5210 Macleod Trail SW. Priscilla was wonderful to deal with and got me a great value for my rental. She understood my requirement for the extension and accommodated the request very efficiently. I highly recommend this center as long as Priscilla is there. I am into my 2nd extension of the rental and receiving very competitive prices and service all along. Good job & thank you."



"An excellent place to stay! It is very clean and comfortable. Special thanks to housekeepers for how much they care to make guests comfortable: for example, kitchen utensils are not just cleaned, they arranged with so much attention and care for the guests!"



"I have only eaten good food and had good times at this casino. I go there more for their delicious food especially the PRIME RIB- literally the best:) The staffs were really caring towards their guests. You can go with your friends, family, partner or whosoever you wish to. Do try their 10 oz. prime rib served with potato, vegetables, yorkshire pudding and your choice of soup or salad. You won't regret it!"