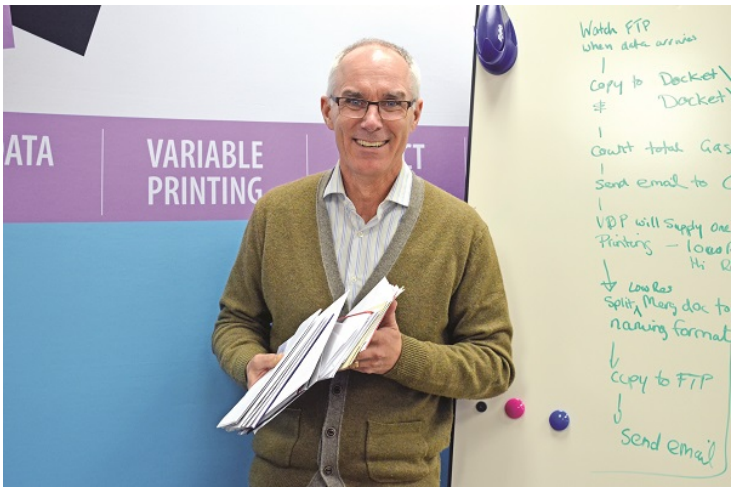
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Local business steps up to keep Women?s March momentum going



By Brock Weir

With his daughters off at university and his wife preparing for her Masters, it was left to Aurora's Steve Falk to ?represent the ladies in his family? at the January 21 Women's March, which brought over 60,000 people to the streets of Toronto to send a message to politicians around the world.

Moved by the experience, however, Mr. Falk is not content to sit back content that he just took part in the March; it is a movement that needs to keep going in order to effect change.

Following the successful protests which sprang up around the world, the organizers shifted focus to ?10/100? issuing ten calls to action over the coming days. The first call to action is to write a postcard to politicians about what matters to you and how you plan to fight for it down the road.

To that end, Mr. Falk and his Industrial Parkway-based company, Prime Data, have stepped up to make things easy for Canadian Marchers. Through their website, interested individuals can fill out a brief web form with their name, their politician of choice, and what they're marking for, and it will be printed off and sent to Canadian Members of Parliament free of charge.

?It was reassuring to know there were that many people who shared your sentiments and cared enough to hit the streets about it,? says Mr. Falk, reflecting on his experiences in the Toronto March. ?There has been a lot of hand-wringing and a lot of ?Where's the free world going?' kind of stuff, and I tend to put my head down, forge forward and try not to make that negative background hum interfere with my every day. Every once in a while, though, you have to step out and say, ?It is important just to say something.?

The idea to offer his company's resource to the cause came about while writing a blog post of his experiences. As he processed his thoughts, March organizers formally launched 10/100 and the creative wheels started turning.

?I'm in the postcard business and I create millions of these personal communications and I was so thrilled they realised that a postcard could have a lot of effect,? says Mr. Falk. ?If they get 150 letters about something in a Senator's office, they think it is a pretty serious thing. It only takes that much. You can put 25,000 names on an electric petition or on a Facebook post and it doesn't make that much of a difference. Knowing that most people don't have stamps anymore in their homes, or they might not have postcard printer stock, I thought we can just make this happen. Within a couple of hours, we can send postcards to people.?

Since the program's launch on January 25, they have had a response from people in such wide-ranging communities as London, ON, Drumheller, AB, and even individuals in France and The Netherlands.

?I am not sure what I would call a success; maybe the dozens of postcards that go out during the day might affect an MP's opinion and I won't know, but writing to your MP should be a thing again. If we just send that message out, maybe the next time someone suggests writing to your MP, maybe they'll do it.

?It is such a small gesture that could potentially change an MP's attitude towards an issue. People often say, ?I can't effect change, I don't even vote because I can't effect change.' Maybe you can't effect change by putting happy faces on Facebook posts or signing electronic petitions, but physical mail has an impact.?