

For Immediate Release

New Indigenous language shelf signage now in Northern/NorthMart stores

New community initiative promotes Indigenous language preservation

Winnipeg MB, October 2, 2017 – Starting today, Northern/NorthMart customers will see and hear more Indigenous languages in their community store. To support the revitalization and preservation of indigenous language, Northern/NorthMart will now provide indigenous translations on shelf labels and signs across more than 80 grocery categories and everyday items.

The program, which is believed to be the first offered by a major Canadian retailer, is aimed at communicating in the language actively used in the community to enhance the customer’s shopping experience, as well as promote the use and learning of the language. QR code* enabled shelf labels will help support education by providing the translation in audio formats – helping non-indigenous language speakers to hear the proper pronunciation.

“This initiative responds to our customer’s needs and their community priorities, which are closely intertwined at North West, and go to the heart of our community promise to help make a positive, progressive difference in each community we serve,” said Craig Gilpin, Executive Vice President, The North West Company.

“This is an ambitious translation project, with 121 communities across northern Canada and over 30 different languages or dialects,” said Gilpin. “It recognizes the importance of language to sustaining culture around the world and especially within the indigenous communities that we serve across Canada,”

In addition to using professional translators, Northern/NorthMart collaborated with Elders, language teachers, and cultural centres at a local and regional level to ensure accurate and culturally appropriate translations.

The Customer Experience

1. Green shelf labels will be easily visible to customers on translated categories and everyday items such as flour.
2. Using a smartphone and QR reader application, customers will scan the QR code.
3. Once scanned customers will hear the word in English followed by the translation



* available in select locations

About The North West Company

North West is a retailer serving rural communities and urban neighbourhoods in Canada, Alaska, the South Pacific and Caribbean. We are committed to helping our customers live better by bringing them the best products and services together with a tradition of community support. North West's Northern and NorthMart stores are the largest local private employer of Indigenous people in Canada, with over 3,100 employees and an annual payroll exceeding \$65 million.

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