

Here to Help – 200 Years and Counting: BMO Unveils a Modern Way to Wish It Forward

- *BMO invites people everywhere to wish it forward in big and small ways throughout its bicentennial year*
- *Wishing it forward is easy: choose your category, write your wish, and toss your digital coin online at www.BMO200.com, or toss your digital coin right into a first-of-its-kind BMO200 fountain*

TORONTO, January 24, 2017 – To mark its 200th year, BMO Financial Group today announced it would fulfill a number of wishes both big and small to thank the communities where the bank does business.

Throughout 2017, BMO will be granting wishes across a number of categories, such as Green, Togetherness, Legacy, and Community. As part of the celebration, the bank is calling on individuals and organizations to wish it forward by visiting www.BMO200.com or by visiting one of the interactive BMO200 fountains, unveiled today at First Canadian Place in Toronto. Cameron Fowler, Group Head, Canadian Personal & Commercial Banking, and other members of the Executive Committee, were on hand for the initiative's official kickoff.

“We could think of no better way to celebrate and say thank you than to give back in a way that speaks directly to who we are as a company, and that reinforces the promise we’ve made since we opened for business: *we’re here to help*,” said Mr. Fowler. “We’re proud to be Canada’s first bank. This initiative is a modern build on what we’ve always known to be true: that we are only as strong as the customers and communities we serve.”

Making a Wish

BMO200 wishing fountains will be visiting several cities throughout 2017 and are open for the public to make and share wishes. Wishes can also be made and shared anytime from anywhere through the digital experience at www.BMO200.com. Whether in person by visiting a BMO200 fountain or through the website, visitors simply choose their category, write their wish, and toss their digital coin on the screen towards the fountain. Both the fountain and the digital experience are interactive and come to life when the wish is made. Participants will also have the opportunity to share their wish with friends.

The first BMO200 fountain, which stands 17 feet tall, will be open to the community to wish it forward and share their wishes at First Canadian Place in downtown Toronto until early March. Afterward, the fountain will travel to Chicago for the spring, then to Montreal for the summer, before heading back to Toronto to celebrate the date of the bank’s bicentennial on November 3rd, 2017. Smaller, mobile versions of the fountain will be visiting a number of locations as well as BMO sponsored events and activations throughout the year.

“We’re expecting to see a variety of wishes made through the BMO200 fountain in the coming months – everything from greening public spaces to recognizing people who have gone above and beyond for their community,” added Mr. Fowler. “BMO’s wish is that, in any small way, the wishes that we’re able to fulfill may cause a ripple effect that can be long lasting.”

The BMO200 Fountain

A first of its kind, the BMO200 fountain was designed to merge old technology with progressive digital components. It was developed through a collaboration of BMO’s experiential marketing agency Mosaic, a team of highly skilled technology and infrastructure experts at Globacore, the web development and digital experience team at Secret Location, and the creative talents of Canadian multidisciplinary artists Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins. The design pays homage to the past by opting to use over 50,000 flip dots – an early technology used for train station destination boards – along with digital technologies that animate as the fountain is interacted with. It’s a larger than life kinetic structure that also stays true to the bank’s commitment to innovation and reaching customers in new ways.

“We intrinsically saw a link between coins, making a wish, and creating legacy. We wanted the movement and flow to represent the action of a coin hitting water through a ripple effect created on the surface,” said Mr. Borins. “Much like BMO’s rich history, the fountain design bridges the past with the future through the use of flip dots and the flow of complex technological sequencing used to make the installation interactive.”

Marking 200 Years

A celebratory volume of BMO’s history is now available to commemorate its bicentennial. “A Vision Greater than Themselves: The Making of Bank of Montreal, 1817-2017” written by Dr. Laurence B. Mussio, a McMaster University business historian, is available [here](#).

To make a wish, please visit www.BMO200.com.

For more stories from BMO and the impact it’s making in communities, visit www.history.bmo.com.

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About BMO Financial Group

Established in 1817, and currently marking its 200th year of operations, BMO Financial Group is a highly diversified financial services provider based in North America. With total assets of \$688 billion as of October 31, 2016, and more than 45,000 employees, BMO provides a broad range of personal and commercial banking, wealth management and investment banking products and services to more than 12 million customers and conducts business through three operating groups: Personal and Commercial Banking, Wealth Management and BMO Capital Markets.

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