



# FRONTIER CENTRE FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Profile Series

*Profile of:*

## SCOTT & TRENT YOUNG

***" We have created a stepping stone for these young guys  
into the workforce."***

Trent and Scott Young are two Indigenous Australian entrepreneurs and business leaders who are proving that Indigenous entrepreneurs can be successful in all sorts of business ventures, including ones that are not tied to an Indigenous cultural focus. There is still a widely-held perception that Indigenous Australian businesses are limited to cultural areas such as Indigenous arts, bush food, and tourism operations.

Instead the two brothers have decided to focus on building careers for younger workers in the open market.



"We have created a stepping stone for these young guys into the workforce. We are passionate about giving them the support and confidence they need to find their feet both in society and professionally," said managing director of Young Guns, a shipping container removal business, in an interview in May 2015 with the Courier Mail newspaper. The two brother's family comes from the Koa people, an Indigenous group outside Winston, Queensland.

"There is an aging population issue within the supply chain industry and here at Young Guns we believe we can usher in the next generation," Young added. Although based in Brisbane, the business has offices in Sydney, Perth, and Melbourne. It now unloads an average of 140,000 shipping containers every year, and this is growing.

The family-owned Indigenous business

was founded in 2004 and focuses on the young and has employed more than 400 young people with the average age of 24. A few years ago, they were given the Queensland Industry Excellence award and the Young Guns Container Crew took out the Queensland Supply Chain Management category at the Supply Chain and Logistics Association of Australia Awards.

The two brothers originally started out in professional rugby and both were headed towards careers in the National Rugby League (NRL). The business had very humble beginnings and was started for more practical reasons at the start.

"It was pretty much just three guys in the back of a container in Brisbane and then a couple of guys from the football club ... (it was about) finding work for guys who were pursuing their career but needed a bit of work to get them by," Scott said, in an August 2015 interview with the Courier Mail.

Trent Young said the brothers were inspired by the hard work of their mother and two grandfathers who ran farms in rural Queensland. On his LinkedIn profile, Trent Young wrote the following: "Trent attributes his business success largely to the exposure attained growing up with some of Australia's best entrepreneurs, 'farmers'."

Also, on his LinkedIn profile, Trent mentioned how his rugby experience influenced his later business practices: "The basic principles of elite sporting teams have also provided significant learnings that Trent believes are easily transitioned to business. These learnings centre around resilience, the importance of extreme ownership and the creation of thriving environments where people are not just satisfied and productive but also engaged in creating the future- the organisation's and their own."

They were also motivated by the autonomy they would receive by running their own business venture. They also wanted to build something tangible and lasting for

their future families. Research shows that besides personal challenge, commitment to community and family was one of the main motivators for Indigenous entrepreneurial leaders. Michelle Evans and Ian Williamson are two scholars at Charles Stuart University and Melbourne Business School, respectively. They have produced a study (featured in a November 2015 edition of the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper) that looks at the experiences of Indigenous entrepreneurial leadership using a three-year longitudinal study.

The study found that although they were as ambitious as other entrepreneurs (they wanted to double their employees over the next five years and they wanted to increase their revenues tenfold in the same period), they also wanted to improve future generations.

Although the brothers are proud to be Indigenous, it is not the focus of their business or the service they provide. They also hire young workers from all cultural backgrounds. It might not even be noticed that there are two Indigenous Australian people at the helm of the venture. The Young Brothers are showing that Indigenous Australian entrepreneurs can enter into and succeed in all areas of business and don't have to focus solely on Indigenous culture or identity to do so. In fact, the Evans and Williamson study found that Indigenous businesses that focused less on cultural products had higher revenues, which might be attributed to wider market appeal to all communities.

The brothers, of course, did focus on a business area that focuses on a product and service of interest to all Australians and in all communities.

The rest, as they say, was history. Now, they employ hundreds of workers across the main state capitals of Australia. Now, it generates well over \$20 million in revenue from packing and unpacking shipping containers for some of Australia's largest multinational companies. According to the



brothers, they intended over the next five years to raise their number of employees to 700 and they are exploring other markets including nearby New Zealand.



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#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Joseph Quesnel is a research fellow for the Frontier Centre for Public Policy who mainly focuses on Aboriginal matters and property rights. Presently based in eastern Nova Scotia, he is from northeastern Ontario and has Métis ancestry from Quebec.

He graduated from McGill University in 2001, where he majored in political science and history. He specialized in Canadian and U.S. politics, with an emphasis on constitutional law. He also has a Master of Journalism degree from Carleton University, where he specialized in political reporting. His master's research project focused on reformist Indigenous thinkers in Canada.

He is currently studying theology at the Atlantic School of Theology in Halifax.

In the past while as a policy analyst, he was the lead researcher on the Frontier Centre's flagship Aboriginal Governance Index, which is measured perceptions of quality of governance and services on Prairie First Nations. For over two years, he covered House standing committees as well as Senate committees. Quesnel's career in journalism includes several stints at community newspapers in Northern Ontario, including in Sudbury and Espanola. He also completed a radio broadcasting internship at CFRA 580 AM, a talk radio station in Ottawa, and the well-known Cable Public Affairs Channel (CPAC).

He is a past editor of C2C Journal, an online Canadian publication devoted to political commentary. He wrote a weekly column for the Winnipeg Sun and contributes to The Taxpayer, the flagship publication of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

Quesnel's policy commentaries have appeared all over Canada, including the Globe and Mail, the National Post, the Financial Post, the Vancouver Sun, the Ottawa Citizen, the Montreal Gazette, the Calgary Herald, Winnipeg Free Press, among many other major papers. Over the years, he has been featured as a guest commentator on many radio and television news programs.