



It's almost...

# pride month

here's what your local queer organization wants businesses to know:

This infographic was prepared by Coastal Queers for Ucluelet & Tofino-based businesses as we come up to Pride month in June. This is an educational offering for businesses who are interested in learning more about engaging with and supporting the 2S/LGBTQQIA+ community.

## A BIT ABOUT COASTAL QUEERS

### WHO ARE WE?

Coastal Queers is a local non-profit organization dedicated to creating representation, resources, and collaboration for the queer community.

### HOW WE WORK WITH BUSINESSES:

Coastal Queers wants to support businesses in learning how to create joyful, barrier-free experiences for queer staff and patrons. We have incredible workshops that provide education about how to implement best practices in the workplace.



IG @COASTALQUEERS

### WHAT DO WE DO?

1. **REPRESENTATION** ✧  
Create space for queer folks in surf culture through our Queer Surf program; Consult on events, programs, and reports to ensure that queer voices are being heard in our community, and community events are safe and enjoyable for queer folks

2. **RESOURCES**  
Offer educational workshops to a variety of stakeholders in the community, including healthcare professionals and business owners, about how to implement practices that support queer folks and contribute to their safety in the workplace; Create healthcare resources that address the intersection of queer specific healthcare and access in a rural community; Host Queer Youth Connections, a program dedicated to creating community for queer youth in our region through monthly meet-ups, book sharing programs, and more

3. **COLLABORATION**  
Regularly bring together queer folks for fun and connective events in our region; Work with a variety of partners who are dedicated to supporting our mission (Tourism Tofino, Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, Surf Sister)

## DEFINITIONS

**Cisheteronormativity:** an operating system that relies on gendered & binary practices to create assumptive spaces, language habits, cultures, and norms. Cisheteronormativity assumes that everyone is cisgender and heterosexual until stated otherwise, and this informs a variety of cultural and systemic assumptions.

**Cisgender (cis):** people whose gender identity matches their assigned sex at birth. (eg. you are assigned 'girl' at birth, and you continue to identify with this gender throughout your life)

**Heterosexual (het):** people who are attracted to the 'opposite' binary gender (eg. man attracted to woman, woman attracted to man)

## SO WE'RE COMING UP TO PRIDE...

We believe our community is made up of people who have a genuine desire to support the queer community; we also believe that sometimes well-intentioned efforts of support from non-queer folks can contribute to **rainbow capitalism**.



### RAINBOW CAPITALISM



the action of businesses claiming to support the queer community (particularly during June, Pride month) while financially or socially benefiting from merchandise and events that appropriate queer identities and cultures.

**IS THERE NUANCE IN THESE IDEAS?** Yes, of course - we can't capture every situation or scenario in a few short lessons. Ultimately, the **key take-aways** are:

1. **Non-queer people should not profit off of queer culture (drag shows, pride events, etc)** – if it's not your culture, it's not your place to make money! Especially because financial support is one of the most continuous needs of our local queer community.
2. **Don't try to put on Pride events without queer support** – because this is appropriation and causes harm to the 2S/LGBTQQIA+ community.
3. **There are lots of actions you can take to genuinely support the queer community** - we welcome you on your learning journey!

**What this education is not intending to do:**  
Gate-keep queer folks from celebrating Pride however feels best to them/  
be a party pooper.  
Rainbow Capitalism applies only when there is a financial or social benefit to non-queer folks while appropriating queer culture.

### examples: how it creates harm

Putting a rainbow up in your storefront for pride month, only to take it down after June is over.

Only asking "How can I support the queer community?" during the month of June.

Changing business logos to incorporate a rainbow as your only act of support for the queer community.

Putting up a rainbow in your storefront without addressing the barriers your business may be creating for queer folks.

Hosting events that profit off of queer culture (ex: drag shows, pride parades) without having financial proceeds being directed back into the queer community.

Creating products that appropriate queer culture (ex: using slogans like yas queen or shantay you stay).

Posting on your social media about Pride without ever having made a post about anything queer related ever before.

Signals that the support was part of June marketing and sales strategy rather than genuine support for the queer community.

Queer people exist year round. Only 'supporting' the queer community for one month a year isn't actually supportive.

Performative and trendy rather than genuinely supportive for the queer community – reads as inauthentic and empty.

Support for the queer community goes much further than saying 'everyone is welcome'.

Non-queer folks creating queer events is harmful. Such actions lead to harmful environments and misused language, amplifying the damage.

This is appropriation (ie. stealing) from the queer community – especially given that **financial support is one of the most continuous needs** of our local queer community.

Let your private actions speak louder than your public words. If you're at the beginning of your journey in learning about queerness; see the actions \*below\* to learn more about how to genuinely support the queer community.

Here are three ideas to think about when considering why **rainbow capitalism is harmful**:

### 1. BY COMMUNITY, FOR COMMUNITY

Queer people know what's best for themselves, and their participation and leadership within any event, promotion or activity created for their community is essential to its success. When non-queer people host pride events, these events highlight the wrong voices (non-queer people), and these events often don't reflect the needs or desires of the queer community.

**EXAMPLE:** Attempting to host a drag show without paying drag artists to create the event. Queer people will be able to tell that it was not created by queer folks, because it will not reflect the culture, history, or community it comes from.

### 2. NO REPRESENTATION WITHOUT RESOURCES

Our society operates within cisheteronormativity as a system, which assumes that everyone is cisgender and heterosexual until told otherwise. Because of this, our language, bathrooms, and systems have assumptions built into them that exclude and erase queer people. Unless specific measures have been taken to address the barriers that are generally present for queer folks in most spaces, those spaces cannot be advertised inclusive without actually addressing any of the barriers that make that space exclusionary. Putting up a rainbow but still greeting customers with the sentence 'hey ladies' is missing the mark. There is a big difference between "everyone is welcome" and "we've built this space to consider everyone".

**EXAMPLE:** Putting a rainbow up in your storefront window, but having your retail sorted into mens and womens clothing.

### 3. IMPACT OVER INTENT

Impact and intent are different, and they have different levels of importance in a situation. We should prioritize the experience of the person who has been impacted over that of the person who intended the intent was. Well-intentioned efforts to support the queer community can still be harmful.

**EXAMPLE:** Making a social media post about Pride without supporting local queer initiatives - signals your support online, but isn't backed up by actions in your community.

## Actions to take this June (and year round!)

- Become more familiar with gender-diversity through [this free half hour module](#)
- Keep an eye out for our Swap the Signs campaign, launching June 1, and sub out gendered washroom signage for gender-inclusive washroom signs
  - Utilize the recommendations in our ["Hosting Inclusive Events Zine"](#)
  - Come out to [Coastal Queers events](#) & amplify them on your social media
- Donate to initiatives we've already created (eg. Queer Surf) & help support initiatives we dream of starting - [donate today via this link](#)



### Honoring our history and creating our future:

The first Pride was an anti-police brutality riot led in 1969 by Marsha P. Johnson, a Black gender non-conforming drag queen, and Sylvia Rivera, a Latina-American drag queen. The fight that our queer ancestors have fought for many decades is not over; many queer people, specifically intersex folks, Two-Spirit people, and trans and gender non-conforming people, continue to live with daily violence because of their identities. The rights that our queer ancestors have fought for are somehow still up for debate - and it's getting worse. With hundreds of anti-trans bills currently active in america, unprecedented attacks on the rights, safety, and freedoms of 2S/LGBTQIA+ people in Alberta, and celebrities like JK Rowling and Elon Musk spouting endless streams of bigoted misinformation, we know that violence against the queer community is on the rise. Pride Month is not a time to look away—it's a time to show up. This moment is not about finding the next party—it's about pushing back. Use your privilege. Speak up. Stand up. Put your body, your money, and your voice on the line for queer and trans liberation—not just in June, but every single day.

### REMEMBER!

Queer folks are your neighbours, customers, colleagues, and service providers. We use local services, purchase local products, hang out at local establishments, beaches, and parks. We're here, we've always been here, and we want to work together to make all spaces welcoming and inclusive, in June, and all year round.