



**Innovation Place Newsletter
December, 2001 Edition**

Join festive gatherings at Innovation Place!

**Holiday Tenant Reception
Thursday, December 6
4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
The Galleria**

Visit with friends and colleagues, enjoy complimentary refreshments and appetizers, at this festive gathering hosted by the management and staff of Innovation Place.

**Innovation Place
9th Annual Turkey Nooner
Friday, December 14
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Boffins Café, The Atrium**

Enjoy a scrumptious turkey feast prepared by the gourmet experts from Boffins! Innovation Place administration and staff will be on hand, serving complimentary refreshments and treats. A 50/50 draw will take place, with proceeds going to support the Saskatoon Food Bank.

Dark Horse Studio, Fast Consulting form alliance at Innovation Place

What's better than a great creative concept? A great creative concept backed by solid market research.

With the relocation of Dark Horse Studio to Innovation Place, at 112 - 112 Research Drive, a strategic alliance has been forged between one of the province's hottest creative shops and Fast Consulting, one of city's most established market research consulting firms.

The two companies share more than office space at the research park; they also share a vision of the future of marketing.

Dark Horse Studio was established in 1986 by professional photographer Sean Francis Martin. "I had been working in Toronto and came back to Saskatoon to open my own downtown studio," says Martin. "I started out doing commercial photography, with a strong focus on fashion, advertising and corporate images."

Under Martin's creative direction, the photography studio expanded at a steady pace. The company soon relocated to larger facilities in the Earl's Building on Second Avenue North. In 1994, Dark Horse Studio made the move to digital photography. "We were the first studio in Western Canada, the third in Canada and the seventh in North America to offer high-end digital photography. We were pioneers in the field of digital technology," says Martin. Digital photography created new opportunities for Dark Horse Studio to expand further into multi-media production and pre-press services. "Digital technology really opened new doors

for us. It also saved a lot of money and time for clients who wanted catalogues and flyers produced," says Martin.

Dark Horse Studio continued to evolve, expanding their capabilities to meet clients' needs. "We expanded into large format printing to meet our client's trade show display and banner requirements," says Martin.

The studio's technology base continued to expand, with additional investments in sophisticated computer imaging systems. "We're now at the point where we have five full-time designers, three pre-press people, three photographers, numerous sales and marketing people. Our scope has really expanded with time," says Martin.

The company has also diversified into the publishing industry. Dark Horse publishes several magazines, including The Commuter which is distributed on Transwest Airlines. Martin says his staff handles everything, "from selling the ads to all of the creative."

On June 1, Dark Horse Studio entered a new era of growth and development, relocating to a two-storey facility at Innovation Place.

"We had been looking for a new location for quite some time. We felt we could benefit from the infrastructure at the research park, and in turn, felt we could be of benefit to the Innovation Place community," says Martin.

"The fact that many of our existing clients are located at Innovation Place is an added advantage. We also hope there are additional companies here at the park that we'll be working with in the future."

The unique structure of the facility has allowed for a mammoth two-storey photography studio to be developed, which allows products of all sizes and shapes to be brought in and photographed. "We can even shoot motorhomes in this studio," says Martin.

The alliance with Fast Consulting has further strengthened and expanded the new company's services. "That's a very crucial part of what we're going to be doing in the future with some of our clients," says Martin.

"Today's clients are more sophisticated than ever, and require extensive market research, surveys and polling to guide their marketing strategies," says Martin.

Doug Fast, president of Fast Consulting, has been involved in the field of market research and information gathering for close to two decades. His company initially focused on tourism marketing and market research, but has expanded over the years to include consumer and public opinion research. Fast Consulting now serves its client base with 10 full-time management consultants, and offers one of the most sophisticated call centres in the province, staffed by 50 part-time employees who conduct interviews.

"It's our clients who we feel will benefit the most from this alliance," says Fast. "We get feedback from our clients' customer groups, which we interpret into strategic recommendations."

Branding, for example, is a vital element of modern-day marketing plans. "Branding doesn't happen overnight. It's an evolutionary process and it requires research. Companies want to know where they stand and require that information to shape their marketing strategies," says Fast.

"As soon as you're into branding, you're right back into the area of communications. And that's the point of contact for our two businesses," says Fast.

"We've become a one-stop shop for clients to get all of their communications materials produced. The component we were previously missing was market research, which Fast Consulting now brings to the mix," says Martin.

"No other corporate communications company in Saskatchewan offers the same range of services we now extend to our clients," says Fast.

"We're way ahead of the competition as far as technology goes, from digital equipment to software. We have far more in-house capabilities than any other design firm or agency in the

province. And over the years, we have carefully developed a staff of very talented people who use that technology to produce superior creative concepts."

Tour the state-of-the art facilities at Dark Horse Studio and Fast Consulting during the Open House celebrating their grand opening, Thursday, December 13, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., at 112 - 112 Research Drive.

Clevor Technologies targets world markets with revolutionary new software

Clevor Technologies is about to change the way the world does business – one business process at a time! It plans to optimize certain business and design processes using intelligent systems.

The software company, based at Innovation Place, has been co-founded by the team of founders, investors and advisors behind two highly successful companies founded by six U of S graduates: Topological Programming Inc. (TOP) and Analog Design Automation (ADA). Analog Design Automation grabbed news headlines in 1999-2000 with its engineering breakthrough of analog synthesis, a technology with the capability to revolutionize the electronics world. The company started with local investor support and was initially located at Innovation Place. Later, it received a multi-million dollar investment from a consortium which included Royal Bank Partners, Intel and Synopsis. ADA relocated to Ottawa to access the pool of analog engineers available there. The company is now working with such technogiants as Intel and Texas Instruments, on their chip sets.

Clevor Technologies is the new spin-off of the ADA/TOP team. The company utilizes and extends the algorithms developed by the principals of ADA and TOP to develop intelligent systems software for new applications.

"Our three areas of interest include Operations Research, Unit Process Design and Finite Element Design, however, we have started by focusing on one business process, namely scheduling," says co-founder and company president Ravi Maithel.

Clevor Technologies is committed to creating value for its customers by helping industry work smarter and increase efficiency.

The company's own name is an indication of its operations research focus, says Maithel.

"Clevor is a play on words: "clever" plus OR – Operations Research."

"Although we are a technology company, we are a customer-driven business," says Maithel.

"We don't do the R&D first and then push our products onto customers. Our customers participate in the design of the product, so it's a product that they will want."

The first product in development by the company is called the Clevor Scheduler. "In a manufacturing environment, scheduling becomes crucial. It is also very difficult to achieve optimum schedules because there are so many constraints to observe," says Maithel.

The software being developed by Clevor Technologies provides a solution to the problem that has plagued manufacturers for decades, says Maithel. "It is a very pervasive problem. If you can provide a solution to the problem, you are creating a lot of value for the user company."

Maithel says that Clevor Technologies' software solutions can significantly improve a manufacturer's profit picture. "Let's say there's a company with \$50 million in sales, operating on a 25 per cent gross margin. If our software increases production out of that plant by just ten per cent, we can add \$1.25 million to their bottom line. Now that is quite a good return. We think there are many companies who will be interested in this product."

In addition to manufacturing companies, the Clevor Scheduler can also be used by companies which are project-oriented, such as construction companies.

Maithel has an extensive background in the manufacturing sector, and understands the challenges plant managers face. "It's a tough business, with so many constraints to take into consideration. Any scheduling system has to be very customer-friendly, because otherwise, it will not be used and the user will not get the benefit."

As the former Vice-President of Technology Transfer and Business Development with the Saskatchewan Research Council, Maithel has a lot of experience in working with small to medium-sized companies. "With my 16 years of experience at the SRC, I have a good understanding of these companies' needs. I also come from a manufacturing environment, so I know what these companies want and what their problems are."

Joining Clevor Technologies on a full-time basis is Wayne Larsen, one of the six co-founders of Analog Design Automation, Inc. A third full-time staff member is Adam McKee, who is a highly experienced programmer.

Clevor Technologies also benefits from the talents and experience of its leadership team, including board chair Jim Hutch, board member Trent McConaghy who was recently awarded the 2001 U of S Outstanding Young Alumni Award, board member and co-founder of TOP and ADA Amit Gupta, and technical advisor M. M. Gupta – a longtime professor at the University of Saskatchewan and head of the Intelligence Systems Laboratory.

Over the next few months, Clevor Technologies plans to increase its staff to six and is currently seeking experienced software designers. "Our business plan is to grow to a staff of 30 people within the next three years," says Maithel.

"We feel that being part of the Clevor Technologies' team is an excellent opportunity. We are offering competitive salaries, stock options and the opportunity to work in Innovation Place, which has excellent facilities, proximity to other technology companies and the university."

Clevor Technologies sees unlimited marketing potential for its products. "We are aware that there are many applications for our technology, with the potential to reach markets all over the world," says Maithel.

"Right now, we are focused on one area. We will focus on scheduling first, then we'll go to one application in the process design area and onto finite element design. Even after that, we will be tracking potential opportunities as they present themselves. As far as the eye can see, there's lots to do."

For more information about Clevor Technologies, contact Ravi Maithel at 955-5772, drop into their offices located in the Atrium Building at 302 - 111 Research Drive, and watch for the launch of the company's new website at www.clevor.com.

Innovation Place in the headlines: Research park makes an impression

Don Gerhardt, president and CEO of the 200-member Minnesota-based health-care trade association called Medical Alley, was recently in Saskatoon to speak at the 2020 Health Conference. While in the city, Gerhardt toured Innovation Place and the Canadian Light Source Synchrotron.

"What I saw knocked me down, blew me away," Gerhardt said in an interview with The StarPhoenix. "My intent is to figure out ways that we can do things that can enhance what we do both in Medical Alley and here. I wouldn't say it if I didn't think so."

He went on to add how impressed he was with the research park. "Because I have done so many start-ups, I can sense what's going on in a business quickly. As I went through Innovation Place, you could tell people were proud of what they were doing, they were proud to be there."

Inroad Solutions secures licensing agreement

Innovation Place's Inroad Solutions has signed a marketing agreement with the Calgary firm Chartwell Technology Inc., for a new software product that will help prevent children from participating in online gambling. The three-year renewable agreement licenses the Aegis Secure Login product developed by Inroad Solutions, which utilizes computer keystroke pattern identification technology.

The technology enables gaming companies to verify the age and location of individuals as they attempt to log on to a gaming site. Chartwell will incorporate the technology into its own gaming software and sell it to other gaming product developers.

The Aegis Secure Login product developed by Inroad Solutions has already earned honors as the SABEX Best New product of the Year, and was a finalist in the New Product category of the ABEX Awards.

Critical Telecom makes long-distance connection to China

At the end of October, Critical Telecom signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a major telecommunications manufacturer, the Function Group of China.

The MOU sets the stage for a partnership to manufacture and distribute the wireless TelePATH technology developed by Critical Telecom. The TelePATH wireless system provides a wireless link for voice and data communication, and can be used to provide basic telephone service when the traditional copper wire system would be impractical or too expensive.

In an interview with The StarPhoenix, Oliver Cruder, President and CEO of Critical Telecom, said the partnership could generate revenue potential in the millions of dollars.

Saskatchewan investment opportunity

The Saskatchewan brokerage firm, Sanderson Securities Ltd., has filed a preliminary prospectus with the Saskatchewan Securities Commission to raise between \$1.1 to \$1.5 million in new financing for Fytokem Products. The opportunity to invest will only be available to Saskatchewan residents.

The capital raised will be used to expand Fytokem's product development and marketing efforts, and will also help Fytokem tap into an additional \$150,000 in funding in the form of a new share issue to the provincial AgriFood Equity Fund (AFEF).

With Fytokem's sales figures growing with each quarter, Fytokem president and CEO Art Hesje is confident that Saskatchewan investors will respond to this investment opportunity.