

**Innovation Place Newsletter**  
**June 2001 Edition**

**BlackSun rises at Innovation Place:  
Now province's largest web hosting company**

From its headquarters at Innovation Place, BlackSun Inc. has grown to become the largest web hosting company in Saskatchewan.

"We currently host over 2,500 websites around the world, with the vast majority of our customer base located here in Canada," says Jay Tingley, president and co-founder of BlackSun.

In addition to high performance web hosting, BlackSun also offers a full range of e-commerce solutions and domain name registration services. BlackSun works to establish an effective and dynamic presence on the Internet for their clients, utilizing the staff's extensive marketing and promotional experience, combined with some of the most sophisticated and advanced networking equipment available.

BlackSun was established in 1998 by Jay Tingley and Steve Rogoschewsky. Both were working as consultants at the time. "We merged our clients and ideas to form the company, which focuses on core Internet technologies and user solutions," says Tingley. "About a year ago, we decided to make web hosting the primary focus of the company."

The company's name is a reference to an episode from the sci-fi TV series, *Space 1999*, entitled "Journey through the Black Sun." "We thought the acronym Black Sun was appropriately fitting," says Tingley. "Many of our members have also told us that it accurately represents our abstract way of thinking and providing service."

The BlackSun concept took off and soon a corporate address was required. Tingley and Rogoschewsky looked to Innovation Place for its high tech environment and consumer recognition. "Everyone knows where Innovation Place is in Saskatchewan, so it's been very easy for people to find us here," says Tingley.

"As a tech park focused on research, it just seemed a natural choice. And as soon as we saw the Concourse Building, with its games room, the cappuccino bar – all the necessities of life – we knew we had found a home. The staff and management here at Innovation Place have really been essential in making our dream a reality."

Steve Rogoschewsky adds that the opportunity to interact with others working in the Information Technology sector has been a real boon. "We have ongoing working relationships with many of the companies in the park. It's a great place to interact with the high tech crowd and the way of thinking that goes along with that."

BlackSun's member base ranges across the spectrum – from home-based and small businesses to large international corporations. "The vast majority of people find us through the Internet as well as various forms of print and media advertising. Word of mouth is also extremely important," says Tingley.

"We have a very high referral rate, and receive recommendations from people all across North America whose friends and associates are hosted by BlackSun," says Rogoschewsky.

BlackSun's success is a result of dedicated customer service and their user-friendly systems, says Tingley.

"Our systems are very easy to use, and the end users aren't required to have sophisticated technical knowledge or extensive Internet or computer experience," says Tingley.

"As web hosts, we provide our members with disk space, user accounts, and web-based email services. We also offer a lot of tie-in features, such as MS FrontPage support, MS Access and MySQL databases, as well as various forms of scripting, such as ASP, PHP and Cold Fusion. This allows our clients to develop websites that are perfectly-suited to their individual business needs and requirements."

BlackSun can host a website for an individual or company for as low as ten dollars a month, adds Tingley. "Your average consumer or small business owner doesn't have thousands of dollars to launch their website. With us, they can get up and running for as low as ten dollars a month. We take immense satisfaction in being able to offer that level of flexibility and affordability."

A free trial offer makes it easy for customers to try BlackSun on for size, says Tingley. "We're the only company in Canada that offers a free 30-day trial, without any payment or credit card required. A customer can try us out absolutely risk free for 30 days. If at the end of the trial, they're not completely satisfied or convinced with our level of service – there's no charge."

"That's probably our biggest selling feature right now. We get several hundred people every month that sign up for our free trial service, and in excess of 75 per cent of them remain on as long-term members," says Rogoschewsky.

He adds, "As the business grows, it's very easy to expand a customer's website with the services that we offer. They can upgrade at any time."

BlackSun backs their service with a 30-day money back guarantee. "We're members of the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce and Better Business Bureau, and our goal is to establish a satisfied, loyal customer base," says Tingley.

"Our key focus is customer service, which is kind of unique in the Internet industry. We have a great team at BlackSun, and everyone has had extensive backgrounds in customer service. This is why our members can always reach a knowledgeable person at almost any hour of the day directly by phone or email."

BlackSun has also won wide acclaim for the speed and accessibility of its systems. The company utilizes state-of-the-art Cobalt web servers and industrial-strength Cisco routers and switches. "We use several different carriers, including Group Telecom, Sprint and UUNet, which enable us to guarantee an uptime of 99.99% each month for our members' sites."

"Our network is automatically set up to route traffic to another carrier in the event one connection experiences a failure or high load volume. We're the only private company in Saskatchewan that we're aware of that runs this type of a balanced and redundant network. In Toronto or Vancouver, it's fairly common, but it's still relatively new out here," says Rogoschewsky.

BlackSun's growth has already outpaced all expectations, says Tingley, and continued expansion is anticipated.

"We've exceeded every growth forecast that we've set for ourselves – and in advance of our time frames – so it's hard to predict future expansion. Our goal is to not only provide the best service in Saskatchewan – but across Canada.

"We take great pride in being able to offer services that larger companies situated in Toronto and Vancouver are not able to offer. And the valuable feedback we've receive from our members tells us that we're headed in the right direction."

For more information about BlackSun Inc., check the company's own website at [www.blacksun.ca](http://www.blacksun.ca) or call the office at 933-4800.

### **SABEX Awards honor city's best and brightest**

For the past six years, the Saskatoon Achievement in Business Excellence Awards (SABEX) have recognized the success of local organizations in a variety of categories.

Co-sponsored by the Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce and the Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan, the 2001 SABEX Awards were presented at a gala banquet held Tuesday, May 15 at the Centennial Auditorium.

The SABEX for Business of the Year was presented to Kocsis Transport Ltd. The Saskatoon-based transportation firm also received the SABEX Award for Marketing.

Inroad Solutions, a software development firm located at Innovation Place, received the SABEX for New Product of the Year. (See Page 3 for more details.)

The New Business Venture of the Year Award went to Crawdaddy's Louisiana Bar & Grill, a downtown restaurant which recently expanded its operations to add a nightclub.

The SABEX Award honouring Growth and Expansion was presented to the First Nations Bank of Canada. Saskatoon serves as the headquarters for Canada's first aboriginal-owned nationally chartered bank, established in 1996 through a joint venture of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the TD Bank.

The Community Involvement Award was received by Global Television, for participation in such community events as the Children's Health Foundation of Saskatchewan, the 24 Hour Relay at Innovation Place, the United Way, and the Arthritis Society's Joints in Motion.

Esporta (CDG Holdings Ltd.), a unique sports equipment cleaning company based at the Jemini Arena, was honored with a SABEX Award for Innovation.

Merlin Motors, North America's first ISO-certified Lincoln Ford Mercury dealership, received the SABEX Customer Service Award.

The Strategic Alliance Award was presented to the Saskatoon Sears Canada store and the Saskatoon Preschool Foundation, an organization devoted to raising funds so that all children in the city have access to quality preschool education and care.

A new award presented at the SABEX banquet was the Athena, which recognizes women who have achieved business or professional excellence, served the community in a meaningful way, and who have helped women achieve their full leadership potential. The Award, first created in 1982 in Lansing, Michigan, is now presented annually in 375 cities in three countries. Shelley Brown of Deloitte & Touche, and former managing partner at Ernst & Young, was the first Saskatoon woman to receive this prestigious award.

This year's inductee into the SABEX Hall of Fame was Harry Day, owner of Day's Paints. The 90-year old business and community leader was recognized for his success in operating the long-time family business, Day's Paints, as well as his involvement with the Saskatoon Construction Association, local Kinsmen clubs and the Saskatoon Public School Board.

Congratulations to all of the 2001 SABEX winners, especially Innovation Place's own Inroad Solutions.

### **SABEX Award recognizes Inroad Solution's success in biometric software development**

Inroad Solutions has been a part of the Innovation Place community for the past three years, located on the main floor of the Concourse Building at 116 Research drive.

The company is locally owned and operated by President and CEO James Bassett, Personnel Relations Director Janet Bassett, Media Operations Director Anthony Bassett and Instructional Designer Barb Schindelka.

Inroad Solutions got its start as a developer of e-learning software, then quickly took the lead in the development of advanced security software, utilizing a biometric approach.

Tony Bassett says the SABEX Award for New Product of the Year recognizes Inroad Solutions' successful development of a biometric software application called "Aegis Secure Login."

"It's a software application that authenticates users based on biometric patterns," says Bassett.

He explains that an important security market is user identification systems that use biometric technologies. These technologies help identify "people who were supposed to be there, and people who were not supposed to be there. Biometric technologies range from hardware-based technologies, such as fingerprint scanning, to software-based technologies like Aegis Secure Login."

Bassett says that unlike hardware-based biometric solutions, Aegis Secure Login requires no additional hardware. "Basically, our application gets biometric patterns from what all personal computers already have, a keyboard. This means our solutions are eminently more affordable and easier to implement in comparison to hardware-based biometric technologies."

Aegis Secure Login focuses on individual users, based on unique patterns generated by computer users when using their keyboards. "If you have closely defined the valid individual, you are then able to more closely define the invalid individual," says Bassett.

The software application which provides Internet security solutions to a diverse range of companies has enormous potential, says Bassett. "Companies that would be interested in this software would include companies that offer information or services to customers over the Internet that require a user name or password log-in in order for those customers to access information or complete transactions."

Biometric security software can also be used to protect network environments. "It's a means of user authentication for security purposes. It acts as a firewall, or an extra layer of protection, from outside people trying to hack into the network environment," says Bassett.

In the early stages of marketing the software application, Inroad Solutions has already received a great deal of interest from the Internet gaming industry. "They're looking at our software as a means of user authentication," says Bassett.

"We've received enquiries from companies located across Canada, the United States, Europe, Asia and Africa. They have either approached us in regards to integrating our software application with their technologies, or to discuss licensing the product," says Bassett.

"Aegis Secure Login" is the result of 22 months of research and development. "It's an ongoing development; we continue to research potential applications," says Bassett.

He says that receiving the SABEX Award for New Product of the Year is a great honor for Inroad Solutions. "We have worked very hard on the development of this product. The SABEX Awards are a terrific way to recognize new and successful business concepts in our city," says Bassett.

"This award has had great meaning for our company. It serves to acknowledge our innovation and hard work, and will certainly help to further establish the presence of Inroad Solutions in both the city and the province."

## **UPDATES:**

### **Fytokem appoints new R&D director**

Janice McColl has been appointed to the position of Director of Research and Development at Fytokem Products Inc.

Art Hesje, President and CEO of Fytokem, announced McColl's appointment, lauding her 15-plus years of experience and first hand involvement with natural health products.

McColl brings to the position a background in pharmacy, organic and medicinal chemistry. She holds a Master's of Science Degree in Medicinal Chemistry from the University of Saskatchewan, and is working toward a master herbalist diploma.

Prior to joining Fytokem, McColl held the position of assistant professor at the University of Saskatchewan, and also worked in product development, research and education at Bioriginal Food & Science Corp. Ltd.

Fytokem specializes in the discovery and commercialization of plant-based substances, such as extracts, phytochemicals and bioactive molecules for use in personal care, nutraceutical, pharmaceutical and bioindustrial products.

### **QCC earnings multiply**

QCC Technologies Inc. President and CEO David Criddle has announced revenues of \$2.4 million and net revenues of \$120,000 for the first quarter of 2001.

The firm, located at Innovation Place, specializes in network management services, software engineering and other IT services. In addition to the Innovation Place headquarters, QCC also operates offices in Calgary.

The revenue total is almost four times the gross revenue generated during the first quarter of 2000, and reflects the integration of two Calgary IT companies, Graycon Group Ltd. and Jaratech Business Solutions Inc.

### **Who's new to Innovation Place?**

#### **Join in welcoming the following new organizations to the Innovation Place community:**

- AMANA Tech Consulting has opened offices at 112F-116 Research Drive. Nizar Khalid can be reached at 477-0962.
- CLAS Systems Inc. has moved into 400 - 15 Innovation Boulevard. Contact Atul Varde at 975-8700.
- Executive Source has moved into the Atrium Business Centre at 105J - 111 Research Drive. Contact Judith Chelsom at 982-4236.
- DHS Publishing Incorporated has relocated to 112 - 112 Research Drive. Contact Sean Martin at 652-4956.
- Merck Frosst Canada Ltd. is now located at 236 - 111 Research Drive. Talk to T.J. Smith at 664-1214.