



CABI News Official Newsletter of the Canadian Association of Business Incubators

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Inside this Issue:

- Storm Hits Nova Scotia Incubator
- A Milestone Worth Millions
- And the Winner is...Canada!
- Chinese Delegation Meets with CABI Executives
- Concentricity for Innovation, Competitiveness and Growth
- CABI 2002 Conference: A Report
- Everything You Need to Know: A Lesson from Noah's Ark
- Link to the CABI News Team

Storm Hits Nova Scotia Incubator

by Sarah Wyman, InNOVAcorp / BioScience Enterprise Centre, Halifax NS

InNOVAcorp's Technology Innovation Centre (TIC) in Dartmouth, NS, recently welcomed a new resident client that is stirring things up at the incubator and in the business communications industry.

WINStorm develops propriety software tailored for clients to create presentations using PowerPoint with the ability to access both video and audio. The result is a highly effective marketing tool - both creative and concise.

When WINStorm decided to move into TIC, it presented the Centre with a unique challenge -- how to transform a 2,810-square-foot industrial bay into a progressive and stylish multimedia studio. The two-story bay, now dubbed Studio One, is being adapted into a production studio on the main floor, with the mezzanine housing offices for the company's business and sales

executives. The harsh, industrial fluorescent lighting has been replaced with a custom-built quartz fixture offset by raw canvas on the walls. The space's centrepiece is a 30-metre artist rendition of the company's logo.

Not only did the bay have to go through a major transition to accommodate WINStorm's studio for its multimedia design, photography, motion picture shooting, and editing activities, but three other TIC clients had to be consulted and relocated to create a home for the new resident.

Faye Rose, TIC's Business Services Manager, calls that kind of client movement the "TIC Shuffle," and recalls moving one TIC client 13 times in five years to meet the space needs of other companies. She points out, "Early-stage companies must have the freedom to upsize and downsize their space overnight and without penalty. Flexibility, it's what incubation is all about."

For more information email frose@innovacorp.ns.ca.

A Milestone Worth Millions

At a business luncheon in Saskatoon on May 17, Allan Rock, Minister of Industry, joined Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan Inc. (WE), in celebrating a major funding milestone. Since 1996, WE has made over \$5 million in loans to women entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan.

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WE is a non-profit organization that works with women who are considering a career in business, starting a business, or operating an existing business. Programs and services offered include business advisory services, lending services, and business development workshops and seminars.

"Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan is extremely proud of reaching this funding milestone," said Jan Ursu, chair of WE. "This accomplishment satisfies two of our main organizational outcomes: more women-owned and expanded businesses, and accessible, affordable and effective entrepreneurial products and services available to women."

WE has supported many unique business start-ups in recent years. ProGear uses the world's first automated sports equipment cleaning, sanitizing and drying system to serve individual clients in Saskatoon and Regina, as well as five Western Hockey League teams and two national teams. On-Sight Optical Inc. takes service one step further by selling and fitting prescription and non-prescription safety eyewear onsite at client businesses, an approach that is attracting clients in Saskatchewan and Alberta. In both cases, innovation has been a key element of success.

Women entrepreneurs are having an impact on every facet of Saskatchewan's economy. Between January 1 and May 1 of 2002, WE approved more than \$460,000 in loans for 14 new or expanded women-owned businesses. The network of clients continues to grow. For more information email Terri Parent at tparent@womenentrepreneurs.sk.ca.

And the Winner is...Canada!

Canadian incubators and their clients were among the stars at the recent National Business Incubation Association (NBIA) awards ceremony.

Each year, NBIA honors the business incubators, client companies and graduates that exemplify the best of the industry. This year's awards ceremony

was held in late April at the association's 16th annual international conference, which happened outside the United States for the first time, in Toronto.

Congratulations to the Canadian 2002 NBIA award winners:

2002 Outstanding Incubator Graduate - Garrison Guitars, St. John's, Newfoundland

A former client of the Genesis Centre (1997-2001) in St. John's, Garrison Guitars won the 2002 Outstanding Incubator Graduate award in the technology category.

The company is one of Canada's leading acoustic guitar manufacturers. It has developed and patented the Griffiths Active Bracing System, an innovative way to construct a guitar's inner structure. Instead of using more than 30 individually machined and installed pieces of wood, the company uses one glass fibre, injection-molded piece. The leading-technology gives guitars enhanced structural stability and increased volume, and reduces the manufacturing time for the bracing system from several hours to 45 seconds. Garrison Guitars now exports its guitars all over the world.

2002 Incubator of the Year - Northern Alberta Business Incubator, St. Albert, Alberta

The Northern Alberta Business Incubator (NABI) won the 2002 Incubator of the Year award in the mixed-use category. The award honors exemplary incubation programs.

Since its birth in 1989, NABI (formerly the St. Albert Business Development Centre) has launched 56 new businesses and provided assistance to hundreds of other local firms through courses, seminars and one-on-one business counselling. The facility is a 16,000-square-foot converted schoolhouse that

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can house up to 35 clients. It is currently home to 21 businesses, ranging from high-tech start-ups to business service providers, that employ 30 people. Because of its tremendous success, NABI needs a larger, more modern facility with the infrastructure to support the technology needs of today's entrepreneurs. The incubator's team will therefore soon embark on a capital fund drive to raise funds for a new 30,000-square-foot facility.

2002 Randall M. Whaley Incubator of the Year - Quebec Biotechnology Innovation Centre, Laval, Quebec

The Quebec Biotechnology Innovation Centre (QBIC) established a precedent by becoming the first non-USA recipient of NBIA's most prestigious prize, which recognizes overall excellence in business incubation programs. The jury recognized the extent and relevance of QBIC's programs and business services for start-ups, the level of the results obtained versus its mission and objectives, the Centre's financial stability, as well as the quality of interaction between the incubator and its resident companies.

One of a kind in Quebec, QBIC is a business incubator that offers researcher-entrepreneurs their own laboratories, a scientific equipment park, and business mentoring services to facilitate the launch of innovative biotech firms. Through its partnership agreements and customized business mentoring network, QBIC, acting as a competency broker, is able to meet all the needs of biotech start-ups. As of December 31, 2001, QBIC's 11 resident companies and six graduated companies employed 539 people and had assets of about \$88 million.

Chinese Delegation Meets with CABI Executives

by Jean-Jacques Ledoux, Industry Partnership Facility / NRC Canada, Ottawa ON

While attending the recent CABI conference in Toronto, CABI board executives had the opportunity to meet with a Chinese delegation

that is interested in establishing closer relations with Canadian incubators. They were invited to meet with me in Ottawa to visit my site.

On May 6, 15 Chinese businessmen visited NRC's Industry Partnership Facility (IPF). I gave a 45-minute presentation followed by a 30-minute discussion. To my surprise, the guests then wanted to give their own presentation, which lasted about 20 minutes (copies available). There are more than 400 incubators across China, and they are involved in every aspect of business, varying from mixed-used facilities to technology-based ones. All the incubators report through one central body which is, surprise, surprise, government controlled.

The purpose of the Chinese delegates' visit to Canada was to develop contacts with local incubator operators in the hope that MoUs might eventually be signed whereby Chinese companies could come to Canada and incubate in our facilities and vice-versa with Canadian companies. The delegates indicated they will likely invite some of us to visit them in China to make presentations about our operations here in Canada.

All in all, I believe it was a successful meeting. Where this will go is anyone's guess. We will keep you informed as developments occur. For more information email me at J.Ledoux@nrc.ca.

Concentricity for Innovation, Competitiveness and Growth

by Philippe Roy

(Philippe Roy, CMC, is a member of the Canadian Association of Management Consultants, as well as a CABI member. He is expressing his own private professional and personal opinions below and in the attached

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private paper originally published May 1998 and now in the public domain.)

In the emerging global economy, business clusters, business incubators, and business networks must all be taken together as the business environment and the dynamic instruments to concentrate, synergize and accelerate innovation, competitiveness and growth of large, medium and small enterprises. No one of these three components can work successfully on its own.

Today 80 percent of our economic resources exist in urban environments. Most of these environments have actual or latent business clusters, which serve as a basic business environment that links firms and infrastructure. Business incubators can be used to successfully create mini business clusters within just 10 years using the third generation model diamond form of business incubators. Business networks offer highly dynamic means for smaller enterprises to achieve scale, scope and speed in the marketplace. When these three major components are successfully combined, a highly dynamic marketplace can be stimulated, fostering super innovation, competitiveness and growth. Public-private sector partnership, full scope financing, essential business skills by stage of business development, and expert business mentoring are all critical to this process.

[\(View article by Philippe Roy, CMC.\)](#)

CABI 2002 Conference: A Report

*by Jean-Jacques Ledoux, CABI Treasurer,
Industry Partnership Facility / NRC Canada,
Ottawa ON*

While not all reports have been tabulated yet, we believe CABI's 11th annual conference, which happened in Toronto, May 1-3, 2002, was a success. Participants' comments were, overall, very positive and constructive as to what could be done for future conferences.

The "International Evening / Dinner," hosted by and held at the Royal Bank Plaza, South Tower, was a great success. About 75 people attended, including several international guests. The food and atmosphere were a fantastic way to kick off our conference. The Exceler@tor's Andrew Maxwell is to be commended for making it happen.

Conference registration was somewhat less than we would have liked. However, given that the CABI conference followed the NBIA annual conference, many people could not justify staying for a second conference. While we may have lost some participants, we greatly gained in exposure by piggy-backing on the NBIA conference. We were able to get a tremendous amount of coverage that is greatly needed to further CABI and the Canadian incubation industry.

The conference venue was fantastic - an ancient building with likely many interesting stories to tell. The old wooden school benches made quite an impression on many of us - some who liked them and others who missed the comfort of home. Unfortunately, conference pictures are not yet available, but will be posted on the CABI website in about one week.

We missed many of you who could not attend, but we all know how money and time is in short supply almost everywhere we look.

Hopefully we can all get together next year. Keep checking our website at www.cabi.ca for upcoming CABI events.

Everything You Need to Know: A Lesson from Noah's Ark

When Jean-Jacques Ledoux of NRC's Industry Partnership Facility made his presentation on marketing at the recent CABI conference, many

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people requested a copy of "Everything I need to know about life, I learned from Noah's Ark" he showed. Here it is.

One: Don't miss the boat.

Two: Remember that we are all in the same boat.

Three: Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.

Four: Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.

Five: Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.

Six: Build your future on high ground.

Seven: For safety's sake, travel in pairs.

Eight: Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.

Nine: When you're stressed, float a while.

Ten: Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.

Eleven: No matter the storm, there's always a rainbow waiting.

CABI News

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Link to the CABI News Team

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- 30 -

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