

A niche above

For more than 12 years, Oakville-based Norprint Corp. has been one of Canada's top niche marketing success stories. Now, with new ownership, the company is poised to set an even higher standard worldwide.

It's a Canadian success story that's a breath of fresh air in a choking economic environment.

In 1997 Malcolm Stagg, an engineer whose earlier career included positions as head of research and development for a number of multi-national companies, founded Norprint Corp. in Oakville. After a period of steady growth, Stagg created SnapNwin – a breakthrough Canadian invention launched just last year that won a first-prize award from the Canadian Marketing Association (CMA) for best new promotion of 2008. The company currently has Canadian and worldwide patents pending, but so far the product has been used with great success as a contest card by Adidas, Direct TV, Sobeys, WWE and others.

The concept is brilliant in its simplicity. SnapNwin is basically a magnetic prize card. The difference is that the prize message is more securely hidden and has none of the messy latex associated with traditional scratch & win cards. When the magnetic card is 'snapped', the removable piece is a collectible and practical magnet that can include any combination of photos or targeted promotional messages. The patent also allows the option to include a unique magnetic code similar to an ATM bank card.

NEW OWNERSHIP WITH A BOLD NEW VISION

Enter new owner Cesar Cabrera in April of this year. This engaging, down-to-earth business development entrepreneur with a wealth of multi-national experience saw Norprint as a wonderful opportunity. He has an Honours Degree in Commerce (with a specialization in MIS) from the University of Ottawa, where he spent most of his youth, and eventually moved to Toronto to begin his professional career where he prospered in the corporate world.

"I have devoted my professional career to the high-tech sector, specifically in the areas of strategic alliances and business development," he says. "As a business development executive in Canada, I had an opportunity to secure the largest chartered banks as clients, and also develop new business with multi-national organizations in the U.S. and Europe. This experience exposed me to a huge range of North American and international markets including financial, retail, telecommunications and manufacturing. I have also developed profitable channel programs for small and medium-sized resellers representing millions of dollars in annual revenues."

With this experience, Norprint's new management team, with support from former CEO Malcolm Stagg and Peter Reinhardt on the SnapNwin side, is a Canadian company poised to make headlines.

Oops! I forgot to mention that Cabrera has another

strong ally – a bank! That's right, a bank!

"The Business Development Bank of Canada also agreed with my vision for Norprint and funded part of the transaction after a diligent and comprehensive review of its market potential," says Cabrera. "We look forward to growing our business with them and are happy to have them as trusted advisors."

North American growth will be Norprint's focus – specifically in sales, product innovation, channel/re-seller management, and as always, customer service.

"I saw Norprint as a unique opportunity because of its traditional commitment to product innovation, dedication to quality and customer satisfaction," says Cabrera. "Its strong reseller base has grown to expect new, innovative products in the areas of magnets, plastic cards and variable data. Furthermore, Norprint's product innovation solutions provide a strong differentiator to its trade partners by developing unique brands and products for the marketplace. Magnesheet (a flexible, full-colour die-cut magnet with twice the holding power of magnetic paper) and SnapNwin are just two examples."

Given the problems and misprints that traditionally-printed scratch & win tickets have experienced since they appeared on the market over 40 years ago in the U.S., don't be surprised if Norprint makes progress in this key sector of the gaming industry, especially here in Ontario. The group is also working on creating a software application that will be an option to SnapNwin, allowing clients to seamlessly capture leads and collect statistics.

"SnapNwin offers many advantages over the old scratch concept with its portable ease of use, keep-sake magnet, more robust security and integration with web technology," says Stagg. "Since it's a patented proprietary product, the goal is for Norprint to be a very successful licensee here in North America. My aim is also to pursue its potential through licensing in other areas such as Europe and Asia, as well as the rest of the world."

Undoubtedly, the future looks bright for Norprint as the company focuses on solidifying and expanding its current niche market here and abroad. In today's uncertain times, through innovation and foresight, Norprint has not only weathered the economic storm, but represented a ray of sunshine to other Canadian companies that are struggling.

For more information visit www.norprint.com or call (905) 849-8984.

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Tony Curcio, editor
acurcio@graphicartsmag.com

