



LAVAL TECHNOPOLE

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A giant sets down in Laval

Between last October and January of this year, the Kruger company has set down its crates in a 92,900 m² factory formerly occupied by Techcraft at 1250 Boulevard Dagenais. What did those crates contain? A range of paper products for domestic and institutional use, bearing some of the most popular brands in Canada, including Cashmere, Sponge Towels, Scotties and White Swan, all made in Kruger Products plants and bound for retailers in Ontario, Quebec, the Maritimes and the Northeastern United States. In all, some 10 million crates pass through this distribution centre every year. Cost of acquisition: \$17 million, plus \$3 million to adapt the premises.



Ten million crates a year will pass through the Kruger Products distribution centre in Laval.

For the management of Kruger Products, the purpose of the Laval base is to consolidate its warehousing activities. The eight storage centres it currently operates will soon be reduced to three (Laval, Joliette and Gatineau). There are several reasons for this strategy, the first being environmental, as the Logistics Director for the Eastern Region, Guy Patry, explains: "We noticed that 95% of our products, whether coming from a factory or warehouse, were passing through Laval. So it was logical to centralize our distribution activities here. We're close to our factories and our key destinations, and we have fast access to Highway 25."

It was even more important for Kruger Products to proceed with this consolidation given its 2010 adoption of a wide-ranging sustainable development plan. The base in Laval will allow it to achieve at least two of this ambitious plan's nine objectives. One of them is nothing less than a 15% reduction in transportation-related emissions. By reorganizing its logistics throughout its territory, Kruger will substantially reduce the number of kilometres that products need to travel, consequently reducing its greenhouse gas emissions. A change in warehouse operations will achieve another target of the plan, which is to reduce energy consumption by 15%. Kruger has opted for lift trucks with rechargeable batteries rather than propane-powered ones, reducing warehouse ventilation requirements.

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Kruger has also taken advantage of the opportunity presented by this reorganization to introduce a radio-identification (RFID) inventory management system which, when filling orders, reduces handling, makes batches easy to locate, and coordinates the comings and goings of tractor trailers more efficiently. The implementation of this technology was supervised by Groupe Robert, which Kruger has entrusted with managing this new warehouse.

"We have established a partnership with Groupe Robert which, like Kruger, is a family business," says Mr. Patry. "They are leaders in transportation and logistics. We think it's important to team up with real expertise in this field." And Groupe Robert has a long history in its business. Founded in 1946, it manages a workforce of 2,600 employees, as well as a fleet of 3,000 tractor trailers and 1,000 trucks. "We have solid experience in managing distribution centres like that of Kruger Products," adds Dominic Savard, Administrative Director for Warehousing and Distribution at Groupe Robert. "We manage 17 others for various clients."

Setting up the new Kruger Products base in Laval has already created 60 jobs in the Laval region, a number which will double in the next few months when the distribution centre becomes fully operational.

The warehouse that Kruger Products has just acquired also includes offices that it may eventually use for other administrative units.



Lift trucks powered by rechargeable batteries will save substantial amounts of energy.

About Kruger

Founded in 1904, Kruger is a family business with its head office in Montréal. In addition to Quebec, it operates facilities in Ontario, British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and the United States. The company is a major producer of paper for publications, tissue for domestic and institutional use, lumber and other wood products, corrugated cardboard from recycled fibers using green and renewable energy, as well as wines and spirits.

Its subsidiary Kruger Energy develops and operates hydro, wind and cogeneration power projects including biomass, biogas recycling and solar energy.

The company is also one of the largest recyclers in North America. Its sorting and recovery centres keep its recycled-paper and cardboard plants supplied for the production of recycled pulp and recycled paper products.

Number of employees: 6,000



For further information about Kruger, contact Jean Majeau, Senior Vice-President, Communications and Corporate Affairs, at 514 343-3100 ext. 2028, or visit the company's website: www.kruger.com.



Keeping IT networks secure...

Just over a year ago, Virtual Guardian decided to buy a 280 m² office condo on boulevard de l'Avenir, planning for growth. Thanks to a \$600,000 investment, this IT security specialist can now get going on its projects.

Virtual Guardian has experienced steady growth since it was founded by Patrick Boucher in 2003, thanks mainly to its flagship product Virtual Guardian Telemonitoring (VGSM), a remote security monitoring system which has seen it successfully develop new markets.

"I would describe Virtual Guardian as a team of security analysts charged with detecting and eliminating our clients' weaknesses," says company president Patrick Boucher. "Our expertise enables us to see the vulnerabilities of any infrastructure, network or system, and then make recommendations to ensure it remains secure, confidential and available." Virtual Guardian conducts internal and external security tests and system audits to detect its clients' exposure to risks such as viruses, Trojan horses, post-incident data loss, unauthorized access, etc.

Virtual Guardian's VGSM service, 100% internally financed, is one of the solutions it offers to minimize IT threats. A real-time remote monitoring system, VGSM triggers an intervention procedure if it spots any unauthorized network use. "VGSM can detect any type of threat. When it identifies a problem, the software sends an alert to our surveillance centre. A security expert then launches a procedure that we have predefined with the client. It's a 24/7 service."

VGSM is a service highly prized by companies both large and small, as they all have data to protect and their productivity depends on the availability of their networks. Virtual Guardian also offers secondary but important IT security services: network penetration tests, IT security awareness courses, specialist-personnel recruitment, website and Web application security, IT-legal investigations, etc.

As the first ISO 27001-certified information security consultancy in Canada, Virtual Guardian offers support to organizations looking to set up that kind of quality control system. "We think it's important for a company whose mission is to safeguard IT networks to demonstrate to our clients that we're serious about quality," says Mr. Boucher. "Implementing ISO 27001 standards has also allowed us to perfect our intervention methods and to guarantee that they're effective."

Network efficiency and performance are core issues not only for the IT security industry but also for Virtual Guardian's business processes. This is also why the President and his team have incorporated a wide panoply of security-related services over the years. This strategy allows it to satisfy the vast majority of its clients' needs while firmly establishing its position in the market.

This consolidation and growth has persuaded the head of the company to acquire a business condo for its 12 staff members to continue on their upward trajectory. For Mr. Boucher, who founded his enterprise in Laval, there is no question of moving to another town: "I'm from Laval and I hate traffic jams," he quips. "Seriously, though, we have good quality of life here. The condo is also near the Montmorency metro and has good resale value. It will allow us to grow for many years to come."



Patrick Boucher, President of Virtual Guardian.



For further information about Virtual Guardian, contact Patrick Boucher, President, at 450 933-7774 ext. 701, or visit the company's website: www.gardienvirtuel.ca/en/.



Brevages Gingo: a company with a bite!



Gingo, a ginger-root based beverage, is winning more and more fans across the country.

Brevages Gingo is on a roll... While its founders Ellen Shotton and Ahmed Fofana are brewing up new ginger recipes in their brasserie in Laval, their original lemon-ginger drink is getting ready to conquer the U.S. market.

"With the markets we've established in Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia, we're now ready for the U.S.," says Ellen Shotton, cofounder of the Laval-based enterprise. "In the next few weeks we will begin distributing Gingo in Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Illinois and Wisconsin."

Although they're planning a gradual entry into the U.S. market, these Laval brewers believe their beverages will quickly find takers in the States because of its strong ethnic focus. Ginger drinks are very popular in the rest of the world, particularly in Africa and Asia. And many Americans are also already familiar with ginger-based drinks.

A ginger drink?

Although ginger drinks are popular elsewhere in the world, this is not the case here in Quebec. "People here aren't familiar with this type of drink. But when they taste it, they love it. And this means we need to put a lot more effort into advertising our product," insists Mrs. Shotton.

Gingo is a refreshing ginger-lemon drink made from natural ingredients. Its exotic and spicy taste comes from the freshly pressed ginger root that makes up 25% of the drink. Gingo is the only drink on the market with such a high concentration of ginger. Other similar products generally have less than 5%.

Ginger is known around the world for its medicinal qualities. It is also credited with anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory effects and the ability to boost the immune system.

Gingo's developers are now creating more varieties of ginger-based drinks. They'll be replacing lemon with local products, which they want to keep a surprise. And they've already launched two new recipes this year.

About Gingo

The story of Brevages Gingo, a company founded in 2009, is intimately linked to that of its founders. After travelling and living in different countries for many years, Norwegian-born Ellen Shotton and her husband Ahmed Fofana, a native of the Ivory Coast, immigrated to Canada in 2004. Gingo is inspired by the traditional West African ginger punch Gnamakoudji. In that part of the world, everybody loves and drinks this local beverage, which is invariably made according to family recipes handed down from generation to generation. Ahmed Fofana swears by his grandmother's recipe.

Rapid success

The success of its product was a real boost to this small family business. As the first company in Quebec to produce an industrial quantity of a ginger-based drink, its machinery and facilities were built from scratch. Today the beverage is made in a 186 m² plant in the Industrial Park Centre.

"We love Laval and we really wanted to set up here. We had also been living here in this city since 2005," says Mrs. Shotton. "We believe Laval has lots of potential, ideas and energy. We want to create a company that will grow and flourish here. We want our company to be something that Laval can be proud of."

Gingo is currently distributed mainly through small grocery stores. But Ellen Shotton and Ahmed Fofana are aiming high and are looking to multiply their points of sale in the near future. "We want to be everywhere: hypermarkets, supermarkets, cafés, bars, restaurants. Reinforcing our presence in the Canadian market is one of our key objectives," says this entrepreneur.



For further information about Les Brevages Gingo Inc., contact Ellen Shotton, Co-President, at 450 736-3204, or visit the company's website: www.gingojuce.com.



STL in real time

STL's slogan—Imagine how far we can go together—invites reflection. Indeed, management began thinking some time before the metro was extended to Laval, as they feared a drop in traffic on its bus network. How do you promote public transport in Laval? Armed with a budget of \$8 million, STL launched initiatives to increase ridership on its routes and boost satisfaction for some 20 million passengers a year.

Enhancing passenger service

First at all, STL needed to review its network. It redrew its routes to take into account three new metro stations, as well as strategic locations throughout its territory, in order to reduce transfers and travel time. It also increased service by 33% across the network as a whole. On 12 routes, off-peak passenger trips have doubled. That means a total of 1,100 additional trips a week. These two measures alone represent an investment of \$4 million.

Enhancing passenger information

STL also considered a way of boosting passenger satisfaction. It had to find a solution to improve the punctuality of its buses and alert passengers to any changes to schedules or routes. Armed with a budget of \$4 million for this part of the project, 75% of which was funded by the Government of Quebec, STL implemented several innovative measures.

"In 2010, we launched STL Synchro," says Pierre Giard, STL's General Manager. "This is nothing less than STL in real time. We equipped our 235 buses with GPS systems linked to modems and the control centre. Every 20 seconds, the information is analyzed and relayed to 82 digital displays installed at the most popular bus stops. This means passengers know exactly when their bus will arrive."

The data is also sent to the STL website, where users can view a dynamic network map and see any bus moving along its route. Web users can also register their favourite stops on www.stl.laval.qc.ca, so when they log in again, the website automatically displays the times of the next three buses on their selected routes, in real time. The Chronobus phone feature gives the times of the next buses based on the bus stop code, also in real time.

"We also wanted to connect with passengers between home and bus stop," adds Mr. Girard. "There's an iPhone app that lets you touch any displayed stop and see where the next bus is." This application is a massive hit with users, certainly based on the 12,000 downloads so far.



Digital display at a stop on route 37, on avenue Francis-Hughes, showing the waiting time before the next two buses arrive, in real time.

What's new in 2011

Other innovations are in the cards for 2011. Eighteen interactive terminals with 46-inch screens will be installed in strategic locations such as city hall, metro stations and Cité de la Santé. These terminals will help you calculate routes using NaviGo, a tool which will now incorporate the STM network.

In the fall, as a major world first, STL will launch a phone and SMS automated alert system. Users will be able to set their preferences on the website to receive alerts when a bus is at a given point along its route.

"Through all these measures, we want to become as punctual as the Swiss in public transport," he insists. The results are self-evident: since installing STL Synchro, bus punctuality has leapt from 76% to 92%. And ridership? STL predicts it will increase by 3% in 2011.



For further information about STL, contact Marie-Céline Bourgault, Director, Communications and Marketing, at 450 662-5400 ext. 5429, or visit the company's website: www.stl.laval.qc.ca.



A breath of hope at the INRS for lung cancer research

Last January, Quebec's scientific research institute, the INRS, received a grant of \$697,950 from the Quebec Ministry of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade under the technology development support program, a component of the 2010-2013 Quebec Research and Innovation Strategy. This aid will fund a clinical trial on a drug combination to combat lung cancer discovered by research professor Michel Charbonneau's team at the INRS–Institut Armand-Frappier university centre. The cost of this important project is estimated at more than \$1.7 million.

Already, the laboratory results are very promising. In fact, researchers have observed that the combination of two molecules, genistein and decitabine (5-AZA-CdR), have a synergistic effect, reducing the proliferation of cancer cells in the lung, breast and colon, as well as leukemic cells. They have also demonstrated that this new combination is effective in attacking cells that are resistant to chemotherapy, which are numerous in patients with lung cancer.

Accordingly, in Phase I, Dr. Charbonneau will need to demonstrate the harmlessness of the combination and determine the ideal dose to administer to patients. He will then need to demonstrate its effectiveness, on a small scale, in lung cancer patients. But why target this type of cancer exclusively when fundamental research suggests that the combination could also combat other cancers? "In clinical trials, we need to target one pathology," explains Dr. Charbonneau. "We've chosen lung cancer, because the survival rate is very low. Every year in Canada, 24,000 people are diagnosed with lung cancer and more than 20,000 die from it. In the advanced stages of lung cancer—and that's in the majority of cases—there are no other therapeutic options apart from chemotherapy, as opposed to breast or colon cancer, for example. Of course, if we obtain interesting results, we will then do studies on other cancers."

Dr. Charbonneau's team intends to complete Phase IIa of the clinical trial in September 2012. If the results are convincing, Phase III will be launched. This would be a large-scale multicentric study that would run for two to five years. It is not until these trials are completed, and only if the health benefits outweigh any potential side effects, that the product will be marketed. "If the Phase IIa trial results are as outstanding as the lab results, patients will be able to benefit from the drug under a compassionate program, in other words, before it becomes commercially available," adds Dr. Charbonneau.



Left to right: Dr. Alain Richard (Gestion Valeo), Dr. Patrick Colin (Uman Pharma and INRS), Dr. Luc Daigneault (SciMega Recherche), François Le Barbenchon (SciMega Recherche), Sabin Boily (Gestion Valeo), Dr. Daniel Coderre (INRS), Guy Ouellette (Government of Quebec), Dr. Michel Charbonneau (INRS), Dr. Richard Mompalmer (Université de Montréal), Dr. Dale Meisner (Uman Pharma).
– Photographer: Denis Bernier.

In the meantime, the professor's team and his partners are keeping busy. Uman Pharma, a Quebec pharmaceutical company specializing in manufacturing injectable cytotoxic products and the only company in Canada certified to do so, is preparing batches of drugs for use in the trial. The Dutch multinational DSM is supplying genistein as well as all medical documentation on the molecule. Together, the two partners will inject over a million dollars into the project.

"This partnership between academia, the pharmaceutical world and the government definitely speeds up the drug development process, which will ultimately help save lives while creating value for our society," concludes Dr. Charbonneau.

Source: www.communiqes.gouv.qc.ca

INRS
Université d'avant-garde

For further information about the clinical trial project, contact Dr. Michel Charbonneau, Professor/Researcher at the INRS–Institut Armand-Frappier, at 450 687-5010, ext. 8831.



Laval is home to one of Verint's key R&D centres

In 2003, Verint® Systems, a global Actionable Intelligence™ leader on the NASDAQ Stock Market, acquired a small, Laval-based developer of video solutions to broaden its product line. Flash forward to 2011. This acquisition is now one of the key R&D centres for the company.

Founded in 1994 and headquartered in Melville, New York, Verint is a leading provider of enterprise workforce optimization and security intelligence technology. These solutions capture and analyze complex, underused information sources, such as voice, video and unstructured text. Today, more than 10,000 organizations in 150 countries—including over 85% of the Fortune 100—use the company's solutions to improve enterprise performance and literally make the world a safer place.

The wholly owned subsidiary in Laval, a state-of-the-art facility with over 150 employees, is the backbone of Verint's Canadian operation and, to a greater extent, the "go-to" R&D centre for the company's Video Intelligence Solutions™—which help enterprise and government organizations deter terrorism and crime, secure critical infrastructure, and protect people and assets.

"The cutting-edge, networked IP video solutions we develop in Laval lead to products that are sold around the world," said Elan Moriah, President, Verint Witness Actionable Solutions® and Verint Video Intelligence Solutions.

The Laval subsidiary didn't start off as one of Verint's key R&D centres. In 2003, it was a developer of IP-based video edge devices and software for wireless video transmission—bought to extend Verint's digital video solutions for security, surveillance and asset protection at government, municipal, transportation and corporate facilities.

Now the Laval operation is one of the development teams behind the industry's most comprehensive, integrated video portfolio. Verint's Nextiva® video solutions—comprised of IP video management software, integrated analytics, encoders, cameras, wireless devices and intelligent DVRs—are designed to provide a single source for virtually every facet of video surveillance operations. With these solutions, organizations can rapidly distill the most significant intelligence from large volumes of video to detect threats, improve emergency event management, reduce exposure to liability and loss, and improve performance.

"Traditionally, organizations have a black box mentality," said Mr. Moriah. "They check video only if there is a breach of security. With Nextiva, we are one of the first companies to think outside that box and offer software with the capability to cover thousands of cameras and the ability to apply sophisticated analytics, so you can highlight potential security breaches before they even happen."

The Laval subsidiary was also partly behind another video solution success story: Verint's Retail Traffic Analytics solution. Designed to leverage existing video surveillance applications, it provides real-time information regarding customer count, traffic patterns, dwell-times and broad information regarding in-store customer shopping behaviours.

"Literally, within hours of installing this solution, store management can modify product placement on shelves and in aisles based on up-to-the-minute information," Mr. Moriah said. "Ultimately, this video management application helps improve the customer experience and maximize sales."

Thousands of organizations worldwide rely on Verint's Solutions. Some of the Canadian clients that benefit from them include Vancouver Translink, Rogers Wireless, Bell Canada and London Overground Rail Operations Ltd.

What does the future hold for Verint's Laval operations? More of the same, according to Mr. Moriah. "Verint is a global company and our business in Laval is intertwined with what we do in other parts of the organization. As Verint continues to grow, so will our Laval operation. It is, after all, the hub for our video solutions and Canadian activities." And will continue to be for years to come.



The Laval subsidiary of Verint Systems primarily conducts R&D in video-based information solutions.

VERINT®

For further information about Verint Systems, contact Willie Kounicar, Vice-President, Product Development, at 450 686-9000 ext. 568, or visit the company's website: www.verint.com.



Floursannuelles.com – your gardening helper

Starting this April, you can finally shop for flowers and plan your garden from the comfort of your own home, thanks to Floursannuelles.com, Quebec's first online nursery.

"You can already buy horticultural products online in Europe," says Guylaine Lacroix, who heads the project with her husband Mario. "We find it to be a great way to connect to less accessible customers who use the Internet."

For several years, fewer and fewer Quebecers have been visiting the province's nurseries at the start of the gardening season. Family and business obligations, as well as the attraction of "less complicated" hobbies, account for much of this trend. "The idea behind Floursannuelles.com is to make horticulture a simple and accessible pastime. The website has also been designed to make it easy to buy and take care of flowers. Simple search criteria such as colour, height and exposure make navigation easy," says Mrs. Lacroix.

Gardening is so simple!

Floursannuelles.com is nothing less than an online nursery. The website will go live in early April and will be open for transactions a few days later. From a catalogue complete with pictures, you will be able to select flowering annuals, grasses, climbing plants, fine herbs and vegetables. The products will be delivered to your door by FedEx. In addition to making gardening accessible for people with reduced mobility and those without a vehicle, delivery gives consumers other advantages. "Flowers will be fresher because they won't physically pass through the nursery. They'll make just one trip: from our greenhouses to the customer's home," says Mrs. Lacroix.



Guylaine Lacroix gets ready to launch a website where you can buy horticultural products online.

The founders of Floursannuelles.com hope that their site will become a horticultural reference in Quebec. This is why the portal will be much more than just an online store: it will be a horticultural guide. The catalogue will offer product descriptions, as well as a panoply of practical advice to help you choose and take care of your plants. Ideas for containers, positioning and floral arrangements will also be available on the site. "People want to create flower beds and display flowers around their home but often don't know where to start. Along those lines, we'll also be offering ready-to-plant collections," adds Mrs. Lacroix.

Renewing the family tradition

The products offered on Floursannuelles.com will come directly from the Lacroix family's greenhouses, which have stood on the same agricultural land in Laval for more than a century. The Lacroix family has 11,615 m² of plants under glass. After launching a wholesale business in 1970, they are now making the leap into retail with Floursannuelles.com. In addition to showcasing its innovation, their new enterprise has enormous development potential. Mrs. Lacroix is also highly optimistic about the markets that Floursannuelles.com could win. "We're aiming at the entire Quebec province. We can do it. With FedEx, we can deliver anywhere in 24 hours. As the concept is new, however, we first need to spread the word." For its first year of operation, Guylaine, Mario and Dominic Lacroix have therefore planned an advertising campaign on social networking sites and in the traditional media to let people know they can shop for their flowering annuals online.



For further information about Floursannuelles.com Inc., contact Mrs. Guyaine Lacroix, President, at 450 627-3685, or visit their temporary website: www.floursannuelles.com.



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SPRING 2011
ECONOMIC NEWSLETTER
PUBLISHED BY



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