



LAVAL TECHNOPOLE

E C O N O M I C N E W S L E T T E R

BIOPOLE | e-POLE | AGROPOLE | INDUSTRIALPOLE | TOURISM

Developing young hockey players... and seeing to sustainable development

Laval youngsters could well form an incredible pool of hockey talent thanks to a recently inaugurated \$5.5-million project developed by Groupe Guimond. On September 21, the first minor hockey teams hit the rinks of the brand new Complexe sportif Guimond, a sports centre completely devoted to developing young hockey players.

The driving force behind this project was Éric Guimond, Vice-President of Entreprises J.G. Guimond, a family-owned construction company that has been in business since 1972. Not only did the firm have a solid track record in building sports centres, but Mr. Guimond also had a personal interest—he is a hockey coach for Laval's Association sportive de Monteuil. In January 2009, fed up with having to show up at arenas for hockey practice along with his eight-year-old son at six in the morning because of the shortage of available ice time in Laval, he cracked "We're going to fix this problem!" Only nine months elapsed between that first joking remark and, following the development of a business plan, drawing up the blueprints, approval of a loan and construction, the opening of the Complexe. Groupe Guimond is obviously very fast on its skates!

Exceedingly comprehensive in terms of its services and infrastructure, the 4,180-square-metre Complexe is first and foremost dedicated to developing young hockey players from the novice to midget levels. It has two small, 18 x 40 metre rinks (about two thirds the size of conventional rinks) that, according to Mr. Guimond, who bases himself on experts in the field, "are ideal for sharpening the reflexes, since you have to be faster and more agile on a smaller surface." The centre also has the equipment necessary for filming practice sessions,

a screening room for post-practice analysis and training, and a restaurant whose menu of healthy food choices has been designed by nutritionists especially for the young athletes. Finally, the Complexe houses an Athletic Republic-operated gym. Among other features, that area includes a synthetic ice surface for working on stickhandling and shooting, a skating treadmill, resistance exercise equipment and a synthetic grass training area. In fact, Complexe sportif Guimond is one of the first sports centres to house all these services under one roof.



Moreover, Groupe Guimond hasn't only been innovative in terms of hockey training. The building design itself uses a number of new, especially green, technologies. "In the first place, we decided to take our inspiration from the best practices in the green construction

Continued on the following page



Bio-K+ receives the prestigious Innovation Award from the Fondation Armand-Frappier

Last June 18, on the occasion of a fund-raising gala evening organized by the Fondation Armand-Frappier, Claude Chevalier, Bio-K+ International co-founder and president, accepted the foundation's 2009 Innovation Award on behalf of the company. Following the decision of a scientific committee, this award is presented annually to a company that has distinguished itself through its success and the role it plays within its particular field.

Mr. Chevalier declared how honoured the company was to receive such a distinction, especially since it is awarded by peers truly able to judge the amount of effort invested in developing and commercializing a product. "This award is a source of pride for our team and provides us with additional motivation to work even harder on our various projects," he pointed out. "It strengthens our credibility in the eyes of the industry and retailers, and increases our visibility among those unfamiliar with our company."

Since 1994, Bio-K+ International has manufactured and marketed a unique, patented formula of lactic bacteria—*L. acidophilus* and *L. casei*—that regulate intestinal functions and therefore help prevent antibiotic- or *Clostridium difficile*-associated diarrhea. Bio-K+ International stands out in the highly competitive probiotics market for its



Continued from page 1

industry, because we believe we should be reducing our environmental footprint," states Mr. Guimond. "Because we feel so strongly about this, Entreprises J.G. Guimond has wanted to set an example by offering environmentally friendly building solutions to our customers. It should also be said that the technologies we have chosen to use are cost-effective over the long term, since they enable operating costs to be reduced considerably." Among the environmentally friendly features of the Complexe building are geothermal air conditioning, highly energy-efficient lighting, high-performance insulation and lights with motion detectors in the locker rooms. To top it all off, a system that recovers the heat produced by the compressors used for heating the building's foundation will help supply 80% of the hot water needed for the Complexe's showers.

Complexe sportif Guimond management's sincere concern for current and future generations of young hockey players is reflected in the centre's mission and philosophy. "Although we certainly would like to see a return on our investment, maximizing profits is not our primary goal. If that had been the case, we would have reserved the best time slots for adults, not amateur leagues, and charged more. Our objective is to offer youngsters advantageous training conditions that will foster their development as players, all within a healthy environment for both children and parents. And we intend to respect that mission to the letter," declares Mr. Guimond.

The new centre received a very warm welcome from the community, which reserved 90% of the Complexe's available ice time before it had even opened! What's more, former NHL players have indicated their interest in conducting hockey clinics. Given such enthusiasm, one has to wonder whether the centre's management is not already thinking about expanding. "If the demand is there, the size of our lot would make expansion possible, but we first want to get our team and organization up and running smoothly. We are only just starting out, and we want to ensure that we offer top-quality infrastructure and services," concludes Mr. Guimond.

In short, young Laval hockey players no longer have an excuse not to become champions!



To learn more about Complexe sportif Guimond and Entreprises J.G. Guimond, please contact Éric Guimond, Vice-President, at 450 663-7155, or visit their respective Web sites: www.csguimond.ca and www.ejg.ca.



Claude Chevalier

scientific rigour: its products' effectiveness has been demonstrated by clinical studies conducted according to the strictest protocols, the findings of which have been published in recognized scientific journals. "A significant part of our budget is allotted to clinical research," reveals Mr. Chevalier. "However, no study has any worth unless the product is truly effective. In respect to Bio-K+'s CL1285® formula, for example, patients notice results in less than 72 hours. No other product of its kind currently available on the market works as quickly or as well."

Furthermore, following the 2004 findings of Maisonneuve-Rosemont and Pierre-Le Gardeur hospitals, an increasing number of Canadian hospitals are now using the Bio-K+ product to prevent and contain outbreaks of *C. difficile*. A large-scale clinical study recently conducted in Shanghai has again confirmed the efficacy of multidose administration of the product in hospital settings, as it has found that CL1285® not only prevents such an infection from spreading from one patient to another, but also acts as a remedial therapy.

Another factor contributing to the product's credibility and marketing potential: approval from various health agencies from around the world, including Health Canada, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration

and the European Food Safety Authority. "Plus, more and more U.S. insurance companies are adding CL1285® to their list of reimbursable products," points out Mr. Chevalier. As the old saying goes, the best recognition often comes from afar!

A final proof of the product's effectiveness is that Bio-K+ International has developed its market mainly through word of mouth, rather than through any great commercial hype. "We are essentially a family business," states Mr. Chevalier. "My wife Monique works at Bio-K+, and my two children, Isabèle and François-Pierre, are managers there. In fact, the company itself is like one big family, since we have practically no staff turnover. We do not have the same resources as the big pharmaceutical firms to devote to marketing our product, but we can count on the support of health professionals to talk about and use it."

Bio-K+ International is currently working on strengthening its presence in the other Canadian provinces and in the United States. Its product should also be available soon in Latin America, Europe and China. In terms of clinical research, the company is continuing its efforts to demonstrate the therapeutic properties of CL1285® in respect to, among other things, skin care and treating traveller's diarrhea.

The direct result of all these different projects is that production at Bio-K+'s Laval plant will have to be increased. The facility now produces approximately 10 million bottles of CL1285® annually, a figure that does not include its capsule form. Plans to enlarge the plant are currently on the drawing board, and the company is also considering the idea of setting up a factory in the U.S. The 100 or so employees at Bio-K+ are sure to have some new co-workers in the very near future . . .



To learn more about Bio-K+ International, dial 450 978-2465 or visit the company's Web site: www.biokplus.com.



Hydrolico and Hydrolico international put their power behind the recovery

Last July, a scant three years after it was first built, Hydrolico and Hydrolico international decided to get started on the 975-square-metre expansion of their Laval plant. Following the planned completion of the project this fall, the plant will have a total area of 2970 square metres. The \$1-million investment involved will mainly enable the two sister companies to position themselves for the coming recovery, respond to market developments and consolidate their current workforce.

Founded in 1994, Hydrolico specializes in the manufacture of large hydraulic jacks, devices that enable a mechanical force to be increased tenfold and can thus lift very heavy loads. Its major customers come from the forestry, mining and transportation industries. Wanting to diversify the company's operations, in 2003 Hydrolico president Richard Désy co-founded, along with Daniel Strati, Hydrolico international. The latter is a distributor of hydraulic components such as valves and cylinders—some of which are produced in huge numbers in the company's Shanghai factory—that are mainly designed for the automotive sector. The two firms have pooled their engineering resources in order to offer state-of-the-art custom hydraulic system design services.

To begin with, the expansion of the Laval plant will allow the two companies to get ready for the anticipated recovery. "Our customers are mainly located in Québec," explains Mr. Strati, joint shareholder in Hydrolico international. "We are just beginning to develop our international markets for one very simple reason: we were in the process of getting our Chinese plant up and running smoothly and training the some 100 employees there in our methods. We wanted to make sure that our products would be perfect, and that is now a done deal!" In this way, Hydrolico international will be able to make its mark in various markets abroad. For example, 10% of its sales now come from the United States, the destination of its first exports. Thanks to the investments that have enabled it to increase its productivity, it expects to quadruple sales over the next two years. Furthermore, a targeted acquisition in Ontario will extend its natural geographic base in Canada. "We firmly believe in the economic upturn," declares Mr. Strati, "and we have prepared for it through massive investment to make us capable of meeting the demand."

The expansion of the Laval plant will also enable Hydrolico to respond to the latest developments in its sector, particularly in respect to neutralizing the strong competition from such emerging markets as India, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey. "To do that, we have to diversify," notes Mr. Désy. "The huge garage doors of our new space will allow us to provide repair and rebuilding services for such rolling stock as trucks and drilling machines. We will be able to do repairs on-site very quickly, which is very important to our customers, for whom any



On the left, Richard Désy; on the right, Daniel Strati.

equipment breakdowns can prove to be extremely costly in terms of lost productivity." For its part, Hydrolico international has taken advantage of the technological advances of the last decade to develop ultraprecise, electronically controlled hydraulic systems. In short, the two sister companies have put a great deal of effort into penetrating markets related to their primary operations in order to ensure their continued growth.

Finally, Hydrolico and Hydrolico international's investment will secure the jobs of their 44 current employees. Furthermore, the two companies are banking on the know-how and wealth of experience of their personnel to move forward with their plans for growth and international penetration. "I am optimistic that we will create about 10 new jobs once we see the first signs of economic recovery," states Mr. Désy.

It should also be noted that the plant's expansion has been accompanied by a reorganization of the company's manufacturing processes. Overhead gantries and machine tools enabling the automation of certain tasks will be added to the equipment in place in order to improve productivity.

All that remains now is for Hydrolico and Hydrolico international to await the favourable economic climate that will allow them to achieve their many plans!



To learn more about Hydrolico and Hydrolico international, please contact joint shareholders Richard Désy or Daniel Strati at 450 628-6644, or visit the company's Web site: www.hydrolico.com.

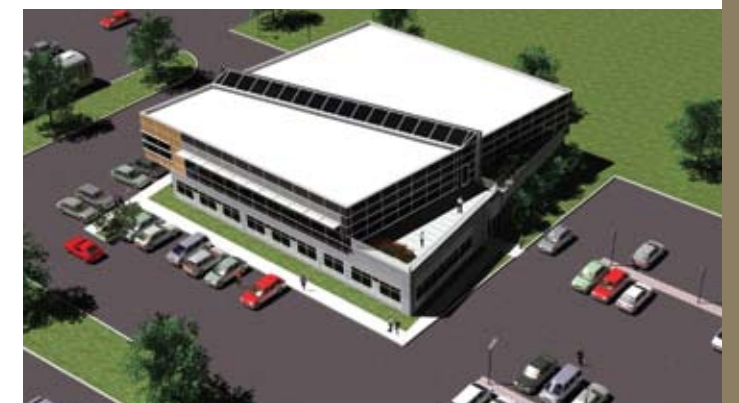
A prestige building that will mean excellence in health care for Laval residents

Centre Le Bergerac will soon open its doors at the corner of Curé Labelle Boulevard and Highway 440. Centre dentaire Patricia Skaf et associés was behind this project, whose impetus stemmed from the fact that it was impossible to expand its former dental clinic, located at 380 Curé Labelle. The decision was then made to build a new two-storey, 1,720-square-metre facility that could accommodate health care professionals from a number of specialties. The cost of the entire operation represented an investment of \$3.5 million.

This prestige building, whose lot provides room for some 70 parking spaces, was specifically designed to meet not only the needs of professionals and their clients, but also their employees. Dr. Patricia Skaf was very anxious to offer her staff, as well as future tenants, a pleasant, light-filled work setting, which explains the building's many windows, skylight and terrace on a section of the first floor's roof. "We practise holistic dentistry," relates Nicole Hacala, the dental clinic's coordinator. "That means we take the overall, not just the oral, health of our patients into account. It was therefore logical for us to consider quality of life and comfort—and thus ensure the physical and psychological health—of all Centre Le Bergerac's users, beginning with the people who work here."



Holistic medicine, which can be characterized by its consideration of every facet of an individual's health and use of biocompatible prevention and treatment products, is a strong trend in the health-care field. Holistic dentistry (HD) is distinguished by the fact that it does not employ either mercury fillings or fluoride treatments. Centre dentaire Patricia Skaf suggests that its clients replace their mercury fillings with resin composite or "white" fillings, which pose fewer health risks. In addition, HD makes use of various complementary approaches, such as homeopathy and chiropractic, since it maintains



that such problems as cavities and bad breath can be symptomatic of an imbalance within the organism. The professionals at Centre dentaire Patricia Skaf have practised this type of dentistry since the clinic's beginnings and has seen its clientele increase considerably over the last years, undoubtedly aided by societal awareness of the necessity of adopting a healthy lifestyle.

The clinic's new premises, which feature eight treatment rooms equipped with the most advanced technologies and can accommodate three full-time teams of dentists, will enable it to extend its hours of operation—meaning more opportunities for appointments at convenient times!

With the view of offering a whole range of health-care services under the same roof, Centre Le Bergerac would like to have as tenants professionals who are dedicated to providing quality care and who could, in line with that perspective, create collaborative synergies to benefit patients' overall health. For the moment, the Centre's rentable area has been left open in order to suit future tenants' needs in terms of space.

To learn more about Centre Le Bergerac and the Centre dentaire Patricia Skaf et associés, please contact Nicole Hacala, Coordinator, at 450 622-3030.



Aliments Candybec makes a family dream come true

Aliments Candybec, a company that specializes in coating nuts and dried fruit, moved its operations to Laval this past summer. In fact, becoming owners of their own plant had always been the dream of the four Salame brothers heading up this company, which was founded in 1991. After many years—and plenty of hard work, patience and planning—their dream has finally become a reality. The family now owns a two-storey, 975-square-metre plant that represents a \$1.5-million investment.

“Initially, all my brothers and I wanted to do was create our own jobs,” says Mustapha Salame, President of Aliments Candybec. “So we set up shop in a space we rented in the industrial zone of Montréal’s Saint-Laurent borough, where we started up operations in a small way.” The company developed its own product line: chocolate, honey, butter and maple syrup coatings for the raw materials produced by customers such as Krispy Kernels, Amira Entreprises Inc., Entreprises Shah, Toots Impex Inc., Miss Arachew Inc., Basse Frères Alimentation Orientale Inc., as well as others throughout Québec and Canada. Slowly but surely, the company grew.



The four Salame brothers, from left to right: Atef Salame, Ahmad Salame, Mahmoud Salame, Mustapha Salame.

By 2000, the owners recognized that sooner or later they would have to acquire a facility that could adapt to the needs of their growing business. Residing in Laval, as did most of their employees, they attended a L'AVANTAGE TECHNOPOLE conference on Laval-area industrial parks and decided to purchase a lot there. However, the four brothers waited until 2008 to give the go-ahead for construction. Safeguarding what they have worked so hard to acquire underlies every one of the family’s decisions, so caution has always been their watchword. Finally, in July 2009, Aliments Candybec and its 15 employees moved into their new headquarters.

The Salames have many plans and now have all the space necessary to bring them to fruition. They have already outfitted their factory with new equipment, which has quickly brought about an increase in productivity. According to Mr. Salame, “It is to such a point that we will have to create five or six new positions in the coming year.” And these are not the only changes that have been made: employees’ work schedules have been reorganized over two shifts, all production processes were reviewed and quality control improved. “We also plan on investing \$300,000 in new equipment within the next two years in order to automate certain procedures,” added Mr. Salame. In the short term, Aliments Candybec wants to step up its output and maximize its production processes, while at the same time offer its customers fair prices.

The new factory will also allow Aliments Candybec to venture onto the international market. Indeed, a plan to export to Japan is generating genuine enthusiasm within the Salame family. A Vancouver producer tested samples of peanuts, shelled sunflower seeds and maple syrup-coated almonds among Japanese consumers with the aim of possibly marketing them... and the Japanese reaction seems to have been very positive! “We sincerely hope this project pans out,” declares Mr. Salame. “It will pave the way for other partnerships with producers and exports to different countries. We will certainly build on export development to ensure our growth over the coming years.”

For the Salame family, as the saying goes, all good things come to those who wait!



For further information about Aliments Candybec, please contact Mustapha Salame, President, at 450 687-9999.

ConvExpert successfully transforms a family business into a structured organization

In the summer of 2008, a group of Laval managers, backed by a private investment fund, acquired ConvExpert, a family business specializing in the conversion, production and fitting of commercial vehicles. ConvExpert has undergone a major transformation during the last few months in order to ensure its productivity, growth and long-term survival. ConvExpert’s management and 75 employees can now declare the transition, whose changes required an investment of over \$2 million, a success.

The acquisition of ConvExpert represented an attractive business opportunity for its group of investors. The company’s major potential for growth, its employees’ experience and the expertise gained since its founding in 1995, its well-established customer base and its state-of-the-art facilities (a 7060 m² plant on a 14,865 m² lot designed to accommodate large fleets of vehicles) were undeniable assets. “In spite of the turbulent economic climate, we firmly believed we would be able to help ConvExpert realize its full potential,” states Serge Larue, the new president of the company.

Acquiring the firm was only the first step in a whole series of changes, since a number of challenges awaited the new managers, the first being structural in nature. Basically, the company had to move from a family-run organization to one managed according to a cost-effective business plan. Following a thorough analysis of where the company stood, several actions were taken. Firstly, a new management, sales and administration team was put in place. At the same time, the decision-making chain was reviewed and duties and responsibilities reassigned. This team was then made responsible for instilling a business culture focused on proactive customer service and uncompromising quality. “Close on the heels of that, we set up a team of technical advisors whose role it is to provide customers with support throughout the vehicle conversion process, both in terms of determining and defining their needs, as well as issuing certain recommendations,” mentions Mr. Larue in way of example.

ConvExpert management also took on a major task in respect to operations. The goal of the initial phase was to review the plant’s production capacity. For one part, the configuration of machinery was redesigned. Engineers looked into the existence of any possible bottlenecks in order to determine the requirements growth would bring. Following that exercise, two high-performance digital punch presses were purchased, enabling the company’s capacity to produce metal parts to quadruple. For another part, employees contributed to a review of the entire range of production processes, as well as the redesign of their workstations.



The increase in production capacity was not accidental. In fact, it was essential for the rollout of the second phase of the operational overhaul—the creation of a heavy van production division that would enable ConvExpert to serve municipalities and other institutional entities, a new market niche for it. At the same time, the company wanted to broaden its line of products in order to better meet its customers’ demands.

Last but not least, the final phase of the overhaul saw the implementation of integrated enterprise resource planning (ERP) software. “This step was crucial for optimum planning of procurement and production, as well as optimization of our resources, and has resulted in our being able to offer our customers more competitive prices,” points out Mr. Larue.

This metamorphosis was made possible through the support of a number of valuable partners, including the National Bank of Canada, L'AVANTAGE TECHNOPOLE, Canada Economic Development for Québec Regions (CEDQR), Québec’s Ministère du Développement économique, de l’Innovation et de l’Exportation (MDEIE), Emploi-Québec and the National Research Council of Canada (NRC).

ConvExpert is now more than ready to take on new challenges. Currently, the company is preparing a plan to expand the territory it serves not only in the Greater Montréal area, but also throughout Québec, Ontario and even the northeastern U.S. It also intends to continue its investments in the purchase of machinery, training of personnel and product research and development.



To learn more about ConvExpert, please contact Serge Larue, President, at 450 664-7943, or visit the company’s Web site: www.convexpert.com.



Putting Warnex's good news under the microscope...

The second quarter of 2009 has certainly proved an auspicious one for Warnex. In quick succession the company, which provides laboratory services to the pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors, announced its launch of a screening test for the influenza A(H1N1) virus, ISO 15189 accreditation and acquisition of Molecular World Inc.

An ultra-fast screening test

As soon as the WHO warned about the risk of an influenza A(H1N1) pandemic, Warnex put an entire team to work on developing an ultra-fast screening test for the virus. One of the reasons prompting this initiative was the fact that employees in many of the companies numbering among its customers must travel to those countries most affected by the H1N1 strain. In order to avoid costly losses of productivity due to preventive quarantines, Warnex now offers a screening test whose results can be obtained in less than eight hours.

The first Québec company to be awarded ISO 15189 accreditation

Last June, Warnex became only the second Canadian and the very first Québec company to obtain ISO 15189:2007 certification for its Laval medical laboratories from the Standards Council of Canada (SCC). This accreditation is an internationally recognized quality standard for medical testing laboratories. "Most importantly," points out Warnex's President and CEO, Mark J. Busgang, "it allows us to guarantee the reliability and accuracy of the testing we do, since the very strict standards laid down by ISO 15189 cover the whole range of associated internal and external operations."

Before embarking upon the process involved in receiving this accreditation, Warnex had already instituted a solid quality management structure modelled on industry best practices within its medical laboratories. The accreditation process not only enabled Warnex to validate and strengthen this structure, but also lent it increased credibility among its customers.



Molecular World: A strategic acquisition

For some time Warnex, a leader in the field of DNA parentage testing, had been planning to expand its activities in the forensic analysis area. This explains its acquisition of Molecular World Inc., a laboratory located in Thunder Bay, Ontario. "Molecular World's state-of-the-art facilities, Standards Council of Canada accreditation and expert team provide the perfect complement to Warnex's services," states Mr. Busgang.

The new subsidiary, whose purchase price was covered by the issue of two million common shares of Warnex, which assumed approximately \$350,000 of Molecular World's debt, is the seventh acquisition made by the company since its founding in 1996.

Warnex, whose sales have steadily increased throughout its existence, has built its success on both the organic growth of its subsidiaries and through acquisitions. It now has a total of 275 employees, 185 of whom work at its head office in Laval. Its growth strategy for the coming years is focused on exports. Warnex currently has customers in some 15 countries, and its overseas markets provide over 30% of its total revenues.



For further information about Warnex, please contact Mark J. Busgang, President and CEO, at 450 663-6724, extension 310, or visit the company's Web site at: www.warnex.ca.



DIRECTOR, MARKETING & COMMUNICATION
SYLVIE GAUTHIER

COORDINATOR, MARKETING & COMMUNICATION
CLAIRE MONTEIL

CONSULTING AND EDITING
INTÉGRALE
STRATEGY, CREATIVITY & DEVELOPMENT



FALL 2009
ECONOMIC NEWSLETTER
PUBLISHED BY



GROWTH CHALLENGE

1555 CHOMEDEY BLVD., SUITE 100
LAVAL, QUEBEC, CANADA H7V 3Z1
TELEPHONE: 450 978-5959
FAX: 450 978-5970
E-MAIL: info@lavaltechnopole.com
WEB SITE: www.lavaltechnopole.com