

A presentation of the LAVAL TECHNOPOLE International Business Centre

MercadOr 2009



“Commitment is the cornerstone of any business relationship . . .”

Luc Mainville
President and CEO

Export Leader

LAB Research

LAB Research: A leader with commitment

Since the 1998 founding of LAB Research in Laval, the company, which specializes in preclinical pharmaceutical studies, has experienced exponential growth. Having initially concentrated on its development in North America—where it twice doubled the area of its facilities through investments totalling \$52 million—it subsequently won over the European market with its acquisition of a contract research site in Hungary in 2003, and one in Denmark in 2005.

More recently, LAB Research has taken steps to enter other markets, including that of Japan, which alone represents approximately 20% of the preclinical contract research market. The company first developed links with local representation agencies. “The Japanese market is very difficult to penetrate,” points out Luc Mainville, President and CEO. “Commitment is the cornerstone of any business relationship, and that is particularly true in Japan. We therefore must have a very strong presence in the field, participate in scientific conferences, meet as many people as possible, and so on.” This well-thought-out strategy has already proved effective.

On the strength of its success in Japan, LAB Research took its formula to South Korea, and then to Australia, in order to set the groundwork for establishing connections in Australasia, a growth area. The company has also begun to build relationships in Israel, where many R & D organizations are headquartered.

“Each market has its own distinctive characteristics,” explains Mr. Mainville. “Having a local representation agency is of great help in establishing its credibility and getting over language barriers, but a supplier of services has to do more to accommodate the targeted clientele. It must understand its customers’ needs, decision-making processes and sales cycles, adapt scientific documentation, ensure a strong, constant presence, and more.”

To ensure that presence, over the next few years LAB Research plans to formally establish itself in the major markets for its services throughout the world by setting up subsidiaries. “It’s all a matter of commitment!” reasserts Mr. Mainville.

LAB Research employs 600 people worldwide, including 275 in Laval. Its staff’s commitment garnered the company two Dunamis awards, in addition to a Mercuriade award, in 2007 and 2008 and, this year, a MercadOr for “Export Leader.”

For further information about LAB Research, please contact Luc Mainville, President and CEO, at 450 973-2240.

“We can apply what we learn in other countries in Canada.”

José-Luis Menghini
President



Market Diversification

JMF Cranes & Hoists

JMF learns from its international experience

On the strength of its success in Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Honduras, Panama, the Netherlands and the United States, JMF decided to explore the Indian market. However, the designer and manufacturer of lifting and materials handling solutions—cranes, hoists, overhead cranes and more—has been careful to first prepare the ground for doing so.

For José-Luis Menghini, President of JMF, that first involved the company itself. “Doing business internationally is important for us in order to put our professional and personal capabilities to the test. We have to juggle with different standards, different cultures and different languages. We therefore had to prepare our employees to adopt an international way of thinking. In human terms, this has been immensely rewarding.” This process began in 2005, when JMF was about to carry out its first international contract.

The company has come a long way since then and its president, who himself speaks five languages, has done a great deal of travelling. “It is crucial to become involved with customers, to make them understand that we are serious about our work and to prove by our presence that their projects are important to us,” he points out. “That approach may be old school, but it’s still the best way to go about things. Plus, Canadian expertise is renowned throughout the world, which gives us the credibility necessary to open the doors of most international markets.” Thus, following exhaustive research on Internet business networks to target its markets and once the first contacts had been made, JMF quickly formed close ties with potential customers.

In just a few years the manufacturer has succeeded in diversifying its markets. However, in Mr. Menghini’s eyes, the Canadian market, which represents 55% of the company’s total sales, remains extremely important: “We can apply what we learn in other countries in Canada. Exporting is very demanding in every way, but it enables us to increase our skills and pass the benefits of that on to our Canadian customers.”

In addition to various Canadian, South American and Middle Eastern projects, the 55 employees at JMF’s Laval plant may soon be working on contracts for Indian customers.

To learn more about JMF Cranes & Hoists, please contact Line Laroche at 450 975-1300.



“Our system of dealing directly with farmers, farm operators and co-operatives has long proven itself.”

Assaad Abdelnour
President and Founder

Expansion Abroad

CLIC International

Consumers the world over have clicked with CLIC

You are sure to be familiar with CLIC International products—rice, lentils, couscous, beans, canned vegetables and more—from seeing them on the shelves of your local grocery store. In all, approximately 1,600 food products, the majority of them Canadian in origin, although others come from some 40 countries in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, as well as the U.S., are distributed by CLIC throughout Canada and exported worldwide.

In business since 1984, CLIC has a head office in Laval, as well as two plants in Montreal, two warehouses in Ontario and sales offices in four other Canadian cities. In addition to its 250 employees, it relies on a sales force of 23 distribution agents in its various export markets.

CLIC recently acquired a multipurpose warehouse in New Jersey. Involving an investment of \$4 million, this first American distribution platform will enable the company to begin tapping into the food market of the entire U.S. east coast, which represents a reservoir of over 55 million consumers. Furthermore, the company expects to make more acquisitions in a number of other U.S. states.

Such plans may seem somewhat audacious during an economic downturn, but for Assaad Abdelnour, CLIC President and Founder, the risk is but a measured one: “CLIC mainly distributes convenience products. Good times or bad, people still have to eat. Our products represent excellent quality for the price. Furthermore, our system of dealing directly with farmers, farm operators and co-operatives has long proven itself. We guarantee the sale of every item we deliver to retailers and wholesalers, do market research and take charge of selecting and promoting our products.”

Combined with CLIC’s logistical expertise, repeatedly tried and tested over the past 25 years, this new U.S. distribution platform will be sure to allow the company to expand far and wide.

For further information about CLIC International, please contact Assaad Abdelnour, President, at 450 669-2663

“The real challenge is finding a balance between performance and a healthy work atmosphere.”

Hugo Meunier
Assistant General Manager



Innovative HR Management Practices

PolyExpert

PolyExpert scripts the film of its HR program to be a better exporter

PolyExpert is the leading non-integrated polyethylene film manufacturer in Canada, employing more than 100 people. Three years ago, while it was in the midst of re-evaluating its strategic development plan, the company decided to put a comprehensive human resources program into action. The following is an outline of its guiding principles.

The first concerns employer-employee relations. After the first round of organizational changes, a survey was conducted among employees, whose responses influenced certain aspects of the action plan. Among other things, an employee committee was set up in order to foster communication. In a concern for transparency and guidance, management also now meets with staff three times a year in order to inform them of the objectives to be achieved. Such measures aim at making relations among employees more flexible, which in turn has an impact on the company's relations with all those it deals with, including on the international front.

Recruitment and training have also garnered PolyExpert's attention. “We require our employees to be independent and responsible, as well as to have a constant focus on quality. We have therefore improved our selection and orientation process for new employees,” explains Hugo Meunier, Assistant General Manager. Once employees have been thoroughly integrated into the company, they are encouraged to become as versatile as possible. Furthermore, the company is about to finalize a training plan based on the skill sets required for each position.

In terms of quality of life, an enlightened system that allows plant employees to trade shifts has been implemented so that they can enjoy longer periods of time off. The company has also joined a wellness program.

This wide-ranging human resources initiative has enabled PolyExpert to become more productive, and thus more competitive. It produces more polyethylene film per employee at a lower cost, has a lower product rejection rate and a better quality product. When a company does business internationally, as is the case for PolyExpert, which exports 35% of its production to the United States and Australia, performance is essential. “The real challenge,” sums up Mr. Meunier, “is finding a balance between performance and a healthy work atmosphere.”

For further information about PolyExpert, please contact
Hugo Meunier, Assistant General Manager, at 514 384-5060.



“Growth isn’t impossible during a recession, it just takes more work.”

Martin Bissonnette

President of the new Nexera division

Agostino Castellano

Executive Vice-President of Megalak

New Exporter

Megalak

Megalak changes track and begins exporting

In 2008, Megalak, originally a contract manufacturer of furniture components and accessories, decided to diversify its offering by creating a new division, Nexera Distribution, which would produce its own lines of ready-to-assemble furniture. Its collections would feature up-to-the-minute, affordable styles designed to appeal to young urbanites throughout North America, which the manufacturer could distribute both in stores and on the Web.

Once the concept was formulated, everything necessary was quickly put into place: the company’s 5,110-square-metre Laval plant was refitted, a customer service department created, the design department—which would have to come up with items fitting the specifications required for shipment throughout Canada and the United States—strengthened, a 2,785-square-metre distribution centre in Boisbriand acquired, a logistical strategy ensuring fast delivery implemented, and a unique positioning for the products defined. In short order the number of employees grew from 20 to 45.

Success did not take long in coming. Chains such as Denis Office Supplies and Furniture, Brault & Martineau and Novexco indicated their interest in Nexera’s collections. “As for selling on the Web and exporting to the U.S., we were starting from nothing. We had to completely change our methods in terms of logistics and inventory management,” explains Agostino Castellano, Executive Vice-President of Megalak. “We therefore hired people who had a great deal of experience in those fields.” The result of this flurry of activity? The company’s products were soon available on such major American shopping sites as costco.com, everythingfurniture.com and target.com. And walmart.com will join the fold as of May 2009!

In short, in less than a year Megalak and its Nexera division have been able to carve out a premium place for themselves on the ready-to-assemble furniture market in both Canada and the U.S. And they may do just the same in Mexico one day!

“Growth isn’t impossible during a recession, it just takes more work. Quality, properly positioned products, targeted approaches and conscientious customer service are all keys to opening the door to any market,” concludes Martin Bissonnette, President of the new Nexera division.

To learn more about Nexera Distribution, please contact Martin Bissonnette, President, at 450 629-9022, extension 226.

www.nexeradistribution.com



A Message from the Mayor

Gilles Vaillancourt
Mayor of Laval

www.ville.laval.qc.ca

I am very pleased to offer my congratulations to the companies awarded a MercadOr that, through their leadership, perseverance and commitment both here and internationally, have contributed to the development of Laval. It is thanks to talented entrepreneurs and the efforts of the entire business community in the region that our economy has been successful in withstanding the severe jolts now rocking the majority of the world's markets.

Despite the current period of economic anxiety, I want to assure these undaunted entrepreneurs of my steadfast support and urge them to continue in their initiatives for growth, the sure guarantor for their success.

I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage all other Laval exporting companies to do the same. Furthermore, I invite those companies wishing to embark on the export path to take advantage of the many tools and services made available by the LAVAL TECHNOPOLE International Business Centre.

A Message from the Organizing Committee

Resolute determination

www.lavaltechnopole.com

Made up of the Business Development Bank of Canada, Emploi-Québec, Export Development Canada, Investissement Québec, Québec's Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation and the LAVAL TECHNOPOLE International Business Centre, the organizing committee is pleased to mark the holding of the 11th edition of the MercadOr awards.

We are particularly proud to salute the creativity, daring and energy of five Laval companies active in international markets. The 2009 winners each stand out for their admirable performance in one of the awards' five established categories, which include New Exporter, Market Diversification, Expansion Abroad, Innovative Human Resources Management Practices and Export Leader.

In addition to having the export of goods and services in common, these five recipients of a MercadOr also share the same strategy: to take advantage of this relatively slow period in the business cycle to review their business processes in order to prove more competitive internationally, as well as build bridges to their target markets to ensure they will be properly positioned when the recovery begins.

As Martin Bissonnette, President of the Nexera Distribution division of Megalac, the company awarded the New Exporter MercadOr, points out: "Growth isn't impossible during a recession, it just takes more work."

Congratulations to all five winners!

CONGRATULATIONS
to all the winners!



Desjardins

jolicœur
lacasse
AVOCATS



EULER HERMES
Canada



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