



LAVAL TECHNOPOLE International Business Centre

INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER



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DBM: A Close Look at a Shrewd Company

Everyone knows the car industry is changing to the core. Without a doubt, the economic crisis has accelerated the change—with annual worldwide sales dropping by 14% between 2007 and 2010—but other factors are also helping redraw the face of this new economic sector: a price war between car makers, greater demand for hybrid and electric vehicles, rising consumption in emerging countries (with Asia currently absorbing more than 50% of global automobile production), and Chinese car makers coming onto the stage...

This means that automotive industry suppliers also need to redefine themselves. And that is exactly what DBM Reflex Enterprises has done in the shadow of the recession. Specializing in fabricating plastic injection moulds for optical components for headlights and tail-lights, DBM is doing business with all major car makers on the planet. It certainly has no competitors biting its heels, as this Laval company with over 40 years of history is ultra-specialized in a market that has only a few major players. Having said that, it is vulnerable in being dependent on only one market.

Having realized this, in 2006 the company decided to diversify and transfer its expertise to other industry sectors. It founded DBM Reflex Lighting Solutions, which specializes in making moulds for LED lighting applications. Its new market niches? Lighting systems for highways, mines and industrial equipment. "Just like car makers, optical systems manufacturers send us their performance specifications and we design the product," explains Bernard Caire, Vice President of Sales at DBM Reflex Enterprises.

But how do you get your expertise known in other markets when you have traditionally been corralled in the car industry? DBM Reflex had a network of highly effective reps in place, but they dealt exclusively with car manufacturers. «Recommendations are very important when you want to do business internationally," says Caire. "And that's mainly how we recruit our reps. Of course, mistakes are inevitable. We've spent three years building up a strong network in the southern U.S. It takes a lot of time, follow-up and training." Another decisive factor: customers often want to meet the company's directors who are driving the initiative. This means you need to be ready to travel regularly to build bridges. "You also then need to deliver the goods," adds Caire.

To grow sales, it is not enough to set up abstract internationalization initiatives. You also need to mobilize the necessary workforce to deliver your products to deadline. DBM Reflex Lighting Solutions therefore created 25 new jobs to sustain its productivity.

Message from the Director



To ensure that our 2011-2012 action plan meets the needs of Laval exporters, we conducted a survey of businesses this summer along with series of visits. This process confirmed that Laval exporters are aiming to diversify by developing lesser-known markets in a structured way, especially in Asia and Latin America. Many thanks to all who took the time to share their views with us and talk about their international projects.

To see our schedule of activities for Fall 2011, please go to our website www.lavaltechnopole.com. You will find that we are offering opportunities in various international markets, networking venues for exporters and support for planning a coherent internationalization strategy. We are confident that these activities will meet your needs. In any case, feel free to contact us to talk about your projects. We will be delighted to help you in your initiatives.

In this issue, you will find an article on DBM Reflex, a company that has succeeded in diversifying to face a changing world market and in using its know-how to reposition itself quickly in a new, fast-growing segment. Our columnists and our Blogger's Corner also deal with various topics directly or indirectly related to the development of new markets, a priority challenge for our businesses.

Happy reading and best wishes for a superb fall season!

Véronique Proulx, MBA

Continued on the following page



Continued from page 1



Head office of DBM Reflex Enterprises and DBM Reflex Lighting Solutions in Laval.

The two divisions now have 200 employees, exporting 90% of their production. DBM Reflex also has a counterparty in Taiwan, which covers the needs of the Asian market. The company's management is striving to consolidate the lighting company's presence in the United States by growing its market share in New England. In the medium term, it would like to get a foothold in Europe.

It goes without saying that by applying its vast expertise to a different field, DBM has really shown its flair. Not only is it no longer hostage to the car industry, its sales have grown substantially, beyond merely weathering the economic crisis.



Products designed and made by DBM Reflex Enterprises.



For further information about DBM Reflex Enterprises, go to: www.dbmreflex.com and www.dbmlighting.com.

ⁱ www.planetoscope.com/automobile/76-nombre-de-voitures-produites-dans-le-monde.html (site consulted on August 15, 2011).

The Mining Industry: National and International Potential

As part of our "Leadership Conference" series, on June 16th Sotech Nitram organized a conference in Laval on the mining industry. The objective was to allow participants to better understand the scale of mining projects in Quebec and internationally, as well as their potential impact for our customers. We invited Claudine Renaud, Managing Director of Minalliance (www.minalliance.ca) to speak to us about this major industrial sector.

Ms. Renaud's presentation revealed that, as of the date of the conference, the mining sector in Quebec alone accounted for

\$27 billion in investment. Dozens of projects are underway or in a stage of analysis: iron, copper, nickel and diamond exploitation projects. Yes, that's right—a high-quality diamond mine is operating north of Chibougamau! Claudine Renaud also revealed that the industry relies on some 3,800 suppliers throughout Quebec. Is your company taking advantage of Quebec mining development?

In a sustainable development context, Sotech Nitram recognizes the socioeconomic value of the mining sector. We invite all Laval businesses to discover this and quantify the potential that it

Our team of columnists:

