

## COMMUNITY UPDATE

# NSBI - Editorial Update

As a member of Nova Scotia Business Inc.'s (NSBI) board of directors, I had the pleasure of participating in the launch of the business development agency's five-year plan last fall in Colchester County. In this plan, job creation is only one part of the bigger picture. It's about providing the right job opportunities. It is important to follow up with the local business community to understand how we can act on this plan.

At NSBI, we work with companies at home and abroad to expand business activity across the province. The Colchester area is home to a variety of industry sectors and a number of growth-oriented companies like Instrument Concepts and Trimstyle Décor Inc. These types of companies are what our province needs in order to continue growing and diversifying our economy.

Instrument Concepts is a sensor and deep-ocean measurement company based in Great Village. Established in 1998 by Mark Wood, the company is competing in local and international markets, including the United States and England.

Recently, the company has shifted its focus to include manufacturing as well as design work. This transition has been difficult, but Instrument Concepts is bridging the gap and continuing its steady course by forging partnerships with local companies and public organizations in the province.

In 2003, Bill Livingston and his son Trevor started Trimstyle Décor, a plastic injection mould company in Debert.

Trimstyle encountered challenges locating the business contacts they needed. NSBI stepped in and created networking

opportunities with companies like Amherst-based C-Vision, IMP and Bradean's Tool & Die. Trimstyle continues to be one of the most successful mould-making businesses in Nova Scotia.

Companies such as Instrument Concepts and Trimstyle Décor are playing a part in the province's overall economic growth and competitiveness.

Like other jurisdictions, Colchester County and the province are confronted by economic challenges on a national and international scale. For businesses that export outside of Canada, the rise and fall of the Canadian dollar has an impact on sales. To address challenges like this, companies are re-evaluating their business practices to understand how they can better compete through innovation and improved productivity.

When NSBI spoke to businesses during the launch of the five-year plan, attracting and retaining talent was the number one issue we heard. We will continue to work with our partners to fine-tune our business cases at the regional level. At the end of the day, it's about understanding what you have to offer and selling it to the world.

As members of the community, you and I know the unique issues businesses face. More importantly, you know Colchester County's greatest strengths. We need your help to understand how we can take our communities to the next level of growth. By working together, the issues we solve today can become opportunities for our future.

Stuart Rath is President and Director of Stuco Holdings Ltd., Truro and is a member of Nova Scotia Business Inc.'s (NSBI) board of directors.

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