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# BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2005

**COACH'S CATCH - C4**  
Don Cherry scores  
gig promoting  
pet insurance



<b>DOLLAR</b> 78.38¢ US +0.40¢	<b>GOLD</b> \$417.50 US +0.90	<b>EURO</b> \$1.5858 CDN -0.44	<b>TSX</b> 9,518.35 +66.16	<b>TSX VE</b> 1,606.55 +3.02	<b>TSX 60</b> 533.06 +3.81	<b>DOW</b> 10,503.68 -19.88	<b>S&amp;P 500</b> 1,194.07 +0.21	<b>NASDAQ</b> 2,061.62 +4.97
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## Focusing on technology

### Going digital lets photo firm click with clients

By ROSE SIMONE  
RECORD STAFF

As digital photography was making film obsolete, the window of opportunity opened for Kevin Harrington's business idea.

Harrington, owner of A Shot on Site in Waterloo, had been a freelance photographer working with traditional film for 25 years. But in the year 2000, just as digital photography was penetrating the market, he had a personal crisis.

He fell into a coma that was caused, he later discovered, by diabetes. When he recovered, he realized it was time to radically change his life. So he quit his manager's job with a manufacturing firm to turn his photography into a full-time business.

Harrington knew the timing was right in another way.

Digital photography and the ability to instantly make high-quality photographs presented the opportunity for a new "on site" type of photo business.

This meant replacing his \$35,000 worth of film-based equipment. And if he intended to proceed, he had to act soon, before others did.

So Harrington, now 44, made the leap. He took a business course at Lutherwood Coda, invested in digital professional cameras and computer equipment, and launched a business he called A Shot on Site.

It sells photos of minor and semi-pro sporting events, such as the Subaru Series triathlon races.

"We have done everything from horse and pony shows and dog shows, to triathlons and duathlons as well as all of your ball sports, like football, baseball, basketball and also hockey," Harrington says.

Sports photography is his bread and butter, but he also takes photos at company events.

Digital photography allows him to take action photos and then, from a trailer, add a decorative border that can feature company logos or the name of the sporting event.

Within minutes, he can produce high-quality prints and sell them to people while they're still at the event.

"So, for example, with a company golf tournament, we can go in, shoot the foursomes, create a golf-type border with the company name and logo . . . print those photographs on the site, and have them in folders ready to hand to people before they go home."

Harrington can also display and sell his photos later from his Web site.

"Before we went digital, to do something like the Subaru Series, I would have to buy bulk load film, and after shooting, we would have to develop the film, contact print the film, cut them, match them to the people, paste them on an order form and mail them out, hoping that a month later, people will actually want some."

Digital equipment, he says, makes it possible to capitalize on the desire of people to have a photo right after scoring



After working with film for years, Kevin Harrington of Waterloo invested in digital photography equipment to launch A Shot on Site in 2000. He takes photos at sports and corporate events, enhances them in a trailer, then sells quality prints to participants before they go home.

DAVID BEBEE, RECORD STAFF

### SMALL BUSINESS

a big goal or winning a race.

Photography and printing are perhaps two of the most obvious examples of businesses in which rapidly changing technology forces owners to either adapt or become obsolete.

#### PRINTING SHOP

Waterloo Printing Co. Ltd. on Frobisher Drive is an example of a printing firm that has survived for 70 years by staying ahead of the technology curves.

Mike Litwiller, the owner, says there are now computers in every piece of equipment in the printing business — and constant technology upgrades.

For example, in the print shop area, where images go from a disk to a proof of the page before going to the presses, a recent "software re-issue" required an investment of \$45,000 in software and computer equipment.

"It is a slippery slope," Litwiller says.

"Because if you don't keep up with the technology and then you are not profitable, then how do you get the loan to buy the equipment to make you profitable again? So you have to stay on top of it."

The rapid evolution of technology also causes some business services to fade away.

Litwiller cites scanning services as an example. Now that anyone can purchase a high-quality scanner for about \$1,000, the need to have a second party provide that service has faded away for many companies.

"That is a whole part of the industry that came and went within about a 15-year period," Litwiller says.

Established camera and photography businesses, such as Highland Camera Image Centre, with both a camera store and a photography studio in Kitchener and Waterloo, have also had to evolve with new technology.

**"Some people complain that digital equipment closed the door for film, but I think it opens the doors to new ways of people being creative and having fun with a camera."**

**MOHAMED GOVINDJI**  
HIGHLAND CAMERA  
IMAGE CENTRE

"We embraced the digital technology early on, in 1998," says Mohamed Govindji, whose parents, Nizar and Nusrat Govindji, own the Highland Camera Image Centre.

Mohamed, 25, also owns a digital photography studio, Studio370.ca in downtown Toronto, as well as maintaining the Shutterbug.ca digital photography web site for his parents' business here.

### Q&A

We asked Kevin Harrington, owner of A Shot on Site:

**Q.** How do you stay ahead of your competitors?

**A.** "You have to put the quality ahead of the quantity . . . Not everybody has the talent and not everybody is going to put the money out on the equipment."

It was one of the early sites that allowed people to upload digital pictures and add borders to make customized greeting cards.

"Some people complain that the digital equipment closed the door for film, but I think it opened the doors to new ways of people being creative and having fun with a camera," Govindji says.

But it also makes the business more efficient, he adds.

"People can now see the image on the computer, edit them, and have those photographs sent directly to the lab where we can print, so that they can walk out with photographs right away," he says.

"It pays off because of the turn-around time we save. And also the processing costs go down."

For printing businesses, too, technological investment cuts time and saves operating costs.

Litwiller says at one time, printing businesses had "film assemblers," who would lay out the sheets of film for the plates.

"With computer-to-plate technology, that trade disappeared and we went from four people in the pre-press area to two. So the technology increases the productivity."

But as the cost of digital technology comes down, it also means more competitors can enter the fray.

#### QUICK OFF THE MARK

Harrington says that is why it helped him to enter the business early, even though technology was still changing as he did.

The first digital camera he bought for his business cost about \$10,000. Today, he has a \$6,000 camera with far more features than the first one had.

"You have to buy the new equipment. And the old equip-

ment depreciates rapidly. But that is part of business. You have to stay on the leading edge, because if you aren't, someone else is."

Harrington says he was able to get a jump on competitors because he had time to build a reputation with corporate clients and event sponsors.

"My main focus in the first year was to survive. But after that, my focus was on getting my name out there because I knew the competition was coming."

Maintaining quality is also key to staying ahead of the competition. Harrington says he has competitors, but most are unable to immediately print photos on site. Or if they are, they aren't using high-quality printers.

"I work with an \$8,000 printer, five laptops and two monitors, just to view and print on site."

His business involves travelling throughout Ontario, Quebec and parts of the United States, often on weekends.

Harrington and his wife, Cindy, will often work together. His daughter and son also help and he sometimes hires helpers on a casual basis.

He admits there are limits to what he can do and how far he can travel. But he is now thinking about setting up franchise operations in other cities, so he can sub-contract work.

Today, he notes, there are digital cameras that amateurs can use to take high-quality images.

But technology can never replace talent, he adds.

"You might get a nice photograph from a distance of a horse or a runner or a hockey player, but you cannot get the shots that we can get," he says.

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### LOCAL SCENE

#### Le Marché condos open model suite

A model suite for a proposed three-storey condominium development that is to be built behind the new Kitchener Market will be officially opened on Thursday.

Visitors will be able to tour the model unit and see updated floor and property plans for the private project.

"We have just started pre-selling. The construction will start later in the summer with occupancy in the spring of 2006," says Lisa Schuett, sales manager for the Le Marché residences.

The proposed condos are to be built along Duke Street East, behind the market. Residents will have indoor access to the market through underground parking that will be provided for their units.

The model suite has been created at 250 King Street E., one of two retail buildings at the front of the market. Thursday's event will run from 4 to 8 p.m., with a ribbon cutting at 5:30 p.m.

The development is to have 68 units. Fifteen have been sold so far, Schuett says.

Prices range from \$154,400 for a one bedroom unit to \$235,400 for two bedrooms plus a den. Schuett said the development is being eyed primarily by professionals who work downtown.

The units are being developed by Barrel Works Group, the same company that worked with the City of Kitchener to develop the Kitchener Market. It also developed the Seagram Lofts condos in downtown Waterloo.

#### Dalsa renews contract for image sensors

Dalsa Corp. has renewed a contract to supply image sensor chips to a medical equipment manufacturer.

The Waterloo company said the deal is worth \$3.8 million.

The image sensors will be used in X-ray systems and will be delivered over the next three years.

They will be produced by Dalsa's digital imaging division in the Netherlands, using semiconductor wafers that will be manufactured by the company's semiconductor division located in Bromont, Que.

#### Microscope maker names new director

Andrew Pinkerton, an investment manager at GrowthWorks Capital, has joined the board of Biomedical Photometrics, a Waterloo firm that develops scanning laser microscopes for medical and genomics markets.

The privately-owned company also announced that Bill Garriock has been elected chair of its board.

Garriock, a director of several private and public companies, is a former president of the analytical instrument division of MDS Inc. and a former chair of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association of Canada.

#### Workshop offers tips to cut energy costs

Natural Resources Canada's office of energy efficiency will present a Spot the Energy Savings Opportunities workshop next month for companies in Waterloo Region.

It's geared to people who are in charge of facilities, such as building managers, maintenance supervisors, operations supervisors and others who manage electrical and heating systems.

The workshop, which costs \$340 to attend, shows companies how to save on fans and pumps, boiler systems and how to assess the benefits of energy efficiency.

The fee includes course manual and other materials as well as exercises and demonstrations.

The workshop will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on June 2 at the Holiday Inn on Fairway Road in Kitchener.

Register online at <http://oeenrcan.gc.ca/workshops/register.cfm>

SEE FOUNDRY: PAGE C2

## Modern systems keep old foundry going strong

BOWMANVILLE, ONT.

Why would a young and hip high-tech guy want to buy a foundry?

The old Bowmanville Foundry, to be precise, making cast-iron hooks, stove parts, truck handles and railway-track hardware, among hundreds of other items.

"It was the late 1980s," says Michael Patrick, now 48. "Everyone was making a ton of money turning everything into condos, but my partner and I wanted to run our own business."

The two were engineers who had met in 1983 at the Ontario

government's Peterborough Robotics Centre, part of the Ontario Centre for Advanced Manufacturing set up by then-premier Bill Davis to help businesses use technology to modernize.

Patrick had hired David Boothman, now 62, and each man ran his own division.

After five years "of telling people how to do things better," as Patrick puts it, the two felt they weren't getting paid for the value they'd created. It was time to do it themselves.

Patrick's neighbour, a doctor, had a patient whose family was thinking of selling its aging foundry in Bowmanville, east of Toronto.

Patrick was interested. His father's father had worked at Dominion Foundries (now Dofasco) in Hamilton as a young immigrant in the 1930s.

Amid the roar and clank of the foundry, watching a red-hot furnace being filled with scrap metal, Patrick describes how he and Boothman negotiated with the founding family, the Rehders, in 1988. For them, the most important thing was to keep the foundry going, to help a Canadian industrial icon thrive amid global competition.

The Rehders' story is told in a new book, Iron in the Blood: The Bowmanville Foundry — One Hundred Years of Innova-

tion, by Helen MacDonald and Helen Schmidt.

The company was started by Christian Rehder in 1902. He had been doing custom electroplating and casting for several firms, but was lured to Bowmanville by the Dominion Organ and Piano Co.

His eldest son, Fred, joined the business, but was scalded fatally and died at 32, Iron in the Blood co-author MacDonald explains, so Ernie, the second son, took over in 1941, followed by his son, Tom, in 1978.

Tom's brother, Ned, studied metallurgical engineering at McGill University, where he commercialized a process to

produce malleable iron in 48 hours rather than seven days.

"Now it's down to 24 hours," says Ned, 89, who watched the foundry struggle to survive the Depression in the 1930s.

"The place stumbled along for a few years. Then the war solved everything."

Not just the war, but Ned's malleable-iron process, which revolutionized war production.

Ned is also proud today of being "the one who unionized the plant."

In the mid-1940s, he says, he was working at a foundry in Windsor when he got a call from his father.

