

Size doesn't matter but customer satisfaction does



Phil Goddard and Dwayne Stewart, partners of Pacific RIM Services

By Cathy Watters

When Dwayne Stewart and Phil Goddard started Pacific R.I.M. (Renovation, Improvements, Maintenance) Services in 1993, they had more gumption than assets. Their assets: Dwayne's 4-year old Chevrolet Cavalier, a \$500-limit Visa and a Canadian Tire store card. Their gumption: the belief that their potential clients were more interested in good customer service than the size of Pacific R.I.M. or the location of its office.

They were right. They spent the next seven years developing a client base, doing the labour and supervision on their own. From their humble beginnings, they grew their business from a two-man operation based out of Stewart's basement to a full-service, commercial construction company with 45 staff, a two-floor warehouse, and several internationally recognized clients.

"We made a decision early to pick one form of construction and stick with it," says Goddard, a former Certified Property Inspector with over 30 years of commercial construction experience. "Our philosophy was to pick one thing and do it well, and our ongoing goal is to become the commercial construction company of choice for clients of excellence."

In that role, they do everything from design-build services and new construction to turnkey installations, tenant improvements, renovations and maintenance. Their commercial contracting services assemble the trades, suppliers and design elements required to orchestrate projects from conception to grand opening.

Their first chain client was Panago Pizza and since then they've added Tim Hortons, Reitman's, Boston Pizza International, Mark's Work Warehouse and many others to their list of satisfied clients. In fact, many of these brand-name clients have become repeat clients.

"We've had consistent 30 percent growth per year with last year seeing a 68 percent increase in business," says Stewart, adding that Pacific R.I.M. (www.pacificrimservices.ca) has completed over 100 projects for its biggest client, Reitman's Canada (which has five brand stores including Thyme and Additionelle), and more than 30 projects for Tim Hortons. It's also worked on over 20 Boston Pizza locations.

Stewart, a highly trained administrator and computer specialist with 15 years of commercial construction experience in Vancouver, says part of their success comes from employing cutting edge technology to enhance their commitment to "impeccable customer service, detailed job costing and tight scheduling."

Their success also comes from attracting and retaining a team of dedicated, hard-working employees who believe in Pacific R.I.M.'s nine core values: "customer service is the basis of our business; we are committed to timelines; organization in all we do; we have a family-like commitment to employees; we are committed to quality and excellence of workmanship; we work with 'clients of excellence'; consistency and reliability in all we do; humor and enjoyment of work and

life; we strive to be the contractor of choice for vendors."

As a growing company, they are always looking for qualified project management, supervisory, and administrative staff.

"We learned early that service was our business and the service we provided was construction," says Goddard.

"We've been able to attract excellent

employees by making them part of process, using good communications and rewards in a family-like, corporate atmosphere."

This includes career development opportunities for all employees, from the most junior to the most senior, so employees can expand their experiences, grow into new challenges and

achieve their own career goals.

Because Pacific R.I.M. Services is based in the valley city of Abbotsford, employees enjoy the family-friendly atmosphere of a smaller town with all the amenities.

The commitment to employees, and the family-like atmosphere the company promotes within the office, extends past the walls and into the community where the company supports local sports teams and charities like the Salvation Army.

"We're a company who understands where we come from, where we are and where we're going," says Stewart, noting he was born and

raised in Abbotsford and his business partner, Goddard, was born in Victoria and grew up in the lower mainland.

They emphasize the importance of good relationships and teamwork, and their team includes both their employees and their clients.

"That philosophy is carried through to the clients and we're told we have repeat business because we use honesty and integrity as the basis of our relationships with our clients," says Goddard.

"We have an open pricing system so clients are aware at all time of the schedule and pricing, and we offer a service department that not only services our products but the buildings our clients already have as well."

Stewart and Goddard must be doing something right: in their 13 years of business they've grown Pacific R.I.M. into a company that has excellent customer and employee retention; and has been named two years in a row among Profit Magazine's 100 Next 100 fastest companies in Canada. Stewart was also named as one of Business in Vancouver's 2006 Forty Under 40 Award, and is a board member of the EO (Entrepreneur's Organization) of Vancouver.

Not the type of businessmen to rest on their past accomplishments, they are already working on their next set of goals: they want to have 100 exclusive national clients across Canada.

"We've just opened a branch in Victoria and we're working on opening an office in Kelowna and Calgary," Stewart says. "Because of this, we're looking for qualified, dynamic staff to fill positions."

"Dynamic construction with clients of excellence" is Pacific R.I.M.'s core objective, and Goddard says, "Dynamic" means being creative problem solvers who are flexible; it also means choosing to work with clients of excellence who appreciate honesty, integrity, and flexibility in their contractor." ♦

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