

# SUPPORTING THE FUTURE WITH HISTORY

Success Stories - 2001

By the OCRI Entrepreneurship Centre

The OCRI Entrepreneurship Centre helped Fred and his four partners turn a good idea into a thriving business.

Fred Hosking had a university degree, a solid grasp of history, and a great idea. What he lacked was a background in business. The OCRI Entrepreneurship Centre helped Fred and his four partners turn a good idea into a thriving business. The managing partners all made concrete use of the Centre's resources, many of which were free for the asking.

For example:

- The partners participated in the Centre's "On-Track" seminar program, a comprehensive start-up seminar series that includes modules on business planning, marketing and cash flow management.
- They accessed the advice of professionals through the Centre's volunteer legal and accounting advisory service. Public History later retained the Centre's volunteer lawyer as its corporate counsel.
- During the investigation stage of business development, the partners accessed a great deal of valuable, free literature from the Centre's resource library.
- The Centre provided Public History with professional guidance in the development of a comprehensive business plan. The finished plan was responsible for securing provincially backed finance through the New Ventures Loan Program.

Fred gave the Entrepreneurship Centre "thumbs up" when he said:

"The Entrepreneurship Centre was extremely important for us, because we had little background in business or this type of industry. We were able to

access advice and direction on the business side. We had pages of questions that were addressed at some level."

#### How Has Public History Done Since Its Inception?

- The company successfully attracted significant public funding – enough to finance 50% of their start-up costs!
- Staff includes not only the 4 managing partners, but also 35 full-time staff.
- A second office has been opened in Winnipeg, to respond to demand from western Canada.
- Public History's 1998-99 revenues were \$1.1 million.
- Public History received the Bronze Award in the Board of Trade's Small Business of the Year Award in 1997 and was a finalist in 1999.
- The company has been prominently featured in the Ottawa Citizen, the Ottawa Business Journal and the Lawyer's Weekly.
- Public History's web site now includes 24x7 access to their in-house library of over 7,000 historical sources.

Public History is a Canadian multi-disciplinary research firm specializing in:

- Historical research
- First Nations land claims
- Policy and social research
- Litigation research
- Document and information management
- GIS mapping

Established in 1995 in Ottawa, Public History began as a historical research firm, with a small staff of five. In 1998, the company expanded its operations into Winnipeg, and today has a team of over 35 people, all with a variety of academic backgrounds and professional skills. Public History concurrently manages an average of 25 projects at any given time.

Public History's current and past clients include:

- Correctional Services Canada
- Indian Affairs and Northern Development
- Justice Canada
- Law Reform Commission of Canada
- Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
- TransCanada Pipeline
- First Nations groups and their legal counsels
- Private legal firms
- Academics

Public History is a knowledge-based, technologically enhanced firm which provides a wide range of professional consulting services in the areas of First Nations Land Claims, Policy & Social Research, Document Management, GIS Mapping, Historical Research and Litigation Support.

Public History's mission is to become North America's largest historical research firm by the year 2005, while continuing to provide trained team members with a superior work environment and opportunities for career advancement.