

# BEINGESSNER HOME EXTERIORS LTD.



## REAFFIRMING THE STRENGTH OF THE FAMILY BUSINESS

by Christopher Cussat

*Above: Maintenance-free vinyl arch windows enhance the architecture design of this newly built Waterloo home.*

IN THIS UNPRECEDENTED ERA OF super corporations, gigantic chain stores, and malls that resemble amusement parks, it is refreshing to acknowledge a quintessential example of a successful small business. Beingessner Home Exteriors Ltd. (BHEL) is such a company. A model of the type of company that has traditionally represented the entrepreneurial spirit in free economies like Canada and the United States—the family business—BHEL is

a leader in exterior home renovations.

Founded in 1957 by Harry Beingessner, the two-man operation was taken over by his son in 1972 when Harry passed away. Today, Doug Beingessner, president of BHEL, along with his wife, Lynne, and daughter, Jennifer, continue the tradition the senior Beingessner began. And although the business has grown substantially, Beingessner still believes in the importance of maintaining a sense of



*Left: (From left to right) Beingessner's sales staff, Barry Jantzi, Lynne and Doug Beingessner, Ryan Uttley and Jennifer Beingessner-Dietrich along with the Beingessner's grandchildren, Ethan and Rachel.*



*Right: Doug Beingessner, president.*

Starting out as simply an installer of aluminum storm windows, the company has grown to become a specialist in the exterior renovation of homes, replacing windows, doors, siding, awnings, and railings. In addition, as an Energy Star and Window Wise contractor, BHEL's main focus is on energy conservation and promoting energy-efficient practices.

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*Doug Beingessner, President*

replacement windows are a relatively modern concept. “Our industry was the same for many years and nothing really changed.” He continues, “There wasn't really a replacement market or

supply contingency—but the industry has in recent years developed in leaps and bounds, and as a result, 70 percent of BHEL's business is now comprised of replacing windows and doors.”

In addition to the market itself, the technology of windows has also changed. BHEL is committed to being the first to implement new technologies. For example, when low-Emissivity (low-E) glass became available, BHEL jumped at the opportunity, requiring all window installations to have energy-efficient, low-E glass. The company also used this innovation as a marketing advantage. Products like argon gas fills within sealed insulating units, and warm edge spacer systems, soon followed.

All of this technology, combined with factory-painted door systems, and the latest in decorative glass designs, allow BHEL customers to make their buying decisions with confidence. Shares Beingessner, “We like to be on the cutting edge of any new technologies and products that come on the market—it's just the way we operate. This helps us to stay competitive because we're leading the pack, rather than following it.”

Beingessner also believes in the importance of promoting BHEL's total image. “We are marketing oriented within our operating region, so we advertise very heavily, and specifically within a 30-mile radius. All of our

promotional materials incorporate a well-designed branding of our company.”

Beingessner hopes that BHEL's targeted



marketing, specialized services, and dedication to high-quality products and customer service will help it achieve its goal of comfortable, controlled growth, while keeping the company's human resource infrastructure strong. "This is a very people-oriented company, and our employees are the backbone of our business. They must be able to do the job professionally, be personable, and get along well with our customers—we have to have all the pieces together."

As a result, BHEL always works diligently to have the best qualified trades-people for product installation. This is accomplished through specialized training. "We have an installation-efficiency program called Window Wise which requires that every installer be completely and appropriately trained," Beingessner explains. This ensures that all BHEL installers are working on the same level, and that the customer is receiving the same quality throughout. Beingessner adds, "Not only does this provide consistency in the installation

process, but it also gives our employees a sense of accomplishment, confidence, loyalty, and pride in the industry." The Window Wise program benefits home owners directly as well because the program helps the homeowner to select approved windows through participating manufacturers, provides job site inspections, and issues a third-party guarantee. "The Window Wise program is in a league of its own and BHEL is proud to be a part of it," states Beingessner.

Summarizing his secret to maintaining a successful small business, Beingessner concludes, "When you own your own company, it's kind of like driving a race car—you've got to keep your foot on the gas or it stops. That's our mantra around here—it takes a consistent push, and we always have specific goals and targets that we try to meet. I love dealing with people, and I love my customers and my employees—I guess I'm just a fortunate person because I love going to work." CBQ

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*Above: Aluminum trim and flashings give new life to this 1950s-style home.*

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