

# CABTEC MANUFACTURING INC.



## BUILT TO LAST—A STRONG COMPANY MAKING STRONG CABINETS

by Christopher Cussat

*Above: A Cabtec kitchen creation, showcasing custom cabinetry.*

A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS CAN BE BASED ON many different financial and organizational strengths, but sometimes the most basic reasons for building a company can lead directly to growth and success. One such reason is perhaps the most important motivation for starting one's own business—having a true love and talent for what you are doing.

That is the premise of Cabtec Manufacturing Inc. president Ken Kowalchuk, along with his brother and sales manager, Kim, are seasoned in the business of creating quality products. Ken explains, "We grew up around our father's home-

building business, so we always were involved with and had a strong interest in woodworking. I have a great passion for creating something from wood, and I love feeling the satisfaction that comes from finishing a project."

After creating furniture in their father's garage throughout their school years, the brothers eventually started building cabinets and other furniture in a 1,200-square-foot workshop—thus, in 1993, Cabtec was formed. This led to case-work and millwork for commercial and residential projects in their local market of Regina. The unique and high-quality

products produced by the brothers were soon in demand, and a few years later, this family-owned business added automated equipment to its process and expanded into a 6,000-square-foot space. Cabtec's current facility is 23,000-square-feet.

Cabtec focuses on custom residential kitchen and bathroom cabinets, offering complete installation services for all of its products. Ken says, "We supply our products and services to homebuilders, multi-family condominium developers, and the retail-renovation market." Today, Cabtec ships its products all over Saskatchewan and Alberta, also completing some work in British Columbia and Ontario.

One unique aspect of Cabtec's products is that the company uses only water-based coatings for all of its custom cabinetry finishes. As a result, Cabtec's stains, sealers, and clear and colored coatings are all waterborne, low-VOC products. Ken notes that this distinction gives Cabtec a competitive edge. "We are one

of the very few cabinet manufacturing companies that use 100 percent waterborne products. Our water-based finishes set us apart from our competition in quality and environmental impact."

Another one of Cabtec's strengths is literally the strength of its cabinets. Ken explains, "We manufacture one of the strongest cabinets in the industry—every single part in our cabinet box is made out of full, solid, 5/8"-thick material. This allows us to ship our products thousands of miles without damage." The company offers an almost unlimited variety of styles and color combinations so its customers can get exactly what they want. Kowalchuk adds, "We custom build products on a larger scale to accommodate our customers' special requests. As a result, they are not constrained to a limited catalogue of items from which to choose."

Ken also utilizes creative and targeted marketing to proactively promote the Cabtec brand. "We have always been

aggressive in promoting our products and services and pride ourselves on our quality that we produce." But in order to be consistently successful, good marketing must be balanced with great customer relations. In this regard, Ken maintains a straightforward, uncomplicated strategy. "We always make sure that our customers are satisfied with our products and services no matter what it takes—this in itself is the best advertising."

Ken believes that, "Hard work and dedication eventually pay off." It is evident that "eventually" is already happening for Cabtec. In fact, for the last three years, the company has been placed in the Wood 100 group, which is a list reserved for the top 100 woodworking companies in North America that have the most sales growth from the previous year. Ken's explanation for this commendable achievement, just like his cabinets, is a perfect fit. "We just strive to succeed by providing good quality products and good customer service." CBQ



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