



KSI Sign Systems Inc.



Products and Services

Commitment to Quality and Service

KSI Sign Systems Inc. is recognized as one of the top suppliers for quality Interior and Exterior Signage products and services.

With over 30 years of experience in the Signage business, we at KSI Sign Systems Inc. know that a good solution to a way finding or branding problem results in efficient and effective environments. Our focus is on working with our customers to create a solution that meets their needs as well as the needs of the users. Therefore, our services start from Consultation, Design, Permit Procurement, Project Management, Fabrication, Installation to Re-Order to ensure that the best solution is achieved and maintained.

We are located in Mississauga, just half an hour from Toronto. Our services extend not only to the GTA region, but nation-wide. Our contacts in all major cities in Canada enable us to service almost any signage issues in any city.

Our motto: 'If you can dream it, you can do it!'



Table of Contents

Wayfinding Signs	3
Room Identifiers	4
Corporate Branding	5
Exterior Signs	6
Emergency Exit Signs, Parking Signs, Washroom Signs	7
Custom Signs	8
Window Frosting	9
Must Have Items	10
From design to finished product	11
NEW! Introducing Interactive Way Finding Solutions	14
Service Supplier Profile	16



KSI Sign Systems Inc

Why do you need a sign?

Wayfinding Signs

Room Identifiers

Corporate Branding

Exterior Signs

Emergency Exit Signs, Parking Signs,
Washroom Signs

Custom Signs

Window Frosting

Must Have Items

From design to finished product

Seamless Interactive Way Finding Solutions

Wayfinding Signs

Wayfinding signs play a tremendous role in facilitating the flow of traffic. They help us get to a place or out of places. Especially beneficial in complex spaces that lack monuments or visual markers, they help us navigate through spaces that may otherwise feel chaotic. We offer a number of options that are flexible to accommodate any aesthetic style of your tenants.

Visit our website at www.ksisignsystems.com for more photos!



stainless steel
and vinyl custom
floor wayfinding



tenant directory signs



tenant directory signs



wayfinding



way finding.

room identifiers.
corporate



tenant suite sign



Ceiling Wayfinding



Room Identifiers/Nameplates

How will you find that board meeting? Are you having a training session in your facility? These types of signs are great to help guests locate various areas of your company as well as to identify people and departments. With room identifiers, welcome visitors into your space and provide them with the general information they may need. Let your team know that a meeting is in session with our In Use/Vacant slider sign.

Visit our website at www.ksisignsystems.com for more photos!



all of our sign systems offer a useful In Use/Vacant slider option

permanent letters and numbers add a sense of permanence and stability



custom branded acrylic vinyl signs allow a cheap and cheerful solution

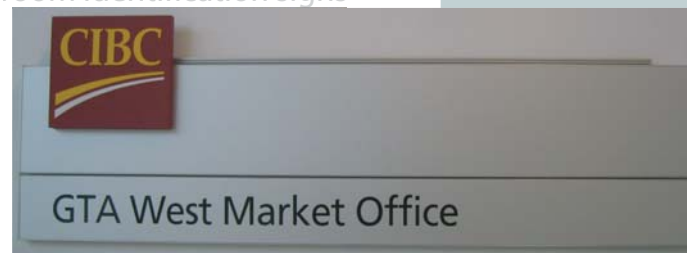


custom graphics enhance standard

brushed aluminum signs



raised graphics and lettering room identification signs



custom nameplates with digital image

way finding. room identifiers. corporate



Corporate Branding

The idea of branding is to engrave your company name into the minds of potential customers. Good corporate branding is more than just your company name. It is about reinforcing your reputation and values to your customer. We ensure that your sign is a visual representation of this.

Visit our website at www.ksisignsystems.com for more photos!



Rogers

Bentall



Davis + Henderson



CIBC



CBRE



Insurance Bureau of Canada



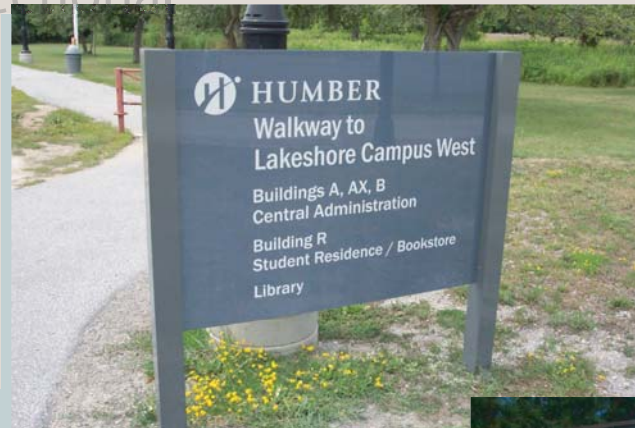
Scotiabank

signs?

Exterior Signs

What better Marketing Strategy than having your company name seen by potential clients! It is about making a positive first impression and to welcome clients into your business. Exterior signs allow your customers to know where you are located. We provide company signs and logo on the exterior of buildings as well as pylon signs, which list all the company names and logos of your tenants in a particular building.

Visit our website at www.ksisignsystems.com for more photos!



exterior signs.

randing.

Wall

Directional

Wall

illuminated sign box

pylon with LED board

pylon with track lettering

free standing illuminated pylon

emergency exit sign

Three sided pylon

Emergency Exit Signs, Parking Signs & Washroom Signs

These type of signs are essential when installing signs in a building! They identify important fire exits and core areas of a building as well as main service areas.

These signs promote safety and organization in a given environment. As always, KSI can supply customized versions that can achieve this which also promote your corporate identity.

Visit our website at www.ksisignsystems.com for more photos!

need signs?

wind

signs, washroom signs, parking signs, emergency exit signs



exterior signs

parking



emergency exit

emergency exit signs, parking signs, emergency exit signs



washroom

security



fire safety



Custom Signs

Custom work begins with an initial consultation where we discuss the needs of our client and to understand the personality and values of the company which they would like to show through their signs. We provide design work and ensure that the final product is up to our high standard.

Visit our website at www.ksisignsystems.com for more photos!

'If you can dream it,
you can do it!'



Window Frosting

Vinyl window frosting is extremely popular and **cost effective** due to its versatility. It can be applied to any glass surface to provide privacy. Applied to windows, the basic window frosting simulates sandblasted glass, although other textures and patterns are available as well. Since it is a vinyl product, it can be cut to any design the customer envisions - the possibilities are endless!

Visit our website at www.ksisignsystems.com for more photos!



Why do you need window frosting. interactive way finding signs.

Must Have Items...



washroom signs



document/brochure holders



ballot boxes



table top desk signs

Why do you need signs?



stair signs



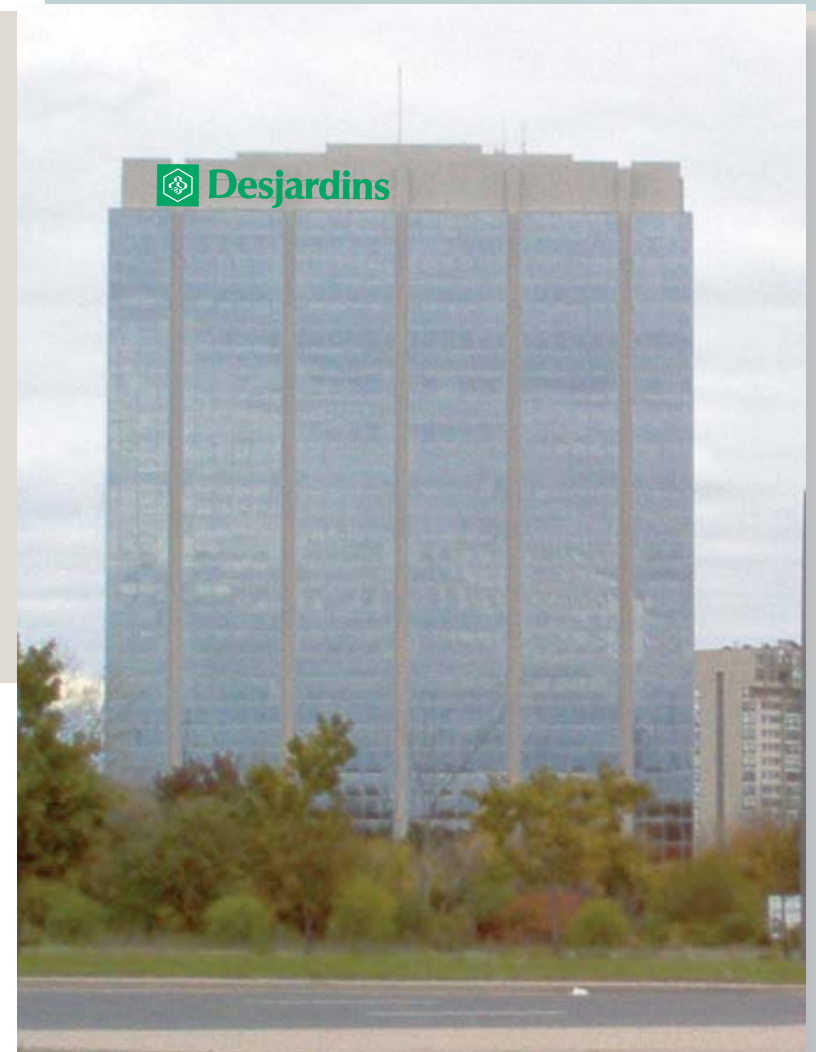
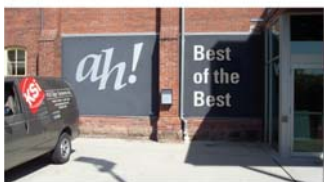
telephone directories



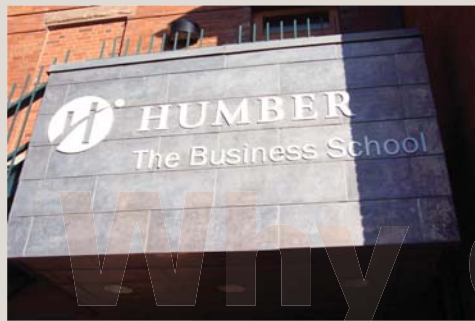
stands sign holders

From design to finished product...

After our initial interview with our clients, our Art Department can prepare graphical layouts to clearly communicate how the sign will look. This service is a great advantage to ensure that the right effect will be made with the correct sign and also for a quicker review/approval process.



Partial List of KSI valued customers signage...



introducing...

seamless interactive way finding solutions

Our interactive systems provide a platform for information gathering within a space that allows for people to stay well informed.



When people have the resources to find out what they need to know it is an empowering experience, and with our touch systems that information is only a touch away.

By combining cost effective proven technologies our goal is to create informative access points throughout the built environment.

This is accomplished through a interactive touchscreen surface seamlessly integrated with LCD flat panel displays. A key feature of our system is that it can be integrated with existing flat panel LCD displays that might already be present within an environment. The LCD display offers the ability to showcase hi-definition content like pictures, videos and text.

The exterior design of the touchscreen system can also be customized through the implementation of materials choices that best fit within the context of your space.

Our touch systems are perfect for high traffic areas as they can show branding or advertising within your space when the screens are not in use. Branding a space is important to the overall experience of people who use it. Our in house graphic team can work with existing brand images tying them into the custom software that we create.

This system runs on affordable ...
platforms like PC and MAC.





Interactive Research Lab

This system also avoids wear and tear because the LCD display is never touched. A piece of tempered glass is cut to size covering the soft LCD and provides a firm smooth surface for the finger to touch.

This can be accomplished because unlike other systems ours do not rely on pressure to the screen itself but rather utilizes a grid of infra red light ovetop of the glass to track peoples interaction.

Our system also works with gloved hands making it perfect for entrance ways. This technology also provides the highest level of accessibility by allowing people to use points, pens, and entire hands if necessary.

The grid of light does not wear down over time and the glass is easily cleaned without any special chemicals.

The only maintenance to take care of are the finger prints from all the people gathering information from the seamless touchscreen system.

This system heightens the experience in Condominiums, Hospitals, Libraries, Offices, Museums, Educational environments, Retail outlets, as it combines engaging interactive experiences with a cohesive ability to brand the space.

Touch surface can be integrated over an existing LCD flat panel display existing within space.



Ideal for branding and advertising within high traffic areas.



KSI BELIEVES IN PUTTING IT IN WRITING

Just over 30 years ago, Ingrid Baler started selling signs made of Lego. Her company, KSI Sign Systems Inc., soon evolved into a trusted source for interior and exterior signage in a wide range of styles and materials

BY PAMELA YOUNG

In the boardroom of KSI Sign Systems Inc., in Mississauga, there are several objects that reflect company president Ingrid Baler's Danish heritage and the streak of entrepreneurialism that clearly runs in her family. There's an ornate, old-fashioned balance scale that saw years of use on the counter of her grandmother's milk shop in Denmark. The three-foot-tall Danish wooden soldier and the imposing, elliptical boardroom table both belonged to her father, who arrived in Canada in the 1950s with \$800 in his pocket and became a world leader in the manufacture of meat-packing equipment. After serving up sinfully good Danish pastries and coffee to visitors from CFM&D, the

Ms. Baler sees growing interest in signage that makes minimal use of materials and can be easily modified to reflect changes

dynamic Ms. Baler takes a seat in the boardroom and begins explaining how she got into the signage business just over 30 years ago, at the age of 21:

"A representative from a Danish sign company called Modulex, which is owned by the Lego toy company, went to the Danish Consulate in Canada and asked, 'Do you know any successful Danish businessman who might want to sell signs?' and he was put in touch with my father," Ms. Baler says. "At the time I was working with my dad, doing public relations and travelling around with him to different industry shows. He asked me whether selling signs was something I'd like to do, and I said yes – even then I felt I could sell anything," she says, smiling. "So I



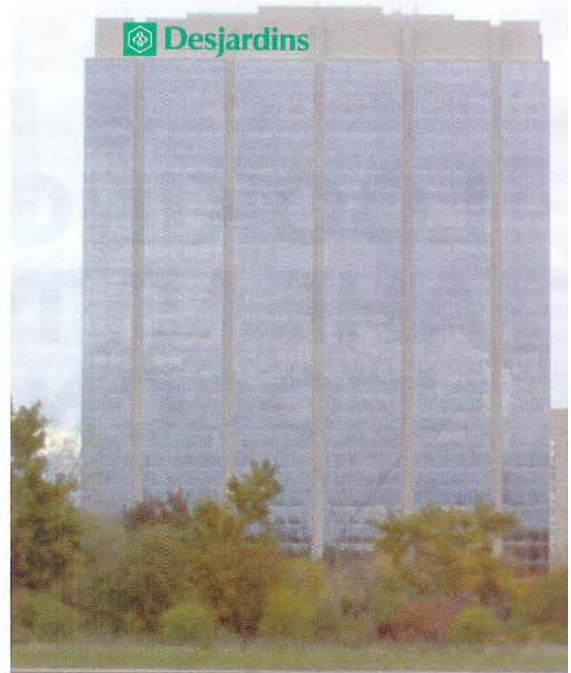
Above: Ingrid Baler attributes KSI's success to competitive pricing and warranties, strong presentations, expertise, and top-notch quality control. Below: Signage for CIBC, a KSI client.

was given a telephone and a typewriter, and that's really how it started."

In the early days, she explains, when she was Modulex's exclusive representative in Canada, the Danish company's signs were actually made out of Lego – they were definitely a niche product. But Ms. Baler began forging connections with a number of Canadian signage fabricators and was soon able to offer her clients a much wider range of options. For the first 10 years, her signage business was part of KSI (Knud Simonsen Industries), the company founded by her father. When she went out on her own, she kept "KSI" in her company's name "because my parents had given me the opportunity and I thought I should honour them, and because it was a well-known name." Three decades after Ingrid Baler began selling signage, KSI Sign Systems has evolved into what she likes to call "a small company with a big name." With 10 employees at its Mississauga headquarters and a coast-to-coast network of representatives and installers, KSI handles interior and exterior signage projects for clients such as CIBC, Scotiabank, Petro-Canada and the University of Toronto. Ms. Baler says that some jobs are small, some are huge, and all are important. In the huge category was a project that resulted from a logo change at CIBC. "We had to go out to 350 locations across Canada and do site checks, remove existing signs, and supply and install the new signs," she recalls.

She attributes her company's success to a combination of competitive pricing and warranties, strong presentations,

PHOTOGRAPHY: KSI SIGN SYSTEMS INC.



Clockwise from top left: After an initial interview with clients, KSI's art department can prepare layouts to show how the finished product will look; exterior signage at KSI's office creates an eye-catching display; window frosting, the application of vinyl film to glass, is a KSI specialty that can create a multitude of looks at an affordable price; cut-out lettering is an impressive option for reception areas.

technical and design expertise, and top-notch quality control. KSI does its own assembly and fabricates vinyl signage in-house; it co-ordinates installations that involve materials produced by specialized manufacturers. "What our clients get is a turnkey product from KSI," she says. "We can manage the entire project for them."

Ultimately signage is about more than the creation of objects with numbers, letters and symbols on them. KSI's graphic designers can help clients develop or strengthen a branding program, or devise a wayfinding system that will make a large facility or a campus of buildings easier to navigate.

The company can supply custom items that range from bronze plaques and three-dimensional cutout letters for reception areas to laser-cut brushed aluminum office and workstation nameplates to illuminated signage for parking garages.

In this era of heightened environmental awareness and shrinking budgets, Ms. Baler says, clients are increasingly interested in signage options that make minimal use of materials or can be easily modified rather than scrapped when an organizational or personnel change occurs. Window frosting is one popular option that KSI offers in this category. Applying pieces of translucent vinyl film to glass creates the look of sandblasted glass at a fraction of the cost, and if a different design is wanted at a later date, the

vinyl coating can be peeled off and replaced. Also in what Ms. Baler calls the "cheap and cheerful" category are acrylic sign holders with removable paper inserts – ideal for lists of employees' telephone extensions and other information that must be frequently updated – and many types of nameplates that require only a new vinyl overlay or the replacement of a small metal insert to reflect a staffing change.

The very latest news from KSI is that the company is going high-tech and getting into interactive digital signage. KSI is a partner in Interactive Research Lab, a new company founded by Ms. Baler's son, Michael Baler, and Steve Reume. (Also active in the family business is Michael's sister, Celine Baler, works part-time for KSI while attending school.) Interactive Research Lab has developed user-friendly software for touch screen digital-display signage, which requires a very different sort of interface from mouse-and-keyboard computing to be truly easy to use. Interactive Research Lab and KSI are now starting to make client presentations with this interactive signage. "This is an exciting new thing now," says Ms. Baler. "It's still in the beginning stages, but I can see that interactive is the future." It's a long way from signage made from Lego, but KSI Sign Systems' founder still sees opportunity whenever a new door opens. | CFM&D

TOUCH SCREEN TO BEGIN: A NEW WAY TO WAYFIND

In smartphones, tablet computers, museum displays and storefronts, interactive touch screens are changing the way people retrieve and manipulate information. And now touch screens are finding new uses in the workplace

BY PAMELA YOUNG

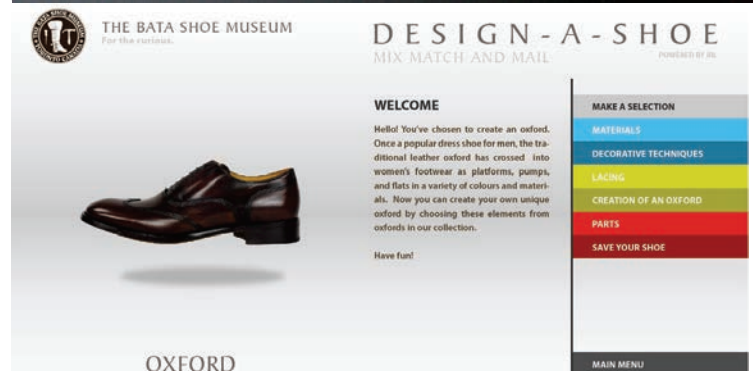
Maybe you're about to design a virtual shoe. Maybe you just need to find the room where your next meeting will take place. Either way, the tech-savvy young entrepreneurs at Toronto's Interactive Research Lab (IRL) can simplify the task and make it an engaging experience.

In smartphones, tablet computers and automated ticket kiosks, interactive touch screens are changing the way that people retrieve information and manipulate it to serve their own purposes. IRL is one of a growing number of start-up companies specializing in the development of customized touch screen solutions for applications ranging from inter-

The young entrepreneurs at Interactive Research Lab see wayfinding and meeting room booking as touch screen tasks

active museum displays to wayfinding and systems for booking meeting rooms.

On my recent visit to IRL's office, the company's 21-year-old president, Michael Baler, and his only slightly older associates walked me through the interactive LED-screen display system that they were about to install at the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto. On a large screen, Mr. Baler called up a razor-sharp, full-colour 3D image of an oxford shoe and demonstrated how a museum visitor could swivel the virtual footwear around and view it from all sides by dragging a finger across the screen. Then he showed how to select from different options for materials, colours, embellishment and lacing styles to customize the look of the shoe. Along the way there are opportunities to do a little painless learning – visitors discover, for example, that early oxfords worn in boggy parts of Britain had holes punched into them to allow marsh water to drain out, and that these piercings eventually evolved into a purely decorative technique. Once you've got the onscreen



Top: Interactive Research Lab's storefront installations for Blyth Academy serve as a forum for students and engage passers-by. Above: The Bata Shoe Museum's new display by IRL enables visitors to customize classic footwear styles to suit their own taste and then e-mail their virtual shoes to themselves or their friends.

oxford, stiletto pump or whatever shoe type looking the way you want, you can save it and e-mail it to yourself or a friend.

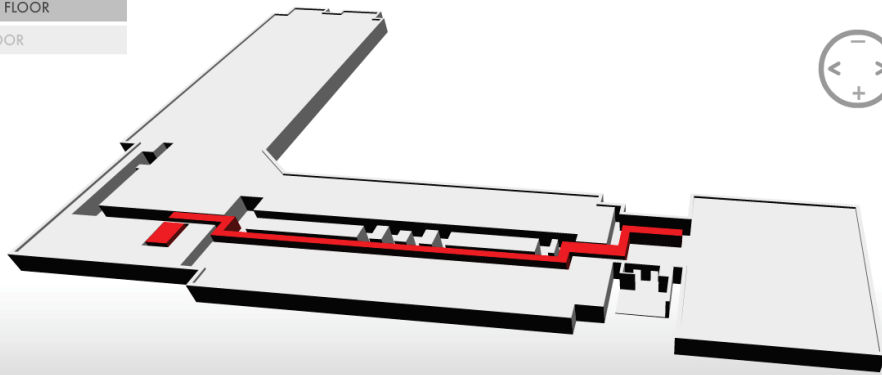
The same sort of interactive technology that makes the new Bata Shoe Museum display possible has all sorts of potential applications for corporate and institutional settings. Petro-Canada has consulted with IRL on the possibility of using a touch screen system for wayfinding within its facilities. Mr. Baler outlined how something like this could work for any company that issues RFID (radio frequency identification) tags to its employees. "Let's say someone from a company's Calgary office had a meeting in the



VIEW COMBINED

VIEW SECOND FLOOR

VIEW FIRST FLOOR



NEXT MEETINGS

10:45 AM	ROOM 191
11:15 AM	ROOM 126
11:30 AM	BOARDROOM 'B' / ROOM 264

DIRECTIONS & INFORMATION

START: 11:30 AM
FINISH: 1 PM

ROOM: BOARDROOM 'B' / 264

DIRECTIONS:
FIRST FLOOR
TURN AROUND AND WALK THROUGH THE DOOR DIRECTLY BEHIND YOU. LEFT AROUND CENTRE ISLANDS. CONTINUE DOWN HALLWAY. RIGHT INTO ELEVATOR.

SECOND FLOOR
EXIT TO YOUR LEFT. LEFT AROUND CORNER. FOLLOW HALLWAY DOOR WILL BE ON YOUR RIGHT.

FREE LOOK

VIEW 1

VIEW 2

Many people find three-dimensional models of buildings easier to understand than two-dimensional plans, and interactive touch screens are an intuitive means of telling people where they are in relation to where they're headed. Users can touch the screen to pivot, enlarge or pull back on the onscreen view; written directions also appear on the screen in this model developed by IRL for Petro-Canada.

Toronto office," Mr. Baler said. An administrative person at the Toronto office would "load" the meeting room onto the Calgary employee's RFID card. "That employee could then hold his RFID card up to a sensor," Mr. Baler continued, "and he'd see a 3D map telling him exactly how to get from Point A to Point B." By touching the screen, the employee could rotate or enlarge the cutaway view of the building to get a clear sense of where he was in relation to where he was headed. This sort of system could also be programmed to allow employees to book meeting rooms, either on site or from a remote computer.

INTERACTIVE ADVANTAGES

Having a background in traditional or "static" signage can be an asset to someone launching an interactive signage company, and that was in fact Mr. Baler's route into the business. KSI Sign Systems Inc., a company founded by his mother, designs and manufactures indoor and outdoor static signage for corporate and institutional settings. KSI and IRL often collaborate on projects, with the interactive company handling the touch screen elements and software and KSI fabricating window frosting, kiosks, and other physical components of the signage.

One of the great advantages of interactive signage is that content can be easily changed, expanded or updated – without generating waste. For Blyth Academy, a Toronto-based private school that has multiple campuses and runs a "summer abroad" program, IRL created interactive streetfront windows

that allow passers-by to learn about the school's offerings – and use a virtual keyboard, if they wish, to e-mail themselves a brochure. For Blyth's students, these windows act as an electronic forum: in addition to finding information about current classes and recent school announcements, they can upload photos they have taken on school trips or at Blyth events and display these "albums" on the screens for all to see. "We wanted to be able to put new pictures on and update information on programs and courses and not have to go back to IRL or pay another programmer to come in and sort things out for us," said Brandon Kerstens, Blyth Academy's director of development. "They built a very easy-to-use back end where we can do those basic sorts of text or picture changes on our own without interfering with any of the larger programming in terms of what it looks like and how it flows. We can't go in there and screw it up."

To date, most of IRL's projects have had to do with imparting computer-stored information to human beings in an intuitive, user-friendly way, but Mr. Baler stressed that installations could be integrated with sensors and other types of technology to do much more than that. Motion sensors could prompt a flat screen display to shift from screen saver mode into a "touch screen to begin" message, or change what's being displayed in response to the speed or volume of foot traffic in the screen's vicinity. On a grand scale, touching a small panel mounted at eye level could change what's projected on an entire wall or ceiling. "The options are truly endless," Mr. Baler said. "It's whatever you want to do." | CFM&D

Young
entrepreneurs
get their
businesses
off the ground

Youth in action

Michael Baler, age 21
Interactive Research Lab
www.InteractiveResearchLab.com

h as it recently dawned on you that an increasing number of entrepreneurs look as if they'd be more comfortable on a college campus than in a boardroom? If not, it's time you took notice of a new generation of business owners less than 30 years old who are blazing fresh trails through the entrepreneurial landscape. You might assume that current economic woes have a lot to do with that, but the fact is that Generation Y—those born between 1977 and 1994—was leveraging its start-up mojo long before the economy starting tanking.

Why? Consider that Gen Y grew up with high-profile entrepreneurial role models such as Steve Jobs, Bill Gates and Richard Branson, who showed them that starting a successful company could bring rock-star status in the press. Their peers, such as Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg and YouTube founders Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim, have proved that, far from being a barrier to success, youth can provide a distinct marketplace advantage. Who knows better how to reach the large and increasingly affluent youth market?

Gen Y also grew up as digital natives. With no memory of life without computers and the Internet, they're comfortable with the tech tools that make starting a company faster and cheaper than it's ever been. Add to that the rise in entrepreneurship programs in school, plus disillusionment with big corporations, fuelled by corporate scandals, layoffs and the recession, and the result is perfect-storm conditions for a youth entrepreneurship movement.

Here are a handful of Costco members who are among the participants. —Donna Fenn

Donna Fenn (donnafenn.com) writes about entrepreneurs.



Debbie Fettback, age 26
Popyoullarity Enterprises
www.popyoullarity.com



Graham Hawryluk, age 23
Meticulous Wood Flooring
www.oneofakindfloors.com

KIM STALLKNECHT

IAN MCCAUSLAND

Touch act to follow {left}

MICHAEL BALER is literally a hands-on boss. He is the founder of Interactive Research Lab (IRL), a Toronto company that specializes in touch-screen technology solutions. The company's installations boast multiple applications: navigation, information, sales and marketing, and more.

It was while he was a student at the University of Toronto that Baler decided to establish his own company. Entrepreneurialism runs in his family—his grandfather, father and mother all established successful businesses—and he saw touch-screen technology as an area ripe for development.

With \$7,000 he had saved from various high school jobs and a \$5,000 loan from his family, he rented a small space in downtown Toronto and began researching the field.

"I felt that interactive [navigation] and touch solutions were a niche market not many people were working with," he says. "I didn't find any other companies [offering] this type of solution as a replacement for standard static way-finding systems and marketing/advertising."

He partnered with a group of graphic designers and programmers from the Ontario College of Art & Design and launched IRL in the summer of 2008, reducing his course load for the fall semester from five to four classes so he would be able to devote more time to his start-up company.

In the nearly three years since then, IRL has completed installations for clients spanning a diverse range of sectors, including retail, education and institutional. Its latest project, for Toronto's Bata Shoe Museum, is a series of interactive kiosks that enable patrons

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

Band aid {above left}

PASS NOTES during class and you're asking for trouble, especially in senior high. But Debbie Fettback needed a name for her online music-promotion biz, and her friends were more than happy to trade ideas on paper.

Luckily, the class happened to be Career and Personal Planning 11. Fettback was not only spared her teachers' wrath, but would eventually be singled out at Surrey, British Columbia's Frank Hurt Secondary School with a host of community awards for her entrepreneurial vision.

What's more, she'd settled on a business name—Popyoullarity.com—and secured herself a career well before graduation.

Still, 10 years into her own rising popularity on the indie and mainstream music scene, Fettback can't pinpoint why a 15-year-old would forfeit her social life to spend months in the basement with her PC, reaching out to bands who'd never heard of her or her business, and were not yet believers in the power of the Web.

"I guess my passion for music has always been strong," says Fettback, who recalls adopting her older brother's obsession with Canadian pop icon Bryan Adams, and sympathizing with her struggling-musician friends. "I've been driven to give independent bands a little more exposure; so many of them get overlooked."

The website evolved from a handful of posted interviews with local and touring Canadian bands and grew along with Fettback's confidence. Bands who initially thought she was "too young to talk to" now jostle for attention on a site fully financed by advertising, attracting 20,000 hits daily. Big-name artists she's interviewed include Katy Perry,

The devil is in the details

"I ALWAYS try to perform to my full potential on everything, even the small stuff," says Costco member Graham Hawryluk, president of Meticulous Wood Flooring.

His efforts seem to be paying off. Last year, the Headingley, Manitoba-based company, a six-man outfit that specializes in high-end hardwood flooring installation and refinishing, grossed more than \$2 million. Along the way, they refinished some 18,600 square metres (200,000 square feet) of flooring and installed another 13,900 square

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

Michael Bublé and Lady Gaga, among others.

Fettback says she was blessed with low start-up costs—just \$50 to host her business and domain name—and a willingness to slog 24/7 in obscurity, until she too was discovered by the big record labels. She's since earned her business degree and hired a professional to redesign her site, which features a daily stream of articles on up-and-coming bands, concert reviews, photos, contests, links to music gossip and more. Ten freelance writer-photographers now attend to Popyoullarity.com, but Fettback keeps the live interviews for herself.

She maintains quality control over Web content by treating her clients with respect, arriving 10 minutes early for interviews and striving for original interview questions. "Celebrities are just regular people," she says. "They're just really cool, regular people."

—Dana Tye Rally

Dana Tye Rally is a writer based in Richmond, British Columbia.

Touch act to follow

to create a virtual shoe using on-screen commands to select everything from the materials to the finish.

Baler prides himself on his ability to bring even the most complicated concept to life—“If you can dream it, you can do it” is the unofficial company motto—and proudly notes that he and his team of six have yet to be stumped by a client request. “So far we haven’t been struck with anything we haven’t been able to do, and we’ve been asked to do some crazy things,” he says.

As with most entrepreneurs, work is paramount for Baler. He used to have an active social life, he says, but that has fallen off recently as he regularly puts in 100-hour weeks to establish IRL. “Working hard and not taking a break seems normal to me, because it’s something I enjoy,” he says. “It’s not hard work until you don’t enjoy it.”

—Chris Powell

Chris Powell is a Toronto-based freelancer.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

The devil is in the details

metres (150,000 square feet) of new hardwood in the Winnipeg area.

Hawryluk first recognized his aptitude as an entrepreneur while playing in Me Against You, a rock band. “I played bass and sang lead vocals, but I quickly found myself assuming a management role,” he says. At 15 he was already negotiating the band’s fees with nightclub owners. He says he helped the group earn enough money to buy equipment and record their songs.

The passion and prowess for business he discovered during his time in the band gave him the confidence to launch Meticulous in 2005. At the time he was a freshman at the University of Manitoba, still playing in Me Against You, and working part-time for a company that installed gymnasium floors.

“I got so many calls to install flooring, all by word of mouth, that I eventually backed out of the band and put college on hold to see where Meticulous would take me,” Hawryluk explains. To meet customers’ demands, he worked seven days a week for an average of 18 hours a day during the company’s first three years.

Over the last few years, he has concentrated on sales, marketing and, most recently, developing a new direction for the company: reclaimed flooring.

“Our reclaimed flooring is a real win-win. It comes from old gymnasiums in Manitoba that are either shutting down or have decided it’s time for new flooring,” Hawryluk says. “Some people say ‘green’ is a fad, but I think earth-friendly businesses are here to stay.”—Will Fifield



Brian Etcovitch, age 24
Swurl
www.facebook.com/swurfrozenyogurt

YVES BEAULIEU

Cool success

COLD TREATS were a part of his DNA long before Brian Etcovitch dreamed of opening his own frozen yogurt bar in the heart of downtown Montreal.

“I’ve always been a cold-drink or -treat kind of person,” the young entrepreneur says on a chilly April morning while ordering an iced coffee for the drive into work. “I like my cold drinks year-round.”

Etcovitch and his business partner, Alexia Afilalo, also 24, are betting that cold-climate Canadians will warm to their self-serve frozen yogurt concept, Swurl. The challenge, Etcovitch maintains, is in changing popular opinion. He says many Montreal ice cream shops close in winter, although that’s not the case in other cold-weather cities such as New York or Chicago.

Even so, Swurl’s first winter was better than expected, thanks to catering and the addition of a delivery service.

Etcovitch and Afilalo, who met in business classes at McGill University, hope their healthy, eat-anytime frozen treat will win over fans who enjoy designing their own concoctions. Swurl offers 40 different toppings, from cereals and fresh fruit to Pop-Tarts, gummy bears and Milk Duds. There are even gluten-free options. On tap are eight yogurt flavours, four of which change each week.

A self-described workhorse, Etcovitch fell in love with frozen yogurt while working in the fashion industry in Los Angeles, where the popularity of self-serve frozen yogurt was gaining speed and where people consume the treat the way Canadians do coffee.

Etcovitch, who likes to look sharp, aimed to give Swurl 1950s flair: The staff wears bowties, Oxford shirts and ice-cream-parlour-style hats against a backdrop of turquoise and pink.

After he decided to open Swurl, Etcovitch’s grandparents asked what he’d like as a good-luck gift for his new venture. He told them, “A Costco membership,” so that’s what they gave him.

Justifying his hunch about ice cream’s year-round appeal, business in the first two weeks of April was tenfold that of the best day in the heat of August when Swurl had just opened.

Etcovitch and Afilalo are hoping to try a Swurl kiosk in a mall or food court, with the ultimate goal of franchising their concept. These entrepreneurs are anxiously awaiting summer.

“I can’t wait to see what July will be like,” Etcovitch says. “I still think the best is yet to come.”—Kelly Putter

Kelly Putter is a Beamsville, Ontario, freelance writer who loves writing about food.



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- ▶ Cool Games (380)
- ▶ Cool Links (1546)
- ▶ Cool Movies (499)
- ▶ Expos, Premieres (411)
- ▶ Gadgets (1063)
- ▶ Holiday Link (27)
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Bata Shoe Museum Goes Interactive With Footwear Design Touchscreens

July 14, 2011 07:55 By Kris Abel

Home to designer footwear both rare and delicate, the Bata Shoe Museum has been curated around an experience that's more look than touch, until now. This week the Toronto institution has launched a set of Design-A-Shoe Kiosks within their exhibition hall, massive LED touchscreens made to match the expansive surfaces of the drawing tables used by professional designers. Visitors can choose from five different styles of footwear - moccasins, sandals, high heels, oxfords, and the sneaker. From there they can access slideshows and videos detailing it's origin and what it is that makes each shoe distinct, then set out through the process of making their own by selecting each part - the tongue, heel, vamp, etc. - and assigning a material or decorative embellish. With rhinestones and rayfish leather amongst the choices, users can go as wild with their designs as they want.



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Month List

- 2011
 - November (5)
 - October (7)
 - September (16)
 - August (11)
 - July (7)
 - June (7)
 - May (9)
 - April (23)
 - March (13)
 - February (9)
 - January (23)
- 2010
- 2009
- 2008
- 2007
- 2006

Twitter

- November 14. 15:22
 It's waaay too soon to remaster Halo & have the monks sing nostalgic. My review of Halo Anniversary <http://t.co/CPBxomoW>
- November 13. 22:37
 Dolly the sheep was cloned from a mammary gland, hence Parton's name. The first cloned cat was named Copycat. #latenightscience
- November 13. 22:31
 1% of the interference of an untuned television is the background radiation of the Big Bang. #latenightscience
- November 12. 19:56
 Fun afternoon trudging around in Skyrim (game). Good to in Bethesda's hands again. I picked strawberries in the snow :)
- November 12. 13:53
 This boy is so completely enthralled, it's awesome. <http://t.co/yXQvj4Q>

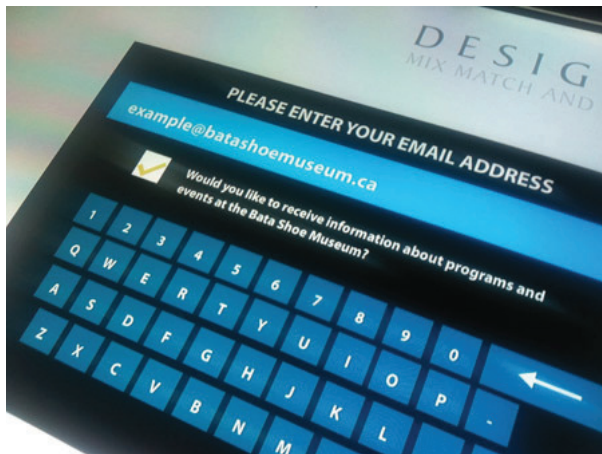
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Created by Toronto-based Interactive Research Lab, the custom-made displays are housed in brushed aluminum bases with screens treated so they can withstand spills, leaning, and other daily abuses. Visitors I watched playing with the system were so impressed by the presence of the bases, many of them joked that they half-expected them to kick out an actual shoe like a vending machine. Rather than create computer models from scratch, project leader Michael Baler tells me that his company convinced the museum to allow a selection of their shoe artifacts to be sent out for high-detailed CT scanning, and the result is a model that can be turned and pivoted, viewed from any angle across a large screen.





At the end of the design process visitors can use a touchscreen keyboard to punch in their email address and have a virtual postcard crafted using a picture of their shoe creation sent to their personal account. It arrives as a standard JPEG file and so easy to upload or share across any social network. For museum curators, this last feature was an important one as the feedback they've received from visitors over the past years is that they'd like to have both an interactive experience, but also a little something they can take home with them too.



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TRENDING TOPICS

The Bata Shoe Museum Goes Tech

This article was written by [Alyssa](#) and last updated on Sep 07, 2011, with 511 views. Learn more about the writers and [who we are](#).

Last week I attended the Bata Shoe Museum's launch of their Design-A-Shoe Kiosks. The Bata Shoe Museum boasts a collection of 12,500 artifacts including designer footwear from many geographic areas, culture groups and time periods. Now they have added a new experience into the mix. The new Design-A-Shoe Kiosks are massive LED touchscreens made to match the drawing tables used by professional footwear designers. The touchscreens allow visitors to choose from five different shoe styles including moccasins, sandals, high heels, oxfords and sneakers. After they have made their selection, visitors can access slideshows and videos where they can learn about the history of the shoe. Finally, visitors can take on the role of designer and can go through the process of making their own shoe by selecting each part and choosing it's material or decorative embellishment. There are many different options from geometric heels to rayfish leather and embroidery. Once visitors have designed their shoe, they can use the touchscreen keyboard to email a virtual postcard with a picture of their shoe to their personal email. So not only do you get an interactive experience while you're at the museum, but you can take a little souvenir away with you! In today's world, this feature is extremely important as now museum curators can give people an interactive experience and something to share via any social network.

The kiosks were created by Toronto's Interactive Research Lab. The project leader, Michael Baler, wanted to give the museum's visitors the best interactive experience possible. He convinced the museum to allow a selection of their shoes to be sent out fro high-detailed CT scanning. This CT scanning allows the shoe to be turned, pivoted and viewed from any angle on the screen.

At the launch, I had the opportunity to use the kiosks and design a shoe myself. The touchscreens were easy to use and there were many different options to choose from. I chose to design a high heel with a geometric heel and blue rayfish leather.



Next time you're in Toronto, be sure to stop by the Bata Show Museum and design your own shoe! It's definitely an experience you won't want to miss.

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