

# Focus on Leadership

A SPECIAL SERIES ON CALGARY'S BUSINESS VISIONARIES

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## Full slate of possibilities for Robert Half

Calgary will probably have another challenging year in 2010, but Action Calgary will help make sure the glass is half-full, not half-empty, says the regional vice-president of Robert Half.

"Action Calgary is very committed to the human-resource element of the economy — workforce attraction, productivity and developing people," says Rod Miller. "I really feel there is a good alignment between what we do as an organization, and what Calgary Economic Development is doing through Action Calgary."

Robert Half is the world's largest specialized staffing services firm with more than 360 locations worldwide. Its main areas of expertise are finance, accounting, office administration and technology staff.

The firm was ranked No. 1 in its industry, in Fortune magazine's list of World's Most Admired Companies.

"We have a global reach, so we can attract people to come to Calgary through our global organization. We can tap into communication with other branches, leveraging those opportunities for people and



Wil Andruschak photo

**Rod Miller is regional vice-president of Robert Half, the world's largest specialized staffing services firm, which has 360 locations worldwide, including Calgary.**

our clients, that other companies just don't have the same ability to do.

"And we can act on a local basis as well, to really address the local business needs. That

allows us to be nimble and flexible in this market," says Miller.

Robert Half has 65 employees in Calgary, divided between two offices — one located downtown to service that mar-

ketplace, while the other is in south Calgary, and focuses on suburban clients and candidates. "We have a really proud history in talent management," Miller says.

## Western Management prepares for next boom

With the dark days of the recession mostly behind us, Western Management Consultants is busy helping Calgary companies prepare for the next boom.

"We're encouraging clients to set a strategy that says, 'We're heading in a new direction over the next three to five years, and let's focus on that — not the vagaries of the economy this month,'" says Mauro Meneghe-

tta, national managing director for WMC.

"If you're not ready, the wave sort of washes over you — if you don't optimize it. That's what happened in the last big boom: most organizations were essentially coping with success, instead of growing into it."

He believes the Action Calgary initiative will help position the city and its businesses for success as the economy picks

up in 2010 and beyond.

"Calgary Economic Development plays a very significant role in connecting and empowering organizations in Calgary, and we wanted to support that and be part of it."

WMC is one of the longest-standing and most respected names in management consulting in Canada. With offices in Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto and Calgary, the firm will cel-

brate its 35th anniversary next year.

"A lot of people will tell you that the development of a strategy is a beautiful thing," Meneghetti says.

"But the real jewel is in the execution. That's where I think we're a little bit different. We're in a position to help organizations to come up with a strategy, and also to help them make it happen."

## Gunnar turns offices many shades of green

Gunnar Office Furnishings' products are available in a multitude of colours and styles, but they can all help your workplace get a little greener.

"There are a lot of issues surrounding environmental concerns — transporting furniture and packaging materials, for example," says Gunnar president Ron Quigley.

He says by buying from a locally-based manufacturer, his company can address that con-

cern, and also save money.

Quigley started the firm in 1979, and today its clients are North America-wide, and include many Fortune-500 companies.

"We offer everything from carpet up through office furniture, private offices, movable walls, desking systems — and we design and manufacture it all right here," he says, adding Gunnar offers complete service.

"We deliver on our own trucks, install it ourselves and

do all of our own after-sales service," he says.

That hands-on approach provides numerous advantages to Gunnar clients — including flexibility, Quigley says.

"Our style of manufacturing is to give the end user exactly the product they're looking for, not a catalogue item that's available in these four colours and these three sizes. We actually sit down with the end user, come up with a product that's exactly what they're looking

for, and then mass produce it for them."

Calgary has been very good to Gunnar, so the company decided to get involved with Action Calgary to return the favour.

"We're part of the fabric of Calgary, and we want to support anything that can highlight the city and the types of companies that work here. Action Calgary will help us all work together to keep Calgary a growing, dynamic centre."

## Newly formed Cenovus makes contributing a priority

Cenovus Energy is technically a brand-new entity, but its roots here run deep, and so does its commitment to the city.

The company was launched in early December, when energy giant EnCana divided into a pure-play natural gas firm — EnCana — and an integrated oil operation — Cenovus.

"There is a strong sense of community at Cenovus Energy. Calgary is home to our head office and to more than half of our 3,000 staff members," says Sheila McIntosh, Cenovus's executive vice-president of communications and stakeholder relations.

"We see ourselves being part of the Calgary community for many years to come, and we want to contribute to the city's vibrant economic future," she adds.

That's why the company got involved with Action Calgary.

"As one of North America's leading oil producers, we support Action Calgary's objective of establishing this city as a global energy centre and increasing Calgary's prominence on an international stage," says McIntosh.

But Action Calgary is the beginning of Cenovus's contribution to Calgary, not the end of it.

"Cenovus will continue to engage and partner with our communities via financial support, sponsorship of community initiatives and innovative employee volunteer and giving programs," McIntosh says.

The company may be new, but it's already seen as a leader in the development of enhanced oil production in Western Canada.



Wil Andruschak photo

**Cenovus Energy team lead of community affairs Vicki Reid with employees assembling toys for a local toy drive.**

"We are focused on innovation and advancing technology to resolve what are important global energy and environmental challenges," McIntosh

says. "This proactive approach creates many exciting career opportunities and we expect to attract and retain the best people."

## Sun sheds light on virtual desktops

If Sun Microsystems has anything to say about it, the desktop personal computer's days are numbered, and so are the security risks and technical and electricity costs that come with it.

Sun is a major player in desktop virtualization, which Andrew Marrant, regional vice-president for Western Canada, says is a great fit for Calgary companies.

"With a virtual desktop, the only things on the desk are a keyboard, mouse, screen and a Java or smart card reader," Marrant says. "You insert your card, it asks for your identity and password and it brings up all your data, information and profile."

This setup uses a lot less electricity than a conventional desktop PC — seven Watts, compared with 80. It also provides enormous mobility and security, without sacrificing computer performance or speed. Because these terminals can be set up in a home as easily as in an office, the system makes work-from-home arrangements both secure and simple.

"All of the management of that system is being done at a central location, so you don't have any risk of someone breaking into your office and stealing your data or your customer's data. They're just stealing a screen.

"You no longer have to do all those patches and bug fixes that happen with operating systems on every desktop. You do it on the server once."

Sun began its virtual desktops business about a decade ago, as yet another link in a long chain of innovation. The company started in California in the early 1980s and set up shop in Canada in 1985. Its Canadian head office is in Markham, Ont., but Marrant says Calgary is a key part of its operations.

"We provide for a variety of customers — in particular in the oil industry — the back-end infrastructure on which our clients are able to run their business software, be it financials, human resources or seismic operations.

"We're a core infrastructure technology provider. We do high-end servers, high-end storage and tape technologies. We have tremendous market penetration and a great customer set in Calgary."

But the company's involvement in the community goes far beyond business transactions. Sun is involved with numerous Calgary charitable causes, including sponsoring an annual charity golf tournament and donating staff time to community projects.

Sun does business with a number of other Action Calgary partners — including Teletrips and Telus — and Marrant sees the company's participation in the initiative as an extension of those relationships.

"Calgary has a very close-knit business community. We all felt the economic downturn, and we all kind of shared the creative solution. It brought the community closer together," he says.

"One of the goals of Action Calgary is to facilitate business growth by creating efficiencies, and that is totally aligned with what Sun is doing. It's definitely a reciprocal arrangement."

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