

HESCO increases Western presence with new branch and dramatic showroom.

Since purchasing Hotel Equipment & Supply Co. (HESCO) in 2006, the Ungarians have dramatically grown the company's number of employees, its market share and its product and service offerings. But perhaps more important is the fact that the current owners of HESCO have changed the very industry itself.

By revolutionizing the way hotel, restaurant and all commercial kitchens are designed – through the use of high-tech, modern computer tools complemented by years and years of industry expertise – HESCO has gained a strong foothold in the western Canadian foodservice industry. And its growing market share has already warranted the opening of a second branch in Calgary.

Opening the Door to Opportunity

This new branch in Calgary – all 15,000 square feet of it – is the first expansion beyond the Edmonton headquarters and facility that the Ungarians initially purchased.

"This new branch has been in the works for the last year and a half," explains Adam Ungarian, co-owner of the company, along with his father, Larry. "Our customer base has been expanding beyond Edmonton into Calgary, parts of British Columbia and even Saskatchewan, as well as Yellowknife and the Northwest Territories for some time now."

This expanding customer base is due, in large part, to HESCO's continued focus on design/build – working with the customer on the conceptual design of kitchens through to and including installation of the equipment, choice of smallware, janitorial tools and even service and maintenance. Another part of this growth is having territory managers who look after the day to day needs of customers. We send our team all over Alberta, parts of B.C., Saskatchewan and Northwest Territories.

"We purchased the company in 2006 with the goal of creating and building this part of the business," says Ungarian, a graduate of Engineering Design and Drafting Technology at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT). "We realized that this was the future of the industry. Today's kitchens not only need the right equipment, they need the right design to encourage proper work flow and to achieve the best work efficiencies."

Ungarian's technical expertise is a good accompaniment to his father's 40+ years of experience in the industry. Together, the two offer the best of the old and new to better prepare their customers. They are joined by a staff of 34, 10 of whom work out of the new Calgary branch.

"We invest a lot of money in our staff to ensure that they are brightest and most knowledgeable in the industry," explains Ungarian. "We are always training them and sending them on courses all across North America. We take pride in the fact that we are industry leaders."

(Left to right) Adam Ungarian,
vice-president, sales HESCO
and Bryan Connell, branch
manager, HESCO Calgary.

Western MIGHT



HESCO's new branch in Calgary is 15,000 square feet.

A Perfect Balance

The design/build portion of HESCO's business currently represents the lion's share. It is well complemented with an extensive smallware business.

"We are a one-stop shop," states Ungarian. "We work with a budget and produce the drawings, interact with the engineers and architects, work with the city on our client's behalf, look after the equipment installation and then we provide the other side of our business, which is the smallware, the janitorial and the actual furniture, which can include everything from patio furniture to bar stools, tables and chairs." He adds that whether

it's designing or doing end user calls they all work hard to do the best job possible.

HESCO's clients range from the small "ma and pa" shops to restaurant chains to industrial work camps in remote locations.

"Our projects can range from \$25,000 to upwards of millions of dollars for the large work camps," explains Ungarian. "And each design is customized for the client's specific requirements. For exam-

ple, if we're designing a kitchen for a work camp, then we know that kitchen is going to be operational seven days a week, 24 hours a day. They will need heavy-duty, rugged equipment. But, we also think about things like service and maintenance. We need to select the right equipment that will ensure that the proper service people will be able to take care of it. We really try to go and above and beyond."



To date, HESCO's client list has included the likes of industry players such as Century Hospitality Group's restaurants, Chopped Leaf, Press'd the Sandwich Company, The Canadian Brew-house, Hudson's Taphouse and even

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CIVEO (AKA: PTI), the work camp.

Although the company works primarily in Western Canada, it has done projects as far west as Victoria and as far east as Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

"We do all of the design work in our facilities but we have team members and partners all across the country who can help us with the installation side," he says, adding that it typically takes between two or three days to come up with an initial design "to ensure that they're on the right page".

From there, it's about a week to select the right equipment. "We want to make sure we're putting in the right equipment and providing the client with the best value ensuring that we are on budget."

And with the addition of the Calgary branch, HESCO can now provide even more value to its growing customer base.



Notable Projects HESCO is currently working on

- Royal Alberta Museum (part of the revamp of the downtown Edmonton core)
- Century Downs Casino and Race Track in Balzac, Alberta
- Pampa Brazilian Steakhouse - downtown Calgary
- Medicine Hat Airport

The New Western Edge

Only open for a few months now, the new HESCO Calgary branch is proving to be popular for more reasons than one.

"We have designed a 6,000 square foot showroom to be the centre piece of this branch," states Ungarian. "It's a real amazing space, with 16-foot ceilings and lots of light. It features a built-in demo kitchen and demo scullery, as well as a boardroom built like a bar, which sits inside a walk-in cooler. Compared to the showroom at the Edmonton location, this one is a lot more modernized and it features interactive equipment, with a lot of displays."



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The interior of the existing facility was gutted and rebuilt to HESCO's exacting specifications. Like the Edmonton location, it features extensive warehouse and inventory space.

"Between the two facilities, we carry \$3 million plus worth of inventory in smallwares, and equipment including janitorial etc.," explains Ungarian. "We carry 10,000 skus and we have three company trucks – two in Edmonton and one in Calgary – that are dedicated solely to making customer deliveries."

Bryan Connell is the Calgary branch manager, a HESCO employee who spent his first couple of years with the company in Edmonton.

"Bryan is a concept designer," says Ungarian, who adds that the company uses the latest AutoCAD equipment. "We moved him and his family to Calgary a few months ago to help establish the

place and get it up and running smoothly. He had help from other key members from Edmonton who moved with Bryan to get things opened. It was a true team effort."

Beyond Calgary

According to Ungarian, future plans will see the company opening additional branches, once the Calgary branch has been firmly established – a process he anticipates will take approximately four years to achieve the same market share currently enjoyed at the Edmonton location.

"We're thinking of a possible Red Deer branch and maybe one in Saskatchewan as well," he says. "If we're not growing, then we won't continue to attract the brightest and smartest people to work at our company."

And with a strong commitment to invest in its people and its future, HESCO will undoubtedly continue to lead by example and, in so doing, will continue to change the industry itself.

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