

Biz2Biz Expo provides an inside look at companies' hiring needs

by Heidi Riley

Local companies were given the chance to shine at the fourth-annual **Biz 2 Biz Expo** held in Charlottetown in October. The event was hosted by the **Greater Charlottetown Chamber of Commerce**. More than 65 businesses had a chance to network and showcase their products and services. **Here's what some had to say about their employment needs:**

Law firm talks about shortages in profession

Stewart McKelvey has six offices across the Maritimes. In the Charlottetown office, there are 28 lawyers and more than 40 support staff. In addition to lawyers, there are paralegals, administrative assistants, title searchers, accounting clerks, a receptionist, and a human resources and marketing manager.



Jonathan Coady, Lawyer (left) and Paul Murphy, Articled Clerk

"It can be difficult to attract **administrative assistants**," says Jonathan. "This is in part due to the fact that more women who are interested in the legal field are going to law school. There has been a real change in the complexion of law schools. When I graduated a few years ago, more than half the class was female."

"Surprising as it may sound, there is also a shortage of **lawyers** on PEI," says Paul. "Graduates are more attracted to larger centres and fewer Islanders are returning to PEI to practice."

Each year, the firm hires between four and six law students to work for the summer. "This is a great chance for students studying law to get real-life experience," says Paul. "This year, only four articled clerks are working on PEI. There are certainly positions available on PEI for qualified law students."

For more information, call 892-2485 or visit www.smss.com



Sewing business needs to hire for busy season



Dawn Hobbs-Penton and her husband **Jamie** moved to PEI from Newfoundland in September 2000. For the past 25 years, Dawn has been employed in various positions in the field of fashion and design. After trying other jobs, Dawn decided to use her sewing and business skills to become self employed. In July of this year, she started her own business, **Fashion Forms Sewing Centre**.

"I've been sewing for about 30 years," says Dawn. This past summer, she worked on 400 wedding and special-occasion dresses, sewing from scratch or doing alterations. She alters and presses tuxedos and creates home decor, including curtains, pillows, and bedding. She also does work for other businesses in the Charlottetown area. Other services offered include classes for people wanting to learn or improve their sewing skills. Her husband Jamie often lends a hand sewing zippers or ripping out seams.

"I will definitely need to hire someone for the busy season from March to October. I need someone with some sewing skills, and I'm willing to train someone who demonstrates attention to detail and is willing to take their time to do a perfect job."

For more information, call 367-2161.



Office furnishings company looks for community-minded sales staff



Guy Gaudet (right), Shay Ward, and Allan Clory work at Office Interiors.

The business, which has locations across the Maritimes, can take a bare room and turn it into a finished office, including raised flooring, systems and freestanding furniture, copiers, printers, faxes and mailing machines.

The Charlottetown location opened two years ago with one employee, and now there are three sales and service staff. "Good sales people are always in demand," says **Guy Gaudet**, Director of Imaging Sales NB/PEI. **"As our business grows, we will be needing more staff.**

"It's hard to find good sales people. I just interviewed 25 candidates to find one good potential sales person. We were looking for someone with a great work ethic, is very sociable, and is excited about joining organizations such as the local Chamber of Commerce and other service organizations.

"We look for someone who genuinely wants to be involved in the community, not just for the sake of their job."

For more information, visit www.officeinteriors.ca or call 370-3050.



Experienced graphic designers hardest to find

Dave Chamberlain, Sales and Marketing **Colours Signs & Printing** designs and manufactures signs and printed material. They cater to a wide variety of customers with all kinds of signs for indoor and outdoor use, including promotional banners of any size, vehicle lettering, and complete wraps. The production department is in Summerside, and sales offices are in Summerside and Charlottetown.

They employ 10 to 11 people in production, graphic design, management, office and sales staff. **"Good graphic designers would be the hardest job to fill,"** says Dave. "They need to be creative and have a sales ability to deal with customer needs and work fast to turn around a top-quality job in the time required."

For more information, call 892-4242 in Charlottetown or 436-7446 in Summerside. Visit www.colours.ca



Biz2Biz Expo continued...

Design company is expanding



Josh Smith, videographer, (left) and Kenny Driscoll, owner

In October, **Higher Design Multimedia Promotions** won the Best New Business Award from the Summerside Chamber of Commerce. They also won Best Booth at the Biz2Biz Expo, for the best design and innovation and awareness of products and services.

This company was started by **Kenny and Klasina Driscoll** in 2006. The business offers web development, film, photography, and graphic design services, and have made local TV commercials.

Kenny is head designer for web and graphic design. Klasina handles the administrative duties. They have recently hired Josh, a videographer. The business is ready to expand, and will open a studio in Charlottetown in November.

“We plan to hire someone as we expand our graphic design and web development services,” says Kenny. “When we put out a call for talent, we received responses from across Canada, US, Britain, and Europe. We prefer to hire local skills, and that is what we did when we hired Josh. We are community-based, and we support local business.”

For more information, call **888-4545** in Summerside or **620-4600** in Charlottetown or visit www.higherdesign.com



As financial company grows, good advisors and support staff will be needed



George Weatherbie (left), financial representative, and coordinator Irene MacLean.

Credential Financial Strategies advises on insurance products, financial planning and wealth management, and serves all Credit Unions across PEI as well as the general public.

In each office location, a financial representative and a coordinator work together to serve clients. “Some representatives have a Certified Financial Planning designation, which is a well-recognized designation in the industry,” says George.

“The coordinator takes care of the administrative side of each office. A coordinator would need experience in office administration and a competency in regulation and compliance areas of the industry,” says George. “I would be unable to function without a skilled coordinator.”

“There is no immediate need for more staff, but as the business grows, more staff may be needed,” says George.

For more information, call **626-3545** or visit www.credential.com



When company expands, more staff will be needed



Kim Green, owner

Island Chemicals Inc. has been in existence for 29 years. They sell industrial chemicals and provides on-Island service for hazardous waste. Recently, their line has expanded to include janitorial cleaning supplies and chemicals. Last year, **Kim Green** purchased the company and began to emphasize environmentally-friendly cleaning solutions. “Green cleaning is where the future is. Since changing to green solutions, business has been up 26 percent.”

There are four full-time and part-time staff, including a bookkeeper, two sales people, and an inside sales/order processing person.

“We are looking at expanding the line further, and if we do, we will need more sales staff. Sales people are difficult to find. You can learn the product knowledge, but sales skills are qualities you already have. You can expect to make eight calls to achieve one sale. You need a tough skin to be able to deal with rejection.”

For more information, call **894-7487**.



Company always looking for qualified investment advisors



Alan Morse (left) and Colin Hawes, Investment Advisors

“Our job is to help people reach their financial goals,” says **Allan Morse**, Vice President and Investment Advisor at **RBC Dominion Securities** in Charlottetown. “We deal with insurance, estate planning, and tax reduction strategies.”

“On PEI, seven investment advisors and seven support staff work for Dominion Securities. **We are always looking for qualified people.** Investment advisors should have a university degree and it helps to have an accounting or business background.”

“We don’t have any problems finding good support staff. Many of our support staff have been with us for 15 years, but we would always be willing to talk to someone with the right credentials.”

For more information, email allan.morse@rbc.com or visit www.morseteam.ca

