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EVA SERRABASSA/IPHOTO

# Electrical Cable Supply Ltd.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

## THE VISION

IT WAS A CRISP SPRING DAY back in 1984," recalls Mohammad Mohseni of the day he set out to create what would soon become one of Canada's leading distributors of wire and cable solutions – Electrical Cable Supply Ltd. (ECS). A serial entrepreneur, Mohseni had recently immigrated to Canada and was examining local and national business practices to see where he could bring the most value. Having gained invaluable international experience as a business leader with companies operating in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, Mohseni was ready to try his hand in Canada.

When asked about his recipe for success, he smiles and says, "It's about understanding true customer service. There are a lot of companies that talk about their commitment to their customers, but in reality, very few actually put this commitment into practice."

So when the opportunity to start ECS arose, Mohseni seized it with vigour. Applying his proven success formula, he was determined to quietly revolutionize the way Canadians experienced solutions

to their wire and cable needs. He set out to differentiate his company by providing unrivalled customer support, effective supply chain management, reliability, product availability and simplified customer purchasing processes. ECS intended to create unparalleled customer value.

With a clear vision and a modest staff of three, ECS was born. Guided by Mohseni's leadership and inspiring enthusiasm, ECS quickly became known for exceptional customer service. Despite their small size, their passion was high and it showed in their daily interactions with customers and suppliers. Soon after opening its doors, ECS outgrew its original location and then invested in a customized facility in Richmond, where it is based today.



## CREATING VALUE

Over the years, Mohseni worked hard to balance growth with the ECS customer-driven approach. The company never lost sight of its founding philosophy. "Our strategy was simple," Mohseni says. "Embracing a broad range of customers,

ECS concentrated on small to medium-sized accounts where we could confidently meet or exceed client expectations with personalized service. As our business grew, our focus evolved to pursue large accounts, including industrial supply agreements and project-based business.

“What we tried to do and what we continue to do today is to build ECS based on service, on relationships with our suppliers and our buyers, and on trust,” explains Mohseni. “Naturally, offering customers competitive prices is important, but they’ll return time and again if you can offer them these three factors.”

“Creating value for our customers is critical to operating in our highly competitive marketplace,” says Scott Myers, ECS’s vice-president of sales and marketing. How does ECS create value? By thinking outside the box and putting in that extra effort. “We hang our hat on our exceptional service. Even our competitors can tell you this. People know they can call ECS to get the answers they need no matter how technical their questions are. They know we will provide them with solutions that work.”


**“Creating value for our customers is critical to operating in our highly competitive marketplace.”**

The entire sales force shares the same passion for service. “At ECS, customers know they can come in with an oddball product request and we’ll take the time to source it. We enjoy the challenge,” he adds. Taking this one step further, ECS will even stock it if it’s an ongoing requirement. “We’ve become known as the company always willing to go the extra mile for our customers. And that’s what keeps them coming back.”

#### 25 YEARS

The hard work has clearly paid off. Now celebrating 25 years of success, ECS has created a presence in most major Canadian cities, with seven full branches, two sales offices and plans to expand into Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan and Northern Ontario. Applying the same value-driven philosophy, the company recently launched a US division – ECS Global – based in Houston, Texas with a mission to offer complete wire and cable solutions by partnering with leading companies offering complementary products.

The company has also expanded globally. After 20 years of Canadian success, Mohseni established ECS in Middle Eastern markets such as Dubai, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Five



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## ECS – A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

BEHIND EVERY GREAT ORGANIZATION there are always great people. And ECS is no exception. When asked to cite his reason for 17 years of continued employment at ECS, Jerry Lungull sums it up in two simple words: the people. "We are surrounded by really good people here," says the B.C. regional manager. "We all share the same passion and similar values, which means there's a contagious positive energy in every office."

Paying extra attention to selecting team members that fit within the ECS culture has proven to be incredibly successful. "We're a very interesting organization as each branch is unique. ECS supports our individuality and empowers us to make the hiring decisions we need to in order to be effective," says Christy Morrison, Richmond Sales Manager. Looking at the Richmond branch, five sales representatives out of eight have been working at least 10 years at ECS. "A true measure of our success is shown by two of our newest sales reps, who came to

work at ECS from the competition."

ECS takes a three-pronged approach to employee engagement: recognition, personal growth (via its Performance Enhancement Program and educational support) and "pay for performance" compensation.

"In our sales organization, every person in every branch develops his or her own customer base," observes Myers. "They draw upon the company resources, the inventory and the corporate support to perform daily operations, and they are compensated almost as if they are running their own business. It's truly an entrepreneurial environment that inspires people to go the extra mile."

"These days an organization's biggest asset is their people," says company founder Mohammad Mohseni of ECS's commitment to its staff. "At ECS we're blessed to have such loyal, honest people working here. They believe in the leadership and they believe in the company. We could not have reached these levels without their dedication." □

years later, ECS is digging its roots even deeper by building a brand new 80,000-square-foot facility in Dubai to quadruple capacity. When asked about his decision to expand internationally, Mohseni replied, "There are abundant opportunities all over the world. Remaining focused on only one or two geographic areas is very limiting."

So what does 25 years mean to ECS? "It's created a great opportunity to reflect," says George Sigsworth, chief operating officer. "In preparation for this milestone achievement, ECS has spent the past year concentrating on developing our plans for the future." Indeed, ECS has certainly shifted its focus inwards by strengthening its leadership team, its strategic focus and its international team. It's a good place and time to take the business forward.

## A LITTLE RECOGNITION

ECS's success has not gone unnoticed. The company has recently joined an elite group of BC finalists for Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies awards. "Planning for the future is the most important requirement for this submission," says chief financial officer Michael Kidd. "Strategic planning has been one of our top priorities for 2008 so that we can continue to evolve and grow over the next five years and beyond, both financially and organizationally."

Mohseni appreciates the recognition, believing it all comes back to a simple philosophy that has been instilled in the company since its humble beginnings. "What differentiates ECS from the competition is, quite simply, we care," he says. "We care about our customers, our suppliers and our employees. We provide a knowledgeable team of professionals to assist our clients with their buying needs efficiently and quickly. We offer total integrated cable solutions with competitive prices and on-time deliveries.

"As we have evolved into Canada's largest independent provider of electrical cabling solutions coast to coast, we're proud to admit that our purpose has not changed since 1984 – to provide continuous reliability, availability and simplified superior service to every customer, every day. We also acknowledge that our success today was made possible by the commitment of our hardworking staff and our loyal customers. To all of these people, I say thank you." ■

*This promotional feature was prepared for Electrical Cable Supply Ltd. by BC Business magazine's Special Advertising Features Dept. Writer: Jodie Warren. For information contact BC Business VP of corporate features John Cochrane at 604-299-7311. E-mail: jcochrane@canadarwide.com*



# Congratulations to ECS on 25 years of service.

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