

Business London Magazine

Stream Weaver

By Suzanne Boles

Brian J. Spencer's love of music and his favourite band, Pearl Jam, are intrinsically linked with his decision to launch his own business. A few years back, Spencer says he had "one of those moments of clarity" while waiting to download one of the band's concerts on the Internet.

"I thought it be wonderful to simply click a button to listen to an entire concert instead of first downloading it," he recalls. So he started to research streaming video and Internet technology.

It wasn't long before Spencer realized what streaming media—a sequence of moving images sent in a compressed form over the Internet that can be viewed almost instantaneously—could do for the business world. And after some early application successes with his former employer, 3M Canada Ceditoriaorp, Spencer gave up his steady paycheque to launch Streaming Digital Media dot Com.

Now, four years later, his business has grown from one-man show to four employees and a client base that stretches around the world. "When I started the company I was driving a decade-old Chevrolet Cavalier with two-tone rust," quips Spencer. "Now I'm able to drive a new vehicle. There's a lot less worry when month-end time rolls around compared with two years ago."

Offering technology that allows small- and mid-sized companies to "run with the big boys," Streaming Digital Media dot Com specializes in all forms of streaming media, including video samples, audio samples, online training, email-based video, live streaming of events and video achieving.

According to Spencer, streaming media is a communications tool that allows companies to communicate locally, regionally, nationally and globally, all for the same price. Some clients use the technology to place video messages on their website, replacing much of the need for traditional print brochures and mail-outs. Others use it primarily for internal communications, training and education.

"The possibilities are endless," says Spencer, adding that many companies have existing corporate video footage that can be edited or repackaged for web delivery at a modest cost and web-streamed for as little as \$25 a month. Streaming Digital Media dot Com also offers a wide range of video production services.

"We've been involved in projects from Halifax to Vancouver, the U.S., Australia, Northern Ireland and the UK, and we're always looking to expand," says Spencer, adding that he is in the process of hiring a business development manager for the Sarnia area, "to capitalize on the relationships we have already with the large oil companies in Calgary."

Like any technology, Spencer realizes that as digital streaming becomes more mainstream, the industry itself will become more crowded. “(But) more players doesn’t necessarily mean more competition,” he says. “It can actually cause the opposite. Everyone will be doing it, but it will become obvious that not everyone has the skills to do it at a professional level. Those service providers that can provide exceptional service, quality and innovation will allow their customers to instantly stand apart from their competition.

“For any technology company, it means spending a lot of time investigating what others are doing and continually advancing on best-practices and processes.”

Streaming Digital Media dot Com

Business: Streaming media and video production services

Established: 2003

Employees: 4

Markets: International

www.streamingdigitalmedia.com