



B&D Manufacturing Wins Northern Ontario Business Award

COMPANY OF THE YEAR *51+ Employees*

By Lindsay Kelly

If André Ruest had to pinpoint one asset that makes B&D Manufacturing unique amongst manufacturers, it's the employees.

Trained in an array of skilled trades, employees with the Chelmsford company, located just outside of Sudbury, bring with them a valuable skill set, along with a dedication to excellence in their work.

"They're passionate at developing new products and innovative solutions and they strive for perfection, and it makes us, I think, stand out as a distinct manufacturing company," said Ruest, B&D's manager. "They are undoubtedly a key part of our success."

That skilled expertise helps B&D, a family-owned and -operated company, fabricate a diversified range of services and products for the mining, construction and recreational industries. Founded in 1980, B&D became known for its portable align boring machines before expanding into equipment for use in mines and mills, open pit trucks, open pit shovels and construction.

Today, the company has close to 140 employees and does \$20 million in annual sales around the globe.

Keeping the company competitive after 32 years in business is its keen attention to quality control and continuous improvement. The company consistently strives for improvement in quality, process and new product development, while looking for cost-cutting initiatives without jeopardizing quality.

And B&D relies on its employees' expertise to help determine how it should be doing things.



France Dubois Hnatiuk and André Ruest (2nd and 3rd from left) represent B&D Manufacturing at the 2012 Northern Ontario Business Awards.

"We might have an idea of what we want to build, and on paper it might look good, but in reality, to be able to either fabricate it or machine it we may have make some changes to it," Ruest said. "So if we don't include the employees, then it gets to the floor and it stalls there."

B&D isn't shy about consulting other companies that have resources, equipment or skill sets that will complement the company's expertise. Forming strategic alliances with other companies allows B&D to enhance its knowledge and skills, keeping it ahead of the industry pack.

Doing all this with a commitment to environmental responsibility is at the top of the priority list. When B&D built its customized, 46,000-square-foot building five years ago, it introduced a number of initiatives to reduce its environmental footprint.

A solar wall reduces the company's natural gas consumption by an estimated 34,620 cubic metres annually, while a grey water system recycles rainwater for use in the washrooms where waterless urinals have been installed.

"With the impact that the industry has towards the environment, we felt that since we were building our own facility, our corporate commitment would be to the environment, to apply some of this green technology to the building," Ruest said.

The company extends its good corporate citizenship to community involvement, sitting on a number of committees and offering input into events like Mining Week. Ruest said B&D wants to be viewed as a progressive company, both by its customers and by potential employees.

Every five years B&D doubles its sales, Ruest said, and it wants to continue that trend in the next five, expanding export sales into different markets, particularly South America, signing up distributors and promoting its products.

The company has just hired a full-time marketing manager, and is looking to expand once again. Its footprint, manpower and equipment will all grow to meet industry demands, and B&D hopes to bring other companies along for the ride.

It's currently in the process of developing the 110 acres surrounding its Chelmsford operations into a full industrial park, with the aim of attracting interrelated companies who can supply to, or from, B&D. The company is awaiting a city review of its plan.

Ruest, who has been with the company since its inception, is excited about the future.

"We're here for a long haul," Ruest said. "We're looking forward to it."