

The Sky is Not Falling ... it's on Fire.

Calgary-based SkyFire Energy is heating and electrifying solar energy initiatives

BY T.L. DUDAR

SkyFire Energy is a leading solar energy company that provides residential, industrial and commercial service and installation of solar heating and electric systems. Established over a decade ago as Sedmek Inc., an engineering design organization, SkyFire Energy was spun out as the solar installation division. Sedmek continues to provide engineering and distribution of select solar products. SkyFire Energy is both heating and electrifying the solar interests of its clients. This promising Calgary-based company is rapidly expanding its operations to include locations in Edmonton, Toronto and British Columbia, providing solar array expertise to clients across Canada.

Harnessing the sun's energy has been a topic of study since the 1800s. Today, the development and deployment of alternative energy continues to be a hotbed of discussion in securing sustainable energy sources and reducing our dependency on current conventional methods such as coal, oil and gas. This issue has become a global focus for government, industry and community. According to the European Photovoltaic Industry Association (EPIA) 2011 report¹, solar photovoltaic (PV) power increased by 16 GW in 2010 worldwide, approximately double the increase seen in 2009. Also, the Canadian federal government has committed to reducing Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions by 17 per cent from 2005 levels by 2020.²

With the ever-increasing demand for sustainable energy systems, SkyFire has built an impressive client roster such as: Avalon Master Builder (Calgary's first net-zero energy home), the Calgary Zoo's ENMAX Conservatory, the City of Calgary Municipal Building, and Parks Canada (Warden Station). Recently, they were selected to engineer and install a solar array for the Okanagan College Centre of Excellence in Penticton, B.C. Boasting a solar array of 262 kW, this installation will be the largest in Western Canada.

Becoming a multi-provincial corporation requires a strategic focus on growth development and sustainability. The leadership team at SkyFire recognized the need to develop the plans and tools necessary to execute an effective marketing strategy to expand their reach. They engaged Calgary Technologies Inc. and participated in the Go-To-Market program. This program, now in its fourth year, provides technology entrepreneurs with



learning and identifying common marketing pitfalls, assistance in the development of comprehensive strategic plans (featuring pricing and positioning), implementation plans (featuring marketing campaigns and channel programs), skill sets in market research, customer validation, channel development, strategic vendor partnerships, integrated campaigns, sales process, account management and presentation execution.

"The Go-To-Market program provided our company with a bird's-eye view into our organization, enabling us to develop an effective marketing strategy. Our organizational focus was primarily on sustaining and supporting our growth such that we needed to re-examine our marketing strategy. The program mentors, experts and advisers helped us to determine where to focus our marketing efforts for maximum company gain," states David Kelly, Partner, SkyFire Energy. "Our company is now equipped with a strategic marketing plan and a tactical implementation plan. We are looking forward to focusing our resources and our efforts on the activities that will allow us to achieve our goals."

Looking ahead, SkyFire is pursuing opportunities for expansion within Canada, providing expert installation of solar energy systems. They remain actively involved with the Canadian Solar Industries Association (CanSIA) to encourage and monitor legislative changes, industrial innovations and further developments of solar energy initiatives. SkyFire is providing accessible sustainable energy solutions for its clients through their experience and expertise of custom-engineered solar solutions to meet the exact specifications of a project rather than having to work with pre-packaged systems. Committed in their principle to never oversell the energy production from a solar system, clients are provided with a comprehensive, custom, sustainable solar energy solution.

The next time you look at a rooftop, look for the SkyFire team working hard to harness the power of the sun. Keep your eyes on the sky, it isn't falling but it sure is on fire... SkyFire, that is!

For more information on SkyFire Energy, visit www.SkyFireEnergy.com.

For more information on solar energy, visit www.cansia.com.

For more information on CTI's Go-To-Market program, visit www.calgarytechnologies.com.

¹ European Photovoltaic Industry Association, "Solar Generation 6". www.epia.org. 2011. ² Canada's Action on Climate Change. www.climatechange.gc.ca. 2011.