Success story

Success: Sometimes you can just feel it in your bones

The theory of evolution? Something that begins as a modest business from a makeshift garage can grow larger than a T-Rex, and Research Casting International is certainly proof. The unique company, which specializes in building museum exhibits, is the largest of its kind in the world and exports nearly 90 percent of its expertise.

“I started out as a sculptor out of school and ended up building five-storey-tall dinosaurs,” says Peter May, owner of the firm, which molds and casts life-size models of fossilized and recent bone, trees, rocks and land formations, largely for museums. He and his team of 20 welders, carpenters, artists, builders and paleontology specialists service exhibits for major institutions around the globe, including the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and the British Museum of Natural History in London. “There was a big gap to fill in museums after budget cuts in the ‘70s and early ‘80s. And we were there at the right time with the support that was needed to build educational exhibits — a unique blend of art, science and technology.”

When Research Casting International outgrew its original Oakville home, the company came premises in Beamsville, Ontario. As well, May relied on the Bank’s management consulting services to improve job costing and scheduling for his rapidly expanding business. “We needed help with strategy to ensure our continued growth,” he says.

Research Casting International

At a Glance

- Founded: 1987
- Owner: Peter May
- Based in: Beamsville, Ontario
- Products and services: Molding and casting for museum exhibits
- Employees: 20
- BDC support: Term loans to purchase land and construct new building, and consulting services
- Next step: Diversification of products
- Web site: www.rescast.com