



Trade in the Digital Age:
.....
helping small businesses think big





Contents

Introduction	06	PeruTourism: Peru	22
pixiv: Japan	08	Ness & Basch Online Marketing: Singapore	24
Welcu: Chile	10	1791 Diamonds: New Zealand	26
Juana Cata: Mexico	12	Inmage: Malaysia	28
Yola Institute: Vietnam	14	Redline Communications: Canada	30
Shoes of Prey: Australia	16	Contact	32
MeSixty: Brunei Darussalam	18		
Scarlett Garnet Jewelry: United States	20		



**Dr John Ure, Executive Director,
The Asia Internet Coalition**

Trade in the Digital Age

Over the last two decades, the emergence of the Internet has delivered enormous economic and trade benefits. According to the OECD, the Internet's impact on productivity may exceed the effects of any other technological innovation to date, including electricity and the combustion engine. As a new, dynamic force in the global economy, characterized by an open, collaborative approach, the Internet has driven record increases in productivity, inspired innovation, and created rapidly emerging markets. The Internet transcends international borders and it has spread to more than a quarter of the world's population. By creating an astounding array of new economic opportunities and expanding international trade, the Internet has also transformed traditional commerce. As the Internet dramatically decreases high entry costs for foreign markets, we are now seeing the rise of small to medium-sized businesses as competitive exporters along with the creation of innovative business models, cutting-edge inventions, and new and improved services.

Even the smallest company can now afford a communications and computational infrastructure that would have been the envy of a large corporation 15 years ago. These small businesses have the ability to operate globally and scale quickly. Internet technologies, including online advertising, online translation services, and online platforms, enable businesses to go global, regardless of their size and geographic location.

In this booklet, we have highlighted 12 small businesses from around the world that are doing extraordinary things online. It's important to create the right environment to empower thousands more innovative SMBs, leading to the creation of new jobs and sustainable economic growth.

The Asia Internet Coalition is an industry association formed by global Internet companies with local friends and partners across Asia. The AIC seeks to promote the understanding and resolution of Internet policy issues in the Asia-Pacific region.

pixiv

www.pixiv.net
Tokyo, Japan

“One of the best things about the Internet is we don’t need to worry about borders between countries.”

Takanori Katagiri, CEO, pixiv Inc.



Illustrating how the Internet enables a dream

Takanori Katagiri had wanted to run his own business since high school. At university in Tokyo, where he studied business administration, a professor advised Takanori to try the Internet. At the time, Takanori admits he “couldn’t even tell the difference between a PC and a Mac”, but it was to prove a life-changing piece of advice.

His early business ventures saw him developing online services and building websites, but he soon decided that he wanted to reap the profits of the services he created himself, rather than hand them over to clients. So in 2007, he launched pixiv, an online community for creators and illustrators that enables them to display their work online as they would in a gallery.

The inspiration came from a programmer friend of Takanori’s who shared his passion for illustration. Initially Takanori was not convinced it would succeed, because there were few examples of successful niche SNS or online community sites in Japan. However, pixiv rapidly became extremely popular with lovers of Japanese illustration from all over the world. Today, pixiv Inc. employs 70 people and

the site has an amazing seven million users in 200 countries worldwide. More than 15% of total traffic comes from outside Japan, but that will change rapidly, as non-Japanese currently account for over 50% of new registrations.

Users discover pixiv through other social media channels and via blogs, often those of the creators and illustrators who upload their work to the site. For Takanori, pixiv is part of a new online movement “where people can communicate with artists and function as a community.”

All pixiv’s revenue comes from online payments, including income from advertising. As Takanori explains, “Because of the nature of our business, we can’t think of any other payment system than online. Offline payments would be costly and require cumbersome procedures. Online is easy.”

Takanori continues, “One of the best things about the Internet is we don’t need to worry about borders between countries. For us there’s no distinction between domestic and international markets. We just think about what we can do for our users, wherever they are!”

Japan’s Internet industry accounts for 3.7% of GDP, making it larger than the country’s automotive industry.

Source:
Nomura Research Institute, www.internet-keizai.jp

Welcu

www.welcu.com
Santiago, Chile

“As a web-based business, we plan to keep hiring more sales and support people, and expanding to cover all of Latin America.”

Nicolás Orellana, Owner, Welcu



Riding the crest of the Internet wave in Latin America

Chilean company Welcu.com is dedicated to helping event organizers and planners register attendees and sell tickets online.

The company has been in existence since January 2011. Owner Nicolás Orellana has been working online for the last 16 or 17 years. “I used to work in advertising – I had my own agency, working with companies like Coke and Pepsi, helping them create their online presence,” he explains. “We organized a major conference every year from 2007 and built some technology to manage our registration and ticketing needs. People started asking if they could use our platform to manage their events. So we decided to offer an all-in-one solution for companies and consumers. Today, business is very strong in Latin America, especially Chile and Colombia.”

Before Welcu, event organizers had to send invitations to guests by mail, call people to confirm attendance, record everything on a spreadsheet and use things like wire transfers and bank transfers for payment. As Nicolás says, “We’ve helped event organizers move everything online. In fact, our whole business is online.”

Welcu’s business model is to receive a small commission on each transaction it handles for its customers. Although there is a direct sales force, customers are also acquired online. With around half a million names on Welcu’s attendee base, spread across Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico, the company’s database is extremely important for marketing and other purposes and this is stored in the cloud, using Rackspace.

Welcu is also a heavy user of online productivity applications, and all incoming payments are received digitally. Nicolás puts it bluntly: “We would die without online payments! We rely on the cloud so we need that too.”

As people across Latin America become more comfortable paying online, Nicolás expects e-commerce to explode in the next three to five years, and unrestricted access to web technologies will be vital to this process. He predicts, “The market will grow 10 to 20% a year, which is amazing. Nowhere in the world is like this. We’re on the crest of a wave.”

“As a web-based business, we plan to keep improving our platform, hiring more sales and support people, and expanding to cover all of Latin America,” says Nicolás. “We’ll achieve this by focusing on what we do best – and online technologies allow us to do just that.”

Chile’s e-commerce market is worth USD 749 million. The average Chilean household has four credit cards, and spends USD 158 online each year.

Source:
CNBC, www.cnbc.com

Juana Cata

www.juanacata.com.mx
Oaxaca, Mexico

“There are many in this region who need work, especially women. They could work from home, without incurring extra expenses like childcare or transportation costs.”

Ileana Conde, Founder



Viva la online retail revolution!

Mexican business Juana Cata makes a range of truly unusual, colorful handcrafted cotton shirts, belts, bags and backpacks.

As a child, Ileana Conde, founder of Juana Cata, would go to the market with her grandmother and see traditional Mexican oilcloth tablecloths, which she loved. It was these which inspired the designs which make Juana Cata's products so eye-catching.

Unwilling to relocate to find work after she was let go from her job at a library in Huatulco, Ileana started Juana Cata while also working part-time as a teacher. She chose the name "Juana Cata" as a tribute to a revolutionary heroine and friend to the poor, legendary for helping to improve conditions in the region of Oaxaca.

Today, Juana Cata's designs are sold at stores in Oaxaca City, Huatulco, Morelia and Mexico City. The catalog is available from juanacata.com.mx and there's also a Facebook page. Ileana communicates with suppliers and distributors via email and social networks. According to Ileana, the Internet is vital for increasing awareness of Juana Cata and its products. "We rely on word of mouth and social networking to

promote the business, and we get over 1,000 hits a month, which is good. Our database of customer information gathered by email is essential for informing people of new collections and other promotions."

But the status of the Internet in Mexico also throws up challenges. Although Internet use in Mexico is increasing as the price of using it declines, very few people own a tablet or PC. Most go online at Internet cafés. Online payment is also a problem, Ileana says. "We've had interest from foreign markets and really want to globalize, but we can't afford the security seal that we are legally required to own if we want to offer an online payment system."

Despite this and other obstacles to working globally, Ileana remains inspired by the revolutionary spirit of Juana Cata and optimistic about the future. "I'm looking for support from SMEs to invest in or otherwise support the business," she says. "We'll also start placing items on Etsy. Most of all, I'd love to be able to employ more people. There are many in this region who need work, especially women. They could work from home, without incurring extra expenses like childcare or transportation costs."

E-commerce sales in Mexico totaled USD 6 billion in 2012, a 46% increase on 2011.

Source:
AMIPCI, reported at www.ecommerce-europe.eu

Yola Institute

www.yola.vn

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

“For young Vietnamese, these are exciting times. The Internet plays a crucial role in connecting them to the world.”

Khoa Pham, Co-Founder and Managing Director, Yola Institute



yola

Internet helps secure Vietnamese children’s education and future

Established in 2009, Ho Chi Minh City’s Yola Institute is a part of an online revolution enabling Vietnamese parents to help secure a better future for their children through education.

An overseas education is seen as the springboard to a better career in Vietnam – for example, the number of Vietnamese enrolling at US colleges is now 10 times what it was 15 years ago. Until recently, information on how and where to apply to study overseas was scarce and mainly spread by word of mouth, but the Internet has given people access to information they would never have had before.

Since its foundation, Yola has expanded into a first-class educational services provider with a rapidly growing network of five learning centers. It is the premier English training and consulting center for Vietnamese students wishing to benefit from higher education in the US, the UK and Australia.

Yola teachers use YouTube videos in their classrooms on a daily basis. Homework is shared on Facebook. Yola communicates with international

partners such as Pearson and Cengage Learning who help develop the curriculum and teachers from around the world via cloud-based applications and email. Documents and the CRM database are stored in the cloud. “We could not provide our service without it,” say the company’s founders.

Maintaining an active online community is key to the Institute’s ongoing marketing. Over 30,000 people have “liked” its Facebook page. Ex-pupils stay connected, engaging and inspiring current students.

Khoa Pham, Co-Founder and Managing Director of Yola Institute, is very clear as to what else the Internet does for Yola. “The Internet is very powerful for us,” he says. “We need to reach out to talented people and with the Internet we are not limited anymore by where they live.”

In the future, Yola hopes to provide a similar service to other countries in South East Asia. Meanwhile, the explosion in Internet usage in Vietnam bodes well for the Institute. Take-up is growing extremely rapidly and the population is very young. As Khoa says, “For young Vietnamese, these are exciting times. The Internet plays a crucial role in connecting them to the world.”

Web technology has increased the revenue of Vietnamese SMEs by an average of 9.4%, and reduced their costs by 6.8%.

Source:
McKinsey, www.mckinsey.com

Shoes of Prey

www.shoesofprey.com
Sydney, Australia

"It's hugely exciting when you think that Shoes of Prey spans the world and that we're part of a wider revolution in the way people shop globally."

Michael Fox, Co-Founder, Shoes of Prey



Shoes of Prey

Unique customized shoe company puts best foot forward online

Launched in 2009, Shoes of Prey is an online business that offers women the opportunity to design their own bespoke shoes.

Set up by CEO Michael Fox, Fashion Director Jodie Fox and CTO Mike Knapp, today the company employs 50 people. Shoes of Prey was inspired by Michael's entrepreneurial spirit, Jodie's passion for Asian custom shoes and Mike's background as a software engineer. The trio came together to create an online company reaching a global audience and offering, as Michael puts it, "a product so interesting, different and noteworthy that customers had to sit up and take notice."

Around 50% of visitors to the company's colorful, multilingual website packed with photos of extraordinary shoes are just browsing. Actual customers currently come from Australia, the UK, US and Japan and are usually directed to Shoes of Prey via word of mouth.

Once they've discovered Shoes of Prey, the customer journey becomes vital. As Michael explains, "A Customer Happiness Team provides

support via the Internet throughout the whole process. Customers receive regular email updates and are emailed a professional photo of their shoes before they arrive. Shoes are packaged in a silk shoe bag and come with inserts. We also have a no-questions-asked returns policy."

The vast majority of Shoes of Prey's orders are taken online, although some sales also come from stores in Australia and Japan. Customer data is collected in a bespoke customer relationship management system, and stored on a cloud server so it can be accessed by employees anywhere in the world. Being able to handle payment online is essential for Shoes of Prey. As Michael says, "Any additional costs would decrease our profit margin or increase the price of our product."

Michael believes Shoes of Prey is part of a wider revolution in the way people shop globally. "The great thing about globalization is that you can be a business based in Australia, with a manufacturer in China, that sells to customers in the US and UK," he says. "Thanks to the Internet, national and geographical boundaries have fallen down in the retail space. Even though we're quite a small business, it's hugely exciting when you think that Shoes of Prey spans the world."

Australian small businesses that make heavy use of the Internet are twice as likely to be growing their revenue, and earn twice the revenue per employee, compared with those with low engagement.

Source:
Deloitte Australia, www.deloitte.com

MeSixty

www.mesixty.com

Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam

“When I launched MeSixty, I automatically thought global, thanks to the ease of doing business in the Internet age.”

Keeran Janin, Founder, MeSixty



MESIXTY^o

Mouthwatering opportunities for online halal fine dining guide

MeSixty, the brainchild of Keeran Janin of Brunei, develops mobile apps for tourism boards and agencies and has been in business since 2011. Based in Brunei with a permanent staff of eight, MeSixty's pool of writers is scattered in different countries across the globe and drawn from freelancer sites and online food blogs.

The company's flagship product is The Best of Halal, a recently launched guide to fine dining restaurants aimed at the Muslim traveler. Free to the end user, the guide is offered as an app because it's far easier to distribute across borders than a magazine, online or otherwise.

The first city featured is the gourmet paradise of Singapore, but by 2015, Keeran hopes to cover between 30 and 40 cities, including non-halal destinations such as Hong Kong, Shanghai and New York. It aims to be the first dedicated online guide to good halal restaurants, and will be marketed online via advertising on travel blogs and websites.

Also, as Keeran explains, "One of the great advantages an app has over a magazine is the

possibility to gain a deep, valuable understanding of our users. Not just geographical information and age but also income range – based on how they use the app. This is really valuable to featured restaurants and for driving future marketing campaigns." Depending on the success of the app, Keeran is considering diversifying to offer different halal-related products such as cookery, lifestyle or TV. "I can also see the potential of offering the same services to other groups, like vegans," he says.

When Keeran launched MeSixty, he automatically thought global, thanks to the ease of doing business in the Internet age. Web technologies also underpin MeSixty's back office: the company uses a cloud-based server to store data, while email and Skype are the main forms of communication with the many remote collaborators.

"The Internet is the enabler of this service," summarizes Keeran. "If it wasn't around or if we didn't have easy access to people all over the world it wouldn't be possible at all. From the production side of things, you are looking at getting all the content delivered from around the world into one place. If we had to go to each of these cities and actually collect this information ourselves, it would just be so prohibitively expensive."

In terms of the proportion of households with Internet access, Brunei ranks 25th in the world.

Source:
Brunei Times, www.bt.com.bn

Scarlett Garnet Jewelry

www.scarlettgarnet.com
St Louis, United States

“Our aim is to continue growing internationally ... the Internet really has shrunk the world.”

Garnet Griebel, Co-Founder, Scarlett Garnet Jewelry



Enabled by the Internet, born online!

Garnet Griebel and Katie Miller launched Scarlett Garnet Jewelry in October 2006. Because Katie was living in Charleston, South Carolina and Garnet in Kansas City, Missouri, their first meeting was virtual, so Scarlett Garnet Jewelry was literally born online.

For a year, the two women communicated by email and cell phone, and it was not until Katie moved back to her home town of St. Louis that they actually met face to face. Even now, Garnet and Katie collaborate long-distance across Missouri, adding an interesting dynamic to the creative process.

Today, Scarlett Garnet sells necklaces, earrings and bracelets influenced by art nouveau and art deco styles through its e-commerce and wholesale websites, and also features on Etsy. Everything is US-made. “We sell across America, in Japan, Canada, Australia, the UK, Belgium, France, Spain, Norway, the Netherlands and India thanks to the Internet,” Garnet says.

Although Scarlett Garnet has grown organically, things are moving so fast that Garnet now works full time for the business and Katie hopes to do so soon. All profits go back into helping Scarlett Garnet grow.

Garnet looks after production and Katie is the Internet guru who looks after Scarlett Garnet’s brick-and-mortar store in St Louis, which has been made possible by growing online sales. The physical store opened in April 2012 and was recently awarded Best New Boutique by a local magazine.

Although the store is a great success, it’s the Internet that enables Scarlett Garnet Jewelry to exist and thrive.

Katie adds: “Pretty much everything we do is stored in our email account, the bulk of our payments are handled online, and online searches are also our best source of suppliers – for example, that’s how we found the Indian company that supplies us with great stones at a great price. So the Internet really is our lifeblood.”

So, what about the future? Garnet says: “Our aim is to continue growing internationally. Although our brick-and-mortar store lends us credibility, the Internet is the easiest way to grow. And it’s so exciting when we receive far-away orders to know our products are going to exotic locations, to people we’ll never meet. The Internet really has shrunk the world.”

“Web-savvy” SMEs in the United States earn twice as much from exports as other companies, and create over twice as many jobs.

Source:
McKinsey, www.mckinsey.com

PeruTourism

www.perutourism.com
Lima, Peru

"If the Internet disappeared, we'd have to completely reinvent ourselves."

Rosario Chahud, Chief executive, PeruTourism.com



Internet opens up a whole new world for PeruTourism.com

Rosario Chahud joined Lima-based PeruTourism.com in 1987, and became chief executive four years ago. During her time with the company, the workforce has expanded from six to 25 – and the Internet has revolutionized her business.

"We're an inbound tourism organization," she says. "We cater to visitors from all over the world. We use online advertising and search engine optimization to find new customers, and they use forms on our website to request more information or book vacations. The site gets around 600,000 visitors a month."

The company has accumulated a substantial marketing database of existing and potential clients, and recently began using this to cross-sell other destinations such as Ecuador, Chile and Argentina.

"We store all of this information on our own servers," Rosario says. "The Internet makes payments much easier: about 30 percent of customers pay by phone or email, but the rest pay online via the website, which is much quicker and more secure."

"We used to work in strategic partnership with just one major provider: we organized the bookings, but they supplied the service to the end customer, and we knew we could rely on them. But as we've diversified into other countries, we've used the Internet to find other suppliers. In the past we'd have needed to do a lot of research, and go and visit them, but now we get all the information online."

The company also allows suppliers to access its business application via the Internet and view customers' booking status. "It's wonderful – it does all the work for us, so we don't have to respond to queries all the time. It reduces errors and it's very flexible."

"In the past, we mainly marketed cultural tourism, but now we're selling a lot more family vacations, with activities such as pottery classes, chocolate making and horse riding. We're using the Internet to target people traveling alone, appeal to the gay community, and meet the growing demand for luxury travel. If the Internet disappeared, we'd have much higher advertising and transaction costs. We'd have to completely reinvent ourselves."

Only 22.4% of Peruvian households had Internet access at the end of 2012, but this was an increase of 4.6 percentage points on the previous year. In the capital Lima, the figure is 51%.

Source:
Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, www.inei.gob.pe

Ness & Basch Online Marketing

www.nessbasch.com
Singapore

“We cannot have global marketing solutions without the Internet. It is our lifeline.”

Sebastian Lim, Group Director, Ness & Basch Holdings Pte Ltd



Cross-border collaboration online helps Singapore web services provider grow

In 2010, Singapore native Sebastian Lim launched Ness & Basch Holdings Pte Ltd to “provide a one stop shop for SME operators in Singapore” wanting to do business online. Services included website design, online marketing campaigns and search engine optimization.

Launched on a shoe-string budget of SGD 50,000, the company’s first projects were handled from home, while meetings were typically held in coffee shops and fast-food outlets. Within a year, revenue had climbed to around SGD 300,000, mainly driven by bespoke website design. Today, creative web design remains the company’s largest source of revenue, and along with online shopping services, it also delivers the highest margins.

The company’s clients are largely drawn from the beauty, finance, fashion and traditional Chinese medicine sectors. One of the company’s biggest successes came when it created a website and marketing campaign for a Singapore-based fashion retailer that provides a customized clothes service for teenagers between 12 and 19. Thanks to Ness & Basch’s work, this client now receives a high volume of orders from global customers.

Ness & Basch’s business obviously would not exist without the Internet. But more than that, the Internet is also crucial to the way the company operates.

Not only do customers discover Ness & Basch online, Sebastian uses the Internet to work with clients outside of Singapore, in China, Malaysia and the Philippines, and to do most of his research into potential new suppliers.

However, it’s in the area of employment that the Internet has most benefited Ness & Basch. As Sebastian explains: “After enduring a high spend on wages we changed our recruitment strategy to employ freelance staff from China, the Philippines and Malaysia on a contract basis. Being able to remotely work with our staff across countries has really helped us grow. Flexible working also allows us to stay competitive and offer the expertise our customers need on demand.”

Looking ahead, Sebastian sees virtually unlimited growth potential for the type of services he offers, as Asian consumers move away from traditional media and a younger, more web-savvy generation grows up. “We cannot have global marketing solutions without the Internet,” he concludes. “It is our lifeline.”

Singapore has the world’s highest rate of smartphone ownership, at 90%.

Source:
Wired, www.wired.com

1791 Diamonds

www.1791diamonds.com
Wanaka, New Zealand

"We have a great lifestyle thanks to the Internet and orchestrate an international business selling stunning designer engagement rings and other jewelry."

**Richard Prout and Alice Herald,
MD and Head of Design, 1791 Diamonds.**



1791 | DIAMONDS

The Internet is a jewelry company's best friend

Richard, a successful online entrepreneur, spotted a great opportunity to offer designer engagement rings and other bespoke jewelry online to consumers in Australasia who have no access to the sort of physical stores that sell these products. "Let's face it, Google.com is the new high street," says Richard.

Enter Alice Herald, 1791 Diamonds' Head of Design. Alice, who had worked for many famous jewelry houses, was also British. Alice and her Australian husband had moved to New Zealand but she missed the glittering world of jewelry design.

It was a business marriage made in heaven and, in 2008, 1791 Diamonds launched online. Apart from the jewelry, a truly special customer experience is vital to 1791 Diamonds' vision. Rings are packaged in boxes that disguise what's inside and help keep the element of surprise.

1791 Diamonds couldn't exist without the Internet and the spectacular global growth since then simply wouldn't have been possible without it. Although the company initially targeted only New Zealand, sophisticated use of online marketing meant that after

just a year Australia was providing 75% of revenue. There are now also smaller customer groups in the US, UK, Hong Kong and Singapore. As Richard says, "As long as legal and tax issues are sorted, it's easy to trade across different countries while controlling business from New Zealand. We can also keep overheads low."

Customers interface with the company via the Internet, and a sophisticated customer database is crucial to the business. Safe, on-time delivery is essential so this database has to be able to interact seamlessly with the online systems of diamond suppliers, delivery companies and customs. Around 80% of enquiries come as a result of online advertising.

"We have a great lifestyle in New Zealand's beautiful South Island," say Richard and Alice, "and thanks to the Internet we can still orchestrate an international business selling stunning designer engagement rings and other jewelry."

For 1791 Diamonds, the future certainly looks bright. Continued international growth is the logical next step and the Internet will also enable this. "As we expand," Richard says, "we only need limited manpower in new territories because staff can be supported online from New Zealand. This business model wouldn't be possible without the Internet."

Half of all New Zealanders made purchases online in 2012, an increase of 11% since 2009.

Source:
Statistics New Zealand, reported in New Zealand Herald, www.nzherald.co.nz

Inmage

www.inmage.com
Petaling Jaya, Malaysia

“Due to the borderless nature of the Internet, businesses which may have started locally can eventually grow to transcend international boundaries.”

Andy Sitt, Co-Founder, Inmage



Inmage instant image delivery enabled by the Internet

Find the image you want, license and download it instantly: that is what Malaysian-based online image gallery Inmage offers its customers, allowing them to choose from a huge library of images via its multi-language website.

Inmage prides itself on its strong local presence in the US, the UK, Australia, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia. Malaysian co-founder, Andy Sitt, studied accounting in the UK, before becoming financial controller for royalty-free image pioneer Digital Vision. Soon, though, booming Asian markets tempted Andy back to Malaysia. In 2000, with co-founder Stephanie, he set up Inmage.

Inmage initially sold royalty-free images via hard-copy catalogs, but producing and distributing these proved costly and tedious. It was time to move online, and a year later the company had its first website.

What really kick-started Inmage's growth was effective pay-per-click online advertising from 2003 onwards. Andy explains, "It allowed us to attract international customers".

Inmage was followed by sister company 123RF in 2005. 123RF provides budget-friendly options for purchasing royalty-free photography, editorial images, video footage, audio clips and illustrations.

Today, Andy is very clear about how the Internet has benefited his business. He explains, "It's driven costs down so much that what we provide today wouldn't be possible if the Internet didn't exist. In addition to that, due to the borderless nature of the Internet, businesses such as Inmage and 123RF, which may have started locally, can eventually grow to transcend international boundaries".

Specifically, the Internet enables a number of essential operations. 80% of 123RF customers buy online and, Andy says, "Online payments form the majority of our daily revenue." Crowd-sourced content contributors are likewise paid via online transactions.

Looking to the future, Andy is excited about the rapid growth in Asian smartphone and tablet use, and the company is exploring the potential of apps. Above all, Andy is focused on expansion, especially in China and India, although he is keen for his company to "remain a global supplier with a local presence".

Web technology has increased the productivity of Malaysian SMEs by 12.6%.

Source:
McKinsey, www.mckinsey.com

Redline Communications

www.rdlcom.com
Toronto, Canada

“I don’t believe any international company can do business without the Internet. It’s as integral as electricity.”

**Lynda Partner, Chief Communications Officer,
Redline Communications**



Canadian tech company staff try to imagine growing a business without the Internet

Lynda Partner, Chief Communications Officer at Markham, Ontario-based Redline Communications, vividly remembers her first encounter with the Internet. “I was at a client’s office, and he said, ‘You’ve got to see this! Give me any subject and I’ll find something out about it.’ I told him to search for Dan Marino, who was the Miami Dolphins quarterback at the time. The results blew my mind. It was a turning point for me, and I remember thinking: from now on, my life is going to be in tech and the net.”

Today, Redline provides wide-area, high-speed machine-to-machine communication networks, used mainly in remote regions by the oil and gas sector. The company shares all of their product information online with all of their customers and over 200 hundred partners in over 70 countries, who can access it as easily from an oil rig in Oman as from an office in Montreal. Their customer relationship management database is also stored in the Cloud and accessible to sales teams worldwide. Both are critical to the business, breaking down traditional barriers to flexibility by allowing partners, customers and employees alike access to relevant

information even from remote areas with undeveloped infrastructure.

Machine-to-machine communication is a fast-growing business, but it is also new and potentially confusing, so education and building awareness are crucial to Redline’s sales efforts. The company has spent a lot of time using the net to establish itself as a thought leader within the industry.

“One of our specialties is converting oilfields into networked entities, so all the machines can communicate with headquarters. Companies all over the world will benefit from this technology, but we can’t just go knocking on their doors. So we put videos online explaining what we do, publish white papers, and ensure that if someone types ‘digital oilfields’ into a search engine, they find us first.

“We have a unique solution, and I believe we’ll become the dominant player in digital oilfields with the help of the Internet. I don’t believe any international company can do business without it: it’s as integral as electricity.”

92.8% of Canadian SMEs are connected to the Internet.

Source:
CEFRIQ, www.cefrio.qc.ca



www.asiainternetcoalition.org

Please don't hesitate to drop us a line if you have any questions,
comments or suggestions.

You can reach us at:
secretary@asiainternetcoalition.org