

GVCA Member Profile Lottery Winner

Knapp Fasteners: Custom Solution Providers



Jenny and Jim Knapp, owners of Knapp Fasteners Inc. in Cambridge are a dynamic team. They're entrepreneurs, custom solution providers and future thinkers.

Both business graduates of Conestoga College, the Knapps began their career working for fastener companies. Jim was in sales, Jenny in purchasing. After a short time, they saw a niche opportunity in the industry as a small company offering customer service and custom solutions.

They quit their jobs and started Knapp Fasteners in 1987 – and haven't looked back since.

"We felt that we were both quite knowledgeable and we tried very hard to offer our clients superior customer service," says Jenny. "We knew that by utilizing our talents and experience in purchasing and sales we would have a winning combination."

Knapp sells to tiny shops as well as to Fortune 500 companies worldwide. Its reputation as custom solution providers

even has them distributing their products to other distributors.

Knapp warehouses 60,000 products and has an inventory of 16 million fasteners. Their products go into a vast array of applications: MRI machines, heating and air conditioning units, drones, aerospace components (including the Space Shuttle) and throughout the construction industry.

The Knapp team works with product innovators to provide fasteners for prototypes, often working with blueprints and drawings.

"We are fastener specialists," says Jenny. "We have knowledgeable people within our team to facilitate this process including a full-time quality engineer on staff which is not usual."

Knapp became ISO-9001 certified in 2008 and has other specialized certifications to allow them to work in industries such as the aerospace industry. Currently Knapp is the only fastener company in Canada to hold the Government – Industry Data Exchange Program certification.

Knapp Fasteners also provides vendor management inventory services. They go onsite to a facility to scan their inventory and make sure that all the essential

components are at the required inventory levels needed for the manufacturing process.

"We provided this service to a company in Ottawa," says Jenny. "Our staff member would fly there each week, scan and assess the inventory, reorder what was needed and we would make sure the order was delivered. Then this staff member would go the next week, put away the new inventory, and prepare the next order."

Given all they do, it's a small wonder that Knapp Fasteners has attracted attention. Most recently, it won the Chair's Award at the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce's 2016 Business Excellence Awards – an honour that has earned the company praise from clients and partners.

Thinking into the future, the Knapps have expansion on their mind. They already have enough land to double the size of their current facility, as well as a talented group of people – including general manager Donna Schwartzentruber (who was also their first employee) – to accommodate more demand. ■