



For Mailennium, the phrase “there’s no room for error” couldn’t have more significance. The Mississauga-based direct mail company collects information through mail-based surveys and evaluations, indexes and classifies raw data, and provides meaningful and intelligent data for its clients.

They work with a variety of sectors such as oil companies, the financial industry, companies wanting to know more about their customers, or organizations wanting to know more about their employees.

THE CHALLENGE

But there’s a challenge – errors. Errors on surveys happen. Questions are sometimes answered incorrectly or misunderstood. And the more they happen, the more likely discrepancies interfere with quality client data.

In fact, there are two sources of errors, explained Mailennium President, Laura Artibello. There are those picked up when surveys are scanned digitally, and human errors that sometimes occur

when an operator attempts to interpret what the digital scanners flagged.

RESOLVING ERRORS, IMPROVING PROCESSES

The company needed to put improvements in place to their current system that made errors easier to spot, and quicker processes to resolve errors once they were found.

To do this, Mailennium partnered with Sheridan College through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) Applied Research and Commercialization (ARC) Initiative.

The ARC initiative matches small to medium-sized companies with Sheridan faculty and students to conduct applied research, development and innovation activities that help companies become more productive, competitive and ultimately create jobs. (Funding of up to \$100,000 is matched by 50% in cash or in-kind contribution by the participating company.)

SHERIDAN BUSINESS STUDENTS ROLL UP THEIR SLEEVES

Three students from Sheridan's **Bachelor of Business Administration – Global Business Management** program, under the guidance of Professor Scott Hadley, brought a variety of skills including IT, marketing, research and analysis to the project.

The team developed a prototype measurement tool that complements the company's current working system. It enables their digital scanners to identify errors faster and earlier, establish error trends across surveys, and create a detailed log of error patterns for both internal use and for customers, giving Mailennium a greater understanding of the accuracy of its entire survey process. For staff operators, better processes were also designed, giving them more confidence to identify errors and, just as important, make decisions faster to resolve them.

THE ENHANCED SYSTEM

Mailennium's improved report system can now clearly provide factual and projected client data unique to each customer, as well as show potential clients how their surveys often remain within a one per cent error rate. (This was something the company knew thanks to client feedback, but couldn't properly quantify.) "All of these improvements – enhancements to the entire system and process, from first touch to

final output, add value which is helping us get to the markets we need to be in," stressed Laura.

That value also extends to the students. "This project gave the students context to help them with further academic work, especially understanding that 'applied knowledge' is quite different from 'book knowledge,'" said Scott. "They had to figure out what resources, new skills and knowledge were required to meet the goals and they learned the importance of communications skills through negotiating, setting up meetings, extracting information, and feeding info back to the company... that's difficult to do in a classroom."

"Sheridan provides a wealth of support – from the faculty guidance and follow through to pairing students to our organization."

- Laura Artibello, President,
Mailennium

Conversely, Mailennium's offices briefly turned into a classroom for Laura and her staff, as they thrived on learning from Sheridan's students. "They're young, motivated and on the cusp of technology, skills, resources and current trends," said Laura. "Sheridan's positive energy impresses me each time I walk through the door!"



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