Trio makes it big

For the founders of TelCan, what began as a quick moneymaker has now become a thriving telecommunications company.

"It started as a part-time job, a way to make some money . . . We thought it would be a one-week or two-week job," says executive vice-president Siva Sanmuga.

Sanmuga graduated from the University of Waterloo in 1997. His co-founders, Anton Mendoza and Mamoon Rashid, graduated the following year. By that time, TelCan had been up and running for two years.

As students, they juggled running a small business as well as attending school. Initially, they were running the business out of Mendoza's basement.

"There was a big learning curve at the beginning . . . Our background is civil engineering, and we went into telecommunications. That was the good thing about going to the University of Waterloo; they teach you how to be entrepreneurial," says Mendoza.

As the company grew a customer base, and moved out of Mendoza's basement, the work gradually became easier. The Business Development Bank of Canada provided some much-needed understanding of the business world.

KEVIN RABJOHN/FOR METRO TORONTO

What started as a part-time job for TelCan's founders turned into a big money maker.

The company developed services as new customers expressed different needs. Most of TelCan's services are aimed at giving small businesses a big business feel.

"It's about confidence," says Sanmuga, "if a customer calls a company and someone actually picks up the phone it seems less professional."

TelCan's services provide voice mail for multiple lines that can be checked anywhere in the world via the Internet. They also set up toll-free numbers, and the lines necessary to run phone card companies.

With more than 10 000 clients, TelCan now provides more than 10 million minutes of service a month. According to its engineers, the company has the ability to provide three times that. For more visit *www.telcan.ca*

KEVIN RABJOHN
FOR METRO TORONTO

Literacy test causes concern

Recent criticism of how the provincial Grade 10 literacy test is marked raises a new questions about just what Ontario is trying to accomplish through this mandatory process.

An educator who marked portions of the literacy test has published an article calling the process a farce. He reported frustration in what seemed to him subjective standards for marking.

But the reality of this literacy test is that it is not what anyone would term "standardized" testing.

All answers are not absolute and definitive, as they might be with multiple choice or true or false questions. In fact, students are required to reason and argue their way through various portions, and markers must assess those answers against examples of work and criteria for grading.

Victoria Hemming, EQAO chief assessment officer, explains this is something called criteria-referenced testing. It looks at how close students' knowledge fits with required curriculum.

Many educators say there were few surprises in the result, which might have been determined without a test. Most students in the academic stream pass on the first go. But two-thirds of English as a Second language students failed.

Torstar News Service

Pupils aid Atwood's land

Land owned by Margaret Atwood is soon to get a makeover based on the designs of third-year University of Guelph landscape architecture students.

The celebrated author is in the process of donating the land to the Pelee Island Heritage Centre in order to create a model farm of ecological sustainability. When Landscape architecture professor Karen Landman heard about the project, she offered the assistance of her class.

The students will present their ideas to Ron Tiessen, the Pelee Island Heritage Centre curator who's in charge of the project.

Metro Toronto news services

Certified Success

Knowledge is Power - Learn the latest in IT at Humber.
Companies are growing more reliant on technology to be competitive, but, as technology changes, employers are having difficulty finding qualified professionals with the latest skills. Humber offers programs you'll need to keep you up-to-date.

- Microsoft Certified System Administrator (MCSA) includes: A+, Net+
- Security Certificate Program (SCP) includes: SCNP (Security Certified Network Professional) SCNA (Security Certified Network Architect)

Info Session:
Tuesday, Jan. 20, 7:00 p.m.
Check the Web for Details.

HUMBER
School of Information Technology

416.675.6622 ext. 4937
www.it.humberc.on.ca

Do you have Retail Sales, Restaurant, Hotel, Tele-marketing or other Customer Service experience?

"I don't want a job, I want a **career.**"

RSVP ...to discover the entry level positions and growth opportunities in the technical support field, including average salaries for various positions.

Information Seminar: Technical Support Analyst
Wednesday, January 21st, 6 - 8pm

ITI's TSA students learn to combine their customer skills with a focused curriculum to launch a career as a technical support analyst in the I.T. industry. This 2-hour information seminar will allow you to discover the entry level positions, and growth opportunities in the technical support field – including average salaries for various positions – presented by an industry professional.

Book your attendance today by calling 1 877 596 4115 ext. 266, or visit http://ai-iti.careerfocus.ca

- Financing available.
- Flexible payment plans available.
- Government financial assistance for those who qualify.

iti Information Technology Institute
For more information call 1 877 596 4115 ext.266