



TORONTO HIGH-TECH COMPANY CELEBRATES ITS 125th YEAR IN BUSINESS

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Listed by Price Waterhouse Coopers as the oldest high-tech company originating in Ottawa in 1881, Ahearn & Soper is proud to announce its 125th year anniversary.

Now with its head office in Toronto and operating from seven branch offices in Canada and one in the U.S.A., Ahearn & Soper is a leading specialized integrator in the deployment of high-tech equipment including industrial barcode software, scanners, printers, barcode label applicators, inventory management systems, access control security systems, video surveillance, and industrial automation.

Ahearn & Soper Inc. continues to be at the forefront of technology in its 125th year of operation, providing automatic ID solutions to businesses - from small to medium sized companies up to Fortune 500 clients. Its present-day annual sales are over \$30 million.

Thomas Ahearn and Warren Soper founded Ahearn & Soper in 1881 to pursue the communications business, pioneering telegraph and telephone systems. Their electrical contracting business grew into a network of companies controlling electricity supply, streetcars and street lights in Ottawa. Early successes included erecting long distance phone lines for Bell Canada as well as founding and operating Ottawa Light & Power Company, the Ottawa Telephone Company and the Ottawa Street Railway. Thomas Ahearn and Warren Soper are credited with introducing the first all-electric streetcar system to Ottawa. The Ottawa Electric Railway lines, a system of streetcars in the city, which was taken over in 1948 by the City of Ottawa and renamed OTC (Ottawa Transportation Commission), is now known as OC Transpo, the Ottawa Regions bus system. Ahearn reputedly invented the electric cooking range which was installed in Ottawa's Windsor Hotel, and he later drove the first electric automobile in Ottawa. This innovative thinker, known as "the Canadian Edison", deserves to be remembered by Canadians every time we use electricity, pick up a telephone, or get onto a bus. It was also Thomas Ahearn who arranged to have a telephone switchboard installed in Canada's Parliament Buildings in 1882, establishing 50 lines to various parliamentary offices.

Ahearn & Soper has always been on the cutting edge of technology. In its earliest years, the company founders set themselves apart by equipping their first streetcars with electric heaters to keep riders warm, as well as with plows to clear the snow and rotating brushes to clear off the tracks.

True to its legacy of innovation and customer service, Ahearn & Soper's present-day leaders have evolved cutting edge technologies in the areas of industrial data collection, RFID, software solutions, access control, and industrial automation. Ahearn & Soper's knowledge of each technology and application has deepened and the technical solutions have become better. In addition to offering complete barcode solutions involving the core components of printers, scanners, labels, applicators, terminals, card products and software, the company has consistently maintained complete service and support of all its products and solutions.

Middleware, or the software required to "glue" industrial data collection solutions together, was both pioneered and developed by Ahearn & Soper Inc. The company's initial products were proprietary transaction processors utilizing their own real time operating systems and proprietary application generators. As PC hardware and software technology progressed through the balance of the 1980s and 1990s they transitioned first to hybrid systems and final to fully "open" systems using industry standard platforms and development methodologies. Now automating the transactions where **raw materials** changes to **finished goods inventory**, Ahearn & Soper's software solutions provide integrated modules in labour tracking, work-in-process, process improvement, quality assurance, identification, counting/validation, inventory updates, and putaway/location.

Being at the forefront of innovative high-tech solutions continues to play a part in Ahearn & Soper's success, with additional offerings of Biometric Systems, Smart Cards and Tags, Digital CCTV, Motion Sensors, Door Control and other Security Solutions. The company's Access Control solutions have addressed the changing face from physical security to technical, for businesses, keeping in place the protection of employees, visitors, property and critical information from damage or loss. In 2005 the company also expanded to include a new Industrial Automation Group, acquiring CapCom Automation. This allowed Ahearn & Soper to provide a much larger part of the overall technical solution by offering Custom Machinery, Control Systems, Data Acquisition & Reporting Applications, Vision Inspection Systems, and Marking & Labeling Systems.

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