

SDI GROUP

Safety Designs Innovation



CREATING HEALTHIER, SAFER WORKPLACES

SDI Group Celebrates 20 years

By Nerissa McNaughton

SDI Group has offered health and safety services and products to businesses across North America for the last 20 years.

The Group consists of four divisions: partnership consulting and COR auditing, occupational screening, occupational hygiene and industrial cleaning. The SDI Mobile division supports all of the health services. The team also offers classroom and online training. Under these divisions, a wide variety of other services are offered, which include but are not limited to quality management systems, function fitness evaluation, drug and alcohol testing, audiometric testing, noise assessments and drinking water safety plans.

David Williamson, the founder of SDI Group, recognized a need for providing a different approach to health and safety as a way to enhance businesses, instead of safety being seen as a hindrance or simply something that is required. Knowing that health and safety can empower a more productive workforce, help combat dangerous situations on the job and even saves lives, he set out to make a difference.

“SDI Group started as Williamson and Safety Services in 1998 but was formally introduced under the current name in 2003,” he says. “We offer specialized services in partnership with our clients to find solutions that meet non-traditional needs. We empower health and safety through innovation and provide pathways to success to all we serve. We were proud to introduce our Indigenous company, SDI Mobile, in 2019 and now couldn’t be happier to celebrate 20 years as a business. Personally, I am celebrating 25 years as a health and safety professional and 18 years as a CRSP (Canadian Registered Safety Professional).”

He continues, “We have achieved many milestones over the years in partnership with our clients. One that comes to mind is building and implementing our first formal health and safety management systems for The Town of Tofield and the Town of Viking, which included achieving a Certificate of Recognition in health and safety (COR). The Town Tofield received the Alberta Worksafe award as a result.”



First Nations, Inuit and Métis Indigenous rights under the Constitution of Canada and respects Nations' connection with the land and its natural resources.”

Along with community and business partnerships, Williamson credits innovation as a driver of SDI Group's success.

“One of our greatest strengths comes from our title of Safety Designs Innovation. We are constantly innovating to provide our clients and partners with the best solutions that fit their business models. We understand the challenges businesses have today. This is why SDI Group was created, to provide trusted support to meet our clients' health and safety needs.”

He enjoys helping clients succeed but is just as invested in his team.

“We have had many memorable moments. A key one that stands out for me is watching staff write and achieve their CRSP (Canadian Registered Safety Professional) exams, which is the highest designation in our profession. Other moments include our team achieving audiometric and auditing certification. Other notable ones are working with our partners and watching their health and safety systems grow from a written process into implementation. We are also proud of our over 150 partnerships that have grown over the years,” smiles Williamson.

Williamson is very proud with the Indigenous partnerships the company has formed with local Nations. Williamson founded SDI Mobile with Ms. Rosalie Gray, a First Nation member of the Enoch Cree Nation. SDI Group is proud to be partners with the Enoch Cree Nation, Alexander First Nation, Maskwacis Education School Commission and the Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council Authority.

“We are dedicated to creating a workplace that is inclusive and honouring of Indigenous Peoples' history, culture and heritage,” says Williamson. “SDI Group recognizes

Although there have been many successes and rapid growth over the past 20 years, there have also been challenges to overcome.

Williamson admits, “Our profession, at times, is not easy but I believe a true health and safety professional possesses the ability to critically think and focus on what our clients and partners need in order to tie in with their business model. We also, at times, must deal with very serious health and safety situations. However, this is why we have the

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partnerships we do – in order to support all aspects of our clients and partners’ needs.”

Overcoming challenges makes SDI Group stronger and more agile; Williamson finds many joys alongside the challenges of the business.

“Watching our company grow with our team and partners is very rewarding. We work with several companies that started out small and have now grown significantly. We are very proud to be a part of that.”

As a provider of many services, a lot of what SDI Group does in the community flies under the consumers’ radar. On any given day SDI professionals are training, conducting occupational screenings or doing occupational hygiene and partnership consulting at the same time. The end users of the companies they serve, and the teams within those companies, are presented with the solutions they need that empowers customer facing

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service. What goes on behind the scenes with SDI Group providing support is what enables a lot of production and client service to happen at high efficiency levels.

“It is important for industry leaders and entrepreneurs to know that health and safety can actually enhance and grow their business on top of ensuring their workforce remains healthy and safe,” Williamson points out. “By working in so many different industries, we have deep insights into how other businesses operate, including learning from their leadership groups. This, in turn, empowers us to offer even more efficient, customized services for our clients.”

Over the past few years, SDI Group has seen its health services grow in demand. Williamson says, “Our partnership consulting has always been one of our greatest strengths, as our clients get an entire team to support their health and safety management system.”

Investing in the communities they serve is a value of SDI Group. Over the years, the Group has supported numerous charities and causes including Food Banks, Stollery Children’s Hospital Foundation, Canadian Mental Health Association and many more.

“We are quite proud to be working with the NAIT co-op program, providing mentorships for the future of health and safety for the last 13 years,” Williamson adds.

As he reflects on 20 years gone by and the many years ahead, Williamson says thank you to a number of supporters. “We have a multitude of partnerships that have contributed to our success. I am also thankful to our team at SDI and in particular, our first employee Cheryl L’Arrivee who is now our VP, Operations. We wouldn’t be where we are without her.”

There are many exciting things ahead for SDI Group.

“We have just added three new health services and those are custom earplugs, spirometry and fit testing for hearing protection. During the spring of 2023 we will move into our new office in Nisku, Alberta. We will be able to provide classroom training and all our existing services for our clients in this location. Our Acheson office continues to grow and in late 2021, we released our latest mobile testing unit featuring all our health services in a portable format.”

SDI Group is committed to the health and safety of teams and workplaces across North America. Learn more online at sdi-group.ca. Like and follow SDI Group on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.



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