

Business aids recycling effort

Cartridge World to refill, recycle used printer cartridges

By **GREGORY SPURLOCK**
Courier Business Manager

Everyone has heard the saying "Recycling Makes Sense." For Peter Healy, it also makes business cents.

Healy is the owner of Cartridge World and has recently helped institute a program at Bluegrass Community and Technical College that recycles and refills printer ink cartridges. The recycling program pays cash for the used cartridges which are then refilled with ink and sold to other customers or back to the original person after being refilled.

Healy has also shared his expertise with BCTC business students in forums, such as the recent Extreme Entrepreneur tour that was sponsored by the BCTC Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) club.

After moving from Clonmel County Tipperary in Ireland, Healy worked for Alltech Inc. for 12 years. "I always had a goal to own my own business before I turned 40," and at 39, he decided to invest in a Cartridge World franchise.

Before selecting a franchise in which to invest, Healy studied many different franchises and flew to California to meet with representatives of his top three choices.

"I almost started a real Danish Bakery with a real Danish baker in charge of our products. My mother was from Denmark and I believe there is huge

potential for 'real' Danish pastries, both from a consumer and a catering perspective."

Healy explained the process of becoming a franchisee. "You want to know that the franchisor knows what he is doing. They, of course, want to be sure you have what it takes to run one of their franchises. They look at your financial position, past business experience, aptitude for the business and your general attitude."

"You must ascertain if the business is for you. Will you enjoy working in that arena? In addition you want to interview as many of the existing franchisees to gauge their success and satisfaction with the business," said Healy. "Franchisors are not allowed to make potential earnings claims, so you have to do your homework."

Healy interviewed 12 franchisees in person and interviewed 20 more on the phone before deciding to invest in Cartridge World.

Healy, who has been married to wife Vikki for 11 years, has three children and two Jack Russell terriers when he is not working at least 10 hours a day, including most weekends.

"In the first year or two of starting a new business, it is nose to the grindstone all the time. My life is very different from when I was an employee but it is not difficult to work long hours when it is for you."

Advertising is a crucial part of the

marketing mix for any new business, especially small businesses with a limited marketing budget. Healy advertises on radio and with local tabloids and college newspapers, including the BCTC Courier. The Cartridge World delivery vehicle is wrapped with the company logo and contact information.

Entrepreneurs often are expected to learn the language of business. Healy was challenged by the linguistics of business-speak.

"When my bank asked me to provide a three-year Pro-Forma business plan, I was taken aback. Terms such as P&L (Profit and Loss) and Cash Flow projections scared me."

Healy responded by purchasing books such as *Franchising for Dum-*

mies and *Accounting for Dummies*, among others.

"Now, these terms are familiar and, more importantly, they are business practices that are carefully monitored on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. I also took advantage of free seminars at the Small Business Development Center and free advice from accountants, attorneys and more," Healy explained.

Another point emphasized by Healy was the value of networking. "Without networking, you don't know what is going on in your marketplace and you will not be as likely to position yourself to avail of opportunities. Word of mouth is the most powerful marketing tool and also the cheapest. Nobody will recommend your business if they don't know you."



Photo by PATSI SEDIVY

Peter Healy is helping BCTC recycle old printer cartridges.

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