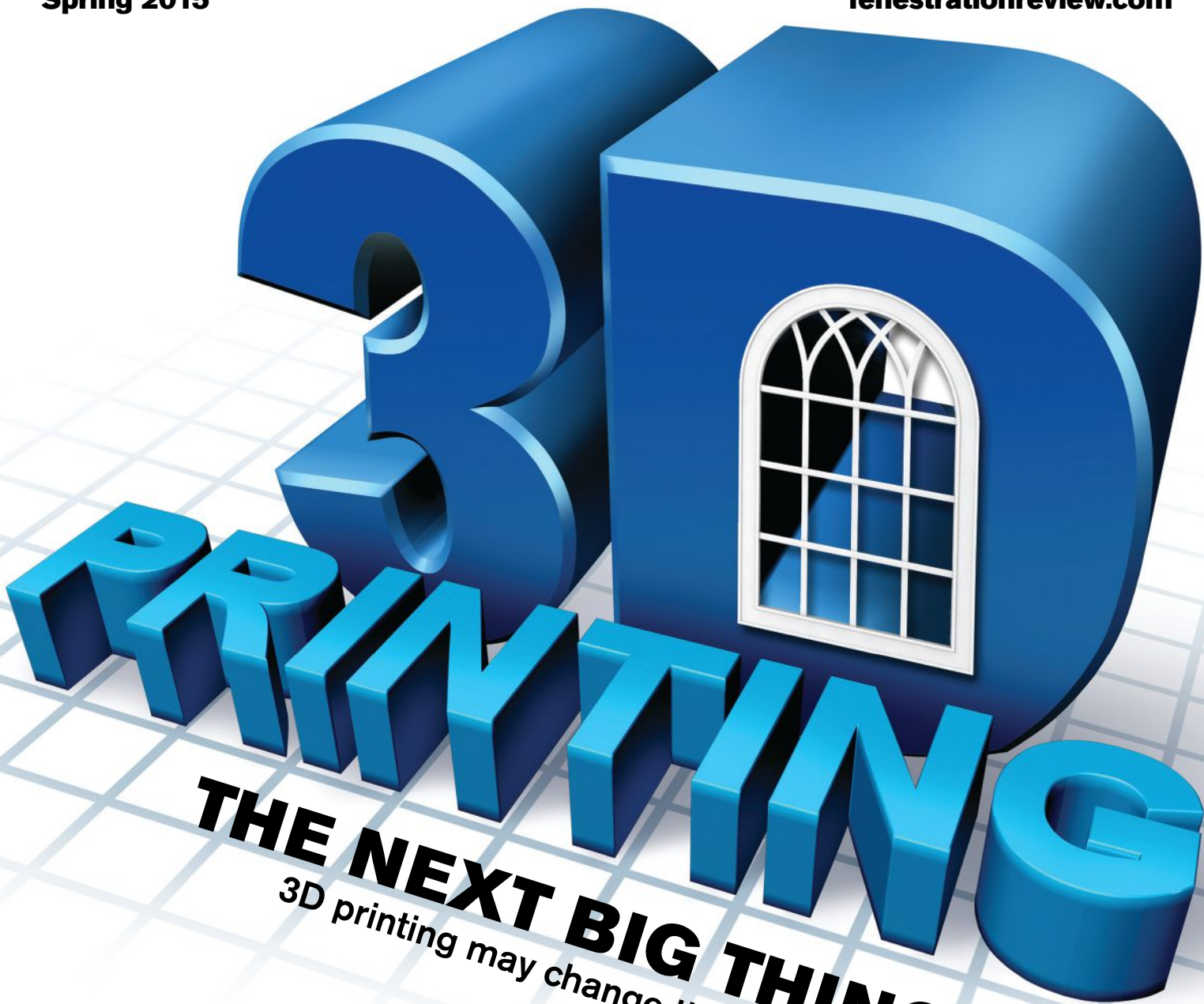


# FENESTRATION REVIEW ON

CANADA'S WINDOW AND DOOR MAGAZINE

Spring 2015

[fenestrationreview.com](http://fenestrationreview.com)



**THE NEXT BIG THING**  
3D printing may change the game

# LOOKING UP

## Spectrum Skylights gives rooms a vertical view

**D**aylight affects people in numerous ways: psychologically, physically and systemically. We require access to natural light for our health, performance and eyesight – especially those responsible for complex tasks.

by RICH PORAYKO

Enter Spectrum Skyworks. Founded in 1992 in Port Coquitlam, B.C., Spectrum specializes in specialty skylights, canopies and other types of overhead and sloped glazing. “We bought Spectrum in 2008,” says managing partner, Ken Boyce. “What attracted us was the potential. We saw this as an opportunity of getting into a niche part of the glazing industry. At the time, Spectrum didn’t do any storefronts or curtain wall and we’ve grown it from a small business to an almost \$7 million a year company.

Control of their materials and systems has helped Spectrum to grow. “I really enjoy the problem solving aspect,” says Boyce, a 30-year building envelope veteran including working for Fortune 500 companies in the U.S. while commuting out of Vancouver. “A skylight is basically a window on the roof. If it is not installed properly, it’s going to leak or fail and can be a major problem. We see it all the time. We solve those problems. We have our own extrusions for our skylight systems. And because of that, we enjoy a fairly stable repeat business.

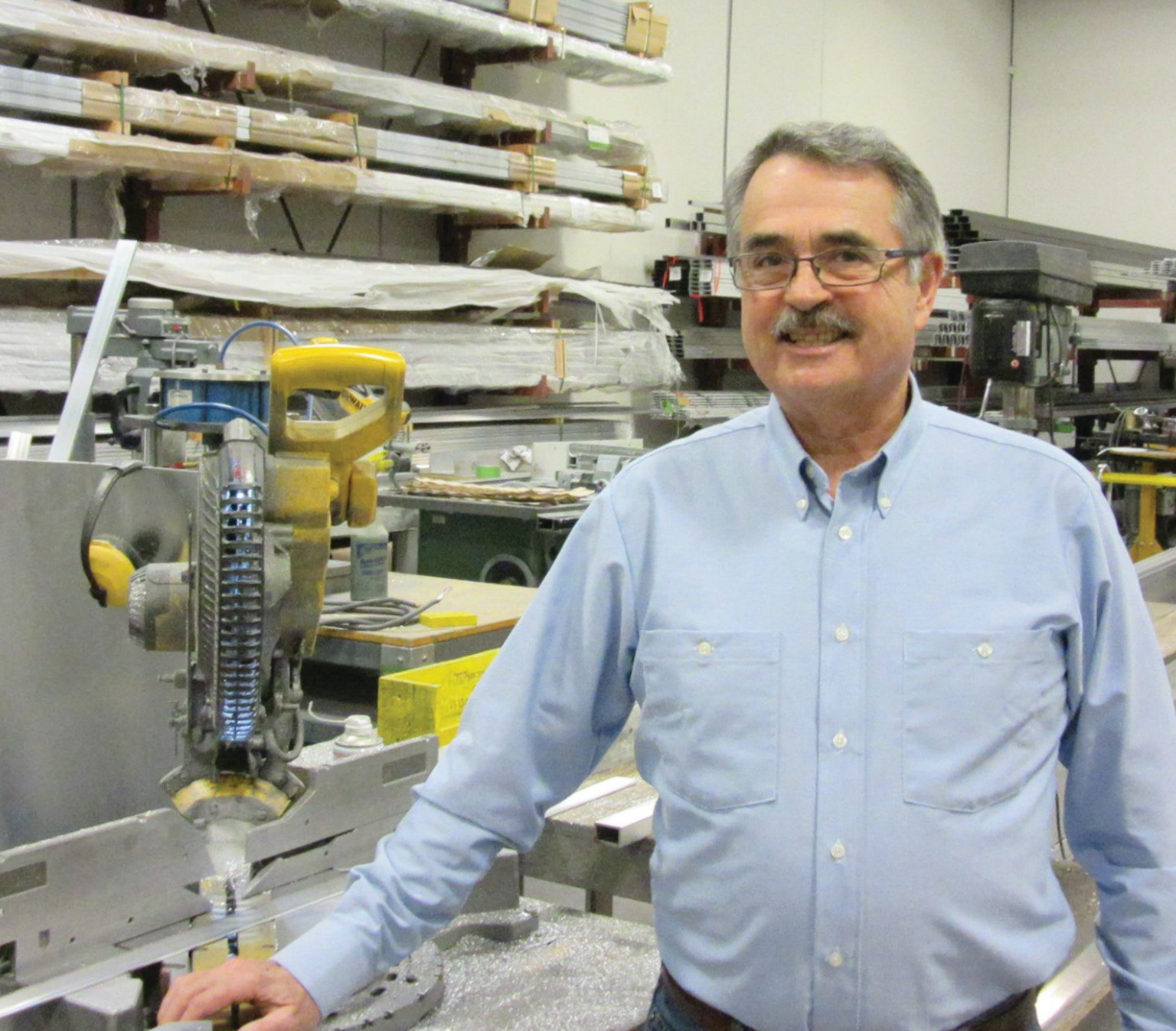
It is a good thing Boyce enjoys problem solving. Spectrum serves high-end residential customers who often have ideas bigger than their budgets. “We also install skylights in a lot of high end homes, however residential is different,” says Boyce. “With commercial you have drawings to look at. With residential, there is no spec, just a hole. The industry has also been backed into a corner with free estimates. When was the last time an electrician provided free estimates? They charge a service call. Every

time we get a residential call, we have no idea what to expect. We’ll send a sales consultant to site and a big part of that is to help set expectations. A home owner might want a 20-foot-long by eight-foot-wide ridge skylight down the front of their house, however they have no idea how much something like that would cost so we help them set a budget and we provide a hard number for supply and install. In all cases, we have stamped engineering drawings.”

Like most successful business owners, when asked how he does it, Boyce points to his staff. “The people here are amazing people,” says Boyce. “Everyone is well trained and loyal. We have sales, estimating, design engineering, AutoCAD, finance, fabrication, powdercoating and installation teams. Even Sunshine the company cat has a place. Together, we’ve installed 8,000-10,000 skylights over the past 25 years.”

Spectrum Skyworks is also the parent company of Langley based Dayliter Skylights, a true manufacturing business with no installation services. “Dayliter has been a good business for us. Roofers will drop by and pick up five two-by-four-foot skylights at a time.” The vinyl frame skylights come in opening and fixed options with glass, acrylic or “insulite” fill. Insulite is a combination of a Cardinal low-E 366 base topped by an acrylic dome. The dome creates an airspace that greatly improves thermal performance.

Spectrum’s restless search for new markets has led it in some unusual directions. “Roof doors are a growing market for us. We have designed our own proprietary system,” says



Spectrum stocks its own aluminum extrusions and has full in-house design engineering, metal fabrication, welding and powder coating capabilities. This is managing partner, Ken Boyce.

Boyce. “The frame is structurally reinforced and has a continuous stainless steel hinge with dual-keyed locks and locking pistons. We ship them all over North America. It’s a solution for people who want to get up on top of their flat roof area. Typically there is a height restriction. If you build a staircase with a dog house and a seven-foot walkout door, the neighbours aren’t going to like it. Roof doors have caught on big time. We’re installing roof doors on the top condo units for a project called the Radius with Marcon. We are installing another 36 roof doors on an Onni project. People love to get outside.

Architects know this and a flat roof which can be dead space or they can get a lot more money for them.”

Boyce sees a big future in commercial glazing for Spectrum. “About a year and a half ago, we expanded our wings with the Bloedel Conservatory, a big geodesic dome with 1,488 panels of which there are 32 different sizes. It is very unique. It went very well. No incidents. No accidents. They only lost two days of business at the Conservatory during the whole project: the day we lifted the two 180-foot spline beams into place and the day we removed them. It was supposed to take nine months but it only took

seven.” Bloedel Conservatory launched Spectrum into looking into larger projects. “We’ve expanded our capabilities and horizons,” says Boyce who is also an engineering technologist. “Leaky condos are a big part of our business, approximately 60 per cent. We work with Morrison Hershfield, RJC and RDH a lot. We recently changed out the top four stories of sloped glazing at a 26-storey building in Vancouver called Crystallis. That was a big job.”

Boyce continues, “We also supply and install around \$1.5 million in custom railing each year. It all ties together. Almost every large building restoration

# EVENTS

- MARCH 23 - 25**  
**NFRC Spring Committee Week**  
Annapolis, Md.  
[nfrc.org](http://nfrc.org)
- MAY 14**  
**Fenestration BC Golf Tournament**  
Surrey, B.C.  
[fen-bc.org](http://fen-bc.org)
- JUNE 4 - 6**  
**Fenestration Canada Annual General Meeting**  
Vancouver, B.C.  
[fenestrationcanada.ca](http://fenestrationcanada.ca)
- JUNE 24**  
**Fenestration Manitoba Golf Tournament**  
Winnipeg, Man.  
[fenestrationmanitoba.ca](http://fenestrationmanitoba.ca)
- JUNE 28 - JULY 1**  
**AAMA National Summer Conference**  
Seattle, Wash.  
[aamanet.org](http://aamanet.org)
- SEPT. 16 - 18**  
**GlassBuild America**  
Atlanta, Ga.  
[glassbuildamerica.com](http://glassbuildamerica.com)
- SEPT. 21 - 23**  
**NFRC Membership Meeting**  
Location TBD  
[nfrc.org](http://nfrc.org)
- OCT. 18 - 21**  
**AAMA National Fall Conference**  
Cambridge, Md.  
[aamanet.org](http://aamanet.org)
- NOV. 3**  
**Windoor**  
Toronto, Ont.  
[windoorshow.com](http://windoorshow.com)
- DEC. 2**  
**Construct Canada**  
Toronto, Ont.  
[constructcanada.com](http://constructcanada.com)



Spectrum goes vertical in its market as well as with its products. The company takes on everything from mass produced standard skylights for the DIYer to custom-built architectural marvels like the Bloedel Conservatory in Vancouver.

job will have skylights at the top, some sort of a railing component and a number of canopies to protect the doors. Which is one reason why these buildings failed, there was no overhang and the water just drove in. It was that period of time. Restoration is a big scope of our work.”

“Glazing wise, we’ve completed a number of high end homes last year and we’re getting more into it,” says Boyce. “We hope that going into 2015, our new relationship with Kawneer as a dealer will allow us to do more glazing work. Window wall, curtain wall and storefront are fairly competitive markets. We are a niche [supplier] so depending on the size of the building,

we can be a one-stop-shop which the general contractors love. Or if it is a smaller project, I’ll take it on as a general contractor. If it’s mostly about glazing and all I have to do is hire a roofer, I’ll do that. That’s the scope in how we’ve expanded. Metro Vancouver, Vancouver Island, Whistler, Kamloops. We have completed six or seven Browns Social Clubs in B.C. and Alberta including Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer and Lethbridge.”

From high-end residential custom builds to mass-produced, off-the-shelf skylights to engineered landmark projects, Spectrum Skylights has built competency across just about every kind of fenestration there is.

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# Show time!

## The right approach makes shows worthwhile.

by Rich Porayko

Get a buzz from tradeshow. The smell of the carpet. The logoed shirts. The bloodshot eyes. The chatter. Industry event season is fast approaching. What's your plan: exhibit, attend, sponsor or all or none of the above?

If you do your homework and, more importantly, your follow-ups, trade shows can be highly effective tools for lead generation and building brand awareness. All too often they are not taken seriously. Companies go with little or no preparation and simply use them as an excuse to expense a trip. Sure, fancy dinners can be a perk of working the conference circuit depending on where you sit in the customer/supplier food chain, but the keyword is work. People call me the Booth Nazi. I take it as a compliment. Companies spend a fortune to exhibit at a tradeshow and everything is lost if the execution is dropped. If you exhibit, train your people and hold them accountable. It's not that complicated. Show up early. Leave late. Look the part. Keep the booth clean and tidy. Don't eat or drink. Don't talk on your phone. Know where you should be. Greet visitors, make them feel welcome but don't crowd them. Attend as many seminars and presentations as possible. Write a one-pager on the plane home about what you saw and heard. In short, be a professional and take it seriously.

The decline in attendance at shows is just apathy, and it drives me insane. Being involved with regional, national and international associations, I have noticed a recurring theme when trying to get contractors interested in attending meetings and conferences. When times are busy, we hear "We're too busy and don't have the resources to send anyone." When things are slow, we hear, "We're too slow, we can't spend the money." These responses are echoed over and over across the country. And it's a cop-out. So much for professional development. The attendees you see at all the shows and conferences are the same

forward-minded companies and individuals that are attracting new customers, opening new markets and growing their businesses. The "A" players. If you want to be an A player, you have to act like an A player.

Develop a strategy. Who, what, when and how much. Exhibiting is an investment, so it is important to know your audience. For a regional meeting, small tabletop displays are more than appropriate. For a national or international show, however, many tradeshow veterans believe if you go with anything less than a 20-by-10-foot booth, you shouldn't bother going at all. If it is available, go endcap or, even better, island, however this is when things start getting real – real expensive. Depending on the show and the venue, for a 200-square-foot booth it's easy to spend \$40,000 on a single event, so it's important to make sure you maximize your investment. Promote your participation before, during and after the event. The actual trade fair is only one piece of the puzzle.

Bring on the razzle dazzle. This is not the time to be shy. Offshore exhibitors pretty much exemplify what not to do at a show. They eat, they drink, they sit down. It boggles my mind that a company would spend time, money and resources to send someone overseas to a show where they can't even have a conversation with their target market. If you exhibit overseas, use this a lesson in what not to do. Learn about the local culture. Get a professional translator. Have your literature translated by a reputable company – I recommend Montreal-based Lionbridge.

There are many ways to skin the trade show cat and companies can absolutely do it easier and cheaper, however these are the same companies that are often disappointed with their results.

"Price is what you pay. Value is what you get."  
– Warren Buffet