

Biz-tech Report



by **Terrance Malkinson**

➤ **The C.D. Howe Institute** has issued a series of reports analyzing the challenge of managing the rising cost of health-care for an aging population, and managing it in such a way that this rapidly approaching demographic change does not compromise other government programs [“Managing the Cost of Healthcare for an Aging Population: 2014 Provincial Perspectives;” December 2014; www.cdhowe.org]. The authors: William Robson, Colin Busby, and Aaron Jacobs, report on five provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba) projecting their population growth and its impact on government programs and revenues. The common conclusion in each province’s report is that their governments need to start strategic planning and setting aside money now to avoid massive tax increases or reducing services in the coming decades.

➤ **Matt O’Grady** in *BC Business* [www.bcbusiness.ca] reports on “How LNG Could Shift the Fortunes of B.C.’s Northwest Cities” [December 18, 2014] According to the British Columbia government, an estimated 100,000 jobs could be created by the liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry. Another piece, “B.C. Government Greenlights Site C Dam” [Dec. 16, 2014], reports that construction on BC Hydro’s controversial hydroelectric dam project is scheduled to start in the summer of 2015. The \$8.7-billion mega dam along the Peace River will be completed in 2024 increasing the provinces power supply by 8%.

➤ **Advanced Towers Ltd.** [www.advanced-towers.com]—a Milverton, Ontario supplier of telecommunications towers—skillfully balances design/engineering, manufacturing, and installation to achieve success. Founded in 1976, the company engineers, builds, and installs towers and network systems across Canada and the United States. Customers include cellular phone carriers, government, broadcasters, railways and small contractors. Melanie Franner’s profile of the organization is found in *Canadian Commerce and Industry*. 64(1):19-22. Winter, 2014. www.commerceandindustry.com

➤ **Unattended Aerial Vehicle** spending will increase to \$91B globally in the next decade, as described in “Rise of the Drones” [*Design Engineering* 60(4):21-25. September, 2014. www.design-engineering.com]. The piece

examines the growth in Canadian unmanned aerial systems technology and identifies as a major challenge the needed reform of regulations governing commercial UAVs, which in most nations is severely restrictive. As profiled in the same issue of [32-33]. Ontario-based Daymak [www.daymak.com] is putting the finishing touches on its Daymak Drive System, an ebike self-charging system comprised of wireless and wired controller, rechargeable batteries, solar panels and a wireless throttle. Daymak has been named one of the greenest companies in Ontario.

➤ **Alberta’s 250 leading companies** are listed and profiled in the September, 2014 issue of *Alberta Venture* [pp. 31-90. www.albertaventure.com]. In the November issue, “Seventeen Great Communities” for business are profiled [pp. 22-34]. In the December issue, Alberta’s Business Person of the year, ATB Financials CEO, Dave Mowat is profiled [24-36]. The Glacier Skywalk [www.glacierskywalk.ca], a cliff-edged glass floored observation platform constructed 280 meters above the Sunwapta Valley in Jasper National Park is now open. The fully accessible engineering marvel gives visitors insight into a unique alpine ecosystem centering on the Columbia Icefields. The \$21-million award-winning project has strong Edmonton connections in its design, engineering and construction.

➤ **Streaming imagery** from its cameras in space is Vancouver-based UrtheCast Corp.’s goal [www.urthecast.com]. Targeting state agencies and commercial users, the company has a market capitalization above \$150M and international offices with 65 employees. As described by Jacob Parry in his article “The Sky’s the Limit” [*BC Business*. 42(4):16-18. April, 2014. www.bcbusiness.ca], Wade Larson, a former Canadian Space Agency employee “stumbled upon a \$100M idea five years ago that might disrupt business models that have defined the aerospace industry for decades.” The piece outlines the idea’s development and gives some optimistic projections.

➤ **Canadian Business** magazine provides its annual guide to “The Rich 100: Canada’s 100 Wealthiest People” [87(15/16):29-57. Winter 2015. www.canadianbusiness.com]. Regrettably, the author of “Biz-tech Report” is not on this list! The in-depth report provides profiles and information on how they became rich, how they set up

their succession plans, philanthropic activities, and strategies from these individuals into how to become wealthy. In its December issue, *Canadian Business* profiles its selection of the top four Chief Executive Officers of the year [pp. 39-46]. Winners’ employers are: National Bank of Canada, Sun Life Financial, CGI Group and Enerplus. In another special report in this issue “Canada’s Best Employers” for fifty large and fifty small and medium businesses are listed [pp. 64-70]. The April, 2014 issue of *Canadian Business* focuses on success stories in Canadian innovation [87(3):49-59]. Twenty-three important problems and Canadian-led solutions are profiled.

➤ **The Vinyl LP** record is not dead. Matt Powell in his article “Vinyl Revival” [*Plant*:72(7):14-15. October, 2013. www.plant.ca] reveals the resurging market with audio purists who prefer the unique characteristics of vinyl over digital formats. As stated in the article, record sales jumped in the US by 17.7% to 4.5 million units and analysts predict continued growth. A St-Lambert, Quebec Canadian company RIP-V [www.rip-v.com] is pressing over 2,000 LPs a day on antique presses purchased from former vinyl record manufacturers. A second article in the same issue discusses another Canadian innovation success story: Colt Hockey’s super-strong hockey stick. [Kick-Starting the Stick of Steel” pp 17-18]. The Colt hockey stick is a joint effort between Colt Hockey and PowerMetal Technologies, a Division of Toronto’s Integran Technologies, a developer of metallurgical nanotechnologies. [www.integran.com] ■

About the Author

Terrance Malkinson is a communications specialist, business analyst and futurist. His career path includes technical supervisor and medical researcher at the University of Calgary, business proposal manager for the General Electric Company, and research administrator with the School of Health and Public Safety at SAIT Polytechnic in Calgary. He is currently an international correspondent for *IEEE-USA Today’s Engineer*, contributing editor for *IEEE Canadian Review*, and a member of the editorial advisory board of *IEEE The Institute*. He was Vice-Chair of the IEEE-USA Communications Committee (2004-2010), and editor-in-chief of *IEEE-USA Today’s Engineer Digest* (2004-2008). He was an elected Governor of the IEEE Engineering Management Society as well as past editor of *IEEE Engineering Management*. He is the author of more than 500 earned publications, and an accomplished triathlete. malkinst@telus.net

N.Ed. Since 2006, Terry Malkinson’s “View from the West” column has engagingly captured the latest trends in business and technology in that part of our diverse country. In “Biz-tech Report” he will continue these first-class synopses, expanding their scope to all of Canada. Our many thanks to Terry for his ongoing contributions to this publication.