

 uébec gave the world its first snowmobile, injection blow molding machine and, believe it or not, the first ice railway ever constructed. In the early 1880s, one of the most daring innovations in the history of North American railways unfolded on the frozen St. Lawrence River. A planned bridge was behind schedule and winter had set in.

*Within a month, timbers, ties and light iron rails were laid. A 25-ton locomotive was chugging 1.5 kilometres over the ice, pulling two platform cars carrying 250 passengers for a total weight of over 60 tons. It was to run for four winters until the bridge was built.*

**I**n today's fiercely-competitive and rapidly-changing global business environment, innovation is the key not only for a company's success. But indeed, for its very survival.

And as traditional industries, once the very backbone of a country's economy, continue to downsize worldwide, the spotlight is on those companies and individuals that dare to be different. Symbolizing the entrepreneurial spirit with which Québec has long been synonymous.

On companies that create their own special niche in the marketplace. Either with a new product or service, a restructured business approach, or an area of expertise in which they excel.

In this regard, the Greater Montréal region is home to a thriving

ing portfolio of companies that are synonymous with innovation-expertise. Companies that are emerging as leaders, not only in their home Province of Québec, but across North America and around the world.

The diversity is simply amazing. From the world's first three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle launched three years ago and now a best seller in 45 countries to a micro brewery that has carved out for itself a substantial share of the draft and bottled beer market in Canada and the United States.

From the design, construction management and start-up assistance of the world's first successful zero liquid effluent bleach pulp mill to the creation of a software program that allows the user to track hazardous wastes from their source to their final disposal.

## HEALTH

Following intensive multi-million dollar research, **A.T.P. Industries Inc.**, established in 1989 in St. Laurent, has introduced to the dental market for the first time ever

# INNOVATION- EXPERTISE THE KEY TO THE FUTURE

a new generation of resins used with an innovative semi-automatic plastic injection device known as Prosthoflex.

The purpose of this new technology, developed with the cooperation of the **Industrial Materials Institute**, a division of the National Research Council, is to inject a thermoplastic resin in a dental mold to form a prothesis. The new material, identified as a "Thermo-flex cartridge", was chosen for its superior mechanical properties.

Not only will Prosthoflex provide patients with durable, non-allergenic and comfortable dentures, but it will also enable technicians to work in a safer, solvent- and odour-free environment. Representing a giant step forward in the dental prostheses manufacturing industry, its main features are zero toxicity, no solvent, greater resistance to impact, and a shrinkage of less than half a percent.

Seeking to develop and market products in biopharmaceutical niches that are relatively unexploit-