

# CTQ firm wins Big Business of the Year

By Ross Freahe Writer

KELOWNA - If engineers build the infrastructure society rests on, CTQ Consultants has played a big part in holding the Okanagan together.

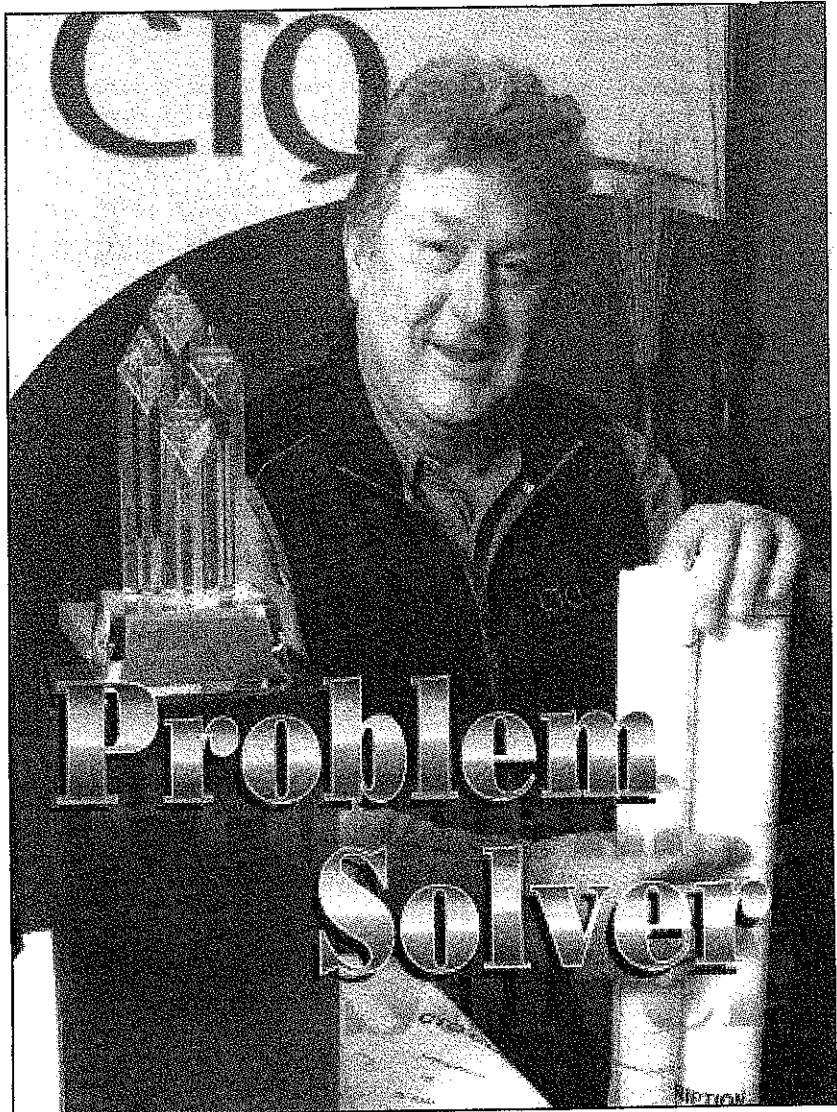
The company, founded in a downtown Kelowna coffee shop in 2003, has helped turn the vision of private companies and public bureaucracies into the reality of roads, buildings and housing developments.

"Engineers are problem solvers," said Matt Cameron, co-founder and managing partner of CQT Consulting, which has 34 employees and offices in Kelowna and Kamloops. "Attacking and solving problems is very satisfying.

"Engineering is a part of everyday life and everything we do. Some of the architecture you see is pleasing, but a lot of it wouldn't stand up unless it was engineered to stand up."

CQT, a full service urban and municipal design, engineering and planning firm, just won *Big Business of the Year* honours in Kelowna's Business Excellence Awards.

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Matt Cameron is co-founder and managing partner of CQT Consulting in Kelowna

## CTQ Consultants makes exclusive BE list

*Cont'd From Second Front*

"I'm very proud of what we do and the fact that people recognize it."

During his acceptance speech, Cameron pointed out the company's three guiding principles.

- Work on great projects for great clients;
- Produce quality work and have fun doing it;
- Be fairly compensated for our work.

"The assets of our company are its employees. We don't make widgets. It's all about the people, and the relationships we build with our clients."

When he was debating whether to take commerce or engineering at university, a family friend told him getting

that the kind of degree because it demonstrated discipline and diligence. He has given that advice to his 18-year-old son, the elder of two, who can't decide whether he should study engineering.

After graduating from the University of Auckland, Cameron worked and travelled for four years, before meeting his wife, Lynne, in Turkey. He followed her home to Kelowna in 1990 and worked with a local engineering company before he and his boss, Gord Savage, who has since retired, started CMT, which stands for cost, time and quality, the core values for a consulting company.

"We were both working for a large corporation and decided that it wasn't for us and wanted

On New Year's Eve, he told his wife, who had just retired from her human-resources job.

"We clinked glasses and I said, 'we're now both unemployed. Her response was shock, but she had great faith in me."

Their timing was perfect. The economy was strong and growing.

"We started doing land development and we thought we'd be an office of 10 people, but suddenly an opportunity came along to start a planning and urban design side and that opened the marketplace to us hugely.

"But you don't grow just for the sake of growing; you find the right people and grow around them."

That's how the company

opened its Kamloops office. It wanted a Kamloops engineer as part of its team, but "he was not going to leave Kamloops, so we thought maybe we'll grow an office around" him.

Of all the jobs he has done, Cameron is most proud of helping create the Okanagan campus of the University of British Columbia.

He started working on the campus in the 1990s when it was still Okanagan University College and is still involved as the provincial government pours \$500 Million into the ever-growing community.

He cemented that strong relationship with university by being the first company to establish two yearly scholarships — \$5,000 each — at the UBCO engineering school.

The engineering school is not only good for the community, but just might help deal with the company's biggest challenge as baby boomers think about retirement.

"I have six partners and the succession plan is huge on our to-do list. When we formed the company, we wanted it to outlast us."

But while the company plans succession, it still has its eye on ensuring that the Okanagan's underpinnings are strong.

"The last 12 months have been the toughest, but our key clients are getting into the planning mode and we have shifted gears more into the municipal market. It's picking up slowly and the infrastructure program will be helpful."