

GIRO: still going strong after 30 years in transportation

THREE DECADES OF STEADY GROWTH IS NO EASY FEAT FOR A SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY.

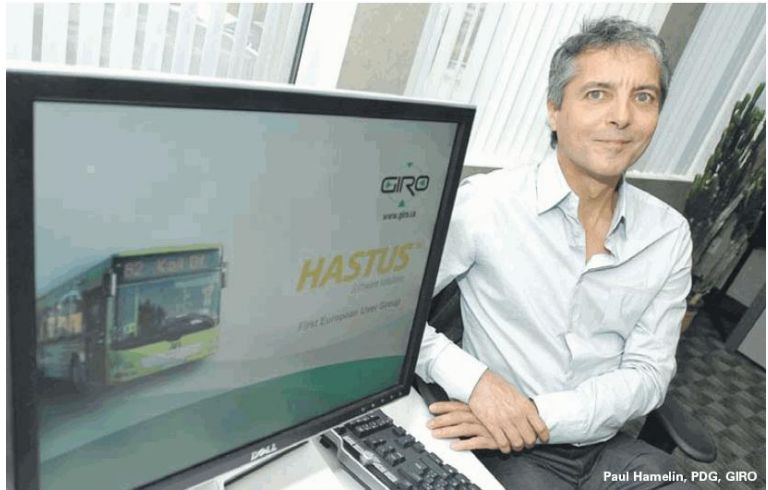
Just ask GIRO (*Le Groupe en Informatique et Recherche Opérationnelle*), who has emerged as one of the most venerable software development groups in Québec and who is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year.

GIRO was founded in 1979 as a way to market a vehicle and operator scheduling system developed at the University of Montréal's Centre for Research on Transportation. Today, the company is a leading provider of comprehensive optimization software solutions with three product lines under its belt: **HASTUS™**, the company's first and flagship solution, designed for the public transportation sector; **GIRO/ACCES™** for the optimization of paratransit services; and **GeoRoute™** for postal and parcel route optimization.

What sets the company apart, according to GIRO's president, Paul Hamelin, is quality and service. "When we respond to tenders, we don't focus on being the lowest bidder. Nor do we inundate the industry with aggressive marketing campaigns like some companies do. Instead, we rely on the quality of our products, our reputation for being able to deliver, and the ripple effect of word of mouth," explained Hamelin.

While other technology companies have experienced bursts of growth, GIRO intentionally maintains a conservative and controlled annual growth rate. "Our objective first and foremost is to ensure high-quality products and services," stated Hamelin. "That begins with hiring qualified people and helping them integrate into the corporate culture and understand our business model. When you do this successfully, clients quickly recognize the level of expertise you bring to the industry ... but building this kind of value doesn't happen overnight," admitted Hamelin.

Hamelin added that industry leadership can be just as challenging to maintain as it is to achieve. "You need an exceptional team to last three solid decades – we've been able to achieve that longevity without changing our original business mission," said Hamelin.



Paul Hamelin, PDG, GIRO



Sharing knowledge, gaining international influence

Point to just about any major developed city – whether it's New York, Hamburg, or Sydney – and chances are GIRO's **HASTUS** software is a core part of its transit system. Today, approximately 80% of the company's revenue is generated outside Canada.

One could say the reason GIRO's software has taken off internationally is because of the company's success at home with its first two customers in Quebec. Montréal's STM (*la Société de transport de Montréal*) was ready to implement the system developed by GIRO's co-founders even before the initial software had been completed. Soon after **HASTUS** was implemented at the STM, Québec City's RTC (*le Réseau de transport de la Capitale*) followed suit and acquired the software for its transit network.

GIRO's international growth is fuelled by a diet of in-house knowledge: of the company's 220 employees, approximately 200 have computer science backgrounds and are graduates of a leading Québec university in the field of research operations, IT, or software engineering. Many recruits are drawn to GIRO for its young and dynamic workforce, while others seek the opportunity to travel abroad and work with clients in a variety of cultural settings.

The GIRO difference

To say that GIRO helps customers optimize their operations – whether it's public transportation, paratransit, or postal services – is oversimplifying things.

GIRO specializes in solving highly complex operational problems and helps streamline some of the most difficult tasks in the world. GIRO's commitment to innovation is one reason the company has been able to do this successfully for so long. GIRO continues to attract new customers from around the globe by developing new technologies and enhancements that enable customers to manage current issues and future challenges.

GIRO is often called upon to help transit organizations simplify their bus scheduling systems: in many cases, myriad printed schedules can cover entire walls and become illegible after so many handwritten updates. GIRO eliminates this problem by transferring scheduling data into electronic format in **HASTUS** and applying a barrage of scientific calculations to produce accurate results and efficient schedules.

But that's just the beginning of the process. Driver schedules and transit routes are constrained by things like collective agreement rules, driver seniority and qualifications, and vehicle maintenance requirements. GIRO's **HASTUS** software takes all this into account and manipulates the data to produce favourable results. For most clients, that means creating schedules and routes up to ten times faster, building trips that are more efficient, reducing fuel costs, allocating staff more effectively, and improving service significantly.

GIRO's highly skilled workforce and its commitment to innovation are leading reasons for the company's success both abroad and at home. And while thirty years in business is a significant achievement in the field of software development, GIRO has no intention of resting on its laurels: the company is as motivated as ever to continue expanding its customer base in the years ahead.



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EFFICIENCY AT EVERY TURN.

HASTUS • GeoRoute • GIRO/ACCES

CELEBRATING
30
YEARS!