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**A GLIMPSE INTO
MANLEY'S LIFE**

A GLIMPSE INTO

MANLEY'S LIFE

John Manley
President
Machine Tool Systems Inc.
Toronto, Ontario Canada

By Robin Yale Bergstrom



John and Nelson, Maasai Warrior, Ngorongoro Crater, Tanzania

JOHN MANLEY is Canadian-born and received his mechanical engineering degree from The University of Toronto in 1986. He decided he just didn't want to follow the role of a traditional engineer, so he was kind of wandering the school halls and saw a job posting in his hometown for a sales engineer of machine tools. "I wasn't quite sure what that meant," he says, "so I thought, it's in my hometown, it has to do with engineering, let's give it a go."

By 1998 he had opened his own distributorship and was representing the entire United Grinding line. "It's kind of magical, the way these things come together," he says. "I had no dreams of being an entrepreneur. I had not thought it through, one way or the other. It's funny how these things fall into your lap and come together."



"I'm fortunate to have a great wife, Heather, and two little boys, Griffin and Charlie, who are just turning ten and six. As a family we love our sports. As part of our wedding vows, my wife and I actually encouraged each other to pursue sports, so it's always been part of our family values."



"When my wife and I got married we went to Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa, and we climbed the summit together, which I would never call a great feat. It's just high-altitude, and your body either likes high-altitude or it doesn't. It really has nothing to do with your fitness. Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro was just a

cool place to go, it's really beautiful. And while we were there we spent another week touring Tanzania and Kenya and some of the wildlife preserves."



"I personally spent a lot of time doing white-water kayaking. We have this little 100-year-old cabin up north, and we do some sports there. We have a canoe and a 40-year-old Sunfish sailboat, so we do a little bit of sailing. My wife and I do some running, cycling and mountain biking as well. And with my boys we do some rock climbing together, mostly indoor for them today because they are young, but soon enough I think



Heather, Griffin, Charlie and John



Hiking in Northern Ontario



Heather & John at top of Mt. Kilimanjaro

they will venture out to do some outdoor rock climbing, like my wife and I have done, and maybe a little ice climbing in winter as well. We've got to wait until they are old enough and mature enough to handle the outdoor climbing rigors. After all, there's a little higher risk climbing outdoors."



"When my wife and I first met, we were trying to figure something fun to do for a weekend, so we went up to Northern Ontario to Sault Ste. Marie, which is quite a hike, and we ice climbed for two days with renowned ice climber Sean Parent. He has mapped out most Northern Ontario ice climbing routes. So this was one of our first dates."



"Probably not long after our next date, my wife was on the East Coast of Canada, in Newfoundland, on business, and we met up and sea kayaked for three days out in the open water,



While in the Caribbean, Charlie, John and Griffin with a sea turtle

A GLIMPSE INTO MANLEY'S LIFE



John, White Water Kayaking

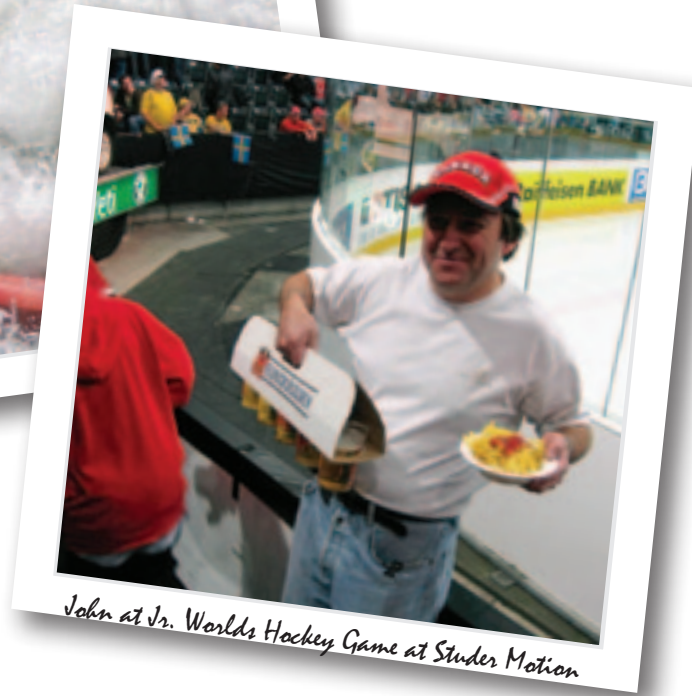
watching icebergs go by, and it was pretty cool. So this stuff is all part of our roots going back to when we were first dating. And I don't want to portray us as being great athletes, believe me, we just enjoy the outdoors."



"Our real passion as a family is squash. My wife and I both grew up playing competitive squash, we both played varsity squash, and now our older son is enjoying the sport just as much, and he plays competitively here in Canada. We just got back from the US National Junior Open in Boston. That was really fun. It's really nice to see our son really taking to the sport."



"I've always kidded that sleep is totally overrated. Now my wife might argue that because she enjoys a good solid sleep. But at the end of the day, I'm operating a business, and she's running a business, and my theory is to try and get home at a reasonable time so we can enjoy family life for a few hours, and once the boys are asleep, my wife and I usually chill out, watch the news together, and then once she's asleep I usually head back to the office. If it's a Friday or Saturday night and the weather is nice, we try to sneak in a late-night run. It's hard running a business. You don't have much free time. And that's just the reality of it. Balancing it all out is never simple."




John at Jr. Worlds Hockey Game at Studer Motion

It's all about sleep deprivation. That's my theory. If you consciously just ignore it, it goes away."



"My wife runs a speakers bureau, and she represents a few hundred motivational speakers. Financial institutions, Fortune 500 companies and even government institutions — when they are hosting an event or a series of events, they contact her and she gets the right speaker for the right event. It's called prospeakers.com. She represents the likes of Wayne Gretzky, Scotty Bowman, the winningest coach in hockey history, Don Drummond a well-known Canadian economist, and a lot of key personalities."



"One thing about me is that I'm really passionate about what I do. You better love what you do, because if you don't, it gets very old very fast, and you're going to do it for a long time. You don't do it just for the income stream. You have to be passionate about what you're doing." 

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BLOG

Posted by: Matt Danford

Employees at Studer's factory in Steffisburg, Switzerland hand-scrape ways, an activity that is said to differentiate products from competitors. According to the company, providing Motion Meeting attendees with a first-hand look at the production process improves their ability to advocate for Studer in their respective markets.

"Motion Meeting" seemed a particularly apt title for this year's gathering of Studer's worldwide sales partners, as the 100-year-old manufacturer of cylindrical grinding machines is certainly on the move (especially in the United States). A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to attend the annual event at the company's headquarters facility in Steffisburg, Switzerland, a location where the company has invested significantly during the past half-decade despite uncertain economic conditions. That willingness to keep improving whether times are good or bad has been touted as vitally important by a range of manufacturers that have appeared in MMS. Here are a few other aspects of Studer's approach that struck me as similar to that of other successful companies:

- **Streamlining processes.** Examples were numerous, but I was particularly struck by the company's approach to inventory management. Smaller assembly tools and spare parts sourced by outside suppliers are stored in containers with force sensors that detect when an item is removed. Only then is a purchase order initiated—technically, the inventory is owned by the supplier until an employee retrieves it.
- **Prioritizing competing goals.** The photo above shows employees scraping ways by hand. Although this could be done faster and with less labor on surface grinders, Studer bills itself as a premium brand and is more than willing to take extra care to ensure accuracy.
- **Controlling core competencies.** One of the most significant of the company's recent investments is a massive Dixi DHP 80 II boring mill with a 29-pallet Fastems automation system. This machine will enable bringing spindle production fully in-house, despite the fact that there had been no dissatisfaction with the company that previously performed some of this work.
- **Investing in the workforce.** Of Studer's 800 total employees, 75 are apprentices—nearly 10 percent of the total. Granted, Europe's culture of apprenticeship differs markedly from our workforce development, but Studer's substantial training effort underscores a recognition that people are its most valuable and irreplaceable resources.
- **Communicating effectively.** Studer CEO Fred Gaegauf commented that customers no longer order just machines, but application solutions. For that reason, a key theme of this year's meeting was improving collaboration with international sales partners serving markets with different needs. On some level, even a small job shop could relate to that goal, whether in terms of working with a customer on a new product design or even streamlining communication between operators in different departments.

