

## New-age clipping service

At Ottawa's dna13, speed and connections are required to track down the mountain of data its clients need daily. Jeff Buckstein reports.

**Jeff Buckstein**

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Officials at the Bank of Nova Scotia are keenly aware of the mountain of daily information they need to track.

And they know the lightning speed with which news about Scotiabank, its competitors and the financial services industry will travel around the globe.

"Today's world is infinitely more connected than it was only a few years ago," says Frank Switzer, director of public affairs for the large Canadian bank with a growing international presence.

"You need to have a good tool to be able to respond effectively to make sure you're on top of these issues." For the past three years, an Ottawa company called dna13 Inc. has been that tool for Scotiabank.

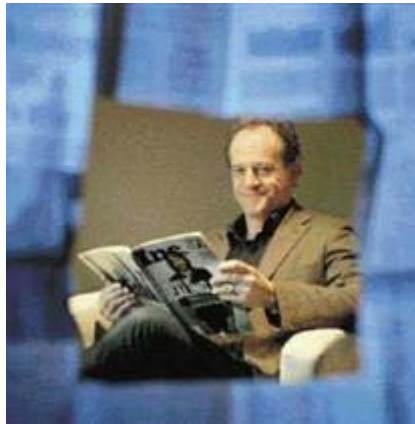
To pull relevant information for its clients and provide news bulletins and alerts as quickly as possible, dna13 monitors more than 600 Canadian and U.S. broadcast TV channels; in excess of 12,000 newspapers, magazines, newsletters, trade publications and wire services; over 25,000 Internet sites; and more than 70 million blogs.

And with most media, the turnaround from this modern clipping service is very quick indeed -- within four minutes of air time on television, for instance, where dna13 digitizes closed-caption text and video in real-time. The print, Internet and blog response generally varies from 30 minutes to three hours.

"They automatically give us a choice of all the top stories that feature Scotiabank, our competitors and the financial services industry in general," explains Mr. Switzer.

His staff picks the ones it thinks are most relevant for worldwide distribution to some 300 senior people in the organization.

"There's an e-mail that goes out every day that says, 'Here's the electronic clip book for the day.' With that clipbook we've saved a lot of money -- probably tens of thousands of dollars in reduced paper and photocopying costs." The company specializes in two products -- dnaMonitor for media monitoring, and dna-Enterprise, which provides corporate clients with a co-ordinated communications strategy.



CREDIT: Julie Oliver, The Ottawa Citizen  
Chris Johnson, founder and CEO at dna13 Inc., says the company's products allow clients to monitor media sources around the globe through a search engine interface and then plan appropriate responses.

The price range for dnaMonitor ranges from \$15,000 to \$100,000 a year. A rough annual charge for the dnaEnterprise module would be \$60,000 to \$350,000 a year.

Besides Scotiabank, other major clients include RBC Financial, Iogen Corp., Nestlé Canada and WestJet.

"We help those companies protect their corporate brand and reputation," says dna13 chief executive officer Chris Johnson.

Clients can log into these software products from anywhere. The products are also modular: a client purchasing dnaMonitor "can instantly turn on dnaEnterprise if they want to pay for it." Mr. Johnson founded dna13 in 2001 and chose the corporate name with care.

"I thought, 'What do we do for clients and customers when we build software for them? We look at what I would call their corporate DNA, and build our software around the business requirements of the work flow surrounding that'." The firm's dnaMonitor product allows clients to monitor sources around the globe through a search engine interface. For instance, notes Mr. Johnson, "I could have a search using the terms, say, 'Bell Canada' and 'quarterly results' that queries television news, print, Internet and web blogs." Or that search could be honed down to focus on just a few sources.

For example, if a client wanted to know what coverage was being generated about the firm on television, its staff could program the software to alert them if a particular search term matched content on any television station.

"That alert could hit your BlackBerry, or corporate e-mail box, which would then tell you, 'I've got a hit.' From there, you see which channel it's on," Mr. Johnson said.

dnaEnterprise allows clients to automatically co-ordinate a response inside or outside the organization.

"You want to synchronize all your teams so everyone's got the same message. Confusing messages just cause problems," Mr. Johnson said.

At Scotiabank, for instance, dnaEnterprise provides information that is used to generate a response "in one centralized location for people to access" if, for instance, journalists want to know how the bank is dealing with something like the sub-prime mortgage lending crisis, said Mr. Switzer.

It is important to have a web-based system like dna13 "that key people can tap into and look at and say, 'OK, here's the issue and here's our response to that issue,' so everybody's singing from the same hymnbook," he said.

The information generated from dna13 may be especially effective in a crisis-management situation, said Mr. Johnson.

For example, "if I'm a big telco and I've got really terrible financial results, I may need to share it across the organization to other public relations people in the company so they know what to say when a journalist calls them," he said.

For an advertising or public relations firm competing for a corporate client, dnaMonitor can give the competing agency a comprehensive picture of how that prospective client is portrayed throughout the media, which they can then use in a sales pitch.

For existing clients, dna- Enterprise can be used to formulate a specific corporate communications strategy based on how favourable that media coverage is, says Mr. Johnson.

The dnaEnterprise software also contains intelligence designed to analyse coverage. It allows information arising from key quotes in the press to be 'scored' or 'toned' to

determine if the media coverage represents a positive, negative or neutral reaction.

This can also help formulate a corporate response if, say, damage control is needed, Mr. Johnson explains.

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