



NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

HAWG DOCTOR LTD.

ALLAN WILLIAMS will tell you that once you get Harley Davidson in your blood, it's there to stay. He was lucky enough to find a way to take his passion for the big motorcycle and build a rewarding career.

As a Harley Davidson (Hawg) mechanic in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and later as a dealer in Lloydminster, Alberta, Allan was able to enjoy the power of the engine and the thrill of the open road on a daily basis. All that changed in late 1994 when a tumour on his spinal cord suddenly rendered him paraplegic. They say: "Where there's a will, there's a way", and Allan certainly has the will. His determination was unwavering despite the physical set-back.

The result of his persistence is Hawg Doctor Ltd., a company he established back home in Mount Pearl, Newfoundland. He started researching and preparing his business plan while in the hospital recovering from surgery from December 1994 to March 1995. Allan made good use of his time. He applied for an Accommodation grant from Human Resource Development Canada and was able to get his business off the ground for about \$20,000.

"There weren't really many jobs available for disabled mechanics in Newfoundland," Allan offers by way of explanation, "so I figured I'd better look after myself." In addition to servicing his beloved Hawgs, Allan's company provides mechanical services for Argo ATVs, Suzuki Outboards, snowblowers and all makes of motorcycles.

Entering this particular type of business hasn't been easy. The poor economy dampened peoples' enthusiasm for luxury and non-essential spending, and new regulations governing the use



Barrett and Mackay

of All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) have reduced that market as well.

The fact that Allan is unable to test drive the vehicles was a significant challenge, but one he takes in stride every day. "I bought a dynamometer for the shop," he says. "It's a machine I can

however, some definite advantages.

"For one thing," he says emphatically, "you have a job. There's also the satisfaction of knowing that all the long hours and hard work will ultimately pay off.... You're working towards your own dream... sometimes you just have

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strap a bike into to simulate driving. Sometimes I might need someone to sit on the bike while I work on it, but mostly I can do all the servicing and fine tuning myself. With the dynamometer, I don't have to take the bikes out on the road." Allan employs one or two workers seasonally who are able to help him moving and lifting the heavier objects.

As with most business owners, Allan admits that hours are long and a salary can be fairly unreliable. There are,

to keep reminding yourself of that."

Allan has taken some entrepreneurial training offered through the Southside Development Corporation and is approaching his business wisely. He hopes to expand into producing motorcycles somewhere down the road. "I'm keeping an eye on the economy to see what happens. If things start to improve within a year, I'll re-evaluate my business plan, otherwise we'll continue 'As Is' for a while."

Allan Williams

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