

Industrial Research Assistance Program (IRAP)

**Region:
Ontario
Richmond Hill**

Applanix Corporation



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Blake Reid, President, Applanix Corporation

Finding your place and keeping it

Pinpointing your location has never been easier or more accurate, thanks to technology such as satellite-based Global Positioning Systems. Now an Ontario firm has made this capability even more flexible and reliable.

Applanix Corporation, based in Richmond Hill, is at the forefront of aided inertial technology. The company's approach overcomes one of the most serious limitations with GPS, the fact that the satellites required for a fix are not always in view. At the core of each Applanix product is a self-contained inertial sensor. Not only does this sensor provide precise positioning data, it also continues tracking the user's position in the absence of GPS information. The process is automatic, and the position data is updated with conventional GPS once the satellites are again available.

Small enough to be worn as a backpack by a walking surveyor, Applanix produces versions of its aided inertial systems for use on land, at sea and in the air. Founded in 1991 by several members of the core technical staff of Honeywell Canada's Advanced Technology Centre, the company has built on this expertise and grown to more than 90 employees. At the heart of this growth has been the Position and Orientation System (POS[™]), which is now sold around the world, generating an annual business worth in upwards of \$23 million.

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**For information on IRAP,
or to reach an Industrial
Technology Advisor (ITA),
please contact the IRAP
regional office nearest to
you. In Ontario call (416)
973-4484.**

Web site:

<http://www.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/irap-pari>

“Today, Applanix is in an enviable position” said Blake Reid, President of Applanix. “Although GPS has been a tremendously important development in the world of positioning, cutting-edge technologies such as vehicle navigation systems and homeland security initiatives are demanding more accurate and more reliable positioning. The successful application of aided inertial technology in the military world has already proven it to be the preferred answer. As the leading provider of this technology to commercial markets, Applanix is ideally positioned to meet these demands.”

NRC’s Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC-IRAP) has played a critical role in helping the company achieve that position, by supporting the research and development that went into POS™. This wide-ranging support took the idea from the testing bench and enabled it to become a turnkey solution that has significantly enhanced the quality of survey and mapping work.

An initiative of the National Research Council, Canada’s foremost research and development agency, IRAP works closely with small and medium-sized enterprises, helping them grow their businesses, increase their competitiveness, and enhance their impact in the marketplace.

“The funding provided by the IRAP program has been instrumental in allowing us to bring our POS products to market,” said Reid. “When we first founded the company, it was financed largely with personal contributions from the founding partners.

“Both because of this and the fact that the staff were quite busy doing contract work to sustain the business, we had very limited resources available for work towards a market-ready product. Partnering with the IRAP program allowed us to concentrate the resources necessary towards this development work, and I can say without a doubt that this partnership was instrumental in growing Applanix to its current global leadership position.” ■

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