

## Startup Xiplinx expects to triple business

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Siteflow CEO Brent MacDonald in his Saint John office.

Photo: Cindy Wilson/Telegraph-Journal

If Brent MacDonald's predictions are proved correct, 2014 will be a significant year for Xiplinx Technologies Ltd.

MacDonald, the company's CEO, says Xiplinx (pronounced Zip-Links) will – at the very least – triple its client base in the coming year. And, within the next month, the company expects to close a round of funding totalling \$500,000.

“We've been kind of quiet the last six months, intentionally,” MacDonald said in an interview. “But we'll probably make a bit more noise in 2014.”

Xiplinx, one of 26 technology startups to emerge from New Brunswick's Launch36 business accelerator, has developed software to help manufacturers and other industrial clients manage key data.

Specifically, the company's SiteFlo software helps clients gather, track and interpret compliance data. Technicians and other workers can use the SiteFlo software on a mobile device, such as an iPad, to record important figures, readings and other bits of information.

That information is then processed and used to help the company comply with the rules and regulations governing its specific industry. For instance, a food processor could use the software to help it comply with food safety regulations.

Xiplinx currently has 10 paying clients, including an aquaculture company and other foods processors. MacDonald said he plans to “at least triple” that figure in 2014.

“It’s the year we’ve been planning for,” he said. “We’ve moved out of the startup stage and we’ve got a commercial-ready product that people like and want to buy. 2014 is all about selling to as many people as we can, in as many markets as we can.

“It should be a pretty high growth year.”

The Saint John-based company will also close a significant round of funding. MacDonald expects the round to close in late January and total a half million dollars.

“Financing is always something that’s top-of-mind,” he said. “This new round should really help to ease a lot of that pain and keep us growing.”

Xiplinx previously bagged \$800,000 in funding, through investors and grants. The New Brunswick Innovation Foundation put \$100,000 into Xiplinx in early 2013. According to Nicole LeBlanc, the foundation’s director of finance, the funding agency is considering making a second investment in Xiplinx.

LeBlanc said the foundation is impressed with Xiplinx’s early “traction” with customers.

“They’re really focused on growing quickly – the go big or go home approach. That’s what makes them exciting,” she said.

LeBlanc is also impressed by the team assembled by Xiplinx’s founders. For instance, the company secured a former Q1 Labs employee – Joel Vautour – to serve as chief operations officer. (IBM acquired Q1 Labs in October 2011.)

“They’re passionate about what they’re doing, and they’re not afraid to reach out and bring new people on to the team,” LeBlanc said.

With a growing client base and an imminent funding injection, MacDonald said he is confident about the prospects for his seven-person (and growing) company.

“We’re not losing a whole lot of sleep right now,” he said. “We think we’re prepared to keep growing, and we have everything in place now to do it. 2014 is really about executing on the plan we’ve got in place.

“I can’t wait.”