



In Conversation with
Jeff Teitelbaum, CPA, CA
CFO
Rubenstein RB Digital Inc.

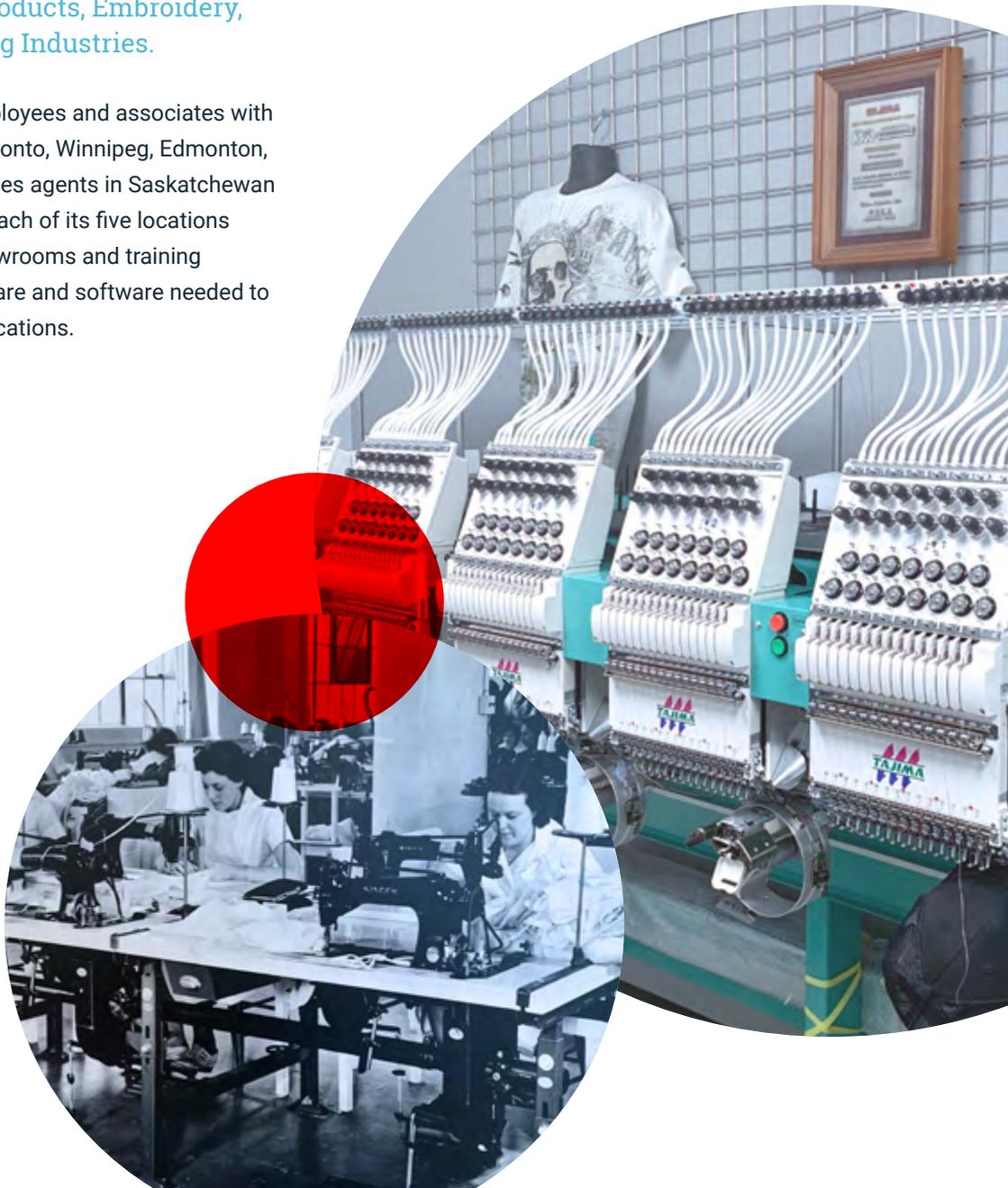




About **Rubenstein RB Digital Inc.**

Rubenstein RB Digital Inc. is a privately held, Canadian-owned company founded in 1864. The company serves the Canadian Sewn Products, Embroidery, and Digital Printing Industries.

They have over 50 employees and associates with offices in Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Vancouver, and sales agents in Saskatchewan and Atlantic Canada. Each of its five locations features hands-on showrooms and training facilities for the hardware and software needed to power these new applications.



Interviewer

Jeff, tell us a little about your business.

Jeff Teitelbaum

We are a supplier of industrial equipment for product decoration. The main cores are industrial embroidery equipment, direct to garment printing equipment, wide-format printing equipment, and sewing equipment—all related primarily through apparel decoration.

We are also leaders in industrial sewing equipment for apparel manufacturing in Canada. That's the business. We sell equipment, we service equipment, we sell supplies related to that equipment, and of course we are the experts and consult within these areas. People look to us for new ideas, they're interested in what we have to offer because our goal is to help them make money. We're basically trying to increase their profitability by offering innovative new equipment.

How many touch points do you have in your supply chain?

In our business, most of our equipment is housed at our vendors' warehouses either in North America or in Asia. We rely on Tecsys' solution to facilitate the process of creating accurate purchase orders given the machines are custom ordered in very many cases, and need to be configured. The history of that knowledge is all within our business software.

In addition to that, our supply inventory—everything that we sell either in supplies or consumables—is inventory that we stock, and we rely on our business software to help us order the right quantities, on time and in one of our five locations. Due to the number of locations that we have, inventory can balloon out of control. We need to effectively manage that inventory and the intelligence of our Tecsys solution helps us to do that.

And with all those touchpoints, what would you outline as your largest obstacle?

To have the right type of inventory we need for the vast number of machines, and to know where that inventory is. We need accurate data so that we can clearly identify inventory according to the machines that they go into. We have a very large number of individual SKUs and again having that inventory, being able to get that inventory up-to-date, and to use order history to accurately replenish is key. The average buyer now expects a very quick turnaround and that is a result of Internet purchasing. So, the biggest challenge is ensuring inventory is quickly available, and there on time.

Interviewer

What solution did you use before Tecsys' solution?

Jeff Teitelbaum

We had used a solution called FACTS and that system dated back to the late 80s and early 90s. It saw us through a large growth period but the ability to extract from that database and use the information beyond the simple functions of the system were not there. We needed to look beyond. We were introduced to Tecsys' solutions through the industry and liked the experience level of senior management. The people who referred Tecsys' solutions were entrepreneurs like us and we knew we could rely on their assessment of Tecsys. Additionally, we knew we could expect Tecsys to innovate and to be cutting-edge for us. We adopted Tecsys' solution in 2014.

The key to our relationship with Tecsys was a strong connection to the people in support and services, and their ability to adapt the software to our needs. We like what Tecsys is doing in R&D to enhance the product and rolling out important innovations on a regular basis.

How has the solution helped your business?

We needed a reliable product that we could use in our multiple locations for inventory management and replenishment and the product met those needs. Today, we run our business with Tecsys' solution as the backbone.

Has the solution helped you grow and expand and if so, how?

Well, the system is fully scalable and allows us to extract and use the data in ways that we never imagined, and I guess in new ways that we still can't imagine. We're confident that having accurate data through Tecsys' solutions allows us to further our growth.

Has it reduced your cost of operations?

We operate as efficiently as possible. We're an entrepreneurial business, owner-managed and we do watch our costs. Tecsys' solution has enabled us to operate with efficiency. As we've grown, we have not needed to increase staff in all areas. We have been able to scale with the software and have been able to manage costs in those ways. We now have time to focus our resources in new areas, new selling resources, and new custom service type resources.

Interviewer

Jeff Teitelbaum

What has the Tecsys solution helped you do that you previously couldn't do and how is that important to your customers?

The old system was getting a bit antiquated and we couldn't do the most basic things like efficiently email documents. It sounds simple and now it sounds run-of-the-mill but with Tecsys, we were basically able to go paperless for the first time. In addition to that, access to more information at our fingertips allows us to understand the customer and analyze the customer's activity. And an efficient fully electronic system allows our customers to get their information quickly.

We also are seeing the benefits of using Tecsys' business partner sales-i's BI & CRM connector. In the past, we couldn't accurately mine data out of the system. The connector helps our sales team access accurate information about their customers. All the data that is collected in Tecsys' solution for other purposes can now drive the selling process in ways that it couldn't before.

Moving forward, we have plans to integrate Tecsys' solution data into our online offerings as we increase our web store activity.

How does Tecsys' solution allow you to be more competitive?

In all the ways that I talked about. Giving salespeople better information about their customers. In giving sales managers more information about selling trends and selling opportunities. All the information that we collect allows us to upsell, to sell complimentary equipment, to follow up on older relationships where product replacement on a schedule may need to occur. So, it keeps us in touch with critical information about our customers, provide better service, and increase profitability.

How has the distribution industry changed over the years?

I think the main thing that's happened is that there is more of a just-in-time need than ever. The customer expects you to replenish their needs on a rapid basis. We deal with our vendors and get replenished by them on a very rapid basis, so everything has sped up dramatically. We inventory less and we move more things, more often. The accuracy of doing all that is critical. Doing it correctly, getting every order correctly, tying orders into eventual purchases—all of that requires accurate information and a well-structured software solution. So, how has distribution changed? Everything has sped up and we needed to speed up the way we do things as well.

Interviewer

Given RB Digital is celebrating 155 years this year, tell us a bit about how you have continued to thrive and what has enabled the longevity of the company?

What trends are you seeing in the distribution industry today?

What advice would you give other leaders in your industry?

Jeff Teitelbaum

We always strive for success based on three pillars. First and foremost, our staff because our staff is our representation to customers. Then, cultivating our customer relations and developing long-term relationships with them. Understanding their needs and evolving our offerings around those needs. And lastly, having critical relationships with vendors as being top priority. Some of our vendor relationships go back 70 years and we have maintained those relationships and we treat them with the highest degree of priority to satisfy customers. Those are the three pillars of success—our staff, our customers, and our vendors.

Now what do you do as the decades roll by? We are constantly innovating. We are distributors and we have our niche but we are open to change. And we are open to allowing certain products that have seen their time go by the wayside and we're eager and always tirelessly searching for new products that fit a need. It's our mission to help our customers achieve success and be profitable. And in doing so, we scour the world for products and new offerings and have evolved over time. It's sometimes a slow process, and sometimes changes are very rapid. But we have continuously aimed in that direction and we've made sure that our senior management are motivated, that our owners are working owners, in other words we have no passive investors. Everybody's hands on deck.

The amount of information that is available online has increased dramatically. The need to integrate your own data with online solutions has become critical in every corner of distribution including what we do.

The main advice is to continue to innovate, to have a strong relationship with your customers, with your suppliers/vendors, and to cultivate a positive work culture and then, the sky's the limit.

About **Tecsys**

Since our founding in 1983, so much has changed in supply chain technology. But one thing has remained consistent across industries, geographies, and decades—by transforming their supply chains, good organizations can become great.

Our solutions and services create clarity from operational complexity with end-to-end supply chain visibility. Our customers reduce operating costs, improve customer service, and uncover optimization opportunities.

We believe that visionary organizations should have the opportunity to thrive. And they should not have to sacrifice their core values and principles as they grow. Our approach to supply chain transformation enables growing organizations to realize their aspirations.



www.tecsys.com

info@tecsys.com

Phone: 514-866-0001

Toll Free: 1-800-922-8649

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