

# 150 NEIGHBOURS

## Commemorating Canada's 150th Anniversary in Scarborough

### BOB HOANG

There is a family business on Birchmount Road that provides business intelligence services to major retailers, banks and government agencies all over the world. Bob Hoang and his brothers Vy and Jack started **i3 International** in the family's Scarborough garage, and the firm now employs a diverse workforce of 160 people with employees in five countries.



The Hoang brothers are three of 13 siblings who escaped Viet Nam with their parents in 1979.

*"We were boat people."*

Sponsored by a church group, they originally landed in Camrose, Alberta, moved on to Edmonton and eventually to Toronto. With a BA from the University of Guelph and an MBA from the University of New Brunswick, Bob started work doing installations for residential alarm systems. His father had been a businessman and he and his brothers continued the entrepreneurial spirit with the development of their first video surveillance systems.

*"Tim Hortons gave us a chance to put [our video surveillance system] in one store. That was the start."*

They moved from installing third-party hardware purchased abroad to producing their own products and developing sophisticated software for analytics and data management.

*"What we're good at is business intelligence."*

The company offers video surveillance technology, analytics and point-of-sale data management, and their systems provide accurate information on store traffic and purchasing patterns, and even individual customer loyalty identifiers.

*"It's an international business. You can always ship product."*

i3 International has longtime employees from all over the world.

*"Just because your degree might be from Ethiopia or Greece or somewhere else, doesn't mean you can't contribute. We think when people come to Canada, we should take the opportunity to hire those people."*

The firm has offered conversational English training to employees and they are proud of their diverse workforce.

Last year, the Hoang brothers privately sponsored a Syrian family to come to Canada.

*"We believe in giving back. Like my mom says, its karma."*

Original Article November 26, 2017 : <http://www.15oneighbours.ca/bob-hoang/>