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CCS prepares to celebrate 15 years

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NASHUA – Every company's dream is to use its existing business to create a different business. As it turns 15, the Nashua audio-visual company CCS Presentation Systems might have done just that.

The company, started by a husband-and-wife team in their garage, sells and installs high-end systems for companies, schools and institutions to make video presentations or do teleconferencing. Their Northeastern Boulevard office, as you would expect, has terrific systems installed for customer demonstrations and in-house testing – and maybe more.

"We got a call from a law firm out of Washington, D.C. They wanted to do a deposition, and asked if we had high-definition video-conferencing available," said Chris Gamst, company vice president, in an interview Wednesday. "They came in and rented the space. They saved thousands of dollars. People, four people, were here that would have had to fly down to D.C. otherwise."

CCS isn't about to morph into a video-conferencing center, but it's nice to know they have the option.

The company said it is doing fine even without that, reporting a 38 percent hike in year-to-year sales, driven partly by an ongoing contract with Dartmouth College.

It has 22 employees, including part-time and temporary and is looking to add four or possibly five more by the end of the year.

It even looks better from the outside. Their 26,000-square-foot office, a portion of which is rented out to another company, was recently redone as part of an energy-efficiency makeover.

"You wouldn't recognize it; it looks completely different," Gamst said.

The duo got the New England license for CCS Presentations, an Arizona-based firm that sells, installs and services audiovisual equipment for companies, schools and government offices, in 1998 when they were in Massachusetts.

They have moved four times since then, expanding each time.

The company moved to Nashua in 2010, into an empty building at 132 Northeastern Blvd., partly because they live here, partly because space is cheaper in New Hampshire, and

partly because they found it easier to do business here. More than half their employees now live on this side of the state line, they said.

Much of the industry growth is driven by technology, said the Gamsts.

"When we started a portable projector, the street price was \$5,000. You can walk into Best Buy and get one for \$500 today," said Chris Gamst. "Flat displays are popping up everywhere. As the prices are coming down, more companies can afford to outfit their conference rooms with high-definition, better equipment, or outfit more conference rooms."

To celebrate its 15th birthday, the firm will have an open house Sept. 12-13.

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