

Whodunit? Huntsman Gay and JMI, in the Library, with the Equity Investment

Mar-02, 2012



DowJones LBO Wire
By Hillary Canada

The two firms made an investment of an undisclosed amount in Innovative Interfaces Inc., a provider of technology and services to over 4,500 public, private and academic libraries.

It's the first time in its 33-year history that the company has taken outside investment, said Huntsman Gay Managing Partner Rich Lawson.

The firms also invested an undisclosed sum in SkyRiver Technology Solutions LLC, a provider of library metadata started by Innovative founder and Chairman Gerald Kline.

Lawson declined to elaborate on the size of Huntsman or JMI's stake, and JMI deferred to Huntsman for comment. Huntsman makes investments of between \$25 million and \$100 million, while JMI does deals in the \$10 million to \$100 million range.

Technology from Emeryville, Calif.-based Innovative Interfaces helps library patrons find books, enables the tracking and logging of overdue fees, and manages other library needs. Kline said the company even handles some back office functions for the Library of Congress. Innovative manages those different needs from its main platform, Sierra, which it rolled out last year.

Kline will continue to be involved in the company as a shareholder and board chairman.

The company, which already does business in more than 50 countries, will look to expand globally while increasing its market share domestically, said Lawson. Additionally, it will continue to develop new products.

Innovation is the backbone of this business," said Lawson. "How do you manage digital products? When you're in the library, how do you search?"

Although this is Huntsman's first deal in the library space, the firm has made a number of different plays in the

software space, including deals for retail software provider Hybris AG, and Sunquest Information Systems Inc., a provider of laboratory information systems.