



ALEXIS KOFMAN,  
OWNER AND CHRIS  
THOMPSON,  
DIRECTOR,  
E-COMMERCE &  
BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT

- **The industry is growing, but we think its moving towards a time of change.**
- **We think the industry is moving into a time where companies that are not trying new things will not survive.**
- **If we truly want to see a strong Canada and a strong market we need to develop better jobs within the market we live in.**
- **If the goal is success, then the question is for who? There is enough at the table for everyone to eat, we should all work together to get a belly full.**

# Hungry Equipment

SEPTEMBER 2021

PROFESSIONALISM  
QUALITY  
INNOVATION



## Grabbing opportunity in a changing market

Lev2 Millwork, Oshawa, Ontario started as a labour of love 3 years ago by designer and owner Alexis Kofman. Her vision to offer exceptional design to everyone at multiple price points, sparked the building of a millwork business with 20 staff working over 2 shifts.



Currently 9,000 sq. ft of gallery and 12,500 sq. ft of production space they are “busting out of it already!” This enthusiastic group work hard to create and produce products that meet the owners vision.

### Dream it, build it

The company admits that they’ve had their bumps and bruises along the way, but have really gained their stride in the last year. In the words of Chris Thompson, who we interviewed, “The focus and dedication to the product, process and clients is unbelievable! If you can dream it, we can build it”



**CKCA:** What sets you apart from your competitors?

**Chris:** We knew from the very beginning that with hard work great things will grow. The market in which Lev2 operates is a tough one and we are always working to distinguish ourselves from others.

We can do this by looking at the market as a whole and constantly asking “what’s next”? By constantly evolving and adding services to our expansive repertoire, we can continue growing and that is what sets us apart.

### Labour shortage no issue

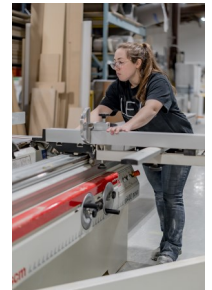
**CKCA:** The labour shortage is an ongoing issue, why in this climate have you chosen to expand operations and bring on more staff?

**Chris:** We are growing fast and really have not been impacted by the labour shortage. When we post for positions on job boards or through social media we get a ton of replies. On top of this, we have taken the opportunities offered within this crazy market and focused on growth. We are expanding into areas that we would not have in the past, we are no longer just a custom kitchen manufacturer, we are a true full service CNC enabled millwork shop. For Lev2 the future is most definitely bright, with the new lines we have in development and in prototyping, we see nothing but success coming our way.

**CKCA:** Why do you think people want to work for you?

**Chris:** I would like to think that the word on the street is that Lev2 is an awesome place to work and people want to join in our success. We are focused on hiring only the best, but we also expect a lot from every member of the Lev2 family.

We work very hard to ensure we are bringing only the very best to market and if people want to become a part of the family they are very welcome to if they want to work.



### Open for business

**CKCA:** Are you open to providing work to other manufacturers?

**Chris:** Most definitely! We are open to working with other suppliers and manufacturers! True growth within any industry does not come at the loss of your competitors, it comes when you can offer services and growth opportunities to those companies that you partner with. The days of trying to crush your competitor by lowering costs and pulling business in the door by cutting things to the bone is over. The millwork industry has a great opportunity to change the way we all do business and use that change to drive profit. I truly believe that through the intercompany partnership everyone is able to succeed.



# Changing times create opportunities

Lev2 has a long list of services we offer to anyone that wants to work with us, from design work to full cabinetry and wood product delivery direct to client branded as the original seller we are here to help. Why work with us? With our ever growing bandwidth and short order cycle times why would you not want to work with us? We are hearing about 18 and 21 week turn times out in the industry and we can offer branded or non branded builds in 8 to 10 weeks to anyone that is interested.

## Growing to be different

**CKCA:** What goals have you set for the company?

**Chris:** When I started with Lev2 I liked to joke about attaining "total world domination", but now I am honestly working towards growing the business into something different than what the market sees currently. We are ready willing and able to offer so much to the market on both the client and supplier partner side it's a very exciting time. From complete custom builds, to contractor style ready-made cabinetry we have the line to help our clients succeed. We have even started offering cutting services as back fill to busy shops that simply do not have bandwidth to keep up.

One of the things we are going to be offering very shortly is branded build programs to smaller shops that are having issues keeping up with their current workload. We will build for them and brand the product as if it came from their shop and help them keep up with their workload. This is an extension of the partnership of companies I alluded to earlier, if we all work together we all succeed. If I have bandwidth and I can help someone who has already made a sale then why not?

## From crazy ideas to supportive teams

**CKCA:** Why are you confident these goals are achievable?

**Chris:** Everyone at Lev2 is always very

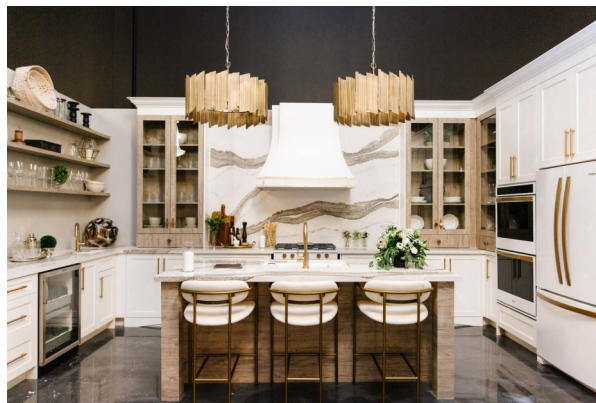
positive and understands where we are going. We all understand that anything is achievable if you are willing to put the work in, and boy do we work!

The Lev2 family is probably one of the most supportive teams I have ever had the pleasure of working with. We all work hard to take the crazy ideas that pop up during our sales meetings and brainstorming sessions and really look if they have merit. Ownership is super supportive and always asking questions and working towards making our clients happy.

## Facing challenges

**CKCA:** What are some of the challenges you currently face and how are you looking to overcome those challenges?

**Chris:** Product and supplier delays. Looking to alternative methods and working closely with partners and competitors to find new



avenues for supply. Covid is becoming an excuse, costs went up and never came back down and we need to address it.

**CKCA:** Why should clients buy from you and not from cheaper foreign competitors?

**Chris:** The importation of foreign goods has been an issue within all industries for longer than I have been alive. The issue I see with cabinetry or millwork, when it comes to importation, you never really know what you are getting. From cheaply made product to countries with questionable labor laws it's a huge melting pot of issues that really have no solution. If we truly want to see a strong

Canada and a strong market we need to develop better jobs within the market we live in. The millwork industry is offering great pay, stability and we all need to support it by buying Canadian market goods.

## Looking to the future

**CKCA:** Where do you see the industry going overall and how does Lev2 fit into that vision?

**Chris:** The industry is growing, but I think it's moving towards a time of change. Smaller builders may start to see that the overhead of running their own shop takes them out of being competitive within certain markets so buying readymade custom cabinetry is the way to go. Some will start to 3rd party the more labor intensive side of the business out to other companies that specialize in cutting, finishing or designing. I for one have some very hungry equipment and I have time to sell on that equipment and if I can help a partner get ahead I am happy to do so. I do worry about the companies that decide to stay with the status quo, I think we are moving into a time where the companies that are not trying new things will not survive.

**CKCA:** What is Lev2's view of the industry overall?

**Chris:** One word "Opportunity"!

## Contact

CKCA is pleased to have Lev2 Millwork as a member. The industry is evolving and changing even during these challenging times of Covid-19. We wish Lev2 Millwork great success. Their enthusiasm and innovative perspective about the industry came through loud and clear!

If you'd like more information get in touch with Chris Thompson, Director E-Commerce and Business Development you can reach him at visit Lev2 Millworks 1-905-240-LEV2(5382) x105

[lev2millwork.com](http://lev2millwork.com)

**CKCA Members strive for  
Quality—Professionalism—Innovation**

[ckca.ca](http://ckca.ca)

**Work with a CKCA member!**