

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Three Kamloops Tech Startups Advance to Next Round in New Ventures BC Competition

Kamloops, BC, December 21, 2011 - The second annual New Ventures BC Regional Competition recently announced that three Kamloops Innovation Centre (KIC) startups secured a spot in the Top 20 Finalists. The contenders are on their way to the third and final round of the tech-based innovation competition, in the running for \$60,000 in prize money. The finalists were selected from a group of 49 competitors based off of their oral presentations to a jury of business experts in Round 2. The winners will be announced at the regional awards ceremony, to be held in Kelowna on February 23, 2012.

As the competition accelerator for BC tech startups, BCIC-New Ventures offers an engaging learning environment for entrepreneurs to sound off their ideas and receive valuable feedback. This intense five-month program offers mentorship, seminars, networking, and potential startup capital, as well as preparation for the province-wide competition, which holds over \$300,000 in prize money. The regional competition seeks out the best and brightest technology ideas in support of business growth in BC. Community industry leaders, angel investors, and venture capitalists have been volunteering their mentorship and expertise as judges for BCIC-New Ventures since the year 2000, when the competition was founded.

Candidates are eliminated throughout increasingly competitive rounds, prompting participants to refine their ideas in order to outstrip the competition. In Round 3, finalists pair up with mentors to develop strategies into a polished business plan overview to be pitched to a live panel of judges from January 31-February 2, 2012. Judges provide valuable feedback during the presentations, and make their decisions based off of business viability.

KIC's representatives in this year's competition are Votari, Vocaba, and Net Shift Media Inc. Votari offers a real-time mobile question and response system for audience participation. "Votari is ready to take Round 3 head on," says founder Jonathan Bowers, "just as we plan to take 21st century learning in the classroom head on. The BCIC-New Ventures Regional Competition has already proven to be invaluable through the mentorship and the feedback from the high caliber judges. We are very excited to start putting into practice the things we have learned and will learn over the course of the competition." Bowers placed third in last year's regional competition with MemoryLeaf Media, an online memorial site.

Vocaba is a flashcard-based language learning web application developed by TRU physics graduate Scott Foubister. Foubister is ready for Round 3: "I'm looking forward to the opportunity to take my business plan for a test run. I've already been able to apply skills I've learned throughout the BCIC-New Ventures Regional Competition to begin to create strong investor appeal in my e-learning website."

Net Shift Media Inc. has entered Net Shift Auction, its web-based auction software platform, into the competition. "Net Shift Auction is a complete auction system for media such as TV, newspaper, and radio outlets looking for alternate forms of revenue generation, as well as non-profit organizations looking for new fundraising methods. Our proven system has had huge success with our first client and we're now looking to expand the product to new clients and grow our business," says Jarrod Goddard, President of Net Shift Media. "We're excited to have been accepted into the third round, and the mentoring and advice we'll gain from the New Ventures competition will be an integral part of our success in building Net Shift Auction into its own successful business unit within Net Shift Media."

As an integral component of the tech community, KIC takes an active part in supporting the BCIC-New Ventures Competition. KIC will offer the following educational seminars as part of New Ventures BC's Regional Series to help prepare participants for the final round presentations:

- January 18, 2012 - "Media Training for Startups" with Elisha McCallum
- February 15, 2012 - "Build a Business Case" with Mike Volker

About BCIC New Ventures (NVBC): The BCIC-New Ventures Competition helps early-stage businesses in the BC area develop the skills needed to thrive, by offering mentorship, business education, and cash prizes. www.newventuresbc.com

About the Kamloops Innovation Centre (KIC): KIC is a technology incubator providing assistance to entrepreneurs to develop innovation and commercialization in the Kamloops technology community. KIC's programs are offered with the help and funding of the [Interior Science Innovation Council \(ISIC\)](#), [Western Economic Diversification \(WED\)](#), [British Columbia Innovation Council \(BCIC\)](#), and the [National Research Council \(NRC\)](#). www.kicstart.ca

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