

# *Profiles of* **SUCCESS** *in Business*

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*Experienced Knowledge, New Perspectives:  
A Formula for Success*



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**F**or a one-stop solution to Logistics and Customs, there is no better name than Active Customs Brokers Ltd., also known as 'The Active Group'. This exceptional company helps you save money on importing and exporting, as well as reducing overpayments and preventing exposure to Customs penalties under the A.M.P.S. (Administrative Monetary Penalty System) directive.

Simply put, The Active Group finds the best solution to lower your distribution costs, something that is important to any and every single importer. What sets this remarkable company apart from its competitors is the fact that it is a

family run business, with each individual having in depth, first-hand experience in the Custom's industry.

Now in establishment for over 50 years, The Active Group was first launched through the vision of Fred Shapero, who has been in Customs since 1937. After working abroad in Europe for a few years, Richard, Fred's son, joined the family firm. Richard initially became a part of the team in order to create an auditing and consultation division. This department was created to offer importers an alternative to the traditional Customs Broker service, where brokerage was the importers' main concern.



Richard notes it was discovered that because importers thought all brokers were the same, the importer assumed that Canada Customs offered some form of review of tariff classification and rates of duty. Therefore, a new service was provided by The Active Group to review and audit their client's imports and exports.

The result was astounding, with millions of dollars of refunds, which were successfully obtained from the government. This demonstrated that the Customs industry was not as importers had originally presumed, and made The Active Group's new service a great addition to the already flourishing company.

Richard also explains that with the introduction of the A.M.P.S., penalties were created by Canada Customs for improper declaration on imported goods, classification, and valuation. Through these increased audits, importers are now subjected to liabilities that can be avoided. As importers look to the broker for cheaper costs, they are unknowingly obtaining a cheaper service since many brokers only strive to meet the importer's demands, and don't necessarily provide the service to ensure their interests are protected. This is where The Active Group steps in and assists its customers, guaranteeing that they provide the best service to their esteemed client base.

With a vast amount of knowledge, both father and son have used their experienced knowledge, and new perspectives to transform the Customs and Logistics industry. Fred's



understanding of Customs ideology (at one point being a Customs officer himself), coupled with Richard's young-minded perspective proved to be especially winning. Their complimentary skills are rounded out with the third generation of the Shapero family, Julie Shapero Clamen, who joined the firm six years ago.

"We see a situation or problem from different angles and approaches," says Richard. "We come to a successful solution by combining experience, new approaches, and challenging old ways."

The Active Group has two locations, with affiliate offices across Canada. Currently employing 13 people at head office and 1 at the airport location, the professional team at The Active Group averages about 18 years of Customs experience per person. Always keeping their clients best interests at heart, The Active Group personally handles their clients, with

the end result being to save the client time and money.

By utilizing the latest technology, The Active Group is able to provide its clients with the most current information. The company is interfaced with Customs, operating such systems as ACROSS (Accelerated Commercial Release Operations Support System) and CADEX (Customs Automated Data Exchange). Additionally, The Active Group is in the midst of developing an on-line Customs clearance system and A.M.P.S. audit system.

Through advertising on the radio for charitable organizations, sponsorship of the famous 'Bull Run' car race, and use of an informative website [[www.activegroup.com](http://www.activegroup.com)], the firm boasts a thriving marketing program that has attributed to its success.

There have been numerous cases where The Active Group has successfully saved a client money. However, there



is one particular that stands out in Richard's mind. "We appealed for four years to the Ministerial level to eventually change legislative policy on tax, saving millions of dollars to the photographic, photofinishing industry." This was truly an outstanding accomplishment for the firm, putting them in the consideration of the importing industry.

Proof of The Active Group's success is apparent. Not only has the company saved many businesses vast amounts of money, but it has also been written up in Executive Magazine in 1984 as a company specializing in finding lost money, making The Active Group a veteran to success.

Richard states that in order for a business to be successful, you must "successfully serve your client's needs with the foresight to treat your client's interests as if they were your own". It is without a doubt that the skilled team at the firm abides by these exact words.

Contributing back to the community is extremely important for The Active Group. The company is active in

its sponsorship of MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving), Back to School Drivers Warning, and Old Timers Hockey League.

With all of the demands of day-to-day life, Richard notes that it is vital to keep your life balanced and in perspective. "I balance life by understanding that 100% of time put into one job will not allow one's mind to broaden," he says. "Life is not a nine-to-five job, and time must be set aside to allow one's mind to relax. One becomes more productive when one's mind is not one-track."

Through hard work and determination, The Active Group continues to revolutionize the Customs and Logistics industry. This driven company prevents A.M.P.S. liabilities with a unique importer warning system, provides Customs solutions to the individual importer, and audits each importer in addition to normal entry preparation and final entry acquittal. A superior reputation and many client referrals are the platform for the firm's achievements. It is The Active Group's unique ability to

challenge laws and policies in order to benefit importers, and understand distribution costs while striving to reduce them, which has brought them to the pinnacle of success.

In short, The Active Group's credo says it all: "To provide expertise in Customs and Logistics and to ensure importer's distribution costs are successfully obtained." This is something that the capable team attempts to accomplish time and time again. With The Active Group's proven track record, it is obvious that whatever the firm sets out to achieve in the coming years, it will not fail as many more generations of Shapero's continue to uphold the family name.

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