

Gord Hicks C.M.

Environmental Sustainability Through Innovation

BGIS Global Integrated Solutions was established in 1992 in Markham, Ontario, Canada. As part of their global expansion, they have opened offices across North America, APAC, and EMEA regions. Gord Hicks, Global CEO, BGIS shares the company philosophy, “At BGIS, our values are foundational to our culture and are the driving force behind our actions and reactions. We believe in unwavering integrity, passion for innovation, living sustainably, delivering memorable customer experiences, and relentlessly building team member engagement. We are passionate about our clients and are constantly looking to raise the bar in our company, in the industry, and in our communities.” Initial inspirations for BGIS came as a response to the growing need for professional technically led integrated Facility Management Services, with a focus on delivering customer-centric solutions, and a commitment to supporting the communities in which businesses operate.

BGIS: A League of Its Own

Gord shares, *“Our culture focuses on elements that differentiate us from our competitors, which are innovation, high performing teamwork, and caring for our people, clients, and the environment. We have our dedicated team members to thank for our successful progress on our journey towards actualizing our goals as described in our mission statement: to deliver innovative business solutions for Clients with real estate portfolios, continually creating value for their stakeholders, while ensuring a sustainable, safe and comfortable environment for all.”*

BGIS has a vertically integrated approach to the delivery of services using BGIS technicians, to deliver increased operational efficiency and quality, while ensuring continuous learning and innovation. Another differentiator in the Real Estate/Facility Management industry is their commitment to environmental stewardship, working to and investing in creating impactful change. At BGIS the leadership team uses deep engineering expertise to drive progress in the adoption of sustainable practices to benefit employees, families, and the planet. They strive to drive improvements to environmental sustainability in operational and energy efficiency initiatives by implementing innovative solutions and new technologies. Their strategic sourcing process requires evaluating sustainability as part of procurement for their and clients’ needs, requiring sustainable and environmentally friendly products and services. BGIS has also deployed its’ proven technology platform, RealSuite, across its global platform ensuring consistency in service delivery processes and the integration of building data across a client’s portfolio to enable effective management reporting.



Gord Hicks, Global CEO, BGIS Global Integrated Solutions

Innovation lies at the core of BGIS as Gord shares, *“Our executive commitment to innovation is evidenced by our tagline – Enabling Innovation, and our core values – Passion for Innovation, and we embrace that a huge part of keeping up with innovation is understanding and taking advantage of new technology as part of that process. Within the company, we have a Global Innovation Council which was formed to ensure executive sponsorship and oversight of innovations, in addition to assigned Council Members and Regional Representatives. Our Global Quarterly Scorecard holds each country leader accountable to present at least one implemented innovation per key account, per quarter, and one innovation per country, per quarter. We are always pushing ourselves to disrupt the status quo in favor of efficiency, sustainability, and creating memorable customer experiences which is how we can shine in our ever-evolving industry.”*

Gord believes that technology is a critical aspect of innovations. It is the enabler in many of BGIS’ solutions, such as its’ Remote Command Centre, which is one of the methods by which they support their client’s goals to increase sustainability. The RCC is digitally connected to our clients’ buildings and allows engineers to view and resolve, in real-time, in ordinances in utility consumption and energy usage.

By being able to engage remotely from our RCC, we can avoid the emissions that would normally exist from BGIS Technicians having to drive out to service the site, in addition to saving technician travel costs for our clients. In 2022, technology usage is an indicator of a company’s capability in a fast-moving world, to provide value for money and to assist their clients in practically all aspects of the business. Gord exclaims, *“I’m proud to say that we are leading the way as a technology enabled services provider.”*

Impacting Millions: The Life of a Sustainability Champion

Deeply inspired by his father Gord recalls, *“My father Douglas Gordon Hicks, was a teacher, sports coach, and entrepreneur. He inspired me to always give my best and that if you sustain a loss then learn from it and get better. He taught me that how you played the game was as important as the result, and that above all else integrity was always the most important characteristic for a leader, and every team member regardless of their position or skill level should be treated with dignity and respect. He instilled in me that a leader has a great responsibility because others follow their actions and behaviors.”*

His father’s teachings inspired Gord and he would grow up to become a Professional Engineer and LEED-Accredited Professional dedicated to supporting and advocating for the highest environmental standards in the real estate industry. He would later go on to join

BGIS in 1997 and held several Executive roles until being promoted to President in 2006. In 2016 he would become CEO, of BGIS, which is a multi-billion-dollar Facility Management Services company operating in more than a dozen countries around the world, with almost 10,000 team members. In 2015 Gord was named the Greenest CEO in Canada, and then in 2020 he was inducted into the Order of Canada, the Country’s highest Civilian honour, in large part for his leadership and commitment to environmental stewardship.

He shares, *“In the early 2000’s it became apparent to me that buildings were a major contributor to climate change and the catastrophic climatic events that were occurring as a result. This motivated me to want to make a difference, and we became determined at BGIS that through our actions and innovative solutions in the area of environmental sustainability we could serve as a role model for other companies in our industry.”*

Applying these solutions was not an easy task, the biggest challenge that BGIS had to overcome was to drive the adoption of new technologies and approaches to service delivery. Through technical expertise and engineering evidence, BGIS remained committed to demonstrate to clients the opportunity that change brings to their organization and the value that can be unlocked for their shareholders through innovation. They believe innovation is the solution to disruption and BGIS wants to support their clients to be the disruptors in their respective industries.

Gord considers the goal of setting an industry standard for sustainable operating procedures, as well as the

outstanding contributions and ongoing progress that BGIS teams have made globally to raise awareness of the issue and implement creative solutions to reduce carbon emissions from both their client portfolios and BGIS’ operations, to be his greatest accomplishments.

Gord is equally proud and honored by his dedication to promoting youth mental health and the part that BGIS plays in assisting organizations like Cam’s Kids Foundation and Kids Help Phone, which assists millions of young people each year who are having a difficult time adjusting to life in today’s complex world.

Sustainability Efforts & Work Culture: Driving Excellence

BGIS has focused on driving opportunities for energy efficiency by partnering with clients to create decarbonization roadmaps for supporting their carbon reduction and ESG objectives, enabling a reduction of over 20,000 tons in CO2 emissions across the portfolio. BGIS also introduced a zero-waste decommissioning solution for several clients, reducing construction waste by hundreds of thousands of tons. Across operations, they were able to reduce more than 35,000 m3 of water through the implementation of low-flow plumbing fixtures, smart irrigation programs, indigenous plantings, and hardscaping techniques. BGIS continues to invest in SMART building solutions and has established a large team of Building Automation technicians and engineers that support the deployment of leading-edge BAS and IoT solutions to support clients in reducing their energy consumption. Further, BGIS is fast becoming one of North America’s largest EV Charger installation providers supporting the shift to a low-carbon transportation sector.

Doing all this work and remaining efficient cannot come without a supportive and safe work culture, as Gord shares, *“BGIS’ culture is caring, innovation and high performance. We care about our people, our customers, and our communities.....enabling*

innovation....and working in an environment that is supportive and effective in the delivery of outstanding services to our clients.”

BGIS’ work culture drives outstanding service excellence. This means they work to understand at the client account and company level how well they are meeting their commitments, as well as identifying areas where they have more work to do or where innovations can be implemented.

Through the Looking Glass: What lays Ahead?

Gord feels, *“Every single team member can have a positive impact on your business, and they are critical to your overall success! Regardless of the role, every individual can make such a difference, and as such effective communications across all levels of the organization are vitally important! We must listen, maintain excellent lines of communication, and engage with team members continuously.”* That is what a great leader does, while being courageous, they still think critically about the decisions they make and do not simply follow the thinking of the masses, but rather they dare to be different and turn those differences into an advantage. They gather information from multiple sources and listen very effectively and embrace change. He also feels small habits go a long way, every day making sure that that inbox is cleared. Gord wants to see responsive action across the business because they are in a service business and that means acting with a sense of urgency and instilling that thinking at all levels in the organization starting from the top. And if he gets some time off after this Gord indulges in his love for sports including skiing, hiking, swimming in the ocean, and biking with friends and family.

Looking ahead for BGIS Gord shares, *“We continue to grow in North America and Australia and New Zealand, while building our platform in the UK and Europe which is very exciting as we are leveraging our successful template from these other geographies,*

which has resulted in exponential growth in those markets. We continue to focus on supporting our clients with their ESG objectives through the engagement on decarbonization roadmaps and the implementation of the solutions that are contained within each of those plans. Social procurement is a major focus and ensuring that we are supporting underrepresented groups and providing them with access to opportunities to develop their businesses. We continue to grow our platform in the United States and have the scale and capabilities to bring outstanding value to our clients in that market.” And as for himself, he wants to double BGIS’ business in 3 years. Expand their service offerings to be able to continue to bring even more value-add services to their clients. Have greater influence through taking on Board of Director roles, and position BGIS as a company with a great foundation for continued long term success, founded on serving society in a positive and meaningful manner.

Gord signs off with these lines, *“A leadership role is a privilege and a great responsibility, take advantage of the opportunity you have been given and make a positive difference in the world.”*

