

Recycled model: It's 'hot spot' for accessibility biz

By: [Elizabeth Deprey](#) - Monday, February 25, 2013

KANSAS CITY, Kan. – Canadian provider Bob Harvey plans to open 126 U.S. locations in the next seven years, and he says his model is positioned perfectly to make it happen.

“Funding is decreasing everywhere as governments are struggling to afford health programs,” said Harvey, founder and CEO of Burlington, Ontario-based Silver Cross. “We’re in the hot spot to try to make this work.”

Harvey says he can help with a client’s cash crunch by following the “Play-it-Again Sports” model: On top of selling new cash-based HME that focuses on accessibility, Silver Cross offers customers a cheaper option: used and recycled equipment. The provider also offers store credit or cash for used equipment, creating an “internal funding model” popular with customers on tight budgets. For example: If a stair lift costs \$4,000 new, a recycled version would cost \$2,000, and Silver Cross will buy it when a customer is finished with it for a fair market value.

Among the most popular items are stair lifts, patient lifts and home elevators—all items seldom covered by insurance and necessary to keep homes accessible as people age.

Instead of focusing on advertising, Silver Cross relies on referral sources, word of mouth, Internet marketing and repeat customers for growth. That seems to be working, prompting sales of hundreds of stair lifts each month, Harvey says.

Silver Cross currently has 15 franchise locations in major Canadian cities and four U.S. locations: Denver; Chicago; Charlotte, N.C.; and Kansas City, Kan.

Franchisees in the United States train with the first franchisees here, husband and wife Bill and Maria Koch, located just outside Kansas City in Lenexa, Kan. Bill Koch sees a lot of potential in Silver Cross.

“The consumers are doing nothing but growing in number, and they want to stay at home,” said Koch.

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