

COULD INVERCARGILL BE THE NEW TECH HUB OF NEW ZEALAND?

If you ask the three directors of Digital Stock the answer would be "it already is."

DIGITAL Stock formed in 2013 and in five short years has become one of Invercargill's most innovative tech companies leading trends in software integration, web application, development and virtual reality.

Two of the company's founders, Jim Dowling and Will Finlayson are former SIT students who during their time studying developed a website to crowd-source small jobs called JobIt. When Avinash (Nash) Varghese connected with the duo to collaborate on further projects, the trio formed the company now known as Digital Stock.

Starting in a small space above Nash's family business, the company has now grown to an office in the CBD, with some pretty impressive clients including SBS Bank, Alliance Group, Southern District Health Board and more. The trio have also grown into a business that now employs 10 staff members and has become an incubator for young techies to get their start and further their own careers in the digital market.

"We all have a great deal of pride in Invercargill and Southland," says Jim. "That's why we are so passionate about being the best and most innovative tech company in New Zealand."

Social equity is as important to the company as profits. They view their business as a platform for young locals to grow their talents, build experience and develop projects near and dear to them

while helping the company to grow by working as interns and employees.

"We are constantly learning, adapting and evolving," says Nash.

"That is what makes a tech company the best in the business. The industry is constantly changing and so are we. When we bring in interns, our goal is to bring them into the fold of the company and help them become successful."

Digital Stock sees itself as being ahead of the curve in Invercargill, where office space is reasonable, overheads are low and they are willing to travel to meet the client's needs.

"We have won contracts because we are willing to travel to the smaller provinces to meet potential clients," says Will.

"We can relate to the importance of being from a smaller city and that this in no way diminishes a company's value - in fact it can make it a greater asset.

"Big firms from places like Auckland and Sydney are often unwilling to make the effort, and require potential clients to come to them.

"That's where we're different."

When asked where they see themselves in five years they all agree: "We'll be bigger and better."

With the ultimate goal of putting Invercargill on the map as the tech capital of Southland and later the South Island, this company is off to a great start.



NASH, JIM AND WILL



ESTHER AND MANA

ART IN OUR HEART

OFTEN talked about and supported across the country is the beauty and uniqueness of street art. Invercargill has been experiencing a bit of a renaissance itself with the addition of works by internationally known artist Deow showcasing his work on Barclay Lane and the Scottish Hall. Invercargill's newest piece of street art has been commissioned by Mana Davis, owner of Louie's Restaurant & Bar on Dee St.

Knowing that many of his patrons are from around the world and wanting to support a young local artist, Mana has helped bring a new piece of work to life. The piece has been made possible through the generous contribution of paint by Resene and the talents of Esther Libeau, a Southlander and a recent graduate of the SIT arts programme. The painting is the meant to provide a point of difference and people are encouraged to take their picture with it. If you haven't seen this new piece, make sure to visit it at 136 Dee Street and share your selfie to share Invercargill's uniqueness with the rest of the world.



WHITE NIGHT HITS THE CBD FOR THE SECOND TIME

MOST people know about our wonderful Southland Arts Festival brought to the region every year by Venture Southland but you may not know about the White Night. The White Night, proudly supported by What's On Invers is a concept that originated in Europe as an all-night arts festival held in many cities in the summer, where sunsets are late and darkness is never complete. Invercargill has adopted the format and concept of a White Night where multiple venues are open in the evenings, showcasing arts for just one night.

Performances and art work will be livening up the city centre from 6pm to 10pm on Saturday May 5. Some of the spaces, such as the galleries are not normally open during the evening, so this is a great time to check out the exhibitions. In ten different venues, musicians, singers and actors will be providing entertainment. Special showcases such as Fibre Octave wearable art will also be scheduled during the evening. Audiences follow the map, the crowds or the music to find any number of creative expressions. The event is free and audiences can stay for as long or as briefly as they want. For more information or to find the map and list of performances and exhibits check out the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/cr3ativ3minds/>

Event CALENDAR

SOUTHLAND ARTS FESTIVAL HAPPENINGS:

SOFT 'N' HARD
3-4 May, 7.30pm
Repertory House, Invercargill

WHITE NIGHT FESTIVAL
5 May
6pm to 10pm
Various locations on Esk, Tay and Dee Streets, Invercargill

MUSCLE CAR BRUNCH
6 May
9.30am -12.30pm
100 Esk Street Car Park, Invercargill

IF THERE'S NOT DANCING AT THE REVOLUTION, I'M NOT COMING
9-10 May, 7.30pm
Repertory House, Invercargill

DIANE FERLATTE AND ANNA JARRETT
11 May, 7.30 pm
Repertory House, Invercargill

THE MĀORI SIDESTEPS
11 May, 8pm
SIT Centrestage Theatre

FREE CONCERT FOR FAMILIES
12 May, 11am
Invercargill Public Library

SEARCH ENGINE
12 May, 6.30pm
Scottish Hall, Invercargill

HOPETOUN BROWN AND THE GENIUS OF FINN SCHOLES
12 May, 8pm
Repertory House, Invercargill

JEKYLL AND HYDE
17 May, 7.30pm
Repertory House, Invercargill

KOKAKO'S SONG
17 May, 11am and 6pm
SIT Centrestage Theatre

SONGS FOR NOBODIES
19 May, 2.30pm and 7.30pm
SIT Centrestage Theatre

THE KUGELS
19 May, 8pm
Repertory House, Invercargill

A CAPELLA SINGERS & ASCOT PARK HOTEL BRASS BAND
20 May, 2pm
First Presbyterian Church, Invercargill

BIKER'S BREKKIE
26 May, 8.00am-10.00am
Meccaspresso, Invercargill

FIND OUT MORE:

invercargillnz.com
icc.govt.nz
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