

Art's Cameras Plus

Ever since Art Miresse decided to open his own camera store in 1967, Art's Cameras Plus became a family owned business and remains so to this day. At the helm today is Art's youngest son Tony Miresse who is successfully carrying on his father's legacy. Tony started working in his father's store at the age of 16 and quickly grew to love the photography business. He enjoyed working in retail and purchased the business from his father in 2001.

Whether you are a beginner looking for your first camera or a Pro looking for the latest lens, Art's Cameras Plus has the knowledge and camera selection to accommodate your needs. Art's Cameras Plus also provides easy and convenient ways to print your photos. They feature Wisconsin's only *digital print suite*, which is a comfortable area where you can sit, relax, and order prints from your digital camera memory card, CD or DVD. With 5-6 digital print kiosks in each store, you will never wait in line or feel rushed to complete your order. These kiosks feature one-button red-eye elimination and photo enhancement features to turn ordinary photos into something special. If you do not have time to enjoy the *digital print* suite experience, you can order your prints on line at <http://www.artscameras.com/> and pick up your orders the next day or have them shipped to you.

Art's Cameras Plus also offers many of their hottest selling cameras in Art's Hot Buys - accessory packages which are not only set up to save the consumer money but also make sure they have many of the common accessory items to help make their picture taking more enjoyable. They also offer a learning experience for the photographer through their frequent seminars and guest speakers.

Art's Cameras Plus currently has three locations in Southeastern Wisconsin located in Waukesha, West Allis and their newest store, which opened in October of 2006, a few blocks north of Southridge Shopping Center on 76th Street in Greenfield. SBA was fortunate enough to assist Tony with a small business guaranteed loan to purchase and renovate the building for his newest store.

When digital cameras came on the scene, Tony, along with his father, made the decision to convert their, then, two film developing labs to digital processing labs. Like anything new, digital cameras were not real popular when they first came out so the decision to convert the labs was daunting for them as they wouldn't see any benefits financially from this conversion until the digital camera caught on. Naturally, time and new technology won out and the digital camera became the camera of choice proving that converting the labs was the way to go.

Other challenges are prevalent in this business as well. Digital cameras and picture processing are very popular in retail stores such as Best Buy, Wall Mart, and Target, which are well known for their lower prices. This competition provides Art's Cameras Plus with the challenge of getting people to understand that just because their stores are independently owned does not mean that they are high priced.

Art's belongs to a buying group called *The Photographic Research Organization (PRO)*. PRO is made up of over 150 member companies with storefronts totaling more than 450. This combined buying power makes it possible to significantly decrease costs and raise the quality of the products that Art's sells. The ability for Tony to network with some of the sharpest minds in the industry has enabled him to learn a great deal and implement new and proven initiatives that help strengthen the business.

Tony is very optimistic about the future of Art's Cameras Plus. He lives by his mission statement of "*exceeding the customer's expectations for quality, service, and value*" by embracing new technologies and investing in the staffing and equipment that will facilitate continued growth. He is a proactive entrepreneur that forges ahead by building awareness of Art's in the community by getting involved in various charities and community events. Art's also has a large loyal customer base that has over 4,000 members enrolled in two photo clubs and retaining this customer base is a high priority.

As evidenced above, it is easy to understand why Art's Cameras Plus is the success it has been for over 40 years, and with Tony at the helm, portends to be a continued success in the future. SBA is proud to have been part of the success of this enterprising family business.