

Celebrity dean gets another chance to take on the world

Roger Martin wants to put U of T's Rotman into top 10 of MBA schools

BY GORDON PITTS

The selling of Roger Martin has been a marketing marvel, creating international celebrity for the intense University of Toronto business school head and a higher profile for his faculty.

A constant stream of commentary by the 48-year-old dean of the Rotman School of Management flows into publications, such as Harvard Business Review and Fast Company.

His profile feeds off his chairmanship of a high-profile panel on Ontario's competitiveness, and his authorship of a well regarded book, *The Responsibility Virus*.

This full-court publicity press has enabled his school, by the calculations of a media service it employs, to capture consistently more than 40 per cent of total press coverage accorded all 30 Canadian business schools.

U of T's academic board yesterday rewarded Mr. Martin with a five-year renewal of his Rotman appointment, effective July 1, 2005. His first seven-year term began in 1998 when he left his job as a top management consultant for Boston's Monitor Company.

Mr. Martin says some members of the governing council urged him to throw his hat in the ring for the vacant post of U of T president, but he declined because he has unfinished business at Rotman.

"It is good for U of T and good for Canada to have a really, truly, world-class business school," says Mr. Martin, whose annual salary rises to \$350,000 from \$300,000. "I'm pretty confident University of Toronto can get a good person to be president."

That unfinished work includes his pursuit of a top-10 global ranking, using the benchmark of the Financial Times ranking of MBA schools. He had aimed to break the top 20 in his first term, but is happy with Rotman's current 21st standing, up from No. 41 in 2000.

He links future gains to Rotman's ability to put its stamp on business education. The vehicle, he figures, is an integrative thinking approach that cuts across teaching lines, such as finance and marketing.

The school recently got a com-

mitment for a \$10-million donation in support of integrative thinking by businessman Marcel Desautels, on top of his earlier \$10-million gift. The second tranche was contingent on Mr. Martin's continuing as business dean.

Mr. Martin's emergence as a celebrity dean has been greeted with equal parts resentment and admiration among his peers. Besides greatly expanding Rotman's MBA programs and faculty, "he's brought a lot of attention to Canadian business schools," says Micheal Kelly, dean of the University Ottawa's business faculty.

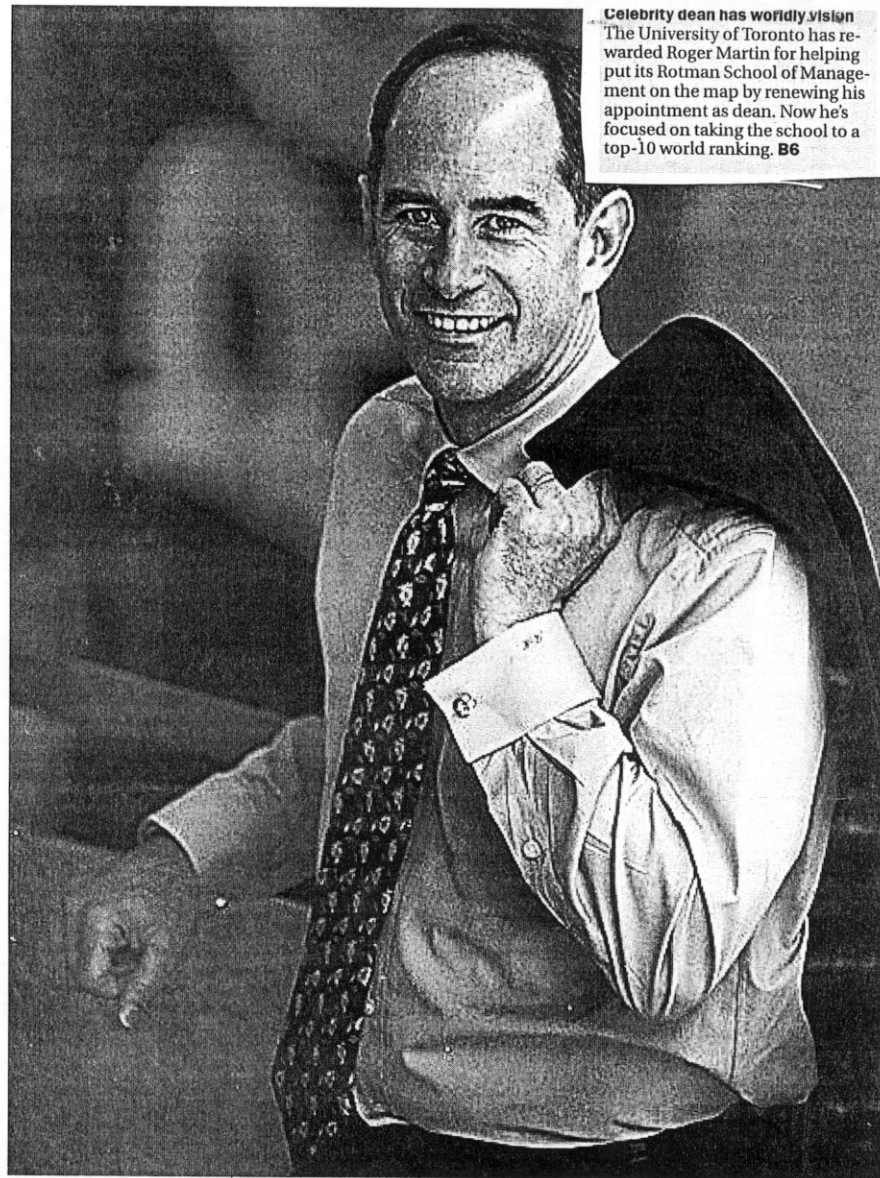
But it could be disputed whether he is Canada's most successful business dean. BusinessWeek recently named Queen's School of Business as the top MBA school outside the United States, rewarding the work of dean David Saunders and predecessor Margot Northey.

Dezso Horvath of York University has pushed his Schulich School into a virtual tie with Rotman in the FT rankings. Dan Muzyka of University of British Columbia was recently handed a \$20-million cheque and a new school name by forestry tycoon William Sauder, and is benefiting from a more flexible tuition structure.

Mr. Muzyka, recently rewarded with a six-year renewal, says Mr. Martin has skillfully exploited his fortunate timing. His appointment came right after the rebranding of his school, linked to \$18-million in donations by financier Joseph Rotman, and the deregulation of Ontario professional school tuition. That has allowed Rotman to push two-year MBA fees to \$50,880.

On the other extreme is the McGill University Faculty of Management whose dean, Gerald Ross, will leave his post next June after a five-year term. Mr. Ross, a former consultant, says he only intended to stay for a term, but acknowledges his major disappointment was the Quebec government's lack of support for a deregulated mainstream MBA.

McGill's two-year tuition for core MBA students from Quebec is less than \$3,400, with other fees pushing the bill to more than \$6,000. It's an incredible bargain but places some restraint on the school's abili-



Celebrity dean has worldly vision
The University of Toronto has rewarded Roger Martin for helping put its Rotman School of Management on the map by renewing his appointment as dean. Now he's focused on taking the school to a top-10 world ranking. B6

Roger Martin was reappointed yesterday to a five-year term as dean of the Rotman School of Management. 'It is good for U of T and good for Canada to have a really, truly, world-class business school.'

ty to compete for faculty against deregulated programs, particularly in the United States.

But even though McGill scored a solid 39th in FT rankings, Mr. Ross figures the focus in business education is shifting from MBAs to life-long learning, which he will continue to help develop at McGill.

Now, it is Mr. Martin who is feeling the constraint of government policy in the form of an Ontario tuition freeze. After conversations with officials, he says he is cautiously optimistic the freeze will be lifted, at least for business programs.

"It would not be worth spending

another five years as a business dean in Ontario with a counterproductive and nonsensical tuition policy," Mr. Martin says.

While Rotman MBA students pay \$50,000 over two years, figures supplied by BusinessWeek and Financial Times rankings show that graduates earn a 40-per-cent annual return on their tuition investment, he says. "Remind me again why it is necessary to freeze tuition to protect the students."

In some ways, Mr. Martin has simply pushed Rotman to realize its potential as a downtown business school in Canada's financial and media capital. Before Mr. Martin ar-

rived, it was punching below its weight, conceding leadership to the Ivey School of Business at University of Western Ontario.

Born in Ontario and holder of Harvard undergraduate and MBA degrees, Mr. Martin says he has simply performed like a good strategist, sizing up the school's assets, particularly in academic content, and pushing them to their best advantage.

Asked what happens after 2010, he muses that he might still be interested in becoming U of T president, if the job were available. "I would certainly be open to that possibility at that point."