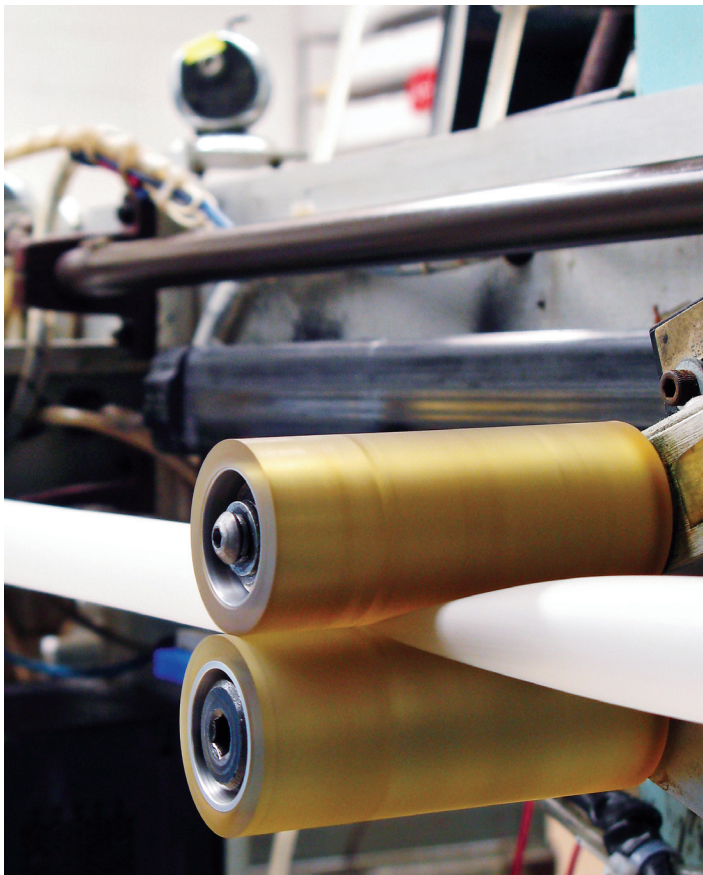


Nitta Casings Inc.

Making a Case for Specialized Customization

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The genesis of Nitta Casings Inc. (NCI) occurred in the 1950s, when during the research for a new form of surgical suture a new type of edible collagen casing was developed. And the market ate it right up.



“We were originally formed as part of Johnson & Johnson to develop and formulate medical collagens, which didn’t exactly go as planned. The product the company developed was a collagen tube casing, which is still the core of our business over 50 years later,” says J. Ronald Frump, NCI president. “In 50

years we have grown through all kinds of economic climates and a number of corporate buyouts, forming what is today one of the largest collagen casing companies in North America.

“At one point, we were acquired by a Scotland-based company, which later became known as Devro plc, that was eventually required to spin off some of its assets during an acquisition in the 1990s,” continues Frump. “We were one of those assets, and in 1996 we were acquired by Nitta Gelatin Inc., a company headquartered in Osaka, Japan, that has been in business for over 150 years.”

Today, the company operates as an independent subsidiary of Nitta Gelatin from two plants – the main headquarters in Bridgewater, N.J., and Canadian finishing operations in Markham, Ontario – that serve the food industry as it continues to expand into areas such as bio-medical, cosmeceutical and nutraceutical. Despite having corporate structures change several times over the years, NCI has placed a premium in maintaining superior customer relations and a commitment to innovation, a philosophy that continues to drive the company today.

“Even as we continue to expand today, we always keep sight on our markets, customer needs and advantages we provide that some of our competitors can’t,” explains Frump. “Many of our competitors can only produce casings in a set variety of colors and sizes, whereas we pride ourselves on providing our customers with a highly customized product portfolio.”

The Panoply of Medical- and Consumer-grade Collagen Products

To reinforce its high standards of customized service the company has developed the P.R.I.D.E. mantra, infusing the most important aspects of the operation with corporate responsibility. The acronym reminds employees to be known for a Product-centric approach, Reinvesting in growth, Innovation

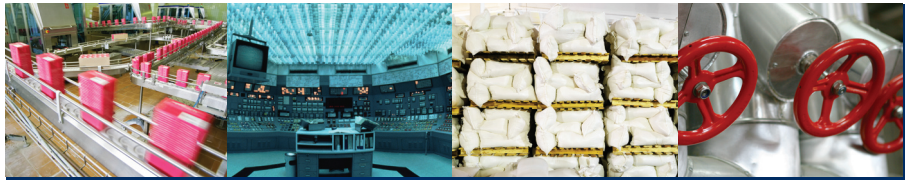
in new products, Developing talent and individual leadership and Efficient use of resources.

“We’re not the biggest producer in the industry today, but we would like to think that we are the most talented,” expands Frump. “We want to be talented in the sense of being well known for our ‘Service after the Sale’ approach and for our overall flexibility. We strive to understand exactly what the client is looking for and to work closely with them to give them exactly that. We don’t exactly take inspiration from the Henry Ford model of the past.”

NCI’s success is based around its history of leadership within the meat processing industry, where it provides consistency and performance for fresh, dry, semi-dry and smoked products throughout the retail and food service sectors. Products can be clear or tinted, available in all manner of sizes, and they are optimized for use on high-speed sausage and meat snack processing machinery. Being a cornerstone of its industry does not mean NCI has been immune from the recent economy, however, and the company has been focused on increasing in-house efficiency, while improving its already consistently high-quality product to make it even more attractive.

“I came on board a little over two years ago after the company had seen a few years of declining profits and revenue,” says Frump. “We have since restructured our company and now we are growing. In just two years we have grown over 26 percent and have seen our profits improve significantly. When I first got here, though, our first order of business was to look internally and assess the manufacturing and logistics of the operation and find room for greater efficiencies to be able to maximize our output and reduce our overhead costs.

“In the next few months, we will begin the upgrading of all our manufacturing lines, as well as investing in a new water filtration system to maximize output and give us more control,” continues Frump. “Consistent water quality is a huge part of the manufacturing process, and especially in the wintertime when the municipal supply can be very inconsistent because of the salt from the roads that ends up in the runoff and in the water supply. So we have a number of capital investments we’re planning to continue to support our growth.”



McCARTER & ENGLISH, LLP is proud to represent **NITTA CASINGS, INC.** a New Jersey based company that puts P.R.I.D.E. in everything it does

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Growth Abroad

With so many potential markets overseas, it seemed only natural to pursue a greater market presence internationally. “We have recently expanded into Russia and some of the Eastern European markets, as well as Australia, Vietnam, the Philippines and South America, where the markets are just booming,” opines Frump. “The Americas as a whole are growing in double digits currently and we have had a good deal of success with our food industry products.”

“In the future, the company will continue to innovate and develop new products for the food industry, while developing other applications which could include new channels and types of collagen-based products.” says Frump.

As NCI grows into international markets and expands its product lines, Frump is quick to acknowledge that the company can’t lose sight of what has made the company so successful. “Our core business is and will be in the food industry,” asserts Frump. “The medical applications are very exciting for us and we’re very optimistic that it will enable us to grow into new channels, but we know who we are as a company and we have a long history of stability behind us.”

Guided by an entrepreneurial, ethical, empowered and empathic philosophy, Nitta Casings Inc. will continue to manifest passion and progression throughout its activities. •