



Overview

Hammer Lithograph Corp. is an integral part of Rochester's cluster of printing and publishing companies — helping to make the region a leader in the industry in the United States.

Led by CEO Jim Hammer and headquartered in Henrietta, Hammer Lithograph is a high-quality, sheet-fed, offset printer of labels, box wraps and premium packets for consumer products.



CEO Jim Hammer

The Hammer Family of Companies has two subsidiaries in addition to Hammer Lithograph: New Frontier Packaging, a flexographic printer of pressure-sensitive labels, wrap labels, and form and fill packaging; and J. Mackenzie Ltd., a sheeting operation.

The company was founded 92 years ago. It currently employs 265 workers, a nearly 30 percent increase since 1998. Its facilities run on three shifts, 24 hours a day, six or seven days a week. Revenues are undisclosed, but have been growing 11 percent annually for the past eight years.

Among the firm's major customers are multinational companies in the food and beverage industry, including Nestle and its Poland Spring bottled waters, among others; Coca-Cola and its Minute Maid juice brand, and others; PepsiCo and its Tropicana and Tostitos brands; as well as Cadbury Schweppes, and its Snapple and Mott's beverage brands.

Horticultural companies — including W.A. Burpee Co. and Ferry-Morse Seed Co. — are top customers as well.

History

The Hammer Family of Companies was founded in 1912 by Herman J. Meyering as Genesee Valley Lithographic Company. Meyering was the maternal great-grandfather of current President and CEO Jim Hammer.



During the early 1900s, the focus of the company was to sell packaging printing to the agricultural community in Western New York. Genesee Valley Litho produced exceptional printing for 60 years from its facility in downtown Rochester, N.Y. In the mid-1940s, the name changed from Genesee Valley Litho to Hammer Lithograph when Meyering's son-in-law, Walter Hammer, took over the business.

Vigorous sales growth in the food and beverage markets necessitated a move in 1972 to make room for new equipment and increased manpower. The company's manufacturing facility and headquarters relocated from Exchange Street to 330 Metro Park to further expand its capabilities. Hammer remained at Metro Park for 26 years, until once again the company outgrew its location.

In October 1998, Hammer began a \$15 million capital improvement initiative, which included a 92,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility on a 14-acre parcel of land near Rochester Institute of Technology. The move was completed in April 1999. Hammer's proximity to RIT's globally recognized School of Print Media has facilitated an educational exchange program for both Hammer associates and customers.



Hammer Lithograph continues its rich tradition as an industry leader and is consistently named to the Top 100 privately held companies in Rochester. The Hammer team is committed to leading the packaging printing industry by *Communicating Your Image*® with superior people, service, innovation and technology.

Situation Analysis

Today, Hammer Lithograph operates in three locations in the Rochester metro area: its 92,000-square-foot headquarters and printing facility on Lucius Gordon Drive; its 57,000-square-foot sheeting subsidiary on Commerce Drive; and once again, in its 54,000-square-foot facility at 330 Metro Park.

The company two years ago expanded back into its Metro Park location, and in the fall consolidated operations from North Carolina to that site.

Hammer Lithograph is currently investing some \$4 million to install a new Heidelberg press at its headquarters site. The investment is an example of the company's commitment to technology in its efforts to boost efficiency and reduce costs.



Research and development are key at Hammer Lithograph, which constantly works with customers in creating new and better labeling products. One innovation, called Hammer Ice, was borne out of a challenge made by Nestle, which wanted a high-gloss beverage label without the higher cost of UV coating. Hammer met that challenge, and now Hammer Ice is among the company's most exciting new products.

As part of the firm's focus on technology, it recently sponsored a Printer's Boot Camp through RIT's School of Print Media. The boot camp, held last fall, was a two-week pilot program for six potential job candidates to learn about the printing industry. Of the six people who enrolled in the boot camp, five were later hired by the company. A second boot camp is being considered for the near future.

In addition, Hammer Lithograph sponsors two to three cooperative programs through RIT at any given time.

Increasing revenues and adding customers are among the top goals for the company in 2004. Since January, Hammer Lithograph has gained six new customers, including Beech-Nut Naturals brand juices and waters, as well as Old Orchard and Apple & Eve juice brands.

Lowering costs and passing those savings on to customers are everyday goals for the company.

Conclusion

Hammer Lithograph is committed to its customers and employees, and to technology. Its work with RIT, including the Printer's Boot Camp pilot program, is just one example of that.

In light of such commitment, it is no surprise Hammer Lithograph was named Best Workplace in America three years in a row by the Printing Industries of America.

The company is vital to Rochester's position in the printing and publishing industry. In light of the recent shutdown at the Case-Hoyt plant in Chili, and the corresponding loss of some 300 jobs, as well as the pending shutdown of Upstate Litho and its roughly 50 jobs, it's extremely important for local leaders to support the region's remaining printing firms.

Hammer Lithograph is one such firm, and a leading one at that.