



Amerilab Technologies: Growing with a Global Market

Since its establishment in 1995, Amerilab Technologies, Plymouth, MN, has grown into a leading effervescent manufacturer. With two facilities in Minneapolis, MN, one in Las Vegas, NV, and another currently under construction in China, Amerilab produces about 400 million effervescent tablets per year, and is poised to make its presence felt in Europe, Asia and elsewhere.

The company offers a range of effervescent development, manufacturing and packaging services for both small and large requests. President and CEO Fred Wehling said the facility in China, which he hopes will be online by the end of this year, will allow the company to extend those services to clients with Eastern and other international distribution needs. Amerilab's facility will be housed within the "Jurassic Industrial Park," a 300-acre complex in Enping, China, owned by Jurassic Enterprises Ltd.

"It just made sense, as I'm expanding our business into Australia, Europe and Russia, that we have an off-shore manufacturing facility—hopefully to supply Southeast Asia," Mr. Wehling said. "Basically our biggest competition is Europe. And with the exchange rate the way it is, it's an opportune time to go to Europe and play in their backyard, rather than them coming here and trying to take business from us. That's our strategy. We've got a licensing agreement with the largest pharmaceutical company in Russia. I expect in the next two years our revenues from exports to rival our domestic ones."

Amerilab benefits from several patents related to effervescent technology. It

recently received NSF GMP certification and anticipates receiving NSF Sports Supplement Certification in the near future, according to Joseph Montgomery, business development coordinator.

In addition, the company has two patents on its Drinkin' Mate Hang-



over Defense product, which claims to protect against the side effects of alcohol consumption. Containing 1000 mg of wild guava leaf extract, the effervescent formula provides quick absorption and has a built-in buffering action that helps prevent nausea. It also helps with headache and dehydration due to alcohol consumption. The company is rolling the product out nationally this month.

In other news, Amerilab has purchased the trademark for Fizzies—originally popular in the 1950s and '60s—and will attempt to stage a comeback for the effervescent drink tablets that offer kids a calorie-free soft drink fortified with vitamin C.

"We've got two or three other patents in the works that are close to being issued, and six others we're starting on now," said Mr. Wehling.

Widely accepted in Europe for over 40 years, effervescent products didn't really catch on in the U.S. until about seven years ago, but have gained popularity since then.

"I think the effervescent industry is still in its infancy, but I expect it to continue to grow," Mr. Wehling offered. "There are probably 40-50 products on the market today, whereas 10 years ago there were probably seven or eight."

He also believes the efficiency, portability and high impact of effervescent tablets will continue to offer a range of opportunities for the market. "You can get three grams of an active ingredient into an effervescent tablet.

It's particularly good for high doses of amino acids and a lot of combinations of the ingredients that make up energy and anti-aging products. Most of those require two to three grams of an active ingredient, which we can deliver in one dose."

While Mr. Wehling anticipates smaller companies trying to enter the market, Amerilab welcomes the challenge. "Competition is healthy; it keeps us on our toes," he said.

And with a small business mentality, Amerilab is in good position to maintain its current footing, at the top. "In general our volume of business is going up, and we're continuing to attract new customers," said Mr. Wehling. "We place a great emphasis on customer service. We have a full time quality assurance department with auditors; we have a full time, fully staffed quality control lab for all of our analytical testing. Even though we're a company of 150 people we remain focused on quick customer response, flexibility in development, and getting products to market. —S.M.

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