

Brockie celebrates 20th anniversary



From left: Trevor Brockie, VP, sales; Scott Brockie CEO; and Trent Brockie, sales

By Alycia Broderick

Back in 1990, Scott Brockie, CEO of Brockie International/Accu-Cut, was working as a sales representative for a large carpet mill. During his time in and out of flooring stores, he realized that dealers needed an easier way to measure carpet. "I figured that there must be a better way for flooring retailers to measure and cut their orders than having two people measure flooring material on the floor with a tape measure and a razor knife," he said. "We had some prototypes built and

tested. The product was instantly accepted and was successful immediately."

Brockie International and its Accu-Cut machine hit the ground running two decades ago, and the company has been providing high-quality cutting and rolling machines to the industry ever since. "We have been able to dramatically increase the number of new customers each year while maintaining our long-established working relationship with the many thousands of existing customers," Brockie said. "Our company's mission is to continue to provide quality, state-of-the-art equipment to our customers while also ensuring that we can give them the back-up service and support that we would expect ourselves. We are constantly improving our service and the features on our equipment so that we will have customers who are proud of their machine and the relationship they have with us."

Brockie customers are indeed proud of that relationship. "I have been using Accu-Cut for about 17 years," said Frank Arevalo, owner of Uncle Frank's Carpet in Mission, Texas. "I thought that I would benefit from something like that because I was spending a lot of time, effort and money to cut carpet. The machine has held up really well and it's easy to fix if we have a problem. I am very pleased with the

equipment and if it needs service, the company is quick to take care of it."

Frank Marra, vice president of Casual Carpets in Youngstown, Ohio, said, "The machine saves a lot of time. You could cut a whole house [worth of carpet] in about 20 minutes, and it saves space because you don't have to roll out the carpet. They have technicians you can call if you have a problem and they are very prompt with sending out parts."

Carlos Hernandez, Sr., owner of Hernandez Carpet in Commerce, Calif., added, "Before I had the machine, I used to cut the carpet on the floor. They are nice people to deal with and when I call them for service, they call me right back. I recommend them to all of my friends who have carpet stores."

Brockie has also worked hard to develop relationships with the buying groups and home centers. It has exclusivity as a preferred vendor with several major buying groups including Shaw, CCA Global Partners, Abbey, Big Bobs and CarpetsPlus. "I would have to say our biggest challenge was to successfully sell our equipment into the big box home center retail giants," Brockie said. "Our products are still going into these stores. This also gave us the challenge of setting up service networks across the country. We are proud to

say that we can service machines with a day's notice anywhere in North America."

Recently, the company has been working to integrate floor covering software with its Accu-Cut machine. Customers can now electronically send their cuts from their computer directly over to the machine. "The advantages and benefits of this new technology are overwhelming," Brockie said. "For example, you can automatically update your inventory, print and scan your roll tags, generate inventory reports and eliminate the risks of cutting the wrong material and sizes."

The current economic conditions have led the company to expand its market into other countries where the impact has not been so dramatic. It has also taken to purchasing machines back from companies that have gone out of business. "We have also seen that our customers are holding on to their equipment longer than they normally would have and not upgraded because of a decrease in business," Brockie said.

However, things are beginning to trend back up. "We do see them now wanting our latest technology to take advantage of the tax incentives the government is offering for capital cost equipment. We see the market for us rapidly increasing in 2010 and for years to come." **FCW**

Global sourcing, rebranding at CBC have it poised for growth

By Santiago Montero

[COMMACK, N.Y.] You probably know it as the company that brought Toli commercial sheet vinyl to the U.S. but CBC America is making some changes. An international trading company that serves markets as diverse as chemicals, pharmaceuticals and closed circuit TVs, is expanding its U.S. commercial offering in ways that are transforming the organization.

Leading the charge are flooring industry veterans Jeff Collum, director of flooring, and Chip Braulick, senior marketing manager.

At the core of the rebranding strategy is a company-wide revitalization that they say will dramatically grow the business into a major commercial player.

"The vision is in taking the Toli brand and creating a completely new flooring company for the North American market," Collum said. "While we don't have a plant in the backyard that determines what we bring to market, we basically have factories all over the world at our disposal."

That global sourcing means that the company brings in product — much of it created to its own specifications — from Mexico, Argentina, Finland, and of course, Japan (where the Toli line is manufactured).

Closer to home, the company had to revamp how it delivers and sells those prod-

ucts and it now relies on a network of stocking distributors, independent agents and a direct sales effort that work only with a limited number of national accounts.

"Part of the strategy is to have good representation all over the country and by good representation we mean people out specifying the product and selling to the A&D community," Collum said. "We went from covering only 50 percent of the U.S. market and we will be at 100 percent with the changes we've made."

Part of a larger effort that includes rebranding the company, CBC has adopted the "blue wave" corporate symbol. Said Braulick, "The blue wave in Japanese business culture means momentum and a bright future and fresh new ideas. That's what we're doing."

At the core of this rebranding effort are three additional product lines: Indelval, Ceres and Salto. "Our vision is to market key brands that there is a demand for in North America. One of those demands was for a rubber line, so we went to Argentina and brought in Indelval," Collum said.

"What Indelval brings is a high-quality, high-performance product," Braulick said, the result of a proprietary high pressurization system. Under the Indelval brand will be



From left: Chip Braulick, sr. marketing manager; Reggie Lee Ohishi, Toli; and Jeff Collum, director, flooring

a total of 18 products, all made with natural rubber, free of PVCs, plasticizers, halogens, formaldehydes, heavy metals and asbestos.

Another new line, the Salto brand, offers Unica, a limestone tile with 80 percent recycled content. Salto, manufactured in Mexico to CBC's specifications provides "price point and sustainability — the perfect fit for the market," according to Collum.

The company offers a fourth brand, the Ceres PVC-free line of sheet, planks and tiles. Described as a premium product but at a lower price point, Ceres is also made with recycled content, which Braulick says can be difficult to achieve in PVC products. But, he added, environmental sustainability is a core principle throughout CBC.

Sustainability platform

"We have been driven by the U.S. Green Building Council, by LEED credits, by California guidelines and are meeting the more stringent environmental standards that are in the marketplace," Braulick said. "We have products specifically designed to meet those standards. That is what the architect/specifier is looking for — products that generate more LEED points. That is a way for us to measure the level of sustainability or the level of how green these products are."

Braulick pointed out that Toli was green before it knew it was green and it had high recycled content before green was important. "Before we even consider bringing a product to market, it has to have a story line behind it that is sustainable — whether it be recycled content, low maintenance options, significant reduced water energy for use of the product, PVC free. Literally the manufacturing process has to be green," Braulick said.

While 2009 was a year of considerable challenge for the flooring industry as most businesses focused on survival, Collum said his company concentrated on future growth. "Our initial plan was to add these brands to the marketplace, get all that done in a challenging economy in 2009 and set the table for dramatic double-digit growth for the next five years." **FCW**