

Local firm prospers despite economy

Daily Journal - Vineland, N.J.

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Date: Aug 3, 2010

Start Page: n/a

Section: NEWS

Text Word Count: 456

Document Text

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MILLVILLE -- One local construction company has managed not only to survive but grow during the down economy by developing a new type of material.

Intex Millwork Solutions uses plastic materials instead of wood for millwork and trim in high-end homes and commercial buildings along the East Coast.

Owner Joe Umosella's family previously owned Universal Supply Inc. before selling the business five years ago.

He started Intex after seeing how the composite materials work to form trim and millwork.

The company manufactures custom-made plastic pieces that last longer than wood because they don't absorb moisture.

"I enjoy old architecture," he said. "It's an opportunity to bring modern technology back to old world architecture."

Developers supply Intex with the details of the architects' rendering and the company's staff manufactures the piece.

"It allows them to design whatever they want," he said. "Architects can design nice things and they know where to get it."

The company started in Williamstown and moved to the city in March. Intex hired 10 employees, bringing the total to 28.

Umosella hopes to expand the business to 50 employees in the next few years, and the owner said there are many residents in the area skilled in this type of production.

Scott Johnson worked in construction for 20 years before joining the company in May. The city resident worked for private contractors and said he wanted a steady job. Finding work in the industry had become very difficult, he said.

"I was on the verge of losing my home before I started working here," he said. "I couldn't find a job."

Though he's been able to start and grow his business, the difficult real estate market has taken a toll, Umosella said.

"I initially thought the growth would be three times as much" at this point, he said. "We've grown every year in spite of the economy, but we haven't grown at the rate we expected."

The company's client base includes developers from Maine to South Carolina, but the majority of the work is in the local shore towns and the New England area, Umosella said.

Right now, the company specializes in handmade niche items, such as ornaments on top of railings and trim for exterior sidings.

Zach Fisher, an Intex employee for three years, said he never worked with plastic before, but the material handles similarly to wood.

The Williamstown resident said all the employees are motivated to see the new business prosper.

"Everybody that's been here for a while. We started from nothing and they want to see it succeed," he said. "We like what we do. We try to be the best at it."

BUSINESS CARD

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Abstract (Document Summary)

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