

SASCO Chemical Group grows in innovation

SASCO CHEMICAL GROUP INC.

Located in Albany, Ga., **SASCO Chemical Group Inc.** is a family-owned business that was founded in 1948.

A manufacturer of environmentally friendly specialty chemicals and hazardous chemical control products, SASCO has grown since its early days to employ nearly 200 Georgians. Much of its recent growth has been attributed to product innovation and international trade, which has also helped the company offer higher wage jobs. Recently, SASCO opened a 10,000-square-foot innovation center in Macon staffed with a Ph.D. and three chemists, and the company has plans to eventually hire up to 30 research chemists.

For its ongoing success and expansion in international trade, SASCO Chemical Group Inc. is the winner in the International Trade category for the 2011 Governor's International Awards.

"In this economy where a lot of companies are really struggling to hold their own, they've added employees and a large part of that has been to manage their international growth, which has happened in the last year or two," said Kathe Falls, director of international trade

for the **Georgia Department of Economic Development**. "It is really wonderful to see the impact that international trade is making with smaller and medium-sized companies."

While SASCO chemical has experienced double-digit growth over the last six years, a major turning point for its international exports took place in 2010 at the Expo Manufactura in Monterrey, Mexico. With the help of the GDEcD, SASCO was able to make vital business connections during the expo. This included meeting the representative that is now leading the company's business growth in Mexico.

"He is extremely good at what he does and he's an American living in Mexico for 12 years and he just has been phenomenal and we met him at the show at the Georgia booth," said Marc Skalla, SASCO president.

Although SASCO has worked internationally for nearly 20 years, the lack of good international contacts made it difficult for the company to succeed. Skalla said the combination of great international representatives and innovative technology has been key to the company's recent success, including increasing international sales by 120 percent and its sales to Mexico 2,700 percent. Its international

reps have also helped the company expand sales in the Americas as well as in Spain and the United Kingdom.

"For 63 years we've been stable, but the last two years we've actually become someone because of GDEcD's help," Skalla said. "I think of it as a really good success story to see a small business like us make it in a really tough market."

The company now relies on the help of the GDEcD and the U.S. Commercial Service before entering a new market.

SASCO's notable success has been a big factor in the company's decision to open its Macon innovation center, where it is already making strides in new product development and is working in joint partnership with local universities. SASCO is also using its success to benefit the community, recently donating a technology center for the **Boys and Girls Club of Albany**.

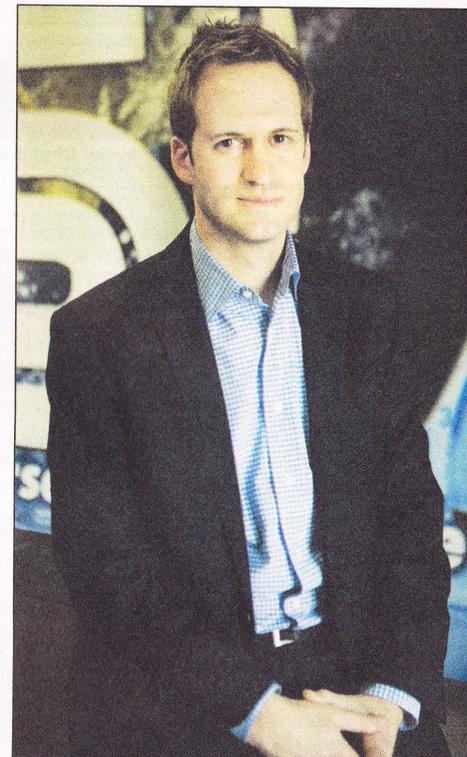
"They are just one of those companies you are really proud to work with and say, 'wow this is a Georgia company and what a great example for other people to follow,'" Falls said.

Although SASCO has already seen great success despite troubled times, Skalla said this is only the beginning of its growth abroad. In the future, he plans to continue looking at possible contracts in Mexico and plans on expanding in Europe as well.

"I feel like this is just the beginning



WINNER
International Trade



BYRON E. SMALL

Mark Skalla: The SASCO president expects more growth abroad.

for our exports," he said. "In November we are going to be all over Europe talking to reps so I feel like we are on the first step of the ladder and we are just starting to climb."

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