



**CHARLOTTE COUNTY**  
Economic Development

# WEEKEND WAVE



## Friday Economic Roundup

### **AREA NEWS**

#### **Below the radar, signs of progress**

OUR VIEW, Charlotte Sun July 3, 2014

Marketing Charlotte County is the centerpiece of the county's economic and tourism development efforts. Taking a business-minded approach

- advertising, networking and partnerships -

has paid dividends in recent weeks.

The economic development office's "Good Life-Great Business" multimedia campaign was named the best digital marketing campaign at the Florida Economic Development Conference in late June. The EDO collaborated with Allegient Air in the 23 markets it serves and employed lenticular 3-D technology (think of those novelty postcards that change when you tilt them) to highlight the county's inviting natural setting.

In addition to driving traffic to the EDO's website, the campaign generated a site visit by a business now exploring relocating to Charlotte County, according to EDO Business Recruitment Supervisor Lucienne Pears.

On the tourism side, longtime public relation staff member Jennifer Huber was appointed to serve on VISIT FLORIDA's Cultural, Heritage, Rural and Nature Committee. Huber, a social networking expert and travel blogger, has extensive contacts in the travel industry worldwide.

While people focus on economic and tourism development home runs like Cheney Brothers and the Super Boat races, the journey to progress is one of thousands of small steps (and tweets, brochures, meetings, conferences, handshakes, phone calls, etc.) taken every day.

## Enzymedica is leader in its field

By Michael Pollick Herald-Tribune Published: Monday, June 30, 2014 at 1:00 a.m.

As people age, their internal systems age as well.

Foods that were never a problem in years gone by, for instance, can begin to cause problems. Venice-based Enzymedica is capitalizing on the aging of America with products that aid digestion.

From a 45,000-square-foot building in an industrial park, the company is marketing its combinations of enzymes and multi-vitamins to health care practitioners and consumers alike

"You can see the gray hair. What you don't see is the aging inside," said Scott Sensenbrenner, Enzymedica's chief executive since 2009.

"As you are aging, your body is producing less of what it used to, and one of the key components of that is your body is producing less enzymes. And enzymes are really the ignition, the catalyst, of your digestive process."

Today, the company has emerged as the U.S. leader in enzyme development, according to Spins LLC, a Schaumburg, Illinois-based firm that tracks natural food products sales information.

Spins data show that Enzymedica's retail sales have climbed from around \$350,000 a month to \$450,000 a month during the last two years.

By comparison, Enzymedica's 16 primary competitors generate monthly sales of \$50,000 to \$150,000, Spins data indicate.

Sensenbrenner notes that Enzymedica's sales are even higher when a pair of other business lines are factored in.

Spins data, for instance, tabulates only cash-register sales at retail establishments and online venues such as Whole Foods Market, or Amazon.com. In 2012, Enzymedica launched a new line using a completely different distribution channel. Enzyme Science is sold to licensed health care practitioners, including medical doctors, naturopathic doctors, chiropractors, nutritionists and acupuncturists. Sensenbrenner declined to provide Enzyme Science's sales, saying only that it is one of the fastest-growing segments of the company.

Though the specialized product line uses many of the same plant-based enzymes Enzymedica employs in its retail products, Enzyme Science customers order from separate catalogs such as Digest Spectrum.

Enzymedica also has differentiated itself with specialty products aimed at people with gluten or casein intolerance or airborne allergies.

The practitioners' product lines also include Candida Control, to balance overgrowth of the fungus candida albicans, and Nattokinase Plus, for cardiovascular and circulatory health.

This year, the company is launching a third set of products: multi-vitamins that include enzyme blends in each capsule.

Introduced this spring at trade shows, the company's blue bottles of Enzyme Nutrition Multi-Vitamin capsules come in formulas for men, women and children.

Initial shipments have already sold out, and the company has ordered new, larger inventories from its contract producer.

Enzymedica also has garnered fans by developing all-vegan products using no animal by-products. Even its capsules are made from vegetables, whereas most capsules are made from gelatin that is derived from animals.

### **A NOTICEABLE BENEFIT**

Within Enzymedica's Venice plant, where many capsules still are produced, crews are devoted to quality control, research and development.

The company assiduously avoids "flow agents" or fillers, in its products, both for purity and to keep its machinery from jamming. Another way it avoids jamming its machines is to fill its capsules more slowly than many pill makers.

Sensenbrenner said Enzymedica's production process simply makes good business sense.

"The digestive-health consumer is the one consumer you cannot lie to," he said. "When you look at

the success of Enzymedica, the No. 1 factor is the efficacy of our product.

"When you take an Enzymedica product, you feel the difference with your next meal, and it is noticeable."

Enzymedica's push comes as America's population aged 65 and over is set to grow explosively in coming years, from 12 percent of the population now to 19 percent by 2030, according to the federal government's Administration on Aging.

Environmental factors also may aid the company's growth. As Americans rely more on prepared and processed foods, they can miss out on vegetables that contain the most natural enzymes.

Sensenbrenner believes its core customer "is that 45-year-old-plus, educated woman for the most part. Someone who is very conscious about their health and very much looking out for their family and also dealing in a fast-paced environment."

#### **INVESTING IN GREEN DESIGN**

Sensenbrenner has a vested interest in Enzymedica's success. When he became CEO in 2009, he also acquired an equity stake in the company.

The company was founded in 1998 by two brothers, Tom and David Bohager. Tom Bohager maintains an active role as its chairman and formulator-in-chief.

David Bohager, however, now runs his own nutraceutical wholesale distribution firm, Focus Marketing, from Fort Myers, representing the Enzymedica brands along with others.

Enzymedica's year-old headquarters appears to have been designed with efficiency -- and green standards -- in mind. Just as the company strives for purity in its products, Enzymedica set out to turn the structure into an environmental showcase.

In September, the building received Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design Gold certification, a feat that is difficult to achieve with an existing structure, analysts say.

To obtain the certification, the company used soy-based insulation and installed more than 100 solar panels to supplement its electrical use.

Even more critical is the attention Sensenbrenner has given to work flow.

Before the company moved from four buildings totaling 15,000 square feet it occupied in Port Charlotte, Sensenbrenner hired a consultant to help organize the new space.

Using an approach called Lean Six Sigma, the company held a series of meetings with representatives from each department, from accounting to quality control to shipping.

Green Buildings, of Sarasota, then came in to build out the space using the employees' and the consultant's suggestions. Sensenbrenner's second-floor office is at one end of the building, production is at the other.

But not everything is ultra-modern.

Some work is tracked with sticky notes posted inside rectangular frames mounted on walls.

Sensenbrenner has one of the frames just outside his office, while another occupies a main, first-floor corridor next to training rooms.

The company's 70 employees often refer to, or use, the notes to show how work is flowing.

If a production run has been inspected and is about to be put into inventory, for instance, a note is shifted from one column to another.

#### **LOCAL EMPLOYEES**

These days, more and more of Enzymedica's workers are home-grown talent.

Last fall, the company committed itself to recruiting employees locally, and it's worked with area schools to create a pipeline of new staff.

Most notably, Enzymedica has recruited interns from State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota as part of the school's new two-year degree in biotechnology.

Sara van der Veken, one of the first graduates of the program, was hired this spring -- even before graduation. She is now part of Enzymedica's quality-control team.

"I am a big science nerd," van der Veken said. "So then to get into this program where all you do is learn to do different experiments, it was right down my alley."

## **PGT picks up land near the Laurel Road exit on I-75**

By Michael Braga , Herald-Tribune/ Wednesday, July 9, 2014

Sarasota furniture store owner and hard money lender Edward L. Kalin sold 2.5 acres of land at the Laurel Interchange Business Center in Nokomis to Venice window manufacturer PGT Industries Inc. for \$450,000.

The land at 3459 Precision Drive previously belonged to Waterford North Inc., a Venice company managed by developer Mike Miller.

Kalin seized the property 2010 after Miller failed to repay a \$3.2 million loan.

PGT - the region's largest publicly-traded company - paid \$1.64 million for 12 acres of vacant industrial land at 100 Triple Diamond Boulevard in Nokomis in August 2013.

## FLORIDA ECONOMIC NEWS

- Florida business groups court more internationals for tourism, labor ([Orlando Sentinel](#))
- Need business help? Whom to call ([Florida Trend](#))
- Florida leads nation in international real estate sales ([Miami Herald](#)) ([Sun Sentinel](#))

## US ECONOMIC NEWS

- The best and worst states for small business ([The Economist](#))
- Study: States that raised minimum wage had stronger job growth ([USA Today](#))

## ENTREPRENEUR NEWS

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