

2010

newsmaker



“We expect to see the oral care category fueled by the growing awareness of the connection between oral health and overall wellness in developed countries worldwide.”

- Christine Henisee, CEO, Ranik





Manpower Survey: Employers remain 'conservatively optimistic' about hiring more people

By Jeff Engel

June 8, 2010

GRAND RAPIDS -- More area businesses plan to hire than cut jobs in the next three months, but the gap has shrunk since last quarter, according to a Manpower Employment Outlook Survey released today.

The portion of companies with "help wanted" ads for the third quarter was higher than the survey found a year ago.

The quarterly announcement comes as talk of a national recovery has grown more sober, but Manpower officials say employers remain "conservatively optimistic" that business will continue its upward trend.

Seventeen percent of employers surveyed in the Grand Rapids-Wyoming area expect to add positions between July and September, while 9 percent said they will reduce staff.

Last quarter, 20 percent planned to hire, and only 6 percent were cutting positions. A year ago, 14 percent expected to hire in the third quarter and 11 percent expected to reduce staff.

Grand Rapids Chair Co. was among those that expanded last quarter, and the furniture-making company is seeking to fill five more positions.

The 13-year-old business has added 20 employees in the past four months after opening a new table plant, said Tom Southwell, managing partner for sales and marketing. It has a staff of 110.

Southwell said the business, which produces mainly for government, educational and medical sectors, has seen increased orders from pent-up demand. He indicated the company could expand more this summer.

"We will know more after NeoCon, but if the other (trade) shows are any indication, we will need to hire," Southwell said.

Grand Rapids Chair Co. isn't the area's only growing business. Conveyor company Dematic Corp., toothbrush-maker Ranir LLC and Prestige Products, with a major contract for booms to contain the Gulf Coast oil spill, were among those announcing hiring in the past month.

Still, the unemployed re-entering the work force may have to swallow a pay cut. Ron Parmeter, out of work since August 2007, said he will be hard-pressed to find a job that pays the \$16 per hour wage with vacation benefits he used to earn in a sales job.

Those jobs are just "not out there," said the 53-year-old Grandville resident.

The survey's Grand Rapids outlook was slightly more positive than Michigan's as a whole, with 18 percent hiring and 12 percent expecting to eliminate jobs.

This stems from West Michigan's more diverse manufacturing and service sectors, according to Jill Momber, Manpower's vice president and regional director for Kent County.

"It doesn't seem like just a summer pick-up," Momber said. "Overall, employers are hiring more."

Nationally, the economic recovery may be slowing, at least in May.

U.S. employers have added jobs for five straight months, but only 41,000 people were hired in May, the fewest since January. The government hired 10 times that for temporary national Census positions.

The Labor Department's announcement Friday sent Wall Street into a tailspin, as the Dow Jones industrial average fell more than 300 points.

But employers remain optimistic, the Manpower survey shows.

Of the more than 18,000 polled, 18 percent expect to hire this quarter, while 8 percent plan to shed payroll. This marks the third straight quarter of positive findings.

The results indicate a trend that has historically heralded accelerated job growth, Momber said.

The survey also showed a positive hiring outlook for 98 percent of the states and 95 of the nation's largest 100 metropolitan areas.

"We're still in the early stages of recovery, but we're seeing it become more widespread geographically," Momber said.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Oral Care Company Ranir Adds On

July 9, 2010

Ranir LLC, a Grand Rapids, Mich.-based maker of oral care products, has acquired Synpart, a maker of branded and third-party oral care products, from HemCon Medical Technologies Inc. No financial terms were disclosed. Ranir shareholders include Linden LLC, Beringea and an investment vehicle led by William Blair & Co. principal Richard Kiphar.

PRESS RELEASE

Ranir, LLC, a leading oral care consumer products company and member of Beringea's InvestMichigan! Growth Capital Fund portfolio, announced today that it has acquired Synpart Limited and Synpart AG from HemCon Medical Technologies, Inc.

Synpart is a leading manufacturer and marketer of store brand oral care products in the European Community and a contract manufacturer for global branded oral care companies.

Along with Ranir, LLC, Synpart will become a division of Ranir Global Holdings, LLC. The combined company is now the largest store brand oral care company in the world and a significant contract supplier to global branded oral care companies.

The acquisition of Synpart will allow Ranir to build a global oral care footprint, increase its product offerings, expand its expertise in oral care and enhance its supply chain partnership network.

"Teaming with Synpart will not only allow us to accelerate our growth through international expansion in important U.K. and European markets but it will also expand our oral care product line and enable us to increase our commitment to innovation to exceed the expectations of our customer partners" said Christine Henisee, CEO of Ranir, who joined the company in 2003 and has more than 30 years of consumer products experience.

Henisee added, "We expect to see oral care category growth fueled by the growing awareness of the connection between oral health and overall wellness in developed countries worldwide."

The investment from Beringea was made through the InvestMichigan! Growth Capital Fund, a \$185 million fund that provides venture and expansion-stage capital to promising emerging businesses in Michigan.

"The acquisition of Synpart puts a turbo-charge into Ranir's already impressive rate of growth," said Jeff Bocan, managing director at Beringea. "The company's accelerated expansion into Europe brings an exceptional Michigan company and its innovative products to the rest of the world."

Helmut Schlieper joins the Ranir senior management team as President of Synpart, a division of Ranir Global Holdings, LLC.

Mr. Schlieper founded Synpart AG in 2004. Mike Levenstein, currently Chief Operating Officer of Synpart Limited, will lead Synpart's contract business and direct its Asian operations.

"We are thrilled to join Ranir and be part of a company that has such a strong commitment to innovation, efficiency and high quality products. This acquisition brings added value to both companies and to our retail and contract manufacturing customers by significantly enhancing our innovation capabilities and supply chain efficiencies so we can continue to develop products that exceed customer and end consumer expectations," said Helmut Schlieper, president of Synpart. Current Ranir management, including Christine Henisee, Chief Executive Officer and Joe Townshend, Chief Financial Officer,

will continue to lead Ranir Global Holdings, LLC.

About Synpart Ltd and Synpart AG

Synpart Ltd and Synpart AG with offices in the United Kingdom and Germany and now a division of Ranir Global Holdings, LLC distribute a range of store brand oral care products to major European retailers. Synpart also owns manufacturing locations in India and China with other production partners around the globe. Synpart has made significant progress over the past six years developing an excellent reputation with its customers as a leader in the oral care category. Its range of oral care products includes manual and power toothbrushes, dental floss, mouthwash, toothpaste and other dental accessories.

About Ranir, LLC

Ranir, LLC is headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It manufactures and markets branded and store brand consumer oral care products to leading retail and wholesale customers and branded oral care companies in North America. Led by CEO Christine Henisee, Ranir has expanded its sales platform to include serving top chain drug stores, mass merchandisers, supermarkets, wholesalers and discount retailers in North America and the United Kingdom along with some important global branded oral care companies. The company has an extensive line of consumer oral care products which includes power and manual toothbrushes, tooth whitening wraps, tooth whitening trays, dissolving tooth whitening strips, dental floss and flossers, travel kits, night protectors, and other oral care products. Ranir, LLC is owned by Ranir Global Holdings, LLC, formerly Kayak Holdings LLC, an investment group led by Richard P. Kiphart. In addition to being a private investor, Mr. Kiphart is also a Principal and Head of the Private Client Advisory Group at William Blair & Company. Other partners in Ranir Global Holdings, LLC are Camden Holdings Inc., Linden, LLC and Beringea Invest Michigan, LLC of Michigan Growth Capital Partners GP, LP.

About Beringea

Beringea is the largest venture capital firm in Michigan, with more than 70 portfolio companies in the U.S. and UK. Headquartered in Farmington Hills, Mich., the firm has additional offices in London and Shanghai. Beringea has more than 20 years of investing experience in a range of sectors, including health care, clean technology, advanced manufacturing, media, Internet technologies and specialized consumer products. Among its many initiatives, Beringea is co-manager of the \$185 million InvestMichigan! Growth Capital Fund, which provides venture and expansion-stage capital to emerging businesses headquartered or with substantial operations in the state of Michigan. For more information, visit www.beringea.com or www.investmichiganfund.com.

Kentwood-based Ranir buys two German companies

By Julie Makarewicz

July 10, 2010

KENTWOOD -- In an effort to expand into the European market, oral care products maker Ranir acquired German companies Synpart Limited and Synpart AG from HemCon Medical Technologies Inc.

Synpart will become a division of Ranir Global Holdings.

Company officials say the combination is now the largest store brand oral care company in the world.

Ranir, founded in 1979, is headquartered at 4701 East Paris Ave. in Kentwood.

The company has expanded its sales to include serving top chain drug stores, mass merchandisers, supermarkets, wholesalers and discount retailers in North America and the United Kingdom.

"Teaming with Synpart will not only allow us to accelerate our growth through international expansion in important UK and European markets, but it will also expand our oral care product line and enable us to increase our commitment to innovation to exceed the expectations of our customer partners," said Christine Henisee, CEO of Ranir, in a statement.

Henisee believes there is potential worldwide growth as awareness rises about the connection between oral care and overall health.

Ranir has an extensive line of consumer oral care products including power and manual toothbrushes, tooth whitening products, dental floss and flossers, travel kits and night protectors.

Duff Lewis, director of marketing for Ranir, said the acquisition of the German companies won't immediately affect production or employment at the Kentwood facility. But the company does expect to see continued growth and demand for products, which in turn could mean more work in West Michigan.

He also said there are no plans to move any jobs out of West Michigan. "We have a strong commitment to this area and there are not plans to move," said Lewis.

Ranir currently employs 405 permanent employees and 70 temporary employees.

In May, Ranir received a tax abatement from the city of Kentwood for \$4.3 million in new equipment and about \$175,000 in property improvements. Ranir also received tax abatements for expansions in 2006 and 2008.

Synpart Ltd. and Synpart AG have offices in the United Kingdom and Germany. They also distribute store brand oral care products to major European retailers. Synpart owns manufacturing locations in India and China.

Helmut Schlieper, who founded Synpart AG in 2004, will join Ranir senior management as president of the Synpart division. Mike Levenstein, chief operation officer of Synpart Limited in London, will lead Synpart's contract business and direct Asian operations.





GR Health Products Company Buys In Europe

Matt Roush

July 18, 2010

Grand Rapids-based Ranir, LLC an oral care consumer products company, announced the acquisition of Synpart Limited and Synpart AG, the English and German subsidiaries of Dublin, Ireland-based HemCon Medical Technologies Inc.

Synpart is a manufacturer and marketer of store brand oral care products in the European Community and a contract manufacturer for global branded oral care companies.

Ranir is a member of the InvestMichigan Growth Capital Fund portfolio of Farmington Hills-based Beringea, Michigan's largest venture capital firm.

Along with Ranir LLC, Synpart will become a division of Ranir Global Holdings LLC. The combined company is now the largest store brand oral care company in the world and a significant contract supplier to global branded oral care companies. The acquisition of Synpart will allow Ranir to build a global oral care footprint, increase its product offerings, expand its expertise in oral care and enhance its supply chain partnership network.

"Teaming with Synpart will not only allow us to accelerate our growth through international expansion in important U.K. and European markets but it will also expand our oral care product line and enable us to increase our commitment to innovation to exceed the expectations of our customer partners" said Christine Henisee, CEO of Ranir, who joined the company in 2003 and has more than 30 years of consumer products experience. "We expect to see oral care category growth fueled by the growing awareness of the connection between oral health and overall wellness in developed countries worldwide."

The investment from Beringea was made through the InvestMichigan Growth Capital Fund, a \$185 million fund that provides venture and expansion-stage capital to promising emerging businesses in Michigan.

"The acquisition of Synpart puts a turbo-charge into Ranir's already impressive rate of growth," said Jeff Bocan, managing director at Beringea. "The company's accelerated expansion into Europe brings an exceptional Michigan company and its innovative products to the rest of the world."

Current Ranir management, including Henisee and CFO Joe Townshend, will continue to lead Ranir Global Holdings.

(c) 2010, WWJ Newsradio 950. All rights reserved.