

WORKING

Business, Finance, Consumer Issues, Earning A Living

AT WORK

EISCO

By Libby Barsky

SPECIAL TO THE JEWISH STATE

Name: EISCO (Eastern Institutional Supply Company)

Type of business: Janitorial Supply Company

Address: 1545 Route 9, Toms River.

Website: www.eisco1.com

Telephone: (800) 553-4726.

Number of employees: Five full time, two part time.

Founded: 1962.

Top officers: Anise Singer, president; Howard Singer, secretary/treasurer; Brad Singer, vice president.

How would you describe your business?

"We are a janitorial supply company that features specialty floor cleaners, disinfectants, carpet and stain removers as well as commercial floor machines and autoscrubbers," said vice president Brad Singer. "We also have found a niche through our relationships with Major League Baseball that has created a division for the products that are used in the clubhouse. We are currently selling to more than 100 major and minor baseball leagues and to 27 of the 30 Major League teams."

What makes your business special?

"I believe we are special because we are dedicated to excellence in service to our customers. We are unique in the baseball industry because we're able to provide one stop shopping for the person who would normally do the buying for the clubhouse supplies or college team when uniforms are dirty or stained. They don't have to make four or five calls to get what they need.

"The first five years we just sold detergents to get grass stains out. Now we have other products — shoe polish, pine tar

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remover and helmet cleaner for example. We also have the pine tar itself which is used to get a firmer grip on the bat. Once used, the pine tar will be on the bat handle and the players will lean the bat on their shoulder or it'll come off on their pants. And we have a product to remove that."

What goals do you have for the business?

"To increase the number of sports team accounts. We've recently brought on a group out of Texas. They have 15 sales people who cover 25 states to develop new accounts in colleges and universities. They are selling our products to the colleges and universities and getting our name out.

"We are also working with a uniform manufacturer and a helmet manufacturer — that will be marketing our products with theirs and recommending us as a quality and safe product to be used on their clothing and their equipment. Now our strategy is to expand our sales force into multiple sports arenas."

How has your business changed?

"My father started the business in 1962 and I joined him in 1990, a few years after graduating from the University of Hartford in Connecticut. The business has changed from a janitorial supply company doing business with the Atlantic City casinos, private schools and commercial properties throughout the state to including servicing sports teams. We've created so much business in baseball and it is continuing to grow that our feeling is that the clubhouse products can become a separate business unto itself.

"That business started seven years ago



INNOVATIVE. Brad Singer of EISCO has helped the Toms River company move in a new direction — servicing Major League and minor league baseball teams all around the nation — including the New York Yankees. (Photo by Ron Ostroff)

when I had a phone call from the Philadelphia Phillies, looking for a cleaning product for the grass stains. A year or two later, I began flying down to Florida for spring training. That's the one time in the year when you have most of the Major League teams centrally located in one or two states. I also have a booth at the trade show at their annual winter meetings.

"Baseball has an amazing group of people. They are a tight knit group. When you earn their trust, they take you in. It's like a small family. It's blossomed for us. It's worked out really well. This spring when I went down, I picked up the Colorado Rockies, the San Francisco Giants, the Oakland A's and the Milwaukee Brewers.

When a manager recently asked what teams I service, I told him 'It's easier to tell you the ones I don't.'"

What was your most important deal?

"Bringing in the New York Yankees. They are my largest account and the most prestigious. They use all our products, including, but not limited to, helmet cleaner and polish. I was always a Yankees fan and they have been a great group of guys."

What changes do you expect in your business in the next 10 years?

"We are hoping to increase our growth in the colleges and universities. Over the next 10 years, we would like to continue to

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expand our alliances with uniform companies and other equipment manufacturers to connect our products with them to allow the business to grow. Ten years is a lot of time to consider. Every year you go through your business plan and say: 'How do we change this, how do we make adjustments to it.'"

What is the most important thing you've learned in your business?

"To be honest with people and to satisfy their needs. If you take care of a problem they are having, they'll come back to you. If I get a call — 'Brad this product isn't working.' I know the product works. So we analyze what they

have been doing and go over the steps with them and make suggestions.

"That's how you build relationships and your name.

"That's the way that I was brought up.

"I can do a deal on a handshake, unlike today where everything is a contract. If I promise something, I'll do it."

What advice would you give to

someone considering your line of work?

"If you want to grow a business, you have to start small and work yourself up. Nothing comes easily. You have to put time in it. If you establish yourself as a truthful person and someone that your account will trust, it will come back to you. It always does."

Is there anything else you would rather be doing?

"No. I love what I do and spend six days a week doing it.

"The janitorial supplies are great. I spend four days a week working on them and two days on the clubhouse items for Major League Baseball. I'd like a bit more time for my family — to be with my wife and twin boys Andrew and Joshua 6 1/2 and our new twins Ian and Rachel (born April 6)."