

Light and Healthy

Keeping your sales strong in the health market

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For every critic of President Barack Obama's health care overhaul—too expensive, too scary, too intrusive—there is a supporter. This conflict makes navigating the health care industry difficult for the average American.

Politics related to health care are complicated; promotional products associated with health and fitness are not.

Portland, Oregon-based [HumphreyLine](#) , an American manufacturer that does not allow imports, makes working with the health care industry sound easy. That's because there is little to no worry about the company's product safety.


"Because we are the original manufacturer, our customers can rely on us always to have inventory, and to comply with Proposition 65 [also known as the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act] and CPSIA (Consumer Products Safety Improvement Act)," said [Mel Ellis](#), HumphreyLine president. "We actually know what is in the products in our line."

The company's "tightly-defined" line includes Humphrey Flyers, stadium cups, sand pails, lip balms and hand sanitizers. And, the benefits of a "tight line" is the ability to innovate.

"We are finding strong interest in our Super Soft Sanitizer, a hand lotion with a non-alcohol sanitizing agent," Ellis explained. Instead of drying your hands the way alcohol-based sanitizers do, this unique formula moisturizes and softens your hands, and it lasts for hours. Tests show that its germ-killing effectiveness is comparable to conventional sanitizers, but it lasts for hours."

Another innovation HumphreyLine is bringing to the market is its new Tuf-Glos label capability.

"The revolutionary labels are setting a new standard for color quality and extraordinary image detail, and are available at no up-charge," Ellis noted. "The minimum run is just 100 units, and is available on five-day service on any of our labeled items. We think Tuf-Glos labels are a game-changer in the health care category."

Schuyler Graham, sales and marketing manager for Cortland, New York-based [Oraline Inc.](#) , a manufacturer and supplier of oral care products that includes a full line of adult and children's toothbrushes, accessories, dental floss, American Dental Association toothpaste and tooth gel, said the company also is offering some cutting-edge products. This includes its new biodegradable toothbrushes. They are made in the United States and can be imprinted and offered to environmentally conscious clients, Graham noted.

Photos



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The Super-soft Sanitizer from HumphreyLine contains no alcohol so it will be gentler on hands. The sanitizers are made in the USA and are available in various sizes.

"[The] product degrades in landfills and compost without sunlight starting in approximately nine months," Graham said.

Though there are innovations in products in the health and fitness arena, some of the biggest trends in the health care industry are fairly predictable.

Ellis said it all comes down to lower prices and faster turnaround times. The future, however, will be about tighter safety restrictions.

"The coming trends in this category will be far more scrutiny from the FDA [U.S. Food and Drug and Administration] and other regulatory authorities, in an effort to protect the consumer," Ellis explained. "As we know, imported health care products enter the country essentially without regulatory review. Not only does this practice leave the consumer exposed to products that may be unsafe to use, it puts both the distributor and the importing supplier at risk in the event of a product liability claim. Over the next several years, we can expect this aspect of the business to change, to the benefit of the end-buyer."

Ellis offered some advice on the industry.

"The best way to [stay] in touch with new market trends and to anticipate your clients' needs is to listen," Ellis commented. "We spend a great deal of time listening to our customers, and in the end, this enables Humphrey to do a better job of serving their needs."

Graham also had something to say about staying successful.

"Network, talk with suppliers and clients on [a] regular basis, expand your knowledge. I said talk, not e-mail. Get in touch and work that connection."