



## **J. Knipper and Company Celebrates Its 30<sup>th</sup> Year—Almost All of It in Lakewood**

When the doctor gives you a sample of a new medicine to try out, it may not seem like a complicated process. Over the years, however, the practice of giving out pharmaceutical samples has become more and more regulated by agencies, such as the federal Food and Drug Administration and the Drug Enforcement Administration - posing a challenge to the companies that hand out the freebies in hopes of promoting their products.

That challenge became an opportunity to J. Knipper and Company, a family-owned business that has had a presence in the Lakewood Industrial Park for almost 30 years. J. Knipper and Company, who is in the business of marketing, distributing and tracking those drug samples for pharmaceutical companies, was founded in 1986 by Jim Knipper and his father, the late Joseph P. Knipper, to distribute drug samples from pharmaceutical companies to physicians and sales representatives.

When it started out, it was a small enterprise with 23 employees, working out of an old 12,000-square-foot building on Robbins Street in Toms River, said Jim Knipper, owner and CEO. Soon, the company outgrew its space in Toms River; and rented more space, about 5,000-square-feet, in the Lakewood Industrial Park. By 1990, the company moved out of Toms River and leased even more space in the industrial park.

Around 1989, the business of distributing pharmaceutical samples started to become highly regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, requiring a lot of tracking by those distributing the samples, Jim Knipper said. The pharmaceutical companies needed to focus their energies on what generated profits for them, namely sales, so they looked to outside help to keep track of the samples they gave out for free to physicians. The company grew from there.

In 1998, Joseph P. Knipper sold the company to McKesson Corp., a global health-care company; but, in 2002 Jim Knipper bought back his family business. Three years later, Knipper's 180,000-square-foot headquarters was built at 1 Healthcare Way in the Lakewood Industrial Park.

In 2010, Knipper acquired a competitor, Somerset-based Pharmagistics, creating one of the largest healthcare marketing distribution firms in the United States. In 2013, Knipper acquired inVentiv Health's sample management and fulfillment business known as MySTRO, making it the largest pharmaceutical samples management provider in the United States.

In 2014, the company acquired MediMedia Health's sample management line of business, solidifying Knipper's position as the nation's leading provider of sample management services to the pharmaceutical industry. In March of 2015, Knipper opened a multi-million-dollar contact center in Lawrenceville, providing a call center; email, fax and online services for its customers; and a new patient advocacy center.

Over the years, the pharmaceutical companies have consolidated. Jim Knipper said, "With the consolidation, the pharmaceutical companies are looking to outsource more and are looking for positive partners they can rely on to get the job done. I think that has worked in our favor."

With the consolidation of pharmaceutical companies, came growth for Knipper who provides its services exclusively to the pharmaceutical, biotech, and medical device industries. The services it provides include telemarketing, direct marketing, and shipping drug samples to salespeople. In addition, Knipper provides such services as sample reconciliations and audits to comply with FDA regulations.

Today, J. Knipper and Company has 600 employees, working in five locations totaling 600,000 square feet that include its 180,000-square-foot headquarters in the Lakewood Industrial Park; facilities in Somerset, Carlstadt and Lawrenceville, New Jersey; and a West Coast sales office.

On the horizon is a 300,000-square-foot distribution center under construction in Charlestown, Indiana, that will employ about 60 people and provide optimized DIP fulfillment to many Knipper clients when it opens early next year, Knipper said.

With 110 pharmaceutical companies as its customers, many of those among the nation's top 40 pharmaceutical companies, Knipper is considered the largest supplier of sample management services to the U.S. pharmaceutical industry.

Meanwhile, the company places a high value on its loyal employees, which include executives, information technology personnel, people who work in product management and those who "work on the lines, packing and shipping and handling the shipments that go out the door," Jim Knipper said.

Many have been with the company for a long time. "We like to have a family business, and we like the longevity, and we're really focused on our people."

The coming year will be one to celebrate the company's success and longevity as it marks its 30th year in business, something that is no small accomplishment in uncertain economic times, Jim Knipper said. "We're excited to have a year of celebration, to have 30 years in business."

"It's not always easy for a company to achieve that," he said. "We're very proud of our 30 years. We've enjoyed a long-term relationship with the township of Lakewood, being a corporate citizen here, which we will continue to be as we move forward."