

LIPTON - MONARCH

PMG (cont)

Just the facts

- originally called Thomas J. Lipton, the company merged with Monarch Fine Foods (in Canada only) to form Lipton Monarch PMG
- located at 315 University Ave., Belleville, it is a subsidiary of Unilver Canada Ltd.
- produce goods for the food service industry, selling to restaurants, bakeries, schools, hospitals and others
- main product is now flavored drink crystals but also produces soup bases and mixes, bakery mixes, pudding mixes, gravy bases, baking powder and coffee.
- its most recent product is flavored bakery flakes, which the company expects to become a major item within the next two to three years

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About a year ago the company added bakery flakes to its line of products. They are a patented item developed by a small company in Georgetown, in conjunction with Lipton Monarch PMG.

"We saw some big potential there for it, so we ended up purchasing the company," said Blair. The solid flaked product can be put into foods such as muffin mix. When baked, the flakes melt, adding flavor throughout the muffin. It's an alternative to sprinkling flavoring on top of the food, says Blair.

"It's a new product and we see tremendous growth in the next two to three years on that."

The company's goal is to provide the best quality

products with exceptional customer service. What that means in practical terms is Lipton Monarch has to devise goods that help their customers (restaurant owners, for example), reduce costs or improve their menu.

Speaking from the cus-

'...the biggest change was that Thomas J. Lipton and Monarch Fine Foods ... merged their food service divisions into one, to create us'

tomers' point of view, Blair asks rhetorically, "What else can you do for me besides just selling me a pail of soup?"

Internally, the plant is trimming expenses by cutting waste and improving efficiency. A team was recently formed to examine ways of reducing

waste.

And in January, the company embarked on a Big Scale Value Analysis program (BSVA) in which employees can submit ideas for improving efficiency or products. Blair says there are two rules to the program: first, there are no sacred cows; second, nobody is an expert. This means "ideas can come from anybody. They can be completely from left field or they can be an old idea that was thrown out." Traditional beliefs, such as a recipe for a popular product, wouldn't have been questioned in the past, says Blair, but under BSVA, they can be challenged.

The process resulted in 123 ideas being submitted within the first four weeks. About half those came from "the floor." Although management at Lipton Monarch continually aims to improve efficiency, "this is a much more focussed, much more structured" approach.

It's expected the program will take nine to 12 months to complete and will be done again in about five years, says Blair. Lipton Monarch's goal is to save \$250,000 this year. BSVA has

been used by other Unilever companies and has a 90 per cent success rate in achieving financial targets.

Lipton Monarch currently sells about 80 per cent of its products within Canada but is expanding to the United States and other foreign markets.

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