

Understanding their markets helped newcomers flourish

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Kii Naturals Inc

kiinaturals.com

Location Vaughan, Ont.

Size 120 employees

Sector Food manufacturing, food trading

Market North America, Caribbean

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Operating out of manufacturing facilities in Toronto and Vaughan, Ont., the company supplies branded and private-label products to grocery store clients. By using a vertically integrated business model that includes its own importing arm, Kii Naturals is extremely competitive in speed to market, with the capability to quickly introduce new products into North American markets.

Founded in 2006, 65% of the family-owned company's sales are in the United States, with the remainder in Canada and the Caribbean.

"We understand the U.S. and Canadian marketplaces are each unique and have put in place two very clear and separate sales and marketing plans," says Sujay Shah, president and CEO. As evidence of the success of this approach, the company has found coast-to-coast distribution in both countries with approximately 3,000 retail stores across North America carrying some or all of its products.

Shah and his two brothers — one focuses on trading, the other on operations — work closely together to chart the business toward a common goal, says Mr. Shah, who focuses on the company's vision. Mr. Shah also attributes much of the company's success to its employees, who, he says, are hired in part for their passion for life, which includes well-balanced and active lifestyles. In common with the family, "our employees are in line with our company philosophy of sourcing authentic ingredients from where they grow naturally," he says.

Kii Naturals supports local and national Canadian charitable initiatives. Its primary charitable focus, however, is on East Africa, from where the Shah brothers parents emigrated to Canada, where they contribute to health and clean water initiatives.

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