

Growing the Good: Brady Corporation Employees Fast Track New Innovations to Help Flatten the Curve

DAVE CASPER: Welcome to Growing the Good. I'm Dave Casper, head of BMO's North American commercial banking business. We're working with our customers to help them through this incredibly volatile time. They're stepping up in so many ways, helping to keep commerce moving, and keep people safe. I have the pleasure of speaking with a number of CEOs running businesses in a variety of industries, hearing their personal stories about the challenges they're facing, and some of the very innovative ways they've adapted in these uncertain times.

DAVE CASPER: Joining me today is Michael Nauman, President and CEO of the Brady Corporation, headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Michael, thanks so much for taking time today. We really appreciate it. I know our clients will be very interested in your story. So let me start out, the Brady Corporation has been around for over 100 years started in 1914. Give, give our listeners some background on Brady and the products that you offer, if you wouldn't mind.

MICHAEL NAUMAN: Well, absolutely. Dave, thanks for having me on the call today. I really appreciate it. And I appreciate our relationship. We are a global company. And we manufacture in the safety and identification marketplaces, than in addition, we do hospital products and identification products we service 35% of the US market is an example of identification products. So we have a large large variety of products, literally hundreds of 1000s all of them in those marketplaces.

DAVE CASPER: So the businesses you're in because of that, your business is deemed essential. How have some of your products been used to directly support what's going on to fight COVID-19

MICHAEL NAUMAN: Like all our products are serving all 13 federally designated essential industries. And one example would be test kits. So all of the test kits, hopefully, some of you have not had to have the swab test. I've had it twice; it is quite unpleasant. But we're part of that process all over the place, from the actual test files to the packaging systems. Something is straightforward, but critical is the labeling. The must be sequential and must be clear, and must be durable and rugged. But we also do some interesting variations of products that we make for other applications. So we are the largest supplier of solvent materials, we make pads and tubes that are designed to pick up water, oil and other fluids to keep the world a cleaner place. As part of that we created four inch pads that we'd never done before, specifically for test kits, so that if any of the vials broke, none of the contents would leak out and

contaminate. So it's exciting what we've been able to do. And that's literally one of 1000s and 1000s of examples of products we've been able to come up with to help in the fight against COVID-19.

DAVE CASPER: You recently launched an initiative, tell everyone about the Brady global health challenge.

MICHAEL NAUMAN: Our leadership team said, what can we do to rally around our core values of making the world a better and safer place every day. And we came up with the global hope challenge, specifically around COVID, we came up with 157 unique ideas, all of the ideas had to be for COVID. And we had to be able to implement them within days or a few weeks, just an incredible outpouring in a very short period of time. And it not only gave the world a lot of products that they really needed at that critical moment, it allowed our people to see just how important our work is.

DAVE CASPER: So give us some of the great ideas that you've come up with.

MICHAEL NAUMAN: So we have a tag that changes colors if you've been in a place too long. And we converted that product into a labeling system for personal protection equipment, PPE you might hear. And it can notify you visually, if you've been wearing the equipment too long, super important for the safety of people. But beyond that our people came up with some really clever things. One that I personally love I'm wearing right now is the Brady mask lasso. And so if you notice a lanyard, that you have your badges on your ID badges, we've converted that so that we can use those for mass classes. And what I like about it is it's super practical, low costs, and something that is not intuitively obvious until people see it.

DAVE CASPER: I think given the businesses you're in and what you see in your position, Michael, I know our listeners would really kind of like to know what's your prognosis for the economy, not necessarily, Brady, you don't have to be specific about Brady, but just what you see and what you hear from your people, your clients and your gut.

MICHAEL NAUMAN: If you'd asked me in May, I would have told you I thought we hit our rock bottom and industrial products at that point. But we bounced along the bottom for a while, but we've been actually seeing improvement in June, July, August, slow and steady improvement. So, you know, my prognosis is that it's not going to be quick. It's not going to be rapid. And we're probably going to see some spikes down again. But the economies of the world will slowly recover out of this in some areas when they hit Dave, I think it'll be rapid back. So I think it'll depend industry by industry. But I am very

bullish overall, on the long term of the world being able to come out of this people are incredibly resourceful. Dave, what I've seen to the downturn, is they will put all the effort into it if they understand why, and I think people do that again.

DAVE CASPER: Well, that is a great place to end very optimistic and reasonable and realistic. Michael, it was a real pleasure speaking with you today. Brady is doing a great job supporting the fight against COVID-19. And I know all of our listeners will appreciate you sharing your perspectives. Thanks again and have a great day.

MICHAEL NAUMAN: Thank you, sir. Take care. Bye Bye.

DAVE CASPER: Thank you for joining Growing the Good. I hope you join me for another conversation. Until then, stay safe.