

TRYON DISTRIBUTING EXPANDS OPERATIONS AND CAPACITY

Growth trends in specialty “craft” beer, local and regional wines

CHARLOTTE (October 3, 2007) – Tryon Distributing of Charlotte has expanded its facility space by 50 percent to 92,000 square-feet and is adding more employees to meet increasing local and statewide market demand.

“We thought that we would be able to stay in our space a lot longer when we purchased the building six years ago,” said Brad Johnston, president of Tryon Distributing. “But our order volume got to be so great that we needed more space to handle the load and hire more people in the process.”

Tryon currently employs 138 people and will be adding more jobs in the coming weeks. Johnston founded Tryon in 1985 with just three people after seeing a fine wine “niche” in the market. In the past five years, Johnston has hired 50 new employees because of growth.

Tryon originally occupied 60,000 square-feet of space at its new location off South Boulevard, between Arrowood Road and Hebron Street, with 32 thousand square feet of space leased to Superior Fire Hose. When the lease ended, it gave Tryon the opportunity to expand.

Additional load-bearing work on the building was required to support four large air conditioners on the roof. The new units pump 100 tons of AC into the new part of the building everyday, because of specific facility temperature needs. Johnston added they are installing a 1,800 square-foot drive in refrigerator for craft beers – nearly one-third of their business.

“The craft beer market growth percentage is way ahead of any category,” Johnston said. “People have discovered there’s a whole range beer out there that invites the same kind of discriminating taste wine does. In the mid 90’s it became obvious that craft beer and specialty imports were going to catch on like premium wine did, so we went after the cool brands.”

Craft beer is made using a traditional process of blending sugars from malted grains (barley or wheat), with hop flowers and water. Craft beer is usually not pasteurized, but often goes through a filtration process to improve clarity. The beer is then carefully aged at just the right temperatures before it is packaged and delivered to the consumer.

Tryon has the state’s largest portfolio of the craft beer and specialty imports. Tryon distributes local craft beer such as Highland from Asheville and Duck Rabbit of Farmington, as well as national brands like Victory, Dogfish Head, Allagash, Abita, Brooklyn, Bells, Flying Dog and Rogue. The rest of Tryon’s business is devoted to wine, national importers like Fredrick Wildman, Empson, Negoicants, Grateful Palate, Kermit Lynch, Diageo, and Moet. Domestic wineries like Honig Cain, Castle Rock, Clos du Val, Cartledge & Brown, Mine and Rombauer make up roughly 71 percent of overall sales.

“We’re larger now,” Johnston said. “And we’re proud that as we grow, we add more jobs and make a positive impact on economic development in the community.”

About Tryon Distributing

Founded in 1985, Tryon Distributing serves markets with fine wine and specialty beer across all of North Carolina. It employs over 130 men and women across the state, supplying product from a wide variety of local wineries, breweries and importers. Tryon has a totally air controlled warehouse and air controlled delivery vehicles. Tryon promotes responsibility across the state, ensures quality in their product and offers variety to their customers. For more information, please visit www.tryondist.com