

Faces of Trade

Small Business Success Stories

with Chile

Gulden Ophthalmics



Elkins Park, PA

Tom Cockley, President

www.guldenindustries.com

Lounded in 1938, Gulden Ophthalmics is an established and growing manufacturing company with fiscal year sales of just under US\$1 million. Gulden manufactures ophthalmic instruments for distributors, hospitals, clinics, universities, and specialists. Gulden has established a prestigious reputation for quality products and services and has a long history of exporting its products, establishing its first foreign distributor in 1953. Gulden is ISO-9002 certified and was selected as the 1994 Eastern Pennsylvania Exporter of the Year by the Philadelphia District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

President Tom Cockley recently visited Santiago, Chile, and met with an international trade consultant at the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Representation Office in Chile. Cockley was very impressed with Chile's enthusiastic and open business culture: "I found everyone to be very informative and helpful." Cockley conducted eight interviews with potential distributors and took time to visit the beautiful city.

Cockley believes that the current trade status between the United States and Chile has put him at a debilitating disadvantage with his competitors in Europe. **"This import duty has effectively shut us out of the Chilean market. With free trade, we would have an 8% competitive advantage, opening up a new and exciting market for us."**

Cockley is enthusiastic about expanding the company's sales to Chile and believes that an FTA is crucial. "If the United States passes the upcoming FTA, there would be no import duty, and we would be able to sell our products competitively. A reduction of this trade barrier would improve our company's growth and employment projections."

On a final note, Cockley believes that entering Chile's open and advanced economy is fundamental to entering other South American markets. "If we do not export to Chile, then we do not export to all of South America."

Industry: Manufacturing

Major Product Sold to Chile: Ophthalmic Instruments

Years of Involvement in Chile: 40

