



## **Five questions for Acme Paper Co.'s Steve Attman**

### ***Local business keeps Baltimore's biggest attractions stocked***

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If you've ever been at one of Baltimore's ballparks with a souvenir Orioles or Ravens cup in hand, it was most likely made by Savage-based Acme Paper and Supply Co.

The family-run business, born in Baltimore in the 1940s, has been with the Orioles for decades and is now responsible for stocking many of the region's largest attractions — M&T Bank Stadium, Maryland Live Casino, King's Dominion — with cups, nacho trays, napkins and a slew of other vendor products, as well as kitchen equipment and janitorial supplies.

The motto of the company that 93-year-old Ed Attman founded in 1946 with the support of his parents — themselves the founders of Baltimore's beloved Attman's Delicatessen — is "Acme ... much more than paper."

The company sells 50 million cups to Baltimore's two stadiums annually, said Steve Attman, one of Ed's four sons and a vice president at the company. It also provides 2 million to 3 million hot dog trays and about 50 million napkins.

This time of year, with Opening Day just barely in the books, is when work really ramps up, Attman said, standing outside Oriole Park at Camden Yards on a recent afternoon.

"To us, spring is about sports and entertainment," he said. "This is really our home away from home."

In recent years, the company also has developed new connections in new markets, including the casino market, which Attman said is "tremendously growing."

Things are constantly changing in the paper and plastic products business, Attman said, with more emphasis placed now on innovation and environmental impact. In recent years, the company has stayed at the cutting edge, he said, thanks to his son and three nephews, the third generation of Attmans helping steer the company.

"My father was never one to say, when the kids came in, 'No, that's not how we do things,'" Attman said. "That's how we got into a lot of the green stuff."

Just off Eutaw Place, Attman shared some of what's made the hometown company successful.

### **How did Acme go from a family business to working with such big venues like Oriole Park?**

It really started from the way my father would go to the market. He would always take something new to somebody and try to let them know the features and the benefits, and let them know how it could impact their business. So our wiring is really to learn what a customer, what a client, likes to do, how they do it, what they would like to do better, and then fit the pieces of what's new in the market — new tech, new products — that can help promote more of [what] they want to sell, or help them differentiate themselves from any of their competition.

### **Can you describe what you do for the stadiums?**

We've always done many different product lines with both the Orioles and the Ravens that are very similar for their client bases, but always give them their own identity. With the Orioles, we developed the first carry tray, the first pulp carry tray, which are very common nowadays. That was developed here at Oriole Park as the first location on the East Coast to ever sell it. And that's because [the Orioles] had good management that wanted to find ways for the customer to have a better experience, but yet [wanted] the ability to sell more product to them. So there were things like the carry tray, and there were things that we developed here like the first printed plastic cup for beer. We've developed things for the Ravens for popcorn or for hot dogs that were good for the customer base they had.

### **You also do business with Maryland Live. Can you talk about the dynamics there?**

The opportunities in places like Maryland Live are tremendous. They deal with so many things so well. They're very proactive when it comes to sanitizing, to make sure their places are clean for their guests, and it's a healthy environment. They also focus on marketing their image in some of their disposable products. They just opened up an Asian restaurant there and we just built the entire restaurant, from their ovens to their walk-ins, and helped them put that project together. Also we do Bobby Flay's [Bobby's Burger Palace restaurant], which is in there, and we do some of the individual operators. [The casino] also had some desires to make sure that the felt that people were betting on was very clean and sanitized, so we developed systems with steam that they could use to make sure that their products didn't wear. They still look nice, but [are] safe for their customers to be around all the time.

### **You've tried to be innovative with sustainability. How?**

When we sit down with our clients, we really talk to them about their goals. How important is sustainability to them? How important is cleanliness and sanitation to them? How important is branding to them? And while we discuss it, we let them know our capabilities. We might be the largest stocking distributor of green products in the country. We started the program with the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, when they were using a composting system. We not only can do compostable products from anywhere, we can do compostable products all made in the USA. We're very forward-thinking in those areas.

**You run a family business and work in sports venues and theme parks. What does a vacation look like for you?**

When you work in a family business that you love so much and you're so passionate about and you work so closely with everybody, it seems like the social part and the business part still always tie together because it's part of who we are. My wife and I and my kids get a chance to do things separately from my brothers and their families, but not that often. When you talk about the seasonal stuff, we do, along the Eastern Shore, everything from Cape May to Virginia Beach, so we're always traveling these areas trying to just look up and get a little sunshine, but yet focusing on what we have to focus on.

**About Acme Paper:**

Founded in 1946, Acme Paper & Supply Co. is the leading Mid-Atlantic distributor of innovative, customized and cost-effective packaging, equipment and supplies, with an emphasis on sustainability. The company provides wholesale distribution to the hospitality, health care, recreation, education, food processing, and property management industries. In 2013, Acme Paper purchased ReStockIt.com, a recognized leader in business-to-business ecommerce. For more information about Acme Paper, visit [www.acmepaper.com](http://www.acmepaper.com) or call 410.792.2333.