

BUSINESS

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SECTION C

A leader in its field

Chamber recognizes Gateway Packaging

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Gateway Packaging has become a leader nationally as a manufacturer of flexible packaging for the food and pet food industries.

Located at 20 Central Industrial Drive in Granite City, Gateway was recently recognized by the publication "Stagnito Communications" for innovations in the packaging industry.

In September, the Chamber of Commerce of Southwestern Madison County recognized Gateway as its business of the month because of Gateway's longevity and success in Granite City.

Zach Miller, whose father Roger Miller founded Gateway at his Granite City residence more than 20 years ago, said 90 percent of the Granite City operations is packaging used in the pet food and food industries.

The remaining 10 percent of the business laminates and prints packaging, lids, pouches, bags, and labels, through offsetting, Miter bottom and pouch machines.

The machinery and the technology behind it has made Gateway a giant in the packaging industry.

"Gateway Packaging focuses on high-quality packaging and printing," said Zach Miller, facilities manager.

"The offsetting machine produces a print that's comparable to magazine print. It's the Rolls Royce of printing. Offset printing has been taken to the retail consumer for the first time, and it may forever change the way flexible packaging is converted."

Gateway sits on a little more than 100,000 square feet off Illinois Route 3.

It is one of two packaging companies owned by Roger Miller.

The other is located in Kansas City, Mo.

Roger Miller was in the packaging business for years before he founded Gateway Packaging in 1982.

Roger Miller moved Gateway to 20 Central Industrial Drive in 1991. Since then it has expanded twice.

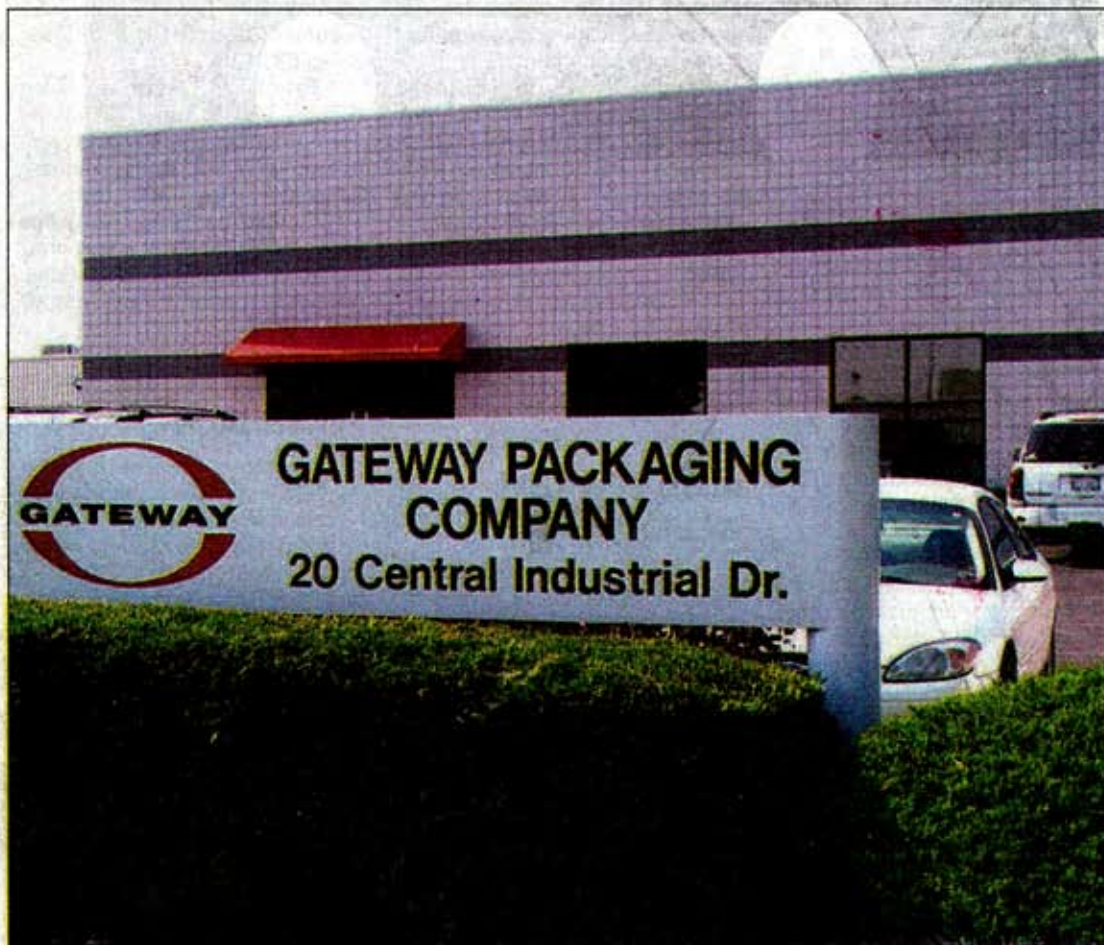
Gateway employs 150 at its Granite City facility and 150 at its Kansas City facility.

It has annual sales of \$50 million.

"We're primarily a domestic company, but we do some shipping to Canada and Mexico," Zach Miller said.

He said the success of Gateway is based on customer service and the ability of the company to continue to improve its printing and packaging capabilities.

"The first 15 years customer focus was a high-level priority, and it still is, along with good people to get the job done on



MICHAEL HEIL PHOTO

Gateway Packaging, a giant in the packaging industry, was honored by the Chamber of Commerce of Southwestern Madison County as its business of the month for September.

the floor and in the office," Zach Miller said.

"More recently our success has been based on the realization that we are competing in a global economy, so we had to sell things differently through high-quality printing and new innovative products to the marketplace."

Miller said Gateway will continue to call Granite City its home in the coming years and

is committed to the philosophy of continuous improvement.

He said he likes to use a phrase that his father often says because it speaks volumes about the company.

"We want to meet our customers' expectations 100 percent of the time," Zach Miller said.

"Our mission is to be the best printer and converter of

bags and flexible packaging in the United States."

Roger Miller started Gateway with a \$10,000 investment and two customers.

Yet sales during the first year topped out at \$500,000.

Rosemarie Brown, executive director of the chamber, described Roger Miller as a "local man who did good."