

Harco Enterprises Limited

Harco is fourth-generation family business which operates two distinct divisions: Plastic Injection Molding and Process & Supply, which distributes sanitary processing equipment and components. The firm has a flexible product line, and is always looking for new market opportunities to take advantage of.

Headquarters	675 The Parkway, Peterborough, Ontario, K9J 7K2
Year Established	1964
NAICS	326198 - All other plastic product manufacturing
Employees	19
Major Expansions	1970
Exports	United States
Parent Company	N/A
Other Locations	N/A

Harco Enterprises Ltd. (Harco) is a family-owned and -operated manufacturer and distributor in Peterborough, Ontario. In the 55 years that Harco has been in operation, it has diversified its product line to take advantage of various market opportunities. Today, the firm focuses on two divisions: plastic injection molding and the wholesale distribution of sanitary process equipment such as, pumps, valves, heat exchangers, and mixing equipment.

Harco was founded by Ray Harris in 1964. With a career in the sanitary process industry, Harris noticed that when certain pieces of equipment were damaged or worn, they were typically discarded. Seeing an opportunity, he began repairing the discarded equipment in his garage—initially more as a hobby than a standard business. Thanks to this arrangement, companies were able to have their equipment fixed at a low cost and Harris was able to earn a side income. As business began to pick up, Harris realized that it would also be beneficial to supply select lines of equipment. He continued to find new product lines to add to his distribution network over the years and in the late 1970s, he purchased some plastic molding equipment and started that side of his business as well.

Today, Harco remains a proud family business—Ray’s wife, Joan, and his two children, Terry and Kathy, run the company. Housed in a 16,000-square-foot production facility, Harco boasts a modern machine shop, production facilities along with an in-house design team. Through its multiple product lines, the business continues to experience stable and controlled growth as it takes advantage of new market opportunities.

As noted, Harco promotes two main product lines: plastic injection molding and sanitary process

equipment components and supply items. Aside from shared administration and facilities, the two divisions have little cross-over. This diversification in product mix and markets is what the Harris family believes has strengthened the company and positioned itself well for the long term.

Harco's Plastic Division focuses on injection molded items crossing various markets from promotional products to general industrial items. With an in-house design and art team, Harco works with customers to generate custom products. Molds are created with computer-aided design (CAD) modelling and quickly installed on the plastic injection machine to begin production in a timely manner. Continual investments in new technology provide higher production quality and capacity, creating not only a better product but also a faster time to delivery.

The Sanitary Process Division targets the food, dairy, beverage, brewing, and pharmaceutical industries. Harco's customers range from large multinational corporations to small independent businesses. The company's expansion of its tool room and machining equipment allow it to additionally offer the production of specialty parts, welding services, and custom assembly of equipment.

The bulk of Harco's plastic products are exported through distributors. While its sanitary process division mostly services the Canadian market, it is actively working to grow its international presence, particularly in the United States. Harco tends to offer value-based products and solutions rather than price-only based items, differentiating itself with exceptional customer service and problem solving. Moreover, the fact that it is a family-owned, fourth-generation business sets the company apart from its competitors and appeals to many customers.

Harco is a longstanding member of the Peterborough business community, often supporting charitable events and associations in the area. The Harris family is happy to be located in the Peterborough area, citing good access to major markets and transportation networks through the 400 series highways, a high quality of life, and good cooperation with the local municipal government as some of the benefits of the location.

Finding labour has not been a big challenge for Harco, as many of its employees have been with the company for years. Yet, the Harris family acknowledges that as these workers begin to retire, finding suitable skilled labour to replace them may prove to be a challenge. Despite steady, consecutive growth, Harco has not had to drastically expand its workforce to keep up with this growth. Instead, continual improvements in equipment, technology, and procedures have allowed for productivity and efficiency gains.

Harco is placing a strong emphasis on producing durable, multi-use plastic items, such as handles, utensils, gauges, caps, which have a longer product lifetime than single-use items. Harco is also molding items with biopolymer substitutes. Similar to conventional plastics in many ways, biopolymers are made from renewable plant-based resources. As a compostable and renewable resource, they are a good alternative in various applications.

Harco is always on the lookout for new opportunities and ways to enhance its product lines. On the plastics line, new molds are easily and cheaply made utilizing the latest CAD software, which gives Harco a high level of flexibility to adjust its products to match market demand. This characteristic that has been a core part of the business since its inception. With a versatile product line, a strong labour force, and commitment to exceptional customer service, Harco is sure to continue expanding in all of its business areas.

