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Wound and Burn Care Company, Rochal Industries LLC is developing revolutionary Products that Remove Biofilm and Speedup the Healing Process

Ann Beal Salamone
President

Rochal Industries LLC

Contact:
CEOCFO Magazine
570-851-1745

Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor
CEOCFO Magazine

CEOCFO: Ms. Salamone, what is the concept behind Rochal Industries, LLC?

Ms. Salamone: Rochal Industries was founded back in 1986 in the Boston, Massachusetts area. At that time seven of us were involved in different industries in Massachusetts, mostly in electronics. The state was headed for a recession. Therefore, those of us who were scientists figured the best way to diversify our portfolio, which is different from what you would do, for instance, coming from a financial background; we decided that we would develop products in a different area than electronics. Hence, we founded Rochal Industries in order to diversify our portfolio and to create financial success in a different area than electronics. We founded Rochal to develop products in personal care and in wound care, thinking at that time that personal care - new nail polish formulations and nail polish applicators - would be a quick hit. It turns out that it was not and we dropped that area within a year; and have focused on wound and burn care ever since then. Our company philosophy is to create products that make a difference to human well-being.

CEOCFO: Would you tell us a little bit about going from electronics to medical? What was the change and how did you adapt to some of new challenges in a medical arena?

Ms. Salamone: First of all, in every position that I held my primary function, even as president, is as a polymer chemist. When I was in electronics I was actually developing the chemicals that go onto integrated chips and into flexible circuits and into printed circuits. Way back in the research department, no one in marketing and sales, for instance, was aware that our group even existed. Therefore, we were developing new insulation materials and conductive materials and new processes for manufacturing. That work resulted in some of the raw materials for multilayer circuitry that DuPont still uses today. The transition from electronic to medical, was mostly learning the industry needs.

CEOCFO: What are you working on today at Rochal?

Ms. Salamone: This particular year our sister company is launching five of our products that we have created within Rochal's R&D department. They are based on three different scientific platforms that were created to address the clinical need of treating chronic wounds. One platform is based on the chemistry and biology to mitigate biofilms found in infected wounds. The second platform provides spray-on coatings that are used to cover wounds and allow a good environment for wound healing. Then, the third platform is a delivery mechanism for delivering active ingredients to help the healing process.

CEOCFO: Wound care is a big field with lots of players and ideas. Would you elaborate on the three areas that you mentioned? What is different about your approach and how does it improve upon or totally change the way things are done now?

Ms. Salamone: In the United States, there are many people that have chronic wounds, about two percent of the population. That translates into about 6.5 million chronic diabetic ulcers, to be specific. Typically, these wounds are more than four weeks old but can be present for up to three years; because people with diabetes have limited healing competency which is compounded by infection. What is changing with what Rochal has created is an ability to repair that wound bed so that it can heal more quickly, by removing the biofilm (infection) that is preventing healing.

CEOCFO: *What happens when your product is put on the wound?*

Ms. Salamone: A biofilm in a wound is composed of many different types of bacteria and fungi. Each of those bacteria and fungi build a polymer matrix around them or we could say a house. It is like you and I sitting outside on the street as a human and when we are in our house or in our office we are more protected than we were outside. Therefore, these bacteria and fungi create these houses and apartment buildings around themselves to protect themselves. With Rochal's unique science and biology, we are able to deconstruct those houses and then go in and take care of those microbes.

CEOCFO: *There are two other products you mentioned?*

Ms. Salamone: One is a technology that we have had for quite some time in a general way. It is a spray-on system that forms a film on the skin to protect it from body fluids, such as with incontinence. This unique chemistry we first commercialized through 3M back in 1992. It is the market leader and continues to be used to provide an environment for that skin to remain healthy under adverse conditions. Newer generations of this platform technology have also been commercialized. The third platform technology is a delivery mechanism that is also based on the spray on composition that allows for non-stinging and non-hurting and a coating that goes on the skin, but also allows for antimicrobials or anti-inflammatory agents to be incorporated in it.

“We strive to help millions in need of wound care with our current products and continued product research enabling human well-being, while contributing to the success of our corporate partners.”- Ann Beal Salamone

CEOCFO: *Would you tell us about your sister company?*

Ms. Salamone: The sister company is strong in marketing and sales of wound care and surgical care products. We are synergistic companies. Rochal creates products and they get them to those in need.

CEOCFO: *Does the industry recognize Rochal Industries? Are they more likely to pay attention to something new because it comes from you?*

Ms. Salamone: Rochal has been a very, very quiet company. We have worked with almost all of the large wound care companies in the world and provided products and know-how to them. However, we worked behind the scenes until this year. This year, because our product portfolio is so strong and we have private equity expertise, we are working with a sister company to sell products that are expected to be market leaders.

CEOCFO: *Would the same companies be likely to use more than one of your products?*

Ms. Salamone: Yes.

CEOCFO: *What is the timetable for the roll out on the products?*

Ms. Salamone: Two of them are coming out in May and three are coming out in December.

CEOCFO: *How do you go about assessing a problem when you are looking to create an innovation? What do you understand from your background that perhaps less experienced people do not recognize?*

Ms. Salamone: From the standpoint of a wound care product, the first thing that we look at and evaluate is the clinical need. What is the clinical need, why is there a clinical need and who is ultimately going to recognize that there is a clinical need? Then, once you know what the clinical need is then attack the problem, again from the standpoint of how to resolve it. For example, about six or seven years ago we recognized the clinical need of getting rid of these infections that were in the biofilm state in a wound bed. At that time researchers recognized it, but doctors and nurses had not yet recognized that that was part of the problem that was preventing them from being able to heal chronic wounds for months, sometimes years. However, the research community recognized it. Therefore, we evaluated what was going on within the wound bed from the microbe standpoint, figured out the chemistry and biology and then went forward and developed products.

CEOCFO: *What is new in polymers?*

Ms. Salamone: That is an interesting question! Probably the newest thing, which is not so new, but it is manufacturing polymers from biological sources and using biological polymers, rather than synthetic. Therefore, plant derived or bacterially derived polymers; biomanufacturing of polymers.

CEOCFO: *How has that changed your approach or is it just another tool in the kit?*

Ms. Salamone: It is just another tool in the kit.

CEOCFO: *What is ahead for Rochal?*

Ms. Salamone: More product innovation and more products out to help people. The company has transitioned from strictly a research and development company to now also managing regulatory and manufacturing for the products that we create in our laboratory. Therefore, I expect Rochal to become fundamentally more product driven, relative to taking things all the way through manufacturing and then ship them off to our sister company for marketing, sales and so on.

CEOCFO: *Why the decision now to go in that direction?*

Ms. Salamone: Because of the robustness of our pipeline.

CEOCFO: *What surprised you as Rochal has grown and evolved?*

Ms. Salamone: The five families of us that founded Rochal Industries in 1986, really created it as a lifestyle company and that was what it was for about twenty years. That means that we developed products and we licensed products and we worked in the lab. We brought in royalties. It was a very easy, fun type of business. It was not until we developed this very robust line of products that came out of our lab that we knew we needed to do something different in order to reach more people with the products. At that time we brought in private equity expertise in 2014. That decision is what has created this dramatic change in our environment, from just R&D to also having more forward business components like manufacturing, quality and regulatory. It has been fun! Therefore, lots of it has been surprising!

CEOCFO: *Why is Rochal Industries, LLC an important company?*

Ms. Salamone: We strive to help millions in need of wound care with our current products and continued product research enabling human well-being, while contributing to the success of our corporate partners.