

**By Amy Byrnes**

Tucked behind the Applebee's off Hope Road in Tinton Falls in an unassuming building is one of the leading manufacturers of scrapbooking products – and we're not talking about stamp pads in three or four basic colors.

Ranger Industries produces an ever-changing line of quality inks and embossing powders used primarily by scrapbookers, mixed media artists, jewelry makers and home decor crafters and sold in retail craft stores around the country like Michaels and AC Moore. According to company president Justin Russo, Ranger has three full-time staff members working in the lab to develop new products and keep up with color trends, which change and need to be adapted every six months.

Since 2005, the company has grown from 40 to 83 employees, including 17 workers it absorbed when Ranger consolidated the business to the Tinton Falls location and closed a Pennsylvania site.

Russo and his partner Alain Avrillon agreed that about 25 percent of each day is spent on thinking about new products. Many innovations they have developed for the medical and retail environment – used in surgeries or as the sell-by date stamped on a snack bag– are then translated into the larger retail craft market.

Russo, who lives in Oceanport, said that about 10 percent of their customers are industrial. “The crafter doesn't drive the business,” he said, “the industrial customer does.”

Avrillon, a native of South Africa who now lives in Monmouth Beach and is sales director, made the comparison to the multiple uses and products that Arm & Hammer has found for baking soda other than for baking cookies.

“How do you legislate innovation?” asked Russo. “You have to find your niche.”

□ *To read the rest of the article, please visit [Eatontown-Tinton Falls Patch](#).*