



American Licorice Company

Sweet success.

AMERICAN LICORICE COMPANY
LA PORTE, INDIANA

ONE OF THE OLDEST LICORICE MANUFACTURERS
IN THE UNITED STATES

Financial stability is important to American Licorice. It has enabled the century-old company to remain a candy aisle staple, even as other family-run confectioneries are absorbed by larger companies or disappear completely.

Old-fashioned customer service also matters to American Licorice, which has built strong customer loyalty by delighting generations of children with its Red Vines and other classic licorice twists, ropes and bites.

After being introduced to Commerce Bank, the licorice maker felt it had found a bank with similar priorities, according to John Kretchmer, chief executive officer and great-grandson of the company's founder.

So in October 2011, the West Coast based company moved its business — including lines of credit, cash management, credit card services and more — to Commerce. The bank's largely Midwestern branch footprint didn't make a lick of difference. "These days, it's possible to bank with anyone from anywhere in the world," says Kretchmer. "We chose Commerce because it is a strong, financially stable bank that could give us the financial flexibility to improve and expand production, invest in our associates and weather challenging economic cycles with confidence."

Currently celebrating its 100-year anniversary, American Licorice makes six different brands of licorice twists, ropes and bites at its production facilities in California and Indiana. From left, John Nelson, chief operations officer; and Clarence Walsh, accounting manager.

“What attracted us was Commerce's financial strength and high industry ratings. The fact that there's no branch nearby is, in this day and age, irrelevant.”

But it was more than that. "Commerce took the time to understand our business and to earn our trust and respect," says Kretchmer. "That allows us to focus our energy on what we do best — making the great candy our customers love."

