

THE IDEAL ALMANAC

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The Unexpected Results of COVID

Hello and Welcome to the November Edition of the Ideal Almanac.

Eighteen months ago, life was moving along at a semi-consistent rate. Global economies were mostly stable—if not rising, global supply chains operated normally, inflation was almost non-existent, and the bulk of people working did so outside their homes. In late 2019, I was traveling in China and the hints of the Coronavirus were just starting to appear. I got back to the US without a problem, but two months later I barely got back from a trip to Chicago before the entire world locked down. For many, it meant a year of either working from home or getting government aid which reverberated around the world with companies slowing down or going out of existence. What was seen as a hopeful impossibility came forth with frightful reality, with the unemployment rate indicating how bad things really were. But in all of that negativity, some good things did come out. In our case, we kept on operating throughout—except for one week last year between Christmas and New Year's. For those of us who were able to be working inside our plants, the camaraderie of facing an overwhelming foe helped to create a permanent bond that has never wavered. For our people working from home, they too were able to operate as they had not

done before; even those with severe health issues that would have probably forced them into partial or full retirement, were able to work productively and successfully and can now do so into the foreseeable future.

COVID has taught us to be even more nimble and resourceful than ever before. When the marketplace throws everyone a new curve, like huge supply chain issues, we may gripe a little at first (okay, maybe a lot), but then we hunker down and find solutions. Getting deliveries from our supplies in months instead of weeks is causing havoc everywhere, but if we look hard enough, we can sometimes find material others can't. As I write this, our domestic sales are higher than last year and globally, we are also ahead. Having multiple locations around the world has been a great help—especially when specific areas go into partial or full lockdown. We are also greatly looking forward to our new

plant in Malaysia going on line early next year.

Business travel has been extremely difficult. I was in Canada a few weeks ago—which was my first time there in over two years. While I still can't schedule sales calls in Europe and Asia, I am hopeful for the first quarter of next year. That is it in a nutshell, see what is possible, and utilize our available resources as best we can. We need to be as efficient as possible, stay optimistic, hope for Divine Intervention as needed, and keep smiling because the odds are good that you, like us, have the chance to do amazing things as long as we keep moving forward.

Regards,
Andrew

Read more of Andrew's blogs at:
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