

well-established member of the community and president of the New Jersey State Board of Pharmacy, Martini helped establish a wholesale drug distribution company in 1947 named after the county of Bergen, in which they lived. The success of the Bergen Drug Company was phenomenal, in part because of the insatiable demand for the wonder drugs of World War II, including such antibiotics as penicillin. Despite the growing sales volume, the company continued to offer same-day service.

With the 1955 death of Emil P. Martini Sr., leadership of the company was turned over to Martini's son, Emil P. Martini Jr. The Bergen Drug Company then began rapidly expanding and acquiring other wholesale drug companies. In May 1969, Martini successfully negotiated the purchase of Brunswick Drug Corporation. The name of the new company was the Bergen Brunswick Corporation. Bergen Brunswick became an innovator in electronic data interchange (EDI) transmissions of purchase orders, handheld computer scanners, automated distribution centers, and next-day delivery to pharmacies.¹²

Alco Standard Corporation purchased The Drug House in 1977, and in 1985 became known as Alco Health Services Corporation. AHSC Holdings Corporation acquired Alco Health Services Corporation in 1988 through a management-led buyout, and in 1994 changed its name to AmeriSource Health Corporation. Two large acquisitions were made in 1999: C.D. Smith Healthcare and a substantial share of ADDS Telepharmacy Solutions, Inc.¹³

In 2001, AmeriSource Health Corporation merged with Bergen Brunswick Corporation to form AmerisourceBergen Corporation. Today, AmerisourceBergen is a leader in global pharmaceutical sourcing and distribution services and has the largest global generics purchasing organization. AmerisourceBergen has 26 U.S. pharmaceutical distribution centers, 4 U.S. specialty distribution centers, and 2 Canadian distribution centers in North America.¹⁴

CARDINAL HEALTH*

Cardinal Health is a relative newcomer to the big three vis-à-vis McKesson and AmerisourceBergen. Cardinal Health was founded in 1971 by Robert D. Walter when he opened a small distribution center

* The following is a summary of the history of Cardinal Health from the Cardinal Health website.