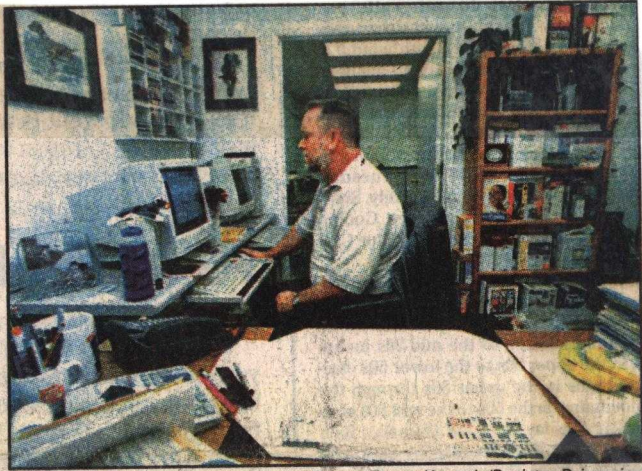
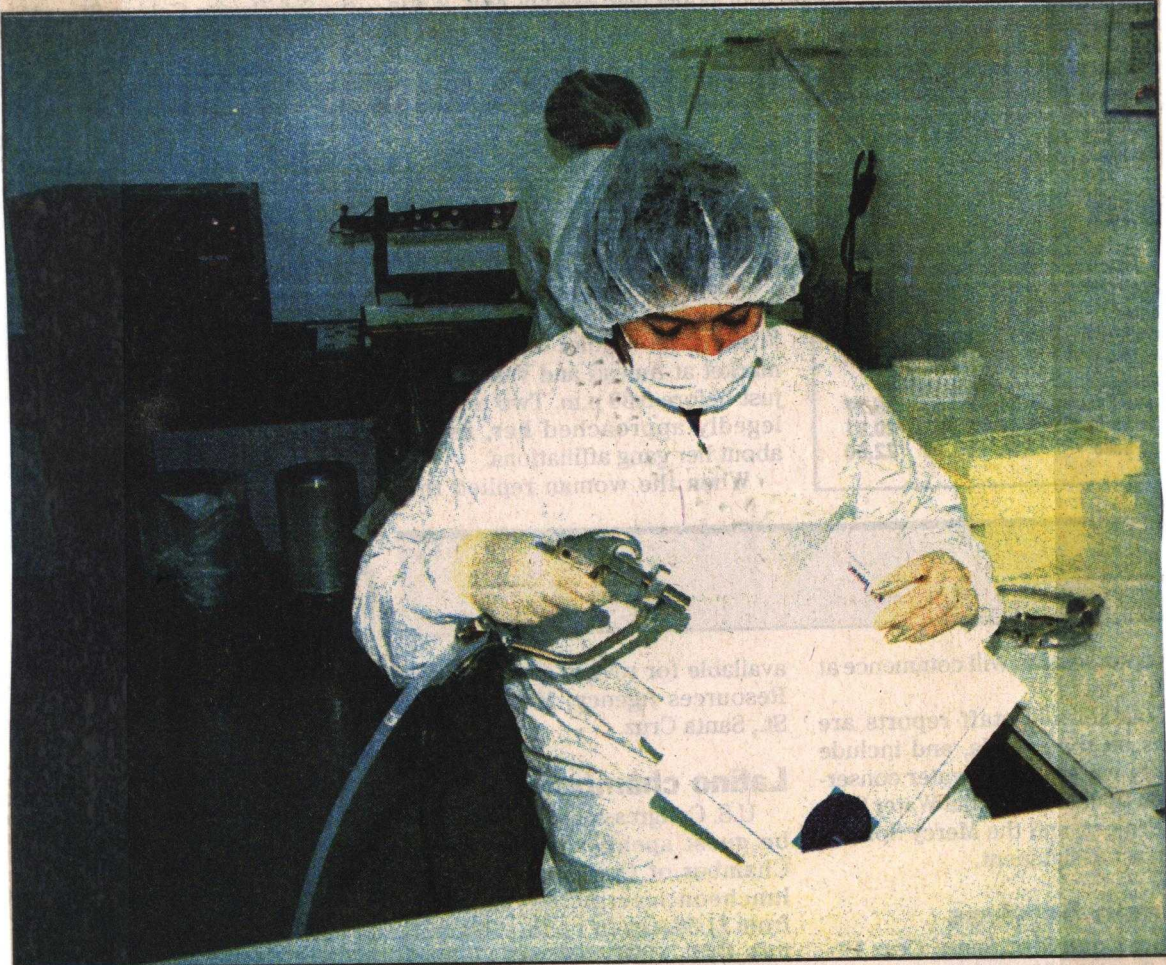


1990-2000

High tech companies look to local firm



Photos Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian
Paul Couchman, chief technical officer, is surrounded by a sea of computer paraphernalia.



Lydia Zarate uses an air gun to clean a brochure inside the class 10 clean room.

Behind the scene at Advanced Paper Solutions

By TARMO HANNULA

REGISTER-PAJARONIAN STAFF WRITER

WATSONVILLE — Where in Watsonville do you find a company that can replicate CD ROMS, perform clean room kitting and assembly, digital archiving, boxing, labeling, warehousing, inventorying, database management and global distribution?

This wealth of professional services, that includes such mammoth clients as Motorola, Granite Rock and Granite Construction, West Marine, IBM, Plantronics — the list goes on — is all unpretentiously tucked behind one small business card taped to the window at 420 Airport Blvd. which reads Advanced Paper Solutions, Inc.

Founded in 1992 by C. Travis Watkins, APS started out as a niche market based on Watkins' 18 years of experience in the semi-conductor industry, in wafer processing, contamination

control, cleanroom and bond documentation.

"Right now, we have over 50 employees, of which 90 percent are from Watsonville," Watkins said. "But the way things are going, and as demands grow, we expect to double — or even triple — over the next year. We are currently building on as we speak."

With well over 100 clients, APS provides service to eight of the world's top ten semiconductor equipment manufacturers.

"APS is a complete turn-key supplier of kitting fulfillment and digital database management," Watkins said.

Kitting is the production, assembly and final packaging and delivery of a company's general documentation, brochures, manuals, etc. sealed in a kit.

"We are very proud of the fact that we do have our own full service, in-house custom design department," Watkins said. APS can complete creative design, Web site

design, custom packaging design, marketing communications design and corporate identification design, Watkins said.

The class 10 clean room — which was the initial core service offered by APS that led to the creation of the company — is a clean, dust free work environment used to assemble kits, brochures, bound materials, technical manuals, etc. Watkins said certain products, such as computer hardware are packaged under extremely clean, dust free conditions so as not to contaminate the product with dust, lint, or free floating materials. The small white clean room has a close resemblance to a surgery room where workers wear white gowns, gloves, and masks.

"There is a great team of workers here and our customers have been good to us," Watkins said. "Watsonville has been a good base for our operation."

SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL
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REFERENCE