

Catching up on business

Distribution firm purchased for Hill's

Veterinary Companies of America Inc. has been purchased by Colgate-Palmolive Co. for Colgate's Hill's Pet Products Division, which is headquartered in Topeka.

VCA is headquartered in Tempe, Ariz., and is the largest independent distributor of Hill's Pet Products, servicing the western United States. VCA was previously a subsidiary of BTR Inc., of Stamford, Conn. A spokesman for Hill's said there will be no changes in VCA operations, and the company will remain in Tempe. VCA has 280 employees.

Hill's is the country's leading supplier of therapeutic pet foods. The Hill's Prescription Diet products are dispensed exclusively through veterinary clinics. In addition, Hill's sells its Science Diet line of nutritional products through veterinary clinics, pet shops, breeders and kennels.

Hill's distributes its products through a number of independent distributors. The purchase of VCA marks the first time the company has gotten involved in owning a distributorship, the spokesman said.

Roderick Turner, senior executive vice president of Colgate and chief of operations - specialty marketing, said, "VCA is an excellent fit for Hill's, supporting its continued strong growth in the animal health industry. VCA is a leader in its field and possesses specialized expertise in sales and distribution. This investment reflects Hill's strategic commitment to the veterinary community."

Robert Wheeler, president of Hill's, said "This business combination reflects a natural extension of the partnership approach which has developed over the years between Hill's and VCA. VCA will operate as an independent entity and continue as a full-time veterinary products distribution company. Hill's will continue to rely on all its distributors to service the needs of its customers."