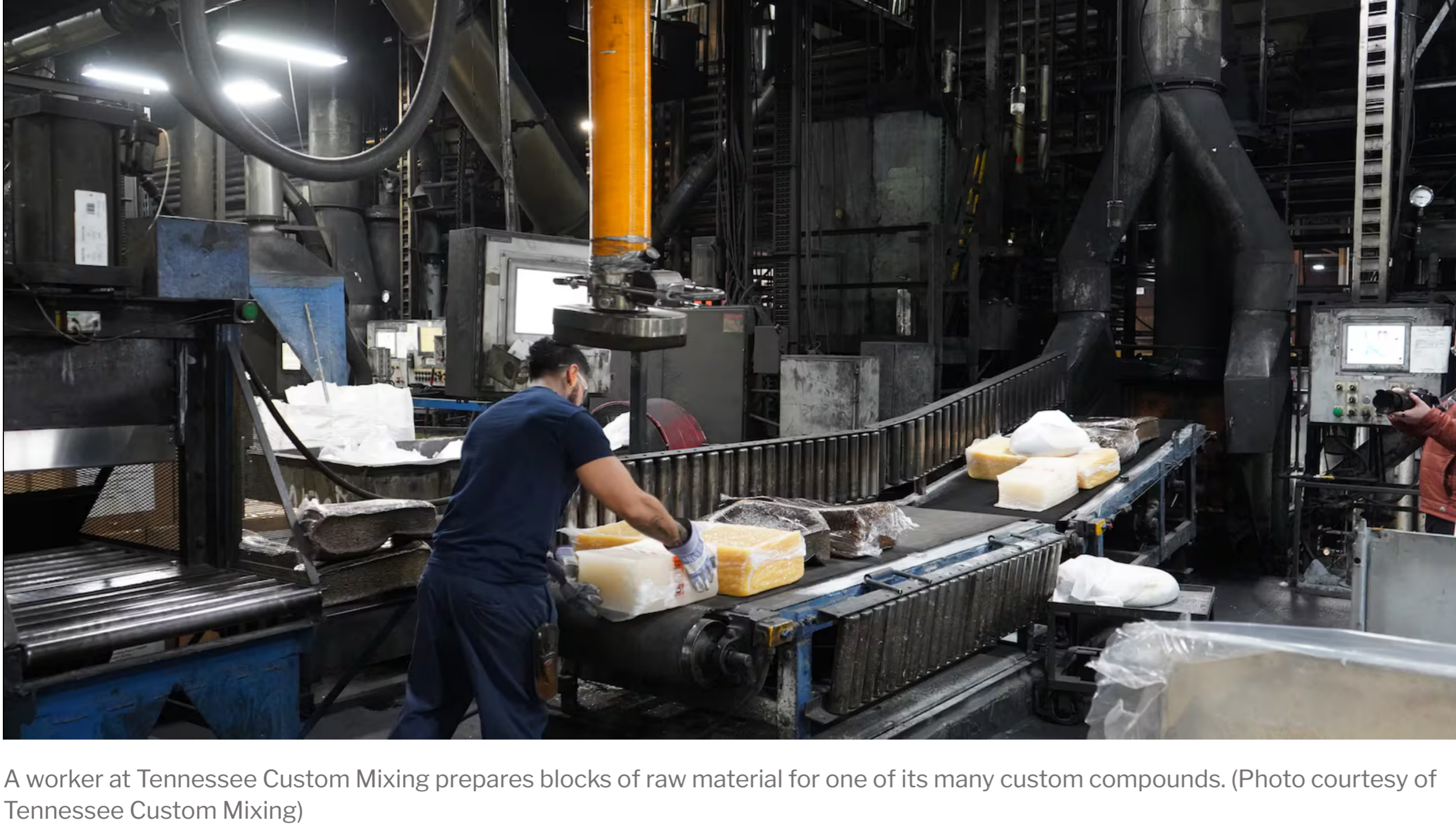


NEWS

Quality, consistency part of Tennessee Custom Mixing's recipe for success

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A worker at Tennessee Custom Mixing prepares blocks of raw material for one of its many custom compounds. (Photo courtesy of Tennessee Custom Mixing)

By Andrew Schunk February 13, 2026 12:25 PM EST

UNION CITY, Tenn.—Tennessee Custom Mixing (TCM), an independent subsidiary of Titan International Inc., is ready to spread its wings—as well as its rubber compounds—in 2026.

The central U.S. firm has been growing its external business model since 2021, when the pandemic forced market contractions and TCM jumped at the opportunity to fill mixing roles for customers outside of Titan.

"Where we position ourselves is that we are big enough to play with all the big names," Aaron Wells, director of compound development at TCM, told *Rubber News*. "That is one of the attractive pieces to us—pursuing that outside market, as we were focused in the past on the internal piece.

"As COVID happened, market contractions happened—and we saw an opportunity to grow that piece out. In my mind, we are well-suited as a single facility to compete with any other single facility in the U.S."



Aaron Wells (Photo courtesy of Tennessee Custom Mixing)

The firm's bread and butter is high-volume runs, though it does not shy away from any project that requires problem-solving.

"We've never shied away from masterbatches," Wells said. "Masterbatching work—if folks have that need—we can help fulfill that. That is well-aligned for us.



"We are buying a lot of SBR, natural rubber, classic masterbatch-type materials, highly aligned with our raw material buying today."

Wells said TCM works in EPDM, BR, HNBR and chloroprene, among many other rubbers.

"The only thing we do not mess with much is FKM," he said. "We have talked about growth potential and these are things we are evaluating. But we have a little bit of everything."

Wells said the engineers and sales force at TCM do not say "no" very often.

"I like my days here—they are a lot of fun," Wells said. "None of us like to say 'no.' People come to us and need a solution to something.

"We enjoy helping them to get on the right path."

And TCM has taken its increased capacity to market in a big way.

"We are well suited for high-volume automotive, and we have done rubber work for appliances, washing machine hoses," said Wendell Duke, outside mixing sales manager for TCM. "We've dabbled in a bit of everything outside of tires."



Wendell Duke (Photo courtesy of Tennessee Custom Mixing)

Undeniably, tires, via the Titan legacy, have been a big part of TCM's history.

"But anything else in that high-volume space is where we can really excel," Wells said. "We play in all the specialty stuff as well. By and large, with the mixing and capacity we have, we like it if someone needs high volume."

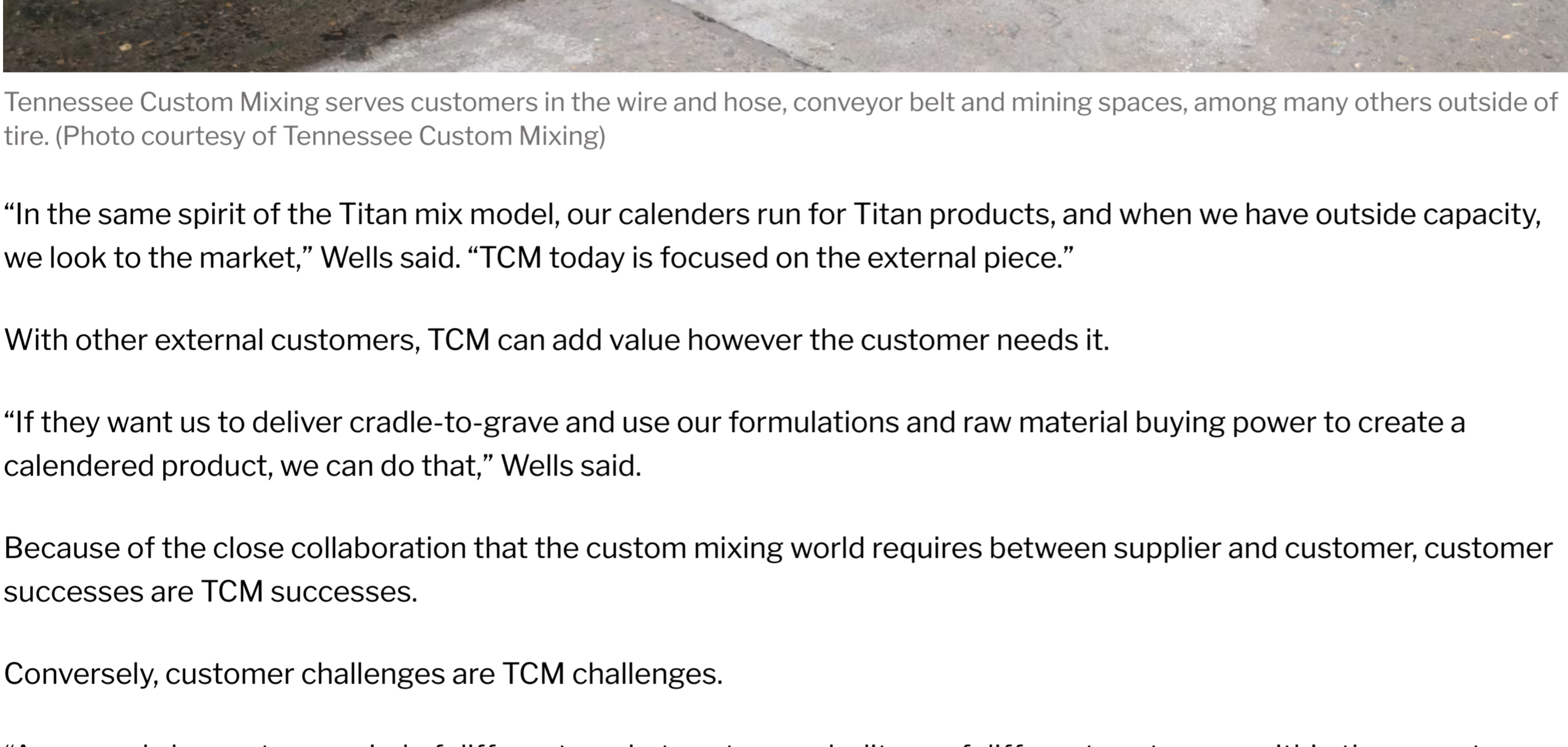
With its Union City location, TCM is able to offer consistent, repeatable, highly scrutinized compound formulas—the very benefits that pushed Titan to purchase the facility in November 2011.

"If you mix cookies in four different bowls, even though you use the same ingredients, you render four different types of cookies," Scott said. "If you make all the cookies in one bowl, you have a standardized, very predictable cookie from one location.

"The capacity at this location offered the ability for us to make cookies in one bowl for standard quality. That was Titan's initial interest—then capacity far exceeded current demand.

"The natural thing for us to do was to extend our capacity to other business partners."

Outside of straight mixing capabilities, TCM separates itself as a compounder with its calendaring lines, which run in a similar business model to the mixing philosophy.



Tennessee Custom Mixing serves customers in the wire and hose, conveyor belt and mining spaces, among many others outside of tire. (Photo courtesy of Tennessee Custom Mixing)

"In the same spirit of the Titan mix model, our calenders run for Titan products, and when we have outside capacity, we look to the market," Wells said. "TCM today is focused on the external piece."

With other external customers, TCM can add value however the customer needs it.

"If they want us to deliver cradle-to-grave and use our formulations and raw material buying power to create a calendared product, we can do that," Wells said.

Because of the close collaboration that the custom mixing world requires between supplier and customer, customer successes are TCM successes.

Conversely, customer challenges are TCM challenges.

"As a supply house to a myriad of different market sectors and a litany of different customers within those sectors, their pain is inherently our pain," Scott said. "We see supply chains readjusting to tariffs, domestic suppliers not being able to ship to different countries because of the tariffs.

"They are the problematic piece at this point. It is a resetting of who we supply, based on their import and export headwinds."

Wells noted that tariffs have been "double-edged." Like the lessons learned from COVID, tariffs giveth and tariffs taketh away.

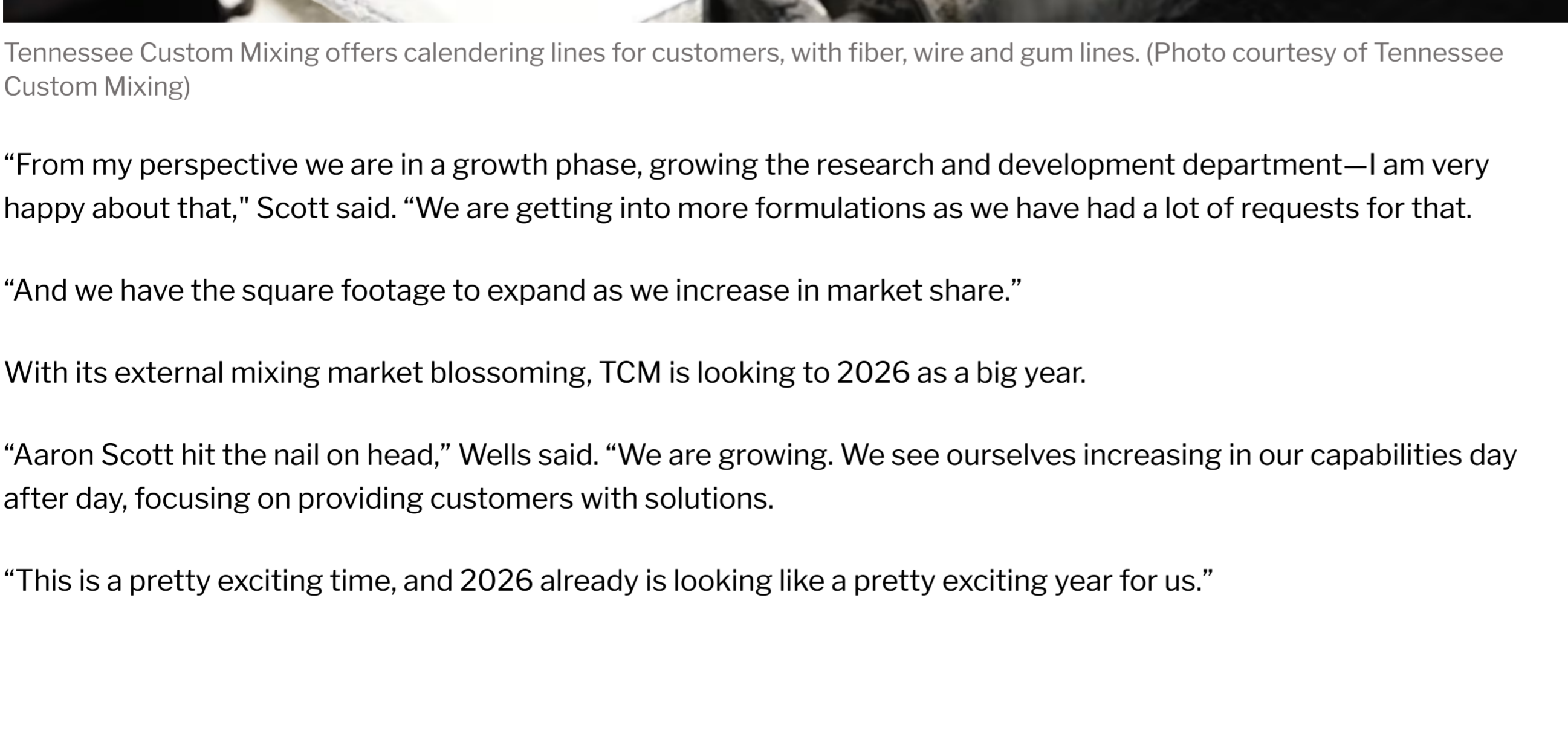
"We have seen things we did not like go away, but we have seen other opportunities as well," he said. "We don't know how this will shake out, but new opportunities have spawned from the tariff world we are in. But we are still in an unknown world.

"We are doing what we can. We are trying to solve problems."

Wells alluded again to the market contraction that offered early external opportunities for TCM.

"There are aspects to the value that TCM provides—being another source out there for people," he said. "Shame on us if we don't remember the lessons from COVID."

Fruitful tailwinds are blowing for TCM as well, especially as they relate to the firm's new research and development lab, currently under construction.



Tennessee Custom Mixing offers calendaring lines for customers, with fiber, wire and gum lines. (Photo courtesy of Tennessee Custom Mixing)

"From my perspective we are in a growth phase, growing the research and development department—I am very happy about that," Scott said. "We are getting into more formulations as we have had a lot of requests for that.

"And we have the square footage to expand as we increase in market share."

With its external mixing market blossoming, TCM is looking to 2026 as a big year.

"Aaron Scott hit the nail on head," Wells said. "We are growing. We see ourselves increasing in our capabilities day after day, focusing on providing customers with solutions.

"This is a pretty exciting time, and 2026 already is looking like a pretty exciting year for us."

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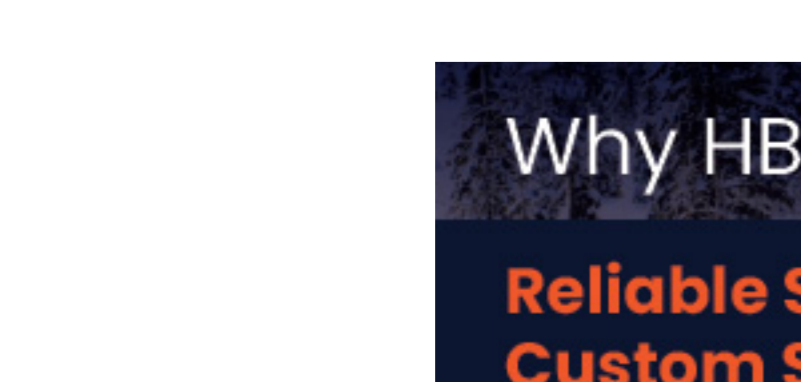
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By Andrew Schunk



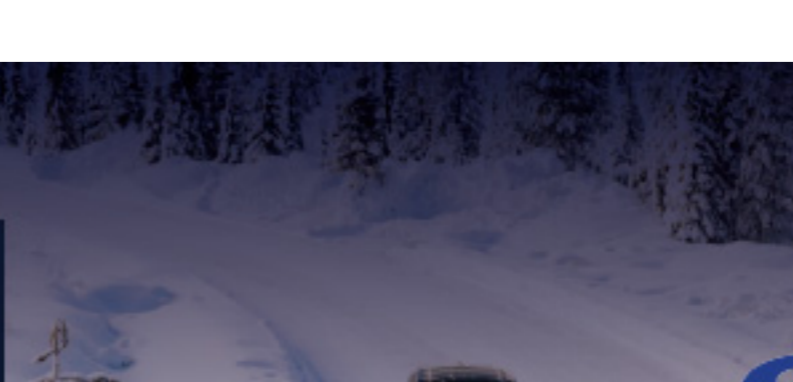
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