

Profits rise at Schein

■ **Melville company logs sales growth around globe**

■ **1Q figures strongest ever, beat analysts' outlook**

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Henry Schein Inc., a Melville-based distributor of medical products, reported record profits yesterday as its sales of supplies to dentists, doctors and veterinarians grew around the globe.

The company's net income rose more than 5 percent, to \$80.8 million, for the first three months of 2012 as net sales rose nearly 8 percent. Global sales of dental products, the company's biggest unit, rose more than 5 percent. Its sales of its animal health products rose 15 percent.

The quarterly figures were better than analysts expected and are the strongest ever for Henry Schein, Long Island's largest publicly traded company by revenue. On Monday the company was again named to Fortune magazine's list of the 500 largest U.S. public com-

panies, ranking 303 with \$8.5 billion in revenue during 2011.

Profits at the 80-year-old company have risen since it went public in 1995, as international demand has grown for dental implants, surgical instruments and other medical supplies. In the United States that growth has been fueled by baby boomers, whose relative affluence and education make them more likely than members of previous generations to visit doctors, have their teeth cleaned or bring pets to the vet.

"The demographics are in our favor," Henry Schein chief executive Stanley Bergman said in an interview. "Baby boomers know it is important to have preventative care."

The company also got a boost from the calendar and the weather.

Unlike in 2011, the first quarter of Henry Schein's 2012 fiscal year did not include the week after Christmas, when sales tend to sag.

Meanwhile, the lack of snow

this winter led to fewer patients' canceling medical appointments. That meant dentists, doctors and vets used more gloves, gauze and other supplies than normal during January, February and March.

Henry Schein employs nearly 15,000 people, including roughly 1,200 on Long Island. It operates in 24 countries, including Germany, France and the United Kingdom. The company entered the Chinese market in 2010.

As part of yesterday's announcement, the company raised its guidance on its 2012 earnings per share — what it expects to earn for the full year — to \$4.30 to \$4.40, from \$4.25 to \$4.34, excluding restructuring costs. The company also said it would repurchase an additional \$200 million of its common stock.

Henry Schein's stock climbed 3.75 percent yesterday to \$77.53.