

## odm Executive of the Month

# FAMILY-OWNED AND OPERATED SINCE 1928; GROWTH OF CASTLE IS AN AMERICAN SUCCESS STORY

## Carla Romita of Castle Oil Corp. has been an active industry participant since the beginning of her tenure

### Carla Romita



**HARRISON, NY** Carla Romita is senior vice president of Castle Oil Corp. Her background is eclectic for an oil company executive. Prior to joining Castle in 1996, Carla pursued a master's degree in German Literature and then went on to law school at NYU. She spent several years at the law firm of Reid & Priest LLC in New York, practicing business and real estate law. "I loved the practice of law, but I wanted a chance to participate in my grandfather's legacy at Castle," she said. Castle Oil Corp. was founded in 1928 by Mauro Romita, Sr. who founded a small coal delivery company in the Bronx.

The growth of Castle is the classic American success story. Its reputation is based on a foundation of family values, unparalleled customer service, and community involvement. Today, the company remains family-owned and operated. Carla and her brother, Michael, represent the third generation of the Romita family to follow in Mauro Romita's footsteps. With their father, Mauro C. Romita, who is president of the company, Carla, Michael, and a team of industry professionals con-

tinue to honor the founder's commitment to providing high-quality energy products, competitive pricing and extraordinary customer service.

Romita joined the company as vice president and associate counsel working with the company's general counsel on day to day legal matters, negotiating acquisitions of several smaller oil companies and working on the company's banking, real estate and insurance matters. Eventually she took over the management of Castle's residential fuel oil division which is a function she continues to have today. The thing she most enjoys about working at Castle is meeting the customers. She is delighted to meet customers who have been with Castle since her grandfather's time and also to greet customers who are new to the Castle "family." More recently Romita took responsibility for all of the company's marketing and advertising. She felt that it was important for the company to speak with a unified voice to the public. To that end, all of the marketing materials distributed by sales staff and advertising that appears in trade and consumer publications now exhibit the same look and consistent message that reinforce the corporate brand and the mission of the company: to provide the highest quality fuel oil and natural gas products and service at competitive prices.

Romita has enhanced the company's professional look at trade shows and in print, attracting notice both from customers and media professionals. At last year's Buildings New York Show at the Jacob Javits Center, Reed Exhibitions, the event manager, videotaped Castle's booth for inclusion in a video demonstrating how to plan and set up an effective trade show display. That show was one of Castle's most successful since



Shown (from left) are: Michael Romita, executive vice president; and Carla Romita, senior vice president

the booth generated a lot of traffic and hundreds of qualified leads. Many of those leads have become customers.

The professional look of the brand underscores the professional manner in which Castle approaches its business. It is a strategy that has proven very effective. The sales volumes are increasing in a very tight market. Senior vice president for sales, Lou Romano, and his staff need professional collateral materials and trade show presentations to augment their sales efforts. The professional marketing materials support the account executives' promises that the organization has the substance to meet its commitments.

Recently, Romita oversaw the redesign of the company's website to make it more accessible to customers and potential customers. Over the past 12 months, Castle has expanded its services without acquisition, and installed a new computer infrastructure as the foundation for a new software system designed to allow customers to manage their own accounts through the Internet. "What sets Castle apart from other companies is that we listen to the customer provide fast, courteous service and exceed customer expectations," said Romita.

Stability and reliability are an important part of the company's commitment to its customers. "We know that our customers have choices, and we work hard to make sure that they choose Castle with confidence," said Romita. Castle owns more than 33 million gallons of fuel storage capacity in New York harbor; this ensures a reliable flow of fuel to our customers even when supplies are tight. Castle's supply and marketing department, led by senior vice president Antonio Rosado, ensures that there is always sufficient product on hand

to service Castle's customers. Castle's fuel oil network spans the globe and the company has long term relationships with domestic and international oil producers, traders, processors, shippers and financial institutions. Since oil availability and price can fluctuate greatly, in-house purchasing is a critical skill and key factor in our success.

Romita has been an active industry participant since the beginning of her tenure at Castle. She serves as a vice president of the Independent Fuel Terminal Operators Association, vice president of New York Oil Heating Association, a director of the Empire State Fuel Association, and a member of the board of directors of the Associated Builders and Owners of New York, which recently recognized her contribution to business in New York City with the Emma Lazarus Award.

The Romita family has a history of public service and Carla is no exception. She works to promote various philanthropic causes. She is a founding member of Project Y.E.S.S. (an organization that raises money to fund capital improvements in Catholic elementary schools in the Archdiocese of New York), a member of the board

of trustees of the Ursuline School in New Rochelle, a member of the advisory board of The Lighthouse of the Hudson Valley, and a member of the board of trustees of the College of New Rochelle.

Strengthened by the Romita family's reputation for integrity and a philosophy of treating every customer like royalty, Castle is a leader in its field. The company's executive management team consists of Michael Romita, chairman and CEO; Mauro Romita, president and chief operating officer; Michael Romita, executive vice president in charge of business operations; Carla Romita, senior vice president and director of marketing; Jack Romita, senior vice president; Louis Romita, senior vice president; Paul Conley, senior vice president and chief financial officer; Michael Meadvin, senior vice president, general counsel and corporate secretary; James Meiners, vice president of operations; Louis Romano, senior vice president, sales; and Antonio Rosado, senior vice president supply and marketing.

Castle Oil Corp. is one of the largest independent energy companies in the metropolitan New York area. With more than 300 employees, Castle serves more than 10,000 commercial and residential customers each month, providing fuel oil and natural gas for the enterprises that are the heart of each community — apartment and office buildings, manufacturing plants, private homes, schools, hospitals and places of worship. Castle also owns and manages fuel oil terminals in New York and Westchester County, a computer-monitored worldwide fuel purchasing system, a fleet of 100-plus service and delivery vehicles, highly trained in-house service personnel and a customer care center dedicated to handling customer needs. The company is headquartered at 500 Mamaroneck Ave.



Original Coal Silo, Bronx, N.Y. Castle Oil Corp. in the 1930s



Castle Oil Corp., Deep Water Terminal, Bronx, N.Y.