

Sept. 23, 2011

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2011
FAST 50

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FAST 50

This year's Fast 50 winners show the Triad's strengths

The Business Journal has written a great deal during the past 13 years about the Triad's efforts to diversify its job base, to cultivate entrepreneurship and to nurture emerging industries. And as the economy sputtered, those demands only became more pronounced.



FROM THE PUBLISHER

DOUGLAS W.
COPELAND JR.

But today, we can see the true value of such efforts in our annual Fast 50 special publication, which highlights the region's fastest-growing, privately held companies. The diversity of the companies in this section is refreshing, and the roster reminds us that small businesses, by and large, have carried the day in recent years in terms of job creation.

This year's list is dominated by familiar names — companies that have earned their way into the Fast 50 multiple years because they have continually evaluated their strategies and evolved. That said, there are 19 companies making their first appearance. In fact, three first-time honorees are in the top 10 and nine total fall within the top 25. Seven of the top 10 have emerged on the list only within the past three years.

Many of our honorees are in clusters that this region has emphasized, such as life sciences, logistics, technology and advanced manufacturing. But it was also interesting to see a number of companies — some of which were launched in recent years — from traditional sectors, such as furnishings and manufacturing.

The takeaway is that this region depends now more than ever on innovative companies, whether they are 5 years old or 50, to carry us forward.

While *The Business Journal* is not privy to the participating companies' financials, accountants at Smith Leonard PLLC, who verified and ranked the participants, tell us that this year's Fast 50 winners collectively had nearly \$1.8 billion in revenues in 2010. These winners also collectively employ 15,543 people, more than 3,500 of whom are located in the Triad.

It is our privilege to honor these firms, in tandem with sponsors Wells Fargo and Smith Leonard PLLC, Top 10 reception host Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP and co-sponsor Time Warner Cable Business Class.

Each honoree had to meet the criteria:

- Must be a private, for-profit venture;
- Must have its U.S. headquarters in the Triad; and,
- Must have finished three full fiscal years and had sales of at least \$2 million in 2010.

And so, as we celebrate this year's winners, we invite you to be a part of it next year. Contact Managing Editor Lloyd Whittington at (336) 370-2914 or lwhittington@bizjournals.com with your contact information.

This section came together under Lloyd's direction, with summer intern Jeff Turner surveying our honorees and Design Editor Dale Edwards developing the section's cover and layout. Production Director Debbie O'Connor ensured the high print quality.

If you have suggestions and questions on this section or any of our news coverage, contact Editor Mark Sutter at (336) 370-2895 or msutter@bizjournals.com.

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Wachovia banking locations across North Carolina will become Wells Fargo stores on Oct. 15, 2011, as a result of the largest bank merger in U.S. history. Customers in North Carolina will be able to take advantage of 311 Wells Fargo locations and 620 ATMs across the state, with added products and services. The merger doubles the size and reach of the new company. Wells Fargo is now truly national in scope: national in community banking, in mortgage, in commercial banking, in investment services and in consumer finance.

Wells Fargo is known as one of America's most generous companies. It contributes almost \$250 million to nonprofits each year — more than peers two or three times its size. This past year in North Carolina, Wells Fargo invested \$18.3 million to nonprofits and

schools. These contributions were channeled into areas such as neighborhood revitalization, education, mortgage counseling, small-business development and financial literacy.

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FAST 50

Varrow Inc.

Description: Information technology services including data storage management, virtualization, disaster recovery, data centers and cloud computing

Top executives: Daniel P. Weiss, CEO, co-founder; Jeremiah J. Cook, chief technology officer, co-founder

Address: 2311 W. Cone Blvd., Greensboro 27408
Phone: (866) 783-8604
Website: www.varrow.com
2010 revenues: \$31.5 million
Founded: 2004

No. of Triad employees: 16

No. of employees total: 54

Locations in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad: Two (Charlotte and Raleigh)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Partnering with top-tier technology players EMC, VMware, Cisco and Citrix; high demand of virtualization, storage and related data center technologies; combination of great timing, people, partners and customer references.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Market demand for our services grew immensely. We didn't create that market, nor did we create the virtualization or storage technology we provide customers. What we did do was strategically align ourselves with the top-performing companies and develop a great relationship with them.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Majority of employees work in the field (i.e. client



Dan Weiss, left, and Jeremiah Cook are co-founders of Varrow Inc. in Greensboro.

FILE PHOTO

sites), but we did add 675 square feet of office space in Greensboro and 481 square feet in Charlotte.

Added locations or broadened service territory? Broadened services into South Carolina, eastern Tennessee and southern Virginia

Added products or services? Added lines of business including Cisco's server technology, UCS. That changed the game of servers in the data center business.

Added employees? 21, primarily in sales, engineering, consulting, accounting, project management and management

"We would have grown even faster except that..." It was difficult to find people experienced in selling and implementing the solutions we offer our customers. That's still the biggest challenge in the

market today.

What's your outlook for the next three years? A lot of demand for cloud computing, desktop virtualization and managed services and support

What factors will determine if that outlook holds true? A large part of our business is based in the health care industry. As long as that sector continues to grow and be profitable, we'll see growth as well.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most?

Developing good leaders. Our key resource at Varrow is our people and we focus on creating a culture of strong relationships among coworkers and customers. That, coupled with technical knowledge, helps us maintain our com-

petitive edge.

Gone green? Helping drive data center efficiencies. Many of our customers have seen their data centers shrink from hundreds of servers down to just 10, thus drastically reducing their carbon footprint.

Positive development that energized our boosted morale in the last year? Sent more than 15 employees to a three- to four-day leadership course. It's been a big investment in our people and has reaped huge rewards in regard to improvements to our culture and how we work together as a team.

Fun fact about your company: At our last quarterly meeting, we broke into six teams and played a dodgeball tournament. Everyone loved it.

Packrite LLC

Description: Packaging design and development company, offering single-face corrugated lamination, microflute and folding paper packaging capabilities

Top executive: Michael Drummond, president

Address: 1650 Eastway Court, High Point 27260
Phone: (336) 884-0793
Website: www.packrite.net
2010 revenues: \$7.7 million
Founded: 2008

No. of employees total: 32

Locations in Triad: One (High Point)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Created a strong business plan to take advantage of an underserved market — high-end, corrugated packaging that features graphics; invested in the latest industry technology and state-of-the-art equipment; hired a dedicated staff

What actions did you take to capitalize on those factors? We strive to provide the best customer service possible, because that keeps customers coming back. Also, staying up to date on the latest technology and equipment; this year alone we've made about \$50,000 worth of upgrades.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Two companies in Ohio with similar capabilities shut down, leaving an opening in the market. Our competitors in the Southeast didn't have the same equipment and capabilities we do. And, not surprisingly, good word-of-mouth always helps.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Not yet. We



Michael Drummond is president of Packrite LLC in High Point. Mary Drummond is the company's CEO and manager.

JULIE KNIGHT/THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

need more space than the 20,000 square feet we have currently.

Added locations or broadened service territory? We're now shipping coast-to-coast, with three customers in California.

Added products or services? Adding a window machine, which adds plastic windows to corrugated boxes (similar in style to the plastic window on a cake box). This represents an investment of about \$250,000.

Added employees? 10 in the past year to help us keep up with growth. Most in customer service or machine operators.

"We would have grown even faster except that..." We don't want to outpace our cash flow.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Anticipate expanding our current facility's square footage, adding more employees (should be at 40 by April of next year) and buying more equipment.

What factors will determine if that outlook holds true? A sluggish economy continuing to pick up steam and not contracting.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: Working to produce a product that's far superior to what others in the market are offering. The best and latest manufacturing equipment and skilled employees help us reach that goal. Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm

the most? Tax incentives. We started a capital-intensive business without any tax breaks. That's hard to do. We could use some incentives to fund future growth.

Gone green? All byproducts of the production process are shipped back to the paper mill and all finished goods are 100 percent recyclable.

Positive development that energized or boosted morale at your workplace in the last year? Our continued growth has provided job security to our employees in a tough economy.

Fun fact about your company: We work hard and play hard, act like a family and admit to being a little nutty.

FAST 50



JULIE KNIGHT/THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Richard Lide is president and CEO of Patriot Services in Greensboro.

Patriot Services

Description: Full-service staffing agency providing qualified, screened and trained candidates for administrative, professional, health care and industrial positions.

#3

Top executive: Richard Lide, president and CEO
Address: 1429 Westover Terrace, Greensboro 27408
Phone: (336) 272-6800
Website: www.patriotser-

vice.com
2010 revenues: \$12.5 million
Founded: 2006

No. of Triad employees: 18

No. of employees total: 27

Offices in Triad: Three (two in Greensboro, one in Asheboro)

Offices outside Triad: Durham, Charlotte, Hickory, Rocky Mount, Roanoke Va.

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Meeting a customer's needs is critical to success in the staffing world. We hired the best talent of our own to ensure that our company was able to find our customers the top-quality talent they needed.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added locations or broadened service territory? Five new offices in five different cities and expanded into Virginia

Added products or services? Payroll services

Added employees? 10

"We would have grown even faster except that..." We had to make sure that the new business we were getting was good business. In the past, we've had customers with good credit ratings but due to the recession they weren't able to pay their invoices in a timely manner, or at all. We had to slow down and

add steps to our evaluation process to make sure we could get paid for services rendered.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Anticipate becoming a regional company and expanding more into Virginia and looking to move into Georgia and Tennessee in the next three years.

What factors will determine if that outlook holds true? The long shadow the recession continues to cast will be a factor in how fast we can grow. But, recessions don't last forever and economic growth will come in time.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: We're the best kept secret in staffing and continue to hire the best talent possible in order to gain more clients and better name recognition.

Acquisitions, product launches or geographic expansions in the next two years? Actively looking for acquisitions and have come close in Georgia on two but both fell through at the last minute. Will continue to look, but the deal has to be right.

How are changes in technology impacting your business? It's improved the staffing sector as a whole by giving us more ways to contact people through Twitter, Facebook, Skype, and so on. It's taking us to another level.

Gone green? Paperless employment applications have drastically cut down on paper files. Now, an applicant can go online and fill out an application and we can store it on our computers instead of wasting mounds of paper.

Positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year? Recently promoted several people within the company. This helps newer employees see that there's room for growth and that hard work always pays off.

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FILE PHOTO

Eric Johnson is president of Cowboy Jungle Inc. in Winston-Salem.

Cowboy Jungle Inc.

Description: Retail and e-commerce outlet for medical apparel and footwear

Top executive: Eric Johnson, president

Address: 684 Hanes Mall Blvd., Winston-Salem 27103

Phone: (336) 768-0303

Website: www.cherokee4less.com/www.alegriashoeshop.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed

Founded: 2001

No. of Triad employees: 20

No. of employees total: 25

Locations in Triad: Two (Winston-Salem)

Locations outside Triad: One (Charlotte)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Partnered with retail manufacturers to create brand-specific e-commerce websites for several brands, including Alegria shoes and Cherokee Uniforms (scrubs). In 2010, sales at our e-commerce sites grew by 300 percent. We've also grown our brick-and-mortar Alegria shoe shops, representing 60 percent of our revenue.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Growth and job stability in the health care industry. Also, the excellent reputation and market share of Alegria and Cherokee.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Expanded retail (2,730 square feet in Charlotte) and acquired warehouse space for distribution (5,100 square feet in Winston-Salem).

Added employees? 16 new hires since 2010 to fill positions in retail, customer service and at our warehouse.

"We would have grown even faster except that..." You can only do so much in 24 hours!

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: Strong. E-commerce has created a very dynamic and competitive arena, not bound by geography or store hours. There's also the element of being able to keep costs low and operate at a lower margin. Besides that, we're focused on keeping the throttle to the floor.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Steady growth of both our physical and e-commerce outlets. Expecting to grow along with the brand, particularly in the instance of Alegria shoes, where the company's still in a major growth curve.

A positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year? Continued growth even in a fairly stagnant economy.

How are changes in technology impacting your business? It's making order processing much more efficient and helps staying in contact with our customer base much easier. For instance, we have lists of over 100,000 email addresses for very targeted consumers. We can send out an email blast notifying them of a discount or closeout and sales go through the roof. The best part? It's free.

Fun fact about your company: We didn't plan any of this! Really, we started as a clothing outlet in Lexington and after performing poorly, a customer recommended we should try selling scrubs. Needless to say, they flew off the shelves and the rest is history.

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FAST 50

New Breed Logistics Inc.

Description: Third-party logistics services, including distribution, manufacturing support, aftermarket services, critical services parts distribution,

transportation management and supply chain consulting

Top executive: Louis deJoy, CEO

Address: 4043 Piedmont Parkway, High Point

#5

27265

Phone: (336) 232-4100

Website: www.newbreed.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed

Founded: 1968

No. of Triad employees: 455

No. of employees total: 7,500

Locations in Triad: Six (five in Greensboro, one in High Point)

Locations outside Triad: 53 facilities in approximately 40 markets

Primary reasons your company grew

between 2008 and 2010? Continuing to invest in the development of additional services and capabilities; acting swiftly to capitalize on opportunities as soon as they're identified; aligning our internal resources and investing in technology to enhance our efficiencies and capabilities

What factors outside of your control

helped you grow? As our clients grow, so do we. And even as some of our clients look to get leaner, we're able to help them become more efficient. It's really a mutually beneficial relationship.

Describe operational changes: Have you...



Louis deJoy is CEO of New Breed Logistics Inc. in High Point.

FILE PHOTO

Expanded square footage? Added more than 4 million square feet across our operations

Added products or services? Increased the scope of our transportation management services and dramatically expanded our business intelligence service offering. We've also grown our sourcing/purchasing/inventory ownership capabilities and capacity as we're finding a rapidly growing market for these services.

Added employees? Added nearly 3,000 employees in positions ranging from

warehouse workers to software developers, engineers to senior executives **"We would have grown even faster except that..."** Growing too fast can lead to difficult implementations or sacrificing quality within existing operations. We want measured, controllable growth.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Cautiously optimistic. We see additional opportunities arising as more businesses focus on lean initiatives and eliminating non-core competencies from their operations. Also looking to expand in global markets

and adding services to our offerings. **Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition:** Unique in our flexibility to respond rapidly to evolving requirements, and our willingness to invest in technology and development of value-added services. (Also differentiated by our) willingness to share risk to enter new markets and support new industries.

Acquisitions, product launches, or geographic expansions in the next two years? Continue to investigate strategic acquisitions and may execute one or more should the right opportunity present itself. We've established operations in Europe and Asia and hope to significantly expand our global presence in the coming years.

How are changes in technology impacting your business? There's an incredible and increasing amount of raw data related to each aspect of everyday operations. Having the ability to effectively mine this data for actionable information is critical.

Gone green? Installed energy-efficient lighting in most of our warehouses and work spaces. Implemented software that automatically chooses the smallest possible box size for each order, reducing cost and packaging waste. Comprehensive recycling/reuse programs in place since the early '90s.

Fun fact about your company: Our annual children's holiday celebration is a joy since our company has so many long-term employees.

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FAST 50

Machine Specialties Inc.

Description: Precision metal-machining and finishing (mainly turning large rods or blocks of metal into parts for the aerospace, defense, medical and energy industries)

#6

Top executive: Robert Simmons, president
Address: 6511 Franz Warner Parkway, Whitsett 27377

Phone: (336) 285-6733

Website: www.machspeg.com

2010 revenues: \$27 million

Founded: 1969



Simmons

No. of employees

total: 161

Offices in Triad: One (Whitsett)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Invested in recruiting new business in industries that we hadn't previously been supplying

What actions did you take to capitalize on those factors?

Purchased larger equipment to process and produce parts for a new market.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Went

from 60,000 square feet in 2009 to 170,000 square feet today.

Added employees? About 45 in the last six months, mostly in engineering and machining positions

"We would have grown even faster except that..."

Lead time on material takes sometimes as much as two years, and getting new employees in and trained takes time as well.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Keeping pace with current growth, or even more. Hopefully without the growing pains that come with expanding.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition:

Invested a lot in training new hires, the latest advanced technical equipment, and in creating an internal infrastructure that will take us to a higher level. Our goal is to be a \$50 million company by 2015.

Fun fact about your company: To raise money for a company committee tasked with improving teamwork and infusing fun into workplace culture, employees auctioned off the opportunity to dress Rob Simmons, company president and a huge Steelers fan, in the NFL gear of their choice for an entire day. Rob was soon donning a Dallas Cowboys jersey.

HICAPS Inc.

Description: Project management and consulting company specializing in construction management, public safety communications and building assessments

#7

Top executive: Daniel M. Hood, president
Address: 600 N. Regional Road, Greens-

boro 27409

Phone: (336) 665-1234

Website: www.hicaps.com

2010 revenues:

Undisclosed

Founded: 1985

No. of Triad

employees: 22

No. of employees

total: 42

Offices in Triad: One

(Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad:

Three (Wilmington;

Washington, D.C.;

Middlethian, Va.)

Primary reasons your company grew

between 2008 and 2010? Being diversified (We have four divisions: construction, telecommunications, building diagnostics and federal contracting). Understanding trends in the market and preparing to address those needs. Pursuing federal contracting work.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow?

Telecommunication needs of the

Department of Homeland Security in response to heightened security measures.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage?

Corporate office has grown from 5,500 square feet to 8,500 square feet.

Added products or services? Sustainable construction services such as LEED, Air Barrier and window testing to meet the demand for green building.

Added employees? 15 positions, including project managers, mechanical engineers, administrative staff, site superintendents and telecom specialists.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

We've tripled our income volume and project that we'll double that in the next three years.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most?

Training in sustainable design and construction as energy savings become even more important.

Gone green?

We have a full-time director of sustainable construction and have upgraded our corporate office to an energy-efficient lighting system. We're also conducting energy audits and working to install a geothermal system.



Greensboro Showroom



Winston-Salem Showroom

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We are proud to announce our moving into our new 33,000 square foot factory at **2800 Patterson St.** in Greensboro (near the Coliseum).

We are now even better able to respond to our customers every need for digital signs and graphics and electrical signs.



336.545.1124

www.Triadsigns.com

FAST 50

Confiance IP Solutions Inc.

Description: Designs, implements and supports technologies for data centers, VoIP, IP contact centers, wireless LAN/WAN, storage area networks and video conferencing.

#8

Top executive: Michael Cotrone, CEO; Bill Demarest, president

Address: 7900 Triad

Center Drive, Suite 300, Greensboro 27410

Phone: (336) 389-4500

Website: www.confianceinc.com

2010 revenues: \$12.6 million

Founded: 2006

No. of Triad employees: 27

No. of employees total: 31

Locations in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad:



Cotrone

Virtual employees in Charlotte, Winston-Salem and Chapel Hill

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Strategically surrounded ourselves with top-quality, talented employees and invested in new technical areas of business. We also increased sales by 64 percent in that time period.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Customers increasingly adopting the advanced technologies that we sell. Also, many of our

competitors were downsizing during the recession.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Doubled the space at our Greensboro headquarters

Added products or services? Added EMC Storage, VMware Virtualization, Cisco UCS Servers and Guardian Managed Services

Added employees? Increased employee count by 79 percent from 2008 to 2010

What's your outlook for the next three years? We're set to



Demarest

have a record year for revenue and profitability in 2011 ... (Longer term) our outlook is positive, but we're preparing for potential dead spots due to a weak economy. Fortunately, our organization is still 100 percent self-funded and debt

free. For the foreseeable future, we expect revenue growth between 25 percent and 30 percent year-over-year.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most?

Bring down the cost of health care through privatization.

Gone green? Using our own virtualization technology, we were able to reduce our power consumption by 75 percent in our data center.

WorkForce Carolina

Description: Full-service staffing company providing temporary help, direct hires, background screening, skills assessments and payroll services

#9

Top executive: Teresa Lewis, president

Address: 711 W. Independence Blvd., Mount Airy 27030

Phone: (336) 789-8220

Website: www.workforcecarolina.com

2010 revenues: \$12.1 million

Founded: 1987



Lewis

No. of employees total: 26

Offices in Triad: Two (Mount Airy and Yadkinville)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? High unemployment led many job seekers to consider temporary positions. Employers, hesitant

to make full-time hires, are looking for temporary workers to fill positions until the economy improves. We also recruiting the unemployed and underemployed to consider open positions, as well as encouraging businesses to consider using a staffing agency.

What's your outlook for the next three years? As the economy

(hopefully) grows and businesses

begin hiring once again staffing services should make considerable gains.

Positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year? A 16-year customer of WorkForce Carolina signed an exclusive agreement with us, resulting in a 50 percent increase in sales revenue from this customer.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? Many employers are looking for candidates with a high, often technical, skill set. It's critical that all students graduate high school and attain at least a two-year college degree.

How are changes in technology impacting your business? The ability to work quicker and more efficiently helps with payroll and billing, recruiting qualified job candidates via social networking sites and keeping staff in contact with one another via smartphones.

Gone green?

Recycling plastics and aluminum cans is a priority, and, like other companies, the move to direct deposit and electronic invoicing has eliminated a lot of paper waste.

Fun fact about your company: When striking Teamsters Local 391 moved its picket line to the front door of WorkForce Carolina, the owner, Teresa Lewis, served coffee and doughnuts to the workers.

Sign-A-Rama Triad

Description: Design, manufacture, installation and maintenance of signs

Top executive: Vince Cvijanovic, president

Address: 3125 Spring Garden St., Greensboro 27407

Phone: (336) 545-1124

Website: www.triadsigns.com

2010 revenues: \$4.6 million

Founded: 1991

No. of employees total: 70

Locations in Triad: Two (Greensboro and Winston-Salem)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Investing in new



Cvijanovic

manufacturing capacity and the latest technology. This is evidenced by the purchase of 17,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in Greensboro in 2008 and the addition of 8,000 square feet in a nearby leased building.

We also made a significant investment in new digital printing technology.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Total of

33,000 square feet.

Added products or services? Brought manufacturing of electric signs in-house to better control quality, cost and time to complete the project.

Added employees? 53 employees across all areas of the company

Acquired another firm? Triad Sign Guys in September 2010 to expand customer base and bring additional talent into the organization

How are changes in technology impacting your business? Digital printing and design has allowed us to respond faster to our customers with better quality and lower cost.

Positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year?

The fact that despite a tough economy, we grew 72 percent in 2010 and were recognized in two business publications.

Gone green? Recycle any scrap metal from the manufacturing process and recycle the old signs we remove before installing new ones.

Fun fact about your company: Sponsor the "Signs of Support" program by either donating or giving significant discounts to local charities and nonprofits for sign and graphics work. We've donated a total of \$60,000 worth of work in the past two years.



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FAST 50

Coble Trench Safety Inc.

Description: Rents, services and sells trench safety equipment and other specialty products for construction industry.

#11

Top executive: Tom Coble, CEO
Address: 3137 Cedar Park Road, Greensboro 27405
Phone: (336) 398-3000
Website: www.coble-trenchsafety.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed
Founded: 2002

No. of Triad employees: 29
No. of employees total: 77
Locations in Triad: One (Greensboro)
Offices outside Triad: 10 branch locations



Coble

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Having a talented group of employees that know the product, industry and customers. Throughout the economic downturn, we had the capital to invest in the resources the sales staff needed to continue our growth trajectory.

We've also expanded our product line and expanded our geographic footprint.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow?

The industry being tied heavily to gov-

ernment spending on infrastructure projects.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Expanding our repair and rebuild center in Greensboro.

Added locations or broadened service territory? Norfolk, Atlanta and Knoxville

Added employees? Sales, management and related staff at each of the new locations. At corporate, a second full-time sales manager and additional staff in human resources.

What's your outlook for the next three years? We believe the market conditions are very strong in the trench safety industry and expect to see continued growth.

"We would have grown even faster except that..." Access to capital. Given access to more cost-effective capital, we could have increased our branch locations by three or more per year.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: We specialize in the market. It's not one of the many things we offer, it's all we do. As a result, we're really good at it.

Fun fact about your company: CEO Tom Coble recently purchased an Aero L-39 Soviet/Russian fighter jet and it was featured alongside the Navy's Blue Angels at this past year's Lynchburg Regional Airshow.

Carolina Liquid Chemistries Corp.

Description: Develops chemistry systems and reagents for diagnostic testing

Top executive: Phil Shugart, president

Address: 391 Technology Way, Winston-Salem 27101

Phone: (336) 722-8910
Website: www.carolinachemistries.com

2010 revenues: \$14.4 million

#12

Founded: 1997

No. of Triad employees: 18

No. of employees total: 56



Shugart

Locations in Triad: One (Winston-Salem)

Offices outside Triad: One (Brea, Calif.)

What decisions contributed to your success between 2008 and 2010? Rolling out new products helped us grow our customer base. Also, investing in direct sales representatives and field service engineers.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? The growing need for drug-abuse testing

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Added 10,000 square feet

Added products or services? Added a chemistry analyzer with twice the speed of 600 tests per hour

Added locations or broadened service territory? Increased international sales

by 50 percent

Added employees? Added 12, mostly in customer support and sales

What's your outlook for the next three years? To continue with a 20 percent annual increase in sales.

What factors will determine if that outlook holds true? Government health care reimbursement

"We would have grown even faster except that..." the complexity of the FDA's 510(k) premarket approval process for medical devices has increased.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: We're able to bring new products to market faster than our competitors.

Positive development that energized or boosted workplace morale? Announcing that we're moving headquarters into the new Piedmont Triad Research Park biotech building.

Fun fact about your company: For the first 10 years of our existence the company was located in California yet called Carolina Chemistries. We had a lot of explaining to do.

Editor's note: So why did Phil Shugart name it Carolina Chemistries to start with? His family's North Carolina roots date back to Yadkin County in the 1700s, and his father, at 101, still lives there. Shugart always wanted to come back to North Carolina, and the state's strong reputation for biotech development was something he could leverage. Plus, says Vice President Patti Shugart, he liked the alliteration of the name.

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FAST 50

Tempo Upholstery & Drapery (DBA Tempo Fabrics Inc. & Tempo Products LLC)

Description: Wholesale decorative fabric converter and distributor, indoor and outdoor pillow manufacturer

#13

Top executive: Paul Romer, president
Address: 1601 Blandwood Drive, High Point 27260
Phone: (336) 889-6606
2010 revenues: \$11 mil-

lion

Founded: 1976

No. of employees total: 70

Locations in Triad: Three (two in High Point, one in Thomasville)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Relocated our pillow facility to a much larger facility in order to increase production capacity. Hired new designers to create product for our expanded converted (finished) decorative fabric line.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Consumer demand for quality products at discount prices during the economic downturn.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Expanded pillow facility from 20,000 square feet to 48,000 square feet

Added products or services? Created a licensed outdoor pillow product

Added employees? Added about 15 employees last year, all in administrative and manufacturing positions



JULIE KNIGHT/THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Paul Romer is president of High Point-based Tempo Upholstery and Drapery Fabrics Inc.

"We would have grown even faster except that..." There's been an overall decline in consumer spending.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Steady growth without overextending ourselves

What factors will determine if that outlook holds true? Consumer confidence and spending

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: Due to the closing of so many U.S. manufacturing facilities, we've built strong business relationships with mills abroad. That's allowed us to produce a quality product at a reasonable cost for consumers.

How are changes in technology impacting your business? It's made communi-

cation with our partner mills overseas much easier.

Gone green? We fill pillows with fiber that's made from recycled plastic bottles.

Positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year? A newer and larger production facility and an increase in the number of workers.

Live Decisions LLC, DBA Web Decisions

Description: Provides database-driven marketing solutions via direct mail, email and website content

Top executive: Kim Addington, CEO
Address: 303 Pisgah Church Road, Suite 2A, Greensboro 27455
Phone: (336) 545-7817
Website: www.webdecisions.com
2010 revenues: \$2.5

#14

million

Founded: 2002

No. of Triad employees: 19

No. of employees total: 22

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad: Three teleworkers in Illinois

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Companies downsizing their marketing budgets due to the economic downturn helped us capture business by offering equal

or better services at a lower cost than what larger, legacy competitors could.

What factors outside your control helped you grow? Shift from traditional marketing to greater use of data-driven, targeted campaigns

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Executed a lease with our landlord to add temporary space until we're able to build out permanently

Added employees? 10, mainly in customer service, database development and data technicians

"We would have grown even faster except that..." It takes time to recruit and train sales personnel to penetrate the market.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Similar growth. Already in 2011, we're tracking toward a 40 percent increase in revenue. Our target is to reach \$10 million in revenue for the fiscal year ending 2015.

Any acquisitions, product launches, or geographic expansions in the next two years?

Nearing completion of a new marketing database platform that will change how data is maintained, aggregated and analyzed. Plan to make an official announcement this October at the Direct Marketing Association conference in Boston. Potential for several on-going discussions to result in an acquisition or merger.

Fun fact about your company:

We have "Taco Wednesday" where we all walk over to our local Mexican restaurant to have lunch together. We've even made T-shirts for everyone in the office.



Addington

DataChambers LLC

Description: Specializes in secure data storage, hosting for mission-critical infrastructure, 24/7 monitoring and management solutions, and cloud computing services.

#15

Top executive: Nicholas Kottyan, CEO
Address: 3310 Old Lexington Road, Winston-Salem 27107
Phone: (336) 499-7220
Website: www.data-

chambers.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed

Founded: 2002

No. of Triad employees: 25

No. of employees total: 26

Offices in Triad: One (Winston-Salem)

Offices outside Triad: One (Charlotte)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? New and existing clients expressed strong demand for

the IT services we provide, including colocation, cloud computing, and backup solutions. Offering an affordable solution at a time when clients' budgets are tight.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Sluggish economic conditions made our services more attractive since they don't require an additional capital investment in infrastructure.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Expanded our data center footprint by almost 25,000 square feet in the past three years.

Added products or services? New cloud-based hosting services.

Added employees? Increased our employee count by almost 25 percent in the past three years, most of them IT professionals.

"We would have grown even faster except that..."

As with any business, we have a finite amount of both human and financial capital.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Pretty bullish. We see opportunities for continued growth and expansion. We anticipate opening additional data centers within the next 12 to 24 months.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? Education of IT professionals, especially in the areas of Internet Protocol networking and security.

Gone green? Our new data center was designed with the latest technology for cooling and power to take advantage of new equipment efficiencies.

Fun fact about your company: Our data centers are located underground in a hardened bunker that's designed to withstand a nuclear blast.



Kottyan

FAST 50

SouthData Inc.

Description: Outsourced services provider for clients' billing, document management and mail distribution needs

Top executive: John Springthorpe III, president

#16

Address: 201 Technology Lane, Mount Airy 27030
Phone: (336) 719-5000
Website: www.southdata.com
2010 revenues: Undisclosed

Founded: 1985

No. of Triad employees: 86

No. of employees total: 136

Locations in Triad: One (Mount Airy)

Offices outside Triad: Two (Mobile, Ala.; Tempe, Ariz.)



Springthorpe

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Expanded our range of products to existing clients; acquired two companies, which allowed us to add document scanning and storage capabilities; kept waste at a minimum

to overcome the sluggish nature of the economy.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Leased an 8,000-square-foot facility in Tempe, Ariz. and acquired two companies with

three facilities in Mobile, Ala. Also acquired Network Dynamics in Pilot Mountain.

Added products or services? Enhanced our electronic billing and payment capabilities

Added employees? 63 (54 through acquisitions, four hired in Tempe)

What's your outlook for the next three years? Strong, since the economy will continue to force businesses to seek partners to provide non-core services to their organizations. Acquisitions, product launches, or geographic expansions in the next two years? Very likely that we'll introduce new products and make additional acquisitions.

How are changes in technology impacting your business?

Must anticipate how technology will impact our clients and mitigate that impact. One of the biggest challenges is staying ahead of the trend towards electronic instead of paper billing. Constantly researching the technology in that area to offer the best of it to our clients.

Gone green? Employee-run "Green Team" meets regularly to come up with ways to promote energy efficiency and recycling.

Fun fact about your company: We print and mail billing documents. Something no one wants to receive, but which is absolutely essential for our clients to get paid.

Piedmont Pharmaceuticals

Description: Specialty pharmaceutical company focused on animal and human therapeutics in parasitology and drug delivery systems

#17

Top executive: Roland Johnson, chairman and CEO

Address: 204 Muirs Chapel Road, Suite 200, Greensboro 27410

Phone: (336) 544-0320

Website: www.piedmont-

pharma.com

2010 revenues: \$3.4 million

Founded: 2001

No. of employees total: 15

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)



Johnson

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Signed a major global deal with Bayer Animal Health in 2010 to develop and register regulatory approval for veterinary drugs. Bayer also licensed or acquired certain patent rights to products

invented in Greensboro. Heavy investment in research and development. Grew our human head lice treatment with new launches in Europe, Australia and Russia.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Increased

office space by about 15 percent

Added products or services? Invented a newly patented, highly palatable soft chewable tablet suitable for a wide range of dog and cat medicines

Added employees? Increased our head count by 40 percent since November 2010, primarily senior-level research and development/regulatory positions

"We would have grown even faster except that..." FDA "red tape" has prevented us from launching our head lice treatment in the U.S.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: Many larger companies are not as nimble.

We're able to make decisions and research and develop products at a quicker pace. Strategic partnerships with these larger companies have proved fruitful.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? Could have significant expansion within the next 36 to 48 months

(such as size of lab and amount of equipment) and public investment would help secure that in N.C. In the early stages of our company, we received a \$150,000 loan from the N.C. Biotechnology Center and paid it back in full with interest.

Fun fact about your company: We come together as coworkers nearly every Friday over lunch at the Best Diner in Greensboro.

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Machine Specialties Inc.
 6511 Franz Warner Parkway
 Whitsett, NC 27377
 336-603-1919

www.machspec.com

Apex Analytix Inc.

Description: Provides services and software for performance improvement, error prevention and fraud detection in accounts payable

#18

Top executive: Steve Yurko, CEO

Address: 1501 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 200-A, Greensboro 27410

Phone: (336) 422-7371

Website: www.apexana-

lytix.com

2010 revenues: \$39.8 million

Founded: 1988

No. of Triad employees: 120

No. of employees total: 244

Locations in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad: 11



Yurko

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Investing in product development to add features to our software that differentiate us from the rest of the market. We also made significant investments in sales and market-

ing.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Companies increasingly turned to recovery audit services and software to improve their bottom line during one of the worst economies in history.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added locations or broadened service territory? Opened a sales office in the Czech Republic and expanded our service to more global locations, including Southeast Asia, Africa and the Middle East

Added employees? Hired 47 associates since August 2010 — 32 full-time; three part-time; 12 temporary

What's your outlook for the next three years? Expanding our presence with a focus on retail in Europe, the U.S. government and the health care industry

"We would have grown even faster except that..." The recession has kept companies from expanding their audit capabilities.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: We were the first large audit recovery company to introduce a technology platform to automate the merchandise audit process and make it available to our customers.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? We'd welcome tax incentives for hiring and training employees.

Gone green? We have a recycling program and have taken steps to reduce paper copies used in audits by incorporating electronic imaging.

Fun fact about your company: Our clients collectively contribute \$4.5 trillion to the American economy.

FAST 50

Bradley Personnel Inc.

Description: Full-service staffing agency, providing staffing solutions for the Triad and surrounding areas.

#19

Top executive:

Darren Bradley

Address: 51 S. Talbert

Blvd., Lexington 27292

Phone: (336) 882-1601**Website:** www.brad-

leypersonnel.com

2010 revenues: \$12.2

million

Founded: 1998**No. of employees total:** 13**Locations in Triad:** Three (Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Lexington)

Bradley

Primary reasons

your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Opened an office in Winston-Salem, thus expanding our client base. Also, we strengthened our relationships with existing customers, which resulted in additional

business.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? 1,600 square feet at our new Winston-Salem office

Added employees? Two positions — one in sales, operations and placement management, the other in office

support

"We would have grown even faster except that..."

An uncertain economy made our customers and potential clients hesitant about investing and expanding their production and manufacturing facilities.

Describe your strategic position

right now versus your competition:

We've strategically managed the key components of a staffing business, controlled costs and have focused our efforts on expanding and promoting our customer service initiatives.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most?

Technical training. Generally a higher level of industrial, manufacturing and professional skills training.

How are changes in technology impacting your business?

Job candidates now have the ability to complete the application process online through our website. This makes the process much more efficient for us.

Gone green? Our new automated office system has enabled us to reduce our reliance on hard-copy documents by 90 percent.

Fun fact about your company:

Our 2010 Christmas party featured gambling night at the Bradley house. Fortunately, no one lost too much money.

Best Services Group Inc.

Description: Logistics services including trucking, freight brokerage, warehousing and fulfillment and international freight forwarding

#20

Top executive:

David W. Reich Jr., chairman and

CEO

Address: 829 Graves

St., Kernersville 27284

Phone: (336) 993-6339**Website:** www.transpor-

tationgateway.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed**Founded:** 1987**No. of Triad employees:** 373**No. of employees total:** 423**Locations in Triad:** One (Kernersville)

Reich

Offices outside Triad:

Five (Charlotte; South

Point, Ohio; Duluth,

Ga.; Jacksonville, Fla.;

St. Louis, Mo.)

Primary reasons

your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Aggressive sales, a diversified product offering and a dedicated staff

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Added a roughly 76,000-square-foot maintenance facility in Kernersville and a 120,000-square-foot warehouse in Charlotte

Added locations or broadened service

territory? St. Louis office

Added products or services? 3PL freight management

"We would have grown even faster except that..." Overall economic

conditions were tumultuous.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Very positive, as long as there is job growth in the private sector.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition:

We are in a good position given the comprehensive and diversified logistics products we offer, as well as the exceptional talent we hire and are able to retain.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? Having a work force that's familiar with technology.

Gone green? Our trucks are SmartWay certified for emissions with the EPA.

How are changes in technology impacting your business?

Communications both with customers and internally are now broad and immediate.

Positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year?

Aggressive revenue growth, continued capital investment in facilities and equipment, no work force reductions and no reduction in benefits.

Fun fact about your company: Everyone maintains a healthy sense of humor.

Saf-Gard
Safety Shoe Co.

Description: Sells occupational slip-resistant and safety shoe footwear with a focus on business-to-business "employer-approved style" programs

Top executive: Patrick Kubis, president

Address: 2701 Patterson St.,

Greensboro 27407

Phone: (336) 299-1688**Website:** www.safgard.

com

2010 revenues: \$32.2

million

Founded: 1980**No. of Triad employees:** 80**No. of employees total:** 171**Offices in Triad:** One (Greensboro)**Locations outside Triad:** 15

Kubis

Primary reasons

your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Launch of SR Max slip-resistant shoe created a new line of business for us in the foodservice, restaurant, grocery, health care and hospitality industries; increased market

share from our safety shoe industrial footwear business; acquired a smaller business in New England

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? One of our significant competitors went bankrupt in 2007.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Warehouse in Windsor, Conn., moved from 5,000 square feet to 12,000 square feet. Expanded into 45,000 additional square feet of space in New Castle, Del., and opened retail locations in Buffalo, N.Y., Newington, Conn., Florence, S.C., and Charlotte.

Added employees? About 45 positions since 2008, including an e-commerce manager, national salesperson for SR Max, and five inside sales team representatives in Greensboro.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

A tough economic environment for our manufacturing and government customers. Increased expenses associated with cost of leather, rubber and overseas labor. However, there will be opportunities for consolidation and expansion, and we expect our SR Max business to grow.

"We would have grown even faster except that..." Bank funding is more

conservative than it was three years ago. As a result, we're reluctant to take large financing risks (high interest rate loans) or offer equity in the business.

Fun fact about your company: Brothers Jeff, Gregg and Patrick Kubis now run the company. When their parents started it back in the '80s, they'd spend Saturdays at the warehouse weeding, washing trucks and stocking inventory.



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FAST 50

Market America Inc.

Description: Product brokerage and Internet marketing company that specializes in one-to-one marketing.

Top executive: J.R. Ridinger, president and CEO

#22

Address: 1302 Pleasant Ridge Road, Greensboro 27409

Phone: (336) 605-0040

Website: www.market-america.com

2010 revenues: \$297.6

million

Founded: 1992

No. of Triad employees: 550

No. of employees total: 700

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad: Six (Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Philippines, United Kingdom)



Ridinger

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

People increasingly seeking alternative methods to generate income due to the unstable economy. Online sales growing by 19 percent a year globally. Expanding our

business into the Philippines and acquiring Shop.com

"We would have grown even faster except that..." We had to temporarily shift

our focus off search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine marketing (SEM) efforts to integrate the technology of Shop.com into our existing platform.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Expanded IT department in Greensboro by 120,000 square feet in 2008

Acquired another firm?

Shop.com, because it's known as the pioneer and leader in comparative shopping, merchandising and SEO/SEM

Added employees? 211 positions added between January 2008 and December 2010. Primarily in human resources, information technology, public relations, creative services and distributor services.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

With the growth of online shopping, some of it tied to the development of mobile applications, we expect booming business.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most?

A more robust international airport in the region would be a huge benefit. Also, continuing to educate social media experts and IT experts.

Fun fact about your company: Market America began out of a 1,000-square-foot house in Greensboro. Nineteen years later, we operate out of a 200,000-square-foot headquarters and have a corporate presence in seven countries spanning four continents.

Secure Designs Inc.

Description: Provides outsourced Internet network security solutions to small and midsize businesses and organizations

Top executive: Larry Cecchini,

president and CEO

Address: 301 N. Elm St., Suite 201, Greensboro 27401

Phone: (336) 232-5990

Website: www.secure-designs.com

2010 revenues: \$2.2 million

Founded: 2002

No. of Triad employees: 13

No. of employees total: 14

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad: One (Raleigh)



Cecchini

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

New investors came into the company and a marketing-focused management team was put in place. Renewed focus on core strategies with emphasis on seeking and maximizing all opportunities and reducing costs.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow?

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Grew from 3,500 square feet to 6,300 square feet in downtown Greensboro, making us the second-largest tenant in a 10-story building.

Added products or services?

Premium email spam filtering, virus scanning email encryption, disk encryption and data backup services.

Added employees? Five, primarily in technical and operations jobs

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Very positive. By the end of 2012, we're projected to have penetrated only .1 percent of our market segment, so there are many opportunities for growth. Anticipate adding six employees in the next 12 months based on increased revenue.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition:

Forecasted to have 5,000 locations under security management by the end of 2011. We're at this point because of our focus on meeting the needs of our target market (companies with fewer than 100 employees).

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most?

Investing in more pragmatic, hands-on education about networking technology that moves beyond theory

Technology Crops LLC, DBA Tech Crops International

Description: Provides supply chain and risk-management services for specialty crops

#24

Top executive:

Andrew Hebard

Address: 7996 North Point Blvd., Suite 100, Winston-Salem 27106

Phone: (336) 759-7335

Website: www.techcrops.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed

Founded: 2004

No. of Triad employees: 13

No. of employees total: 44

Locations in Triad: One (Winston-Salem)

Offices outside Triad: Two (Kensington, Prince Edward Island, Canada; Earls Colne, Essex, England)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Strong demand for risk-management services in light of increasing volatility in global agricultural commodity markets; motivated and focused management team; capitalized on new opportunities for development of technology crops — crops selected and enhanced to deliver specialized characteristics.

What actions did you take to capitalize on those factors?

Invested in resources to meet demand and set objectives with clear performance indicators

What factors outside of your con-

trol helped you grow? Turbulence in global markets

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Doubled from 3,000 square feet to 6,000 square feet

Added locations or broadened service territory? Canada and European Union. Building a processing facility and investing in more research.

Acquired another firm? Small U.K.-based business to enhance our crop production capabilities. Examining strategic alliances and partnerships to leverage other skills/competencies.

"We would have grown even faster except that..." Lag time in specialty agriculture from demand generation to supply fulfillment. We don't produce speculatively, so demand has to be there prior to crop production.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Strong growth. Revenues will increase, but margins will widen significantly as we look to implement some commercial strategies.

What factors will determine if that outlook holds true?

Continued demand for agricultural raw materials and clarity on government policy towards biofuels.

Fun fact about your company:

We are the world's largest grower of bog myrtle. If you didn't know, it's incredibly difficult to grow, but we're just mad enough to do it.



JULIE KNIGHT/THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Andrew Hebard is CEO at Technology Crops International LLC in Winston-Salem.

FAST 50

HEP Direct Inc.

Description: Provides in-home delivery solutions in the continental 48 states to the leading furniture retailers, e-retailers, manufacturers and interior designers

#25

Top executive: Keith Hewitt, CEO
Address: 416 Albertson Road, Thomasville 27360
Phone: (336) 472-8102
Website: www.hep-direct.com

2010 revenues: \$7.7 million
Founded: 2005
No. of Triad employees: 100
No. of employees total: 160



Hewitt

Locations in Triad: One (Thomasville)
Offices outside Triad: Seattle, Dallas, Fontana, Calif.

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Keeping up with new trends on the manufacturing and consumer ends; opening

three new locations; acquiring another company

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Increase in amount of furniture being purchased via the Internet

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? More than 110,000 square feet

Added locations or broadened service territory? New locations in Washington state, Texas and California

Acquired another firm? Executive Delivery Service in Thomasville

Added employees? 100, primarily in warehousing, transportation, office and accounting (about 25 of those via acquisition referenced above)

What's your outlook for the next three years? Positive, as long as consumer spending holds up

"We would have grown even faster except that..." Access to capital has been tight.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: In a strong position to grow by working with our bank for financing and reviewing our operations to drive bottom-line increases.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? Could benefit from middle management and executive types who understand logistics and manufacturing, especially process-oriented people.

Gone green? We regularly recycle materials used in transportation by working with recycling facilities.

Fun fact about your company: Started in N.C. by three friends (company name stands for Hewitt, Earwood, Pope) who all grew up in the state and company is now nationally recognized.

Technology Concepts & Design Inc. (TCDI)

Description: Provides legal software and services specific to legal discovery and litigation case management

#26

Top executive: Bill Johnson, president and CEO
Address: 4510 Weybridge Lane, Greensboro 27407
Phone: (336) 232-5800
Website: www.tcdi.com

2010 revenues: \$24.4 million
Founded: 1988
No. of Triad employees: 56
No. of employees total: 100



Johnson

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad: Three (Washington, D.C., New York, Miami)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Don't try to become something for everyone. Our

model is to first expand our business with existing clients and then deliberately identify a modest number of key, targeted opportunities each year.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added locations or broadened service territory?

Office in New York
Added employees?

Two positions in our Greensboro headquarters

"We would have grown even faster except that..."

We're careful to balance business growth with internal capacity and resources.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Continued growth within the litigation side of our business. Market pressures are continuing to hold down pricing while the total volume to be managed and complexity of the process continue to rise. Even so, expanding market share continues to be an opportunity for us.

Any acquisitions, product launches, or geographic expansions in the next two years?

Launching a new version of our flagship litigation-support software, ClarVergence, in the fall. Will include cutting-edge technologies for more productively finding and organizing documents within large populations. By spring 2012, we'll introduce an automated concept technology that learns human decision-making on sets of documents and applies it to other similar documents.

Fun fact about your company: Dog-friendly workplace. On any given day, we could have a dozen dogs in the office. Also, whenever the weather gets above 90 degrees, employees can wear shorts and flip-flops (extra credit for Hawaiian shirts).

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FAST 50

CaribEx Worldwide Inc.

Description: Freight forwarder, third-party logistics provider and customs brokerage service.

Top executive: John Ford, president

Address: 4248 Piedmont Parkway, Greensboro 27410
Phone: (336) 315-0443
Website: www.caribex.com
2010 revenues: \$35.4 million
Founded: 1987
No. of Triad employees:

#27

25

No. of employees total: 300

Locations in Triad: One (High Point)

Offices outside Triad: 13



Ford

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Diversification of products and new locations. Relentless focus on customer service. Recovering some of our present business from the recession.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Slight recovery in the economy and the unfortunate demise of some of our competitors.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added locations or broadened service

territory? Belize and Mexico.

Added employees? We remained almost at full staff during the economic downturn. We added a few specialized staff to create additional product offerings.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Very positive, as long as our government can create a pro-business environment and give the investor confidence. Also, China is becoming a bigger customer and business in the Pacific is returning.

"We would have grown even faster except that..."

Customers are sitting on cash, uncertain what will happen from a regulatory and tax perspective.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? The logistics program at GTCC is an advantage. Attracting manufacturing for export would help as well.

Any acquisitions, new product launches, or geographic expansions in the next two years?

Possible expansions in Central America and more service offerings to enhance our present portfolio.

Fun fact about your company:

Our small company is composed of employees representing 10 different countries. In the past year, we've had two employees become American citizens. That's a proud moment.

Accelerando

Description: Provides business management software for small and midsize businesses, including network/infrastructure design and support and retail

management and accounting software

Top executive: Craig Castor, CEO

Address: 4194 Mendenhall Oaks Parkway, Suite 120, High Point 27265
Phone: (336) 899-1899

Website: www.accelerando.net

2010 revenues: \$3.7 million

Founded: 2000

No. of Triad employees: 17

No. of employees total: 25



Castor

Locations in Triad: One (High Point)
Offices outside Triad: One (Louisville, Ky.)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Choosing to focus on specific industry verticals, primarily zoos and aquariums, and

spending more on marketing to and developing solutions for these customers. Growth in that niche has been healthy for us.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow?

In late 2009, there was a nice uptick in companies making investments in technology to make gains in efficiency and improve their business

processes.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added locations or broadened service territory?

Acquired a firm in Louisville to expand our expertise in Microsoft Dynamics financial software

Added employees? Seven since October 2008, primarily in sales and account management.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Continuing growth based on what we've learned about developing a vertical solution. Also, we'll continue to leverage newer technologies.

"We would have grown even faster except that..."

Growth was hampered by sluggish economic development. We had to rethink our offerings and strategies in order to attract new customers during the downturn.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: Well-rounded, due to having consultants and programmers that are well-versed in their areas of expertise.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most?

Continuing education; our consultants are constantly learning how to support newer versions of software.

Fun fact about your company: We placed bird feeders outside our High Point offices and enjoy watching all sorts of wildlife get a treat.

Dynamic Quest

Description: Provides IT services, marketing, help desk services, data center services and software development

Top executive: Javier Gomez, president and CEO

#29

million

Founded: 2000

No. of Triad employees: 67

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Trend toward outsourcing IT and data services; addition of services and resource capacity to handle more, and larger, clients



Gomez

What factors outside of your control helped you grow?

Demand. The needs of our clients have helped us drive the direction of our business. When demand for Web design and search engine optimization grew, so did our company.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Built our own 14,000-square-foot office space

in Greensboro but have already leased office space nearby to meet our needs

Added products or services? Training services and "lunch box" learning programs

Added employees? Support center staff has grown from five to 25. Also added specialized project managers for our IT development and marketing teams

"We would have grown even faster except that..." We won't sacrifice quality for a greater slice of market share.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Growing at a rate of 20 percent to 30 percent each year, since economic concerns have more clients outsourcing.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most?

More investment in technology education so there will be a solid, high-skilled applicant pool

A positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year?

Experiencing an estimated 32 percent growth so far in 2011

Fun fact about your company: We emphasize working in a fun and relaxed atmosphere. Our team regularly participates in playing basketball and cornhole as a way of bringing everyone together.

Green Resource LLC

Description: Wholesaler/retailer for seed, chemicals, erosion control and geo-textile products

Top Executive: Todd McPeak, Jonathan Annas, co-owners

#30

Undisclosed

Founded: 1994

No. of Triad employees: 30

No. of employees total: 65

Offices in Triad: Two (Colfax and Winston-Salem)



McPeak

Address: 5204 Highgreen Court, Colfax 27235

Phone: (336) 855-6363

Website: www.green-resource.com

2010 revenues:

Offices outside Triad: Three (Charlotte, Garner, Shallotte)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Maintained a

capitalized position; evaluated all operating expenses; grew a diverse customer base

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? 34,000 square feet from an acquisition in Charlotte

Added locations or broadened service territory? Charlotte

Added products or services? Additional product lines from Syngenta, Bayer and Monsanto.

Acquired another firm? Grogreen Solutions in Charlotte

Added employees? 16, in management, warehouse, administrative and delivery positions

"We would have grown even faster except that..." The uncertainties of our economy have the business segments we participate in hesitant to expand.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Continued growth in the turf and ornamental industry but at a modest rate

What factors will determine if that outlook holds true? Our

ability to keep new and useful products in front of our customers. Also, commercial growth in North Carolina will drive improvements in construction and real estate.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? Improved infrastructure — roads, logistics, etc.

How are changes in technology impacting your business? Technology has been an area of significant investment for us during the past several years and has connected our employees across the state.

A positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year?

We've not reduced our overall headcount. This has not been the norm in our industry during the past three years.

Gone green? Implemented VMware, which has significantly reduced the number of servers required to run our IT infrastructure, reducing our electricity consumption.

FAST 50

Wall Esleeck Babcock LLP

Description: Boutique law firm advising on mergers and acquisitions, estate planning and real estate, tax, international issues and health care

Top executive: Jim Wall, managing partner

Address: 1076 W. Fourth St., Winston-Salem 27101

Phone: (336) 722-6300

Website: www.weblbp.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed

Founded: 2006

No. of employees total: 11

Offices in Triad: One (Winston-Salem)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Added very capable lawyers who brought robust practices with them.



Wall

This, in turn, gave us depth in certain areas of practice and expanded our offerings. Many of our clients have also grown, needing additional legal services.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Occupy more than 6,500 square feet (which doubled our original space) and have the ability to add another 1,700

square feet

Added products or services? Estate planning has been added in the past two years.

Added employees? Four attorneys joined the firm in recent months, three of whom are partners who brought thriving practices with them.

Acquired another firm? Not in the truest sense of the word, but Matt York, of York Law, folded his practice into ours.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: Keep our focus on providing great service at rates that are less than what we'd be charging if we were practicing at larger firms.

Any acquisitions, product launches, or geographic expansions in the next two years? We'd like to enhance our practice areas by adding bankruptcy and perhaps others. We just need the right opportunity to come along.

How are changes in technology impacting your business? It's changed the way we practice. Document management software and electronic databases are used to perform research. Fifteen years ago we would've had to dedicate a large amount of floor space to a library.

Fun fact about your company: It's not lost on any of us that this firm's first day was April Fool's Day — April 1, 2006.

Sunrise Technologies

Description: Consulting and software solutions company specializing in Microsoft Dynamics AX enterprise resource planning (ERP) for manufacturing, distribution and retail industries

Top executive: John Pence, president

Address: 111 N. Chestnut St., Suite 300, Winston-Salem 27101

Phone: (336) 722-6741

Website: www.sunriseconsult.com

2010 revenues: \$14 million

Founded: 1994

No. of Triad employees: 20



Pence

No. of employees total: 91

Offices in Triad: One (Winston-Salem)

Offices outside Triad: (Dallas, Los Angeles, Xi'an, China)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Focused on one product, Micro-

soft Dynamics AX. This enables us to concentrate our efforts in recruiting and training our consultants, giving them extensive knowledge of the product.

Factors outside your control that helped you grow? Microsoft delivering us a great product. The 2012 release has excited manufacturers and distributors, which translates into

customers for us.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added products or services?

Created add-on solutions for Microsoft Dynamics AX, including: Apparel & Footwear template, Advanced Warehouse Management Solution and the Vertex O-Series Integration tax software

Added employees?

More than 25 employees in the last two years, most of them in sales, human resources, support and consulting

How are changes in technology impacting your business? With more demand for technology in the "cloud," we're now able to offer customers Microsoft Dynamics AX software as a service, rather than a product.

Positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year? Since many of our consultants and sales reps are often away from their families due to customer projects located around the globe, we offered them a night out where they could enjoy their families on Sunrise's tab. Employees went to baseball games, the movies, out to dinner, etc.

Fun fact about your company: Company president John Pence is both a sailor and a pilot. He's also an avid swimmer and coaches at a local high school.

PharmaCore Inc.

Description: Custom research organization that makes chemical compounds used in pharmaceutical drug discovery

Top executive: Robert K. Maddox, president

Address: 4180 Mendenhall Oaks Parkway, High Point 27265

Phone: (336) 841-5250

Website: www.pharmacore.com

2010 revenues: \$14 million

Founded: 2000

No. of Triad employees: 67

No. of employees total: 70

Offices in Triad: One (High Point)

Offices outside Triad: Cambridgeshire, U.K.



Maddox

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Increased the size of our facility and equipment to produce hundreds of kilos of chemical products; more companies outsourcing drug discovery projects;

significant amount of time spent on efficiency

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Economic downturn and the subsequent recovery have brought about more spending on outsourced projects.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? 14,000 square feet

Added products or services? More analytical chemistry services

Added employees? 32, mostly chemists, operators and some administrative positions

"We would have grown even faster except that..." We expanded our facility just as the economy really began to tumble. It took some time to start seeing revenue results from our expansion.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: Main limiting factor is that our facility is smaller than our major competitors' and thus we cannot handle the same range of projects. We compensate for this by moving projects smoothly and working diligently.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? Greater regional focus on expanding the pharmaceutical/biotech industry. Companies are always open to doing business locally and it makes good business sense.

Gone green? Condensers in our lab allow us to recapture organic solvents and reuse them.

Fun fact about your company: Annual tournaments against TransTech Pharma. This year featured a golf tournament.

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THE LIST

Fast 50

(Fastest-growing, private companies in the Triad, ranked by revenue change¹)

Researched and compiled by Katie Booher

Rank	Last year's rank	Name and address of company Phone number/ Website	2010 revenue	Company description	Triad employees/ Total employees	Year founded	Top local executive
1	1	Varrow Inc. 2311 W. Cone Blvd., Greensboro, NC 27408 (866) 783-8604/www.varrow.com	\$31.5 million	Information technology services including data storage management, virtualization, disaster recovery, data centers and cloud computing	16/ 54	2004	Jeremiah J. Cook, Daniel P. Weiss
2	NR	Packrite Inc. 1650 Eastway Court, High Point, NC 27260 (336) 884-0793/www.packrite.net	\$7.7 million	Packaging design and development company, offering single-face corrugated lamination, microflute and folding paper packaging capabilities	32/ 32	2008	Michael Drummond
3	NR	Patriot Services 1429 Westover Terrace, Greensboro, NC 27408 (336) 272-6800/www.patriotservicetriad.com	\$12.5 million	Full-service staffing agency providing qualified, screened and trained candidates for administrative, professional, health care and industrial positions	18/ 27	2006	Richard Lide
4	9	Cowboy Jungle 684 Hanes Mall Blvd., Winston-Salem, NC 27103 (336) 768-0303/www.alegrishoes.com	WND	Retail and e-commerce outlet for medical apparel and footwear	20/ 25	2001	Eric Johnson
5	3	New Breed Logistics Inc. 4043 Piedmont Parkway, High Point, NC 27265 (336) 232-4100/www.newbreed.com	WND	Third-party logistics services; distribution, manufacturing support, aftermarket services, critical services parts distribution	455/ 7,500	1968	Louis DeJoy
6	6	Machine Specialties Inc. 6511 Franz Warner Parkway, Whitsett, NC 27377 (336) 285-6733/www.machspec.com	\$27 million	Precision metal-machining and finishing (mainly turning large rods or blocks of metal into parts for the aerospace, defense, medical and energy industries)	161/ 161	1969	Robert Simmons
7	NR	HICAPS Inc. 600 N. Regional Road, Greensboro, NC 27409 (336) 665-1234/www.hicaps.com	WND	Project management and consulting company specializing in construction management, public safety communications and building assessments	22/ 42	1985	Daniel M. Hood
8	2	Confiance IP Solutions Inc. 7900 Triad Center Drive, Greensboro, NC 27410 (336) 389-4500/www.confianceinc.com	\$12.6 million	Designs, implements and supports technologies for data centers, VoIP, IP contact centers, wireless LAN/WAN, storage area networks and video conferencing	27/ 31	2006	Michael Cotrone, Bill Demarest
9	NR	WorkForce Carolina 711 W. Independence Blvd., Mount Airy, NC 27030 (336) 789-8220/www.workforcecarolina.com	\$12.1 million	Full-service staffing company providing temporary help, direct hires, background screening, skills assessments and payroll services	26/ 26	1987	Teresa Lewis
10	24	Sign-A-Rama Triad 3125 Spring Garden St., Greensboro, NC 27407 (336) 545-1124/www.triadsigns.com	\$4.6 million	Design, manufacture, installation and maintenance of signs	70/ 70	1991	Vince Cvijanovic
11	16	Coble Trench Safety Inc. 3137 Cedar Park Road, Greensboro, NC 27405 (336) 398-3000/www.cobletrenchsafety.com	WND	Rents, services and sells trench safety equipment and other specialty products for construction industry	29/ 77	2002	Tom Coble
12	27	Carolina Liquid Chemistries Corp. 391 Technology Way, Winston-Salem, NC 27101 (336) 722-8910/www.carolinachemistries.com	\$14.4 million	Develops chemistry systems and reagents for diagnostic testing	18/ 56	1997	Phil Shugart
13	NR	Tempo Upholstery and Drapery 1601 Blandwood Drive, High Point, NC 27260 (336) 889-6606	\$11 million	Wholesale decorative fabric converter and distributor, indoor and outdoor pillow manufacturer	70/ 70	1976	Paul Romer
14	NR	Live Decisions LLC, DBA Web Decisions 303 Pisgah Church Road, Greensboro, NC 27455 (336) 545-7817/www.webdecisions.com	\$2.5 million	Provides database-driven marketing solutions via direct mail, email and website content	19/ 22	2002	Kim Addington
15	17	DataChambers LLC 3310 Old Lexington Road, Winston-Salem, NC 27107 (336) 499-7220/www.datachambers.com	WND	Specializes in secure data storage, hosting for mission-critical infrastructure, 24/7 monitoring and management solutions and cloud computing	25/ 26	2002	Nicholas Kottyan
16	36	SouthData Inc. 201 Technology Lane, Mount Airy, NC 27030 (336) 719-5000/www.southdata.com	WND	Outsourced services provider for clients' billing, document management and mail distribution needs	86/ 136	1985	John Springthorpe III
17	34	Piedmont Pharmaceuticals 204 Muirs Chapel Road, Greensboro, NC 27410 (336) 544-0320/www.piedmontpharma.com	\$3.4 million	Specialty pharmaceutical company focused on animal and human therapeutics in parasitology and drug delivery systems	15/ 15	2001	Roland Johnson
18	14	Apex Analytix Inc. 1501 Highwoods Blvd., Greensboro, NC 27410 (336) 422-7371/www.apexanalytix.com	\$39.8 million	Provides services and software for performance improvement, error prevention and fraud detection in accounts payable	120/ 244	1988	Steve Yurko
19	NR	Bradley Personnel Inc. 51 S. Talbert Blvd., Lexington, NC 27292 (336) 882-1601/www.bradleypersonnel.com	\$12.2 million	Full-service staffing agency, providing staffing solutions for the Triad and surrounding areas	13/ 13	1998	Darren Bradley
20	26	Best Services Group Inc. 829 Graves St., Kernersville 27284 (336) 993-6339/www.transportationgateway.com	WND	Logistics services including trucking, freight brokerage, warehousing and fulfillment and international freight forwarding	383/ 423	1987	David W. Reich Jr.
21	NR	Saf-Gard Shoe Co. 2701 Patterson St., Greensboro, NC 27407 (336) 299-1688/www.safgard.com	\$32.2 million	Sells occupational slip-resistant and safety shoe footwear with a focus on business-to-business "employer-approved style" programs	80/ 171	1980	Patrick Kubis
22	25	Market America Inc. 1302 Pleasant Ridge Road, Greensboro, NC 27409 (336) 605-0040/www.marketamerica.com	\$297.6 million	Product brokerage and Internet marketing company that specializes in one-to-one marketing	550/ 700	1992	J.R. Ridinger
23	NR	Secure Designs Inc. 301 N. Elm St., Suite 201, Greensboro, NC 27401 (336) 232-5990/www.securedesigns.com	\$2.2 million	Provides outsourced Internet network security solutions to small and midsize businesses and organizations	13/ 14	2002	Larry Cecchini
24	NR	Technology Crops International 7996 North Point Blvd., Winston-Salem, NC 27106 (336) 759-7335/www.techcrops.com	WND	Provides supply chain and risk-management services for specialty crops	13/ 44	2004	Andrew Hebard
25	NR	HEP Direct Inc. 416 Alberson Road, Thomasville, NC 27360 (336) 472-8102/www.hep-direct.com	\$7.7 million	Provides in-home delivery solutions in the continental 48 states to the leading furniture retailers, e-retailers, manufacturers and interior designers	100/ 160	2005	Keith Hewitt

1- Rankings are based on revenue growth as determined and verified by Smith Leonard using a formula that weighs both dollar and percentage change between 2008 and 2010. NR- Not ranked

It is not the intent of this list to endorse the participants or to imply that the size of a firm determines its quality. Although every attempt is made to ensure the accuracy and thoroughness of The Business Journal Lists, omissions sometimes occur. Please send corrections on company letterhead to Katie Booher, research director, The Business Journal, 100 S. Elm St., Suite 400, Greensboro, N.C. 27401 or fax to (336) 574-3607.



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THE LIST**Fast 50**(Fastest-growing, private companies in the Triad, ranked by revenue change¹)

Researched and compiled by Katie Booher

Rank	Last year's rank	Name and address of company Phone number / Website	2010 revenue	Company description	Local employees/ Total employees	Year founded	Top local executive
26	33	Technology Concepts & Design Inc. (TCDI) 4510 Weybridge Lane, Greensboro, NC 27407 (336) 232-5800/www.tcdi.com	\$24.4 million	Provides legal software and services specific to legal discovery and litigation case management	56/ 100	1988	Bill Johnson
27	NR	CaribEx Worldwide Inc. 4248 Piedmont Parkway, Greensboro, NC 27410 (336) 315-0443/www.caribex.com	\$35.4 million	Freight forwarder, third-party logistics provider and customs brokerage service	25/ 300	1987	John Ford
28	NR	Accelerando 194 Mendenhall Oaks Parkway, High Point, NC 27265 (336) 899-1899/www.accelerando.net	\$3.7 million	Provides business management software for small and midsize businesses, including network/infrastructure design and support, retail management, accounting software	17/ 25	2000	Craig Castor
29	30	Dynamic Quest Inc. 4821 Koger Blvd., Greensboro, NC 27407 (336) 370-0555/www.dynamicquest.com	\$4.5 million	Provides IT services, marketing, help desk services, data center services and software development	67/ 67	2000	Javier Gomez
30	22	Green Resource LLC 204 Highgreen Court, Colfax, NC 27235 (336) 855-6363/www.green-resource.com	WND	Wholesaler/retailer for seed, chemicals, erosion control and geo-textile products	30/ 65	1994	Todd McPeak, Jonathan Annas
31	NR	Wall Esleeck Babcock LLP 1076 W. Fourth St., Winston-Salem, NC 27101 (336) 722-6300/www.wallbp.com	WND	Boutique law firm advising on mergers and acquisitions, estate planning and real estate, tax, international issues and health care	11/ 11	2006	Jim Wall
32	19	Sunrise Technologies 111 N. Chestnut St., Winston-Salem, NC 27101 (336) 722-6741/www.sunriseconsult.com	\$14 million	Consulting and software solutions company specializing in Microsoft Dynamics AX enterprise resource planning for manufacturing, distribution and retail industries	20/ 91	1994	John Pence
33	23	PharmaCore Inc. 4180 Mendenhall Oaks Parkway, High Point, NC 27265 (336) 841-5250/www.pharmacore.com	\$14 million	Custom research organization that makes chemical compounds used in pharmaceutical drug discovery	67/ 70	2000	Robert K. Maddox
34	NR	Smart Choice 4121 Beechwood Drive, Greensboro, NC 27410 (336) 217-4650/www.smartchoiceagents.com	\$39 million	Providing a variety of value-added products, services and training to independent insurance agents	39/ 47	1994	Doug Witcher
35	NR	CGR Products Inc. 4655 U.S. 29 N., Greensboro, NC 27405 (336) 621-4568/www.cgrproducts.com	\$16.7 million	Cuts gaskets and sealing materials to make custom parts for industrial and consumer products	63/ 79	1962	Charles Keeley
36	NR	ABCO Automation Inc. 6202 Technology Drive, Browns Summit, NC 27214 (336) 375-6400/www.goabco.com	\$16.5 million	Designs and builds automated manufacturing equipment	122/ 122	1977	Brad Kemmerer
37	31	Stanley Benefits 300 E. Wendover Ave., Greensboro, NC 27401 (336) 271-4450/www.stanleybenefits.com	WND	Independent employee-benefits consulting firm, specializing in 401(k), actuarial and flexible spending accounts	40/ 41	2002	Chris Stanley
38	NR	S&L Painting & Decorating 1011 W. Northwest Blvd., Winston-Salem, NC 27101 (336) 777-3442/www.sandpaintinginc.com	WND	Commercial and industrial paint company specializing in coating, sandblasting and epoxy flooring	50/ 102	1986	Lida Hayes-Calvert
39	40	Foothills Brewing 638 W. Fourth St., Winston-Salem, NC 27101 (336) 777-3348/www.foothillsbrewing.com	\$3.4 million	Brewery and restaurant	75/ 75	2005	Jamie Bartholomaeus
40	NR	Sherrill Inc. 200 Seneca Road, Greensboro, NC 27406 (336) 378-0444/www.sherrilltree.com	\$18.1 million	Wholesaler/retailer of professional tools and importer of a number specialized products for use in urban arboriculture	46/ 48	1960	Tobe Sherrill
41	45	Key Resources Inc. 3703-A W. Market St., Greensboro, NC 27403 (336) 297-1700/www.keyresourcesinc.com	WND	Temporary staffing service	14/ 17	1997	Pamela D. Whitaker
42	NR	Tencarva Machinery Co. 1115 Pleasant Ridge Road, Greensboro, NC 27409 (336) 665-1435/www.tencarva.com	\$145.8 million	Sells and services industrial pumps and related equipment for liquid handling	90/ 295	1978	Rodney M. Lee
43	NR	The Sales Factory 1301 Carolina St., Suite 106, Greensboro, NC 27401 (336) 333-0007/www.salesfactory.com	WND	Research-based strategic marketing firm	26/ 26	1984	Ged King
44	NR	ACT Media Inc. 390 Peters Creek Parkway, Winston-Salem 27101 (336) 416-7117/www.nathanabor.com	\$3 million	Parent to an assortment of ventures, ranging from Internet consulting firm TCV Media to real estate investments	6 full time, 47 subcontractors	2005	Nathan Tabor
45	NR	Logan Heating & Air 5142 N. Causeway Drive, Winston-Salem, NC 27106 (336) 924-4161/www.loganhvac.com	WND	Design, sale, installation and service of heating and cooling systems for residential and commercial markets	70 full time, 5 - 10 temporary	1952	Scott Boyles
46	NR	Good Health Natural Products Inc. 3400 W. Wendover Ave., Greensboro, NC 27407 (336) 285-0684/www.goodhealthnaturalproducts.com	\$22.7 million	Developer and distributor of healthy, all-natural snacks under the Good Health Natural Foods brand and natural body care products under the South of France brand	12/ 22	1992	Mark Gillis
47	NR	Plastic Revolutions Inc. 1704 Barnes St., Reidsville, NC 27320 (336) 637-1408/www.plasticrevolutions.com	\$13.2 million	Purchases used plastic containers, pallets, etc., cleans them and then resells them to companies to make new products	75/ 75	1992	John Hagan
48	NR	Stearns Financial Services Group 324 W. Wendover Ave., Greensboro, NC 27408 (336) 230-1811/www.stearnsfinancial.com	WND	Wealth management firm and investment adviser	13/ 16	1991	Dennis Stearns
49	NR	Apple Rock Advertising and Promotions Inc. 7602 Business Park Drive, Greensboro, NC 27409 (336) 232-4791/www.applerock.com	WND	Manufacturers displays and provides services to the event industry, including trade show exhibits, graphics and audio/visual equipment	40/ 47	1988	Eric Burg
50	NR	Tiger Controls Inc. 7615 Business Park Drive, Greensboro, NC 27409 (336) 889-6265/www.tigercontrols.com	\$7 million	Distributor of electronic, electrical and industrial components for the utility industry	19/ 19	1999	Neeta Singh

¹ - Rankings are based on revenue growth as determined and verified by Smith Leonard using a formula that weighs both dollar and percentage change between 2008 and 2010. NR- Not ranked

It is not the intent of this list to endorse the participants or to imply that the size of a firm determines its quality. Although every attempt is made to ensure the accuracy and thoroughness of The Business Journal Lists, omissions sometimes occur. Please send corrections on company letterhead to Katie Booher, research director, The Business Journal, 100 S. Elm St., Suite 400, Greensboro, N.C. 27401 or fax to (336) 574-3607.

FAST 50

Smart Choice

Description: Providing a variety of value-added products, services and training to independent insurance agents

#34

Top executive: Doug Witcher, CEO
Address: 4121 Beechwood Drive, Greensboro 27410
Phone: (336) 217-4650
Website: www.smart-choiceagents.com

2010 revenues: \$39 million

Founded: 1994

No. of Triad employees: 39

No. of employees total: 47



Witcher

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)
Offices outside Triad: One (Owensboro, Ky.)
Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Increase in the number of agencies desiring to represent quality insurance carriers; aggressively

recruited agencies to join our network

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Barriers to entry in the insurance business are high unless you have a network to go through.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added locations or broadened service territory? Increased the number of agencies we serve by more than 400, particularly in the Southeast, Texas and California

"We would have grown even faster except that..." We didn't recruit agencies for our network to our full capabilities.

What's your outlook for the next three years? If we execute well on our strategies, we have the opportunity to double our revenues.

How are changes in technology impacting your business?

Comparative rating and agency management systems allow agencies to serve more policyholders better, without a large upfront cost or investment by using these tools in the "cloud."

Gone green? Launched an online portal for each agency in our network, providing them with essential information and tools while saving them money on paper and postage costs. We estimate the change has reduced paper files by 9,000 a month.

Fun fact about your company: Our "Workout for Charity" program donates a dollar to charity for every 20 minutes an employee works out. Each month a new charity is selected. Charities have included the United Way, Family Services of the Piedmont, High Point Regional Health System and The Piedmont School.



JULIE KNIGHT/THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Charles Keeley is president of CGR Products Inc. in Greensboro.

CGR Products Inc.

Description: Cuts gaskets and sealing materials to make custom parts for industrial and consumer products

Top executive: Charles Keeley, president

Address: 4655 U.S. 29 N., Greensboro 27405

Phone: (336) 621-4568
Website: www.cgrproducts.com

2010 revenues: \$16.7 million

Founded: 1962

No. of Triad employees: 63

No. of employees total: 79

Locations in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad: One (Decatur, Ala.)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Started a program to incentivize process improvements from our associates; long-term focus on financial prudence and a strong balance sheet proved to be a selling point during difficult financial times

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Unfortunately, some of our competitors didn't survive the recession and we were able to start serving a number of their customers.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added locations or broaden service territory? We've added sales representatives in Texas. They'll service the southwest U.S. and northern Mexico.

Acquired another firm? We've been looking at acquisition opportunities for the past 18 months.

Added employees? Six machine operators and one product-launch person.

What's your outlook for the next three years? While we don't expect the economy to grow substantially during the next few years, we have several large opportunities that we hope to close during the next nine to 15 months.

"We would have grown even faster except that..."

We did not compromise our consistent pricing structure in order to gain market share.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: Our surveys of customers and suppliers on metrics like price, delivery, quality and responsiveness indicate that we rate well in most areas. Moving forward, we feel that improved responsiveness will be critical to separating us from the competition.

Fun fact about your company: We sponsor between 10 to 15 local families during the holiday season.

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FAST 50

ABCO Automation Inc.

Description: Designs and builds automated manufacturing equipment.

Top executive: Brad Kemmerer, president and CEO

#36

Address: 6202 Technology Drive, Browns Summit 27214

Phone: (336) 375-6400

Website: www.goabco.com

2010 revenues: \$16.5

million

Founded: 1977

No. of employees total: 122

Offices in Triad: One (Northeast Greensboro)



Kemmerer

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Continuing to build on strong relationships with our customers. We also developed a diverse blue chip customer base and increased sales of our Build-to-Print

equipment.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Manufacturers understanding that they must automate to remain competitive

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Added

Building 3 to our facility at the height of the recession, giving us an additional 27,000 square feet.

Added employees? Brought on more than 20 employees, primarily in assembly roles

What's your outlook for the next three years? We have established a record backlog and are very excited, particularly about the next 18 months.

"We would have grown even faster except that..."

Many of our customers had severe restrictions placed on their capital spending during the recession.

How are changes in technology impacting your business?

Increasingly using video-conferencing to interact with our customers while reducing travel costs and saving time

Positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year?

Winning two significant contracts that helped us build a record backlog

What economic factors will determine future success? Economic growth and stability that will allow manufacturers to invest in automation

Fun fact about your company: When an employee leaves ABCO, we have a tradition of roasting them with a "Top 10" list of reasons why they're leaving.

Stanley Benefits

Description: Independent employee-benefits consulting firm, specializing in 401(k), actuarial and flexible spending accounts.

Top executive: Chris Stanley, senior vice president

Address: 300 E. Wendover Ave., Greensboro 27401

Phone: (336) 271-4450

Website: www.stanleybenefits.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed

Founded: 2002

No. of Triad employees: 40

No. of employees total: 41



Stanley

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad: One (Charlotte)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Strong growth in cross-selling our existing client base;

relative upswing in the economy

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Firms looking to decrease their costs (as a result of the economic downturn) through better consultation and planning

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? By 1,000 square feet

Added locations or broadened service territory? Hired a salesperson in Charlotte to increase our penetration

Added employees? Added two salespeople

"We would have grown even faster except that..."

Proposed tougher industry regulations from the Department of Labor have required us to expend a large amount of time and resources preparing for them.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Increased sales and expansion into new markets

How are changes in technology impacting your business? A decade ago most folks didn't know what investments or balance they had in their 401(k), pension or Flex plan;

today you can just point and click to pull up data on each.

Gone green? Heavily dependent on creating, handling and disseminating information (which means we use a lot of paper). But now we're able to deliver that same information to clients digitally, reducing our paper usage by 50 percent during the last few years.

Fun fact about your company:

Every year at our holiday lunch we play a game of "Dirty Santa." It really helps to see your employees having fun and cutting up away from the office.

S&L Painting & Decorating

Description: Commercial and industrial paint company specializing in coating, sandblasting and epoxy flooring

Top executive: Lida Hayes-Calvert, president

#38

Address: 1011 W. Northwest Blvd., Winston-Salem 27101

Phone: (336) 777-3442

Website: http://www.sandlpaintinginc.com/

2010 revenues: Undis-

closed

Founded: 1986

No. of Triad employees: 50

No. of employees total: 102



Hayes-Calvert

Offices in Triad: One (Winston-Salem)

Offices outside Triad: One (Sneads Ferry)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Repeat business with several general contractors confident in our ability to complete large

projects on time; opened an office in Sneads Ferry after winning a five-year government contract for maintenance at Camp Lejeune, Fort Bragg and Cherry Point; successfully bid on

several large jobs in our area including HondaJet, Caterpillar and various hospitals and universities

Factors outside your control that helped you grow? Several of our competitors went out of business, leaving us with more projects to take over during the economic downturn.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? 3,200 square feet for Sneads Ferry office

Added locations or broadened service territory?

Commercial and industrial painting at barracks, child-care centers, airplane hangars on military bases

Added employees?

52 painters from Pender and Onslow counties working with us out of Sneads Ferry

What's your outlook for the next three years? Needing adequate upfits for soldiers coming back from war will continue to keep us busy. As projects come in to the Triad, we'll have our fingers on them.

Fun fact about your company: President Lida Hayes-Calvert has two bulldogs, Georgia and Dooley, who come to the office everyday and help everyone de-stress when times get tough.

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FAST 50

Foothills Brewing

Description: Brewery and restaurant
Top Executive: Jamie Bartholomaus, president and brewmaster
Address: 638 W. Fourth St., Winston-Salem 27101
Phone: (336) 777-3348

#39

Website: www.foothills-brewing.com

2010 revenues: \$3.4 million

Founded: 2005

No. of Triad employees: 75

Locations in Triad: Two (Winston-Salem)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Focus on quality and service on the restaurant side has led to growth there. Winning multiple awards and gaining national recognition has increased the company's reputation. Making significant capital investments in capacity for beer production as well as our sales team has led to increased sales.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Increased interest in the craft beer industry.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Presently adding a 49,000-square-foot facility.

Acquired another firm?

Bought equipment, assets and brands, including trademarks of another N.C. brewery (Foothills acquired the beer division of Mooresville-based Carolina Beer & Beverage, known for its Carolina Blonde and Cottonwood Ales brands.)

Added employees? Five to 10 jobs in production, sales and management
"We would have grown even faster



Jamie Bartholomaus is president and brewmaster at Foothills Brewing in Winston-Salem.

FILE PHOTO

except that..." We were limited by the capacity of our equipment.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Better growth in distribution, as the demand for Foothills' beer grows

Any new product launches? We'll start adding new products once our new production facility is built and have room to grow.

Describe your strategic position right

now versus your competition:

Awareness of the brand has created a lot of demand, while the beer industry as a whole has been declining.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? Continued liberalization of ABC laws and awareness about quality local breweries

A positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last

year?

Winning national awards and improved sales has led to salary increases for many workers.

How are changes in technology impacting your business? It's made for better, more efficient production and quality outputs.

Fun fact about your company: Naturally, we love making beer!

Sherrill Inc.

Description: Wholesaler/retailer of professional tools and importer of a number specialized products for use in urban arboriculture.

Top executive: Tobe Sherrill, CEO

Address: 200 Seneca Road, Greensboro 27406

#40

Phone: (336) 378-0444

Website: www.sherrill-tree.com

2010 revenues: \$18.1 million

Founded: 1960

No. of Triad employees: 46

No. of employees total: 48

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Invested

significant capital and energy into developing and sourcing new products to make our customers more productive; honed advertising effectiveness by increasing catalogs from one to seven annual direct mail pieces and more internet marketing initiatives.

What factors outside your control helped you grow?

Because of market consolidation of

smaller retailers, we've seen a lot more out-of-state customers come our way.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added employees? Three — a sales director, customer service manager and warehouse manager

What's your outlook for the next three years? Strong, with continued direct-marketing efforts, new product launches and making customer service a high priority

What factors will determine if that outlook holds true? Customer confidence

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: Placing increased attention on our branding, keeping ahead of what product(s) will be in demand in the future and delivering them to our customers

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? More awareness about the considerable stress urban trees are under, particularly from foreign insects and various pathogens

Fun fact about your company: CEO Tobe Sherrill has climbed (and even slept!) in some of the world's tallest trees, including a 371-foot Giant Coastal Redwood tree in Humboldt Redwood State Park in California.



Sherrill

Key Resources Inc.

Description: Temporary staffing service

Top executive: Pamela D. Whitaker, president

Address: 3703-A W. Market St., Greensboro 27403

Phone: (336) 297-1700

Website: www.keyresourcesinc.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed

Founded: 1997

No. of Triad employees: 14

No. of employees total: 17

Offices in Triad: Three (Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Burlington)

Offices outside Triad: One (Iowa City, Iowa)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Working with

our employees to create new ideas and solutions for our clients'

growth, productivity and efficiency.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Growth for our clients. When they expanded into new markets, we were rewarded with increased business.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? 1,500 square feet

Added locations or broadened service territory? Iowa, Georgia, South Carolina

Added employees? Four — managers and staffing coordinators

"We would have grown even faster except that..." Growing too fast can create a hemorrhage. Planning for solid growth is important.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: Focusing on working as a team and providing quality customer service to our clients. That's how you win referrals.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most?

Having an education system that produces innovative thinkers for a technology/knowledge-based economy

A positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year? Opening and staffing a new facility is

challenging, but also very rewarding and energizing.

Fun fact about your company: Our staff has worked together for an average of eight years, and some have worked the entire 14 years we've been in existence. That's makes everyone feel like part of a big family.

#41



Whitaker

FAST 50

Tencarva Machinery Co.

Description: Sells and services industrial pumps and related equipment for liquid handling

Top executive: Rodney M. Lee, president

#42

Address: 1115 Pleasant Ridge Road, Greensboro 27409
Phone: (336) 665-1435
Website: www.tencarva.com
2010 revenues:

\$145.8 million

Founded: 1978

No. of Triad employees: 90

No. of employees total: 295



Lee

Offices in Triad:

Two (both in Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad: 21

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Improved service capabilities and infrastructure by adding an experienced and

knowledgeable service sales manager; partnered with John Crane seals, the largest manufacturer of mechanical seals, and acquired Greensboro-based Electric Service and Sales Co. (ESSCO), a motor distributor and

electrical service organization, to improve our product line; added sales coverage for municipal-end user accounts

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? 4,000 square feet at our Pleasant Ridge Road facility to accommodate the growth of our corporate accounting needs and sales-support staff. ESSCO division added 25,780 square feet.

Added employees? 23 from ESSCO

What's your outlook for the next three years?

In 2009 our revenues dropped by about 9 percent from a record year in 2008. We recovered and gained some to reach a new record in 2010. So far, 2011 revenues are running more than 15 percent ahead of last year. Sold our compressed air business in May, about 10 percent of our sales. Expecting our pump business growth to exceed the loss of revenue from compressed air.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most? A focus on infrastructure, specifically municipal water and sewer systems

Fun fact about your company: Started with 19 employees and 11 offices in Tennessee, North and South Carolina and Virginia, thus our name, of TENCARVA

The Sales Factory

Description: Researched-based strategic marketing firm

Top executive: Ged King, president and CEO

Address: 1301 Carolina St., Suite 106, Greensboro 27401

#43

Phone: (336) 333-0007

Website: www.salesfactory.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed

Founded: 1984

No. of Triad employees: 26

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)

What decisions contributed to your success between 2008 and 2010?

Existing clients enjoying success in a down economy and spreading the word about us. We



King

also realigned our organization into teams and added professional management, improving efficiency and quality of work. We focused on understanding our clients' customers through the use of qualitative and quantitative research.

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? The downturn in the economy forced businesses to

look for new strategies to improve sales. Our research-based strategic approach proved a popular choice.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Doubled our current office space by 2,200 square feet.

Added products or services? Added marketing research and PR as regular components of our work

Added employees? Six in the last year — chief financial officer, chief operating officer, research manager, two account executives and a graphic designer

What's your outlook for the next three years? Expect to finish 2011 with more than 30 percent top-line growth and to add eight employees.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most?

Expansion of broadband Internet, which will enable the growth of social media and video streaming

Gone green? Most of our merchandising products use green materials and we've started a program encouraging our employees to ride bikes to work and to lunch.

Fun fact about your company: We have a Lego wall that allows us to take some time out of the work day to play a bit and inspire creativity.

ACT Media Inc.

Description: ACT Media is the parent to an assortment of ventures, ranging from Internet consulting firm TCV Media to real estate investments. (Editor's

Note: Owner Nathan Tabor has begun this year breaking businesses into LLCs)

#44

Top executive: Nathan Tabor, president and CEO

Address: 390 Peters Creek Parkway, Winston-Salem 27101

Phone: (336) 416-7117

Website: www.nathantabor.com

bor.com

2010 revenues: \$3 million

Founded: 2005

No. of Triad employees: Six

No. of employees total: Six, plus 43 subcontractors

Offices in Triad: One (Winston-Salem)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Purchased, renovated, stabilized and sold four apartment complexes; demand for affordable and safe rental housing during the economic down-

turn; ability to secure capital, despite the lending freeze

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Banks willing to lend money

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? 2,000 square feet

Added products or services? Purchased a 56-unit apartment complex in Greensboro in November 2010

Added employees? Four since January 2010

"We would have grown even faster except that..." There weren't more properties for us to purchase.

Describe your strategic position right now versus your competition: We're in a strong position. We own three complexes (14 units) and have three other complexes under contract now (184 units).

What's your outlook for the next three years?

We should add roughly 200 units each year for the next three years.

Education, training or public investment that would benefit your firm the most?

An automated system through the Clerk of Court's office giving us the ability to file evictions online.

A positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year?

Seeing a property we've purchased and renovated become a safe place for residents always boosts morale.

Fun fact about your company: ACT stands for Abigail Christine Tabor, my 6-year-old daughter. I started the company four months after she was born.



Tabor

Logan Heating & Air

Description: Design, sale, installation and service of heating and cooling systems for residential and commercial markets

Top executive: Scott Boyles, owner and president

#45

Address: 5142 N.

Causeway Drive,

Winston-Salem 27106

Phone: (336) 924-4161

Website: www.loganhvac.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed

closed

Founded: 1952

No. of Triad employees: About 70 permanent, plus five to 10 temps



Boyles

Offices in Triad: One (Winston-Salem)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Federal and state tax credits for energy-efficient heating and cooling systems created demand; diverse services, including such "green" energy solutions as geothermal and solar;

reputation for high customer satisfaction and popularity of top brand names

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added products or services? Spent

advertising dollars explaining the advantages of geothermal and solar

products. Fair percentage of the market is serious about going green, so we wanted to be there.

Added employees? 12 in three departments: customer service, sales and service and repair

"We would have grown even faster except that..." The economy caused a lot of homeowners to put off replacing old and worn out systems.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Continued demand for products that are more efficient, will last longer and which cost less to operate. Also, as "green" energy solutions become more common, we're poised to service those customers' needs.

Any acquisitions, product launches, or geographic expansions in the next two years? Possibly. We're looking into acquisitions that would put us in new geographic locations.

Positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year?

Winning the President's Award from Carrier, since only a fraction of the dealers nationwide are so honored. Also, due to our success, we've been able to make significant annual contributions to our employee profit-sharing program.

Fun fact about your company: We always celebrate when we do things right so our employees know there's a reward for success. For instance, whenever we receive a letter of praise from a customer, our staff is treated to a free lunch.

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FAST 50

Good Health Natural Products Inc.

Description: Developer and distributor of healthy, all-natural snacks under the Good Health Natural Foods brand and natural body care products under the

#46

Top executive: Mark Gillis, CEO
Address: 3400 W. Wendover Ave., Suite E, Greensboro 27407
Phone: (336) 285-0684

Website: www.goodhealthnaturalproducts.com

2010 revenues: \$19.4 million

Founded: 1992

No. of Triad employees: 12



Gillis

No. of employees total: 22
Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)
Offices outside Triad: One (San Diego)
Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Favorable market conditions for the natural foods industry

in the past decade; effective use of promotions to increase our products' exposure at retail locations; smart allocation of growth capital to meet our needs in the past two years

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? Trend toward living a

healthier lifestyle has been the primary external factor in our success.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added locations or broadened service territory? Expanded distribution internationally to Taiwan, Indonesia, mainland China and Japan, as well as new channels in the U.S.

Added products or services? Introduced Humbles baked hummus chips and numerous scents to our soaps

Added employees? Five since 2008, primarily in sales and marketing capacities

"We would have grown even faster except that..." Retailers have been slow to embrace alternative natural foods brands in favor of those from large, consumer packaged goods companies that will pay big money to insure good product placement.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Expecting 30 percent to 40 percent compounded annual growth, driven largely by a push to increase direct-store-delivery distribution of our products

A positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year? For the first time in company history, our snack brand ranked in the top 10 among all natural snack brands in the U.S.

Fun fact about your company: We ask our employees to come up with scripts for our commercials.

Plastic Revolutions Inc.

Description: Full-service plastics recycler. Purchases used plastic containers, pallets, etc., cleans them and then resells them to companies to make new products.

#47

Top executive: John Hagan, president
Address: 1704 Barnes St., Reidsville 27320
Phone: (336) 637-1408
Website: www.plasticrevolutions.com

2010 revenues: \$13.2 million

Founded: 1992

No. of employees total: 75

Offices in Triad: One (Reidsville)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Moved



Hagan

to a larger facility; measured employee productivity and daily profit/loss; managed cash and credit prudently

What factors outside your control helped you grow?

Green movement that's sweeping the country

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage?

Expanded from an older facility with only 100,000 square feet to a new, 300,000-square-foot facility

Added locations or broadened ser-

vice territory? Started exporting film and fiber

Added employees? Three salaried employees and 35 hourly production employees

"We would have grown even faster except that..."

End-user applications and regulations lagged behind recycling technology.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Expect growth to be 35 percent in 2011 and 50 percent in 2012 before leveling off to 10 percent annually.

What factors will determine if that outlook holds true? If the incentive to use recycled material (high energy costs) diminishes. If energy costs continue going up, our growth could be enormous. Also, the strength and longevity of the green movement is important.

How are changes in technology impacting your business? Huge impact on the manufacturing process. Keeps quality of products better and more consistent.

Gone green?

Added solar panels to the roof of a portion of our building and installed energy-efficient lighting and heating. Changing our forklift trucks to an all-electric fleet. Recycle 100 percent of waste water.

Fun fact about your company: We were recycling before it was cool!

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THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Stearns Financial Services Group

Description: Wealth management firm and investment adviser

Top executive: Dennis Stearns, president

Address: 324 W. Wendover Ave., Suite 204, Greensboro 27408

#48

Phone: (336) 230-1811
Website: www.stearns-financial.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed

Founded: 1991

No. of Triad employees: 13

No. of employees total: 16

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad: One (Chapel Hill)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Proactive in playing good defense in investment portfolios, reducing risk prior to the Great Recession and began bargain hunting in the spring of 2009; influx of new clients by 150 percent during the recession, over 90 percent of which were from referrals; created a network of more than 800 business contacts around the country to help supplement our regular research network



Stearns

What factors outside your control helped you grow? Many financial advisers were caught off guard as

the economy went south. Our firm was prepared and as a result more people came to us.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added employees? Three — financial advisers and analysts

"We would have grown even faster except that..."

We spent most of our time helping our clients survive a severe economic downturn. Our clients come before business growth.

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Expect the recovery to "hobble along" but still anticipate growth by over 20 percent per year

What factors will determine if that outlook holds true?

Whether the economic recovery continues to sputter, which creates many ongoing threats as well as opportunities

Any acquisitions, product launches, or geographic expansions in the next two years? Our new Chapel Hill office will help us further our footprint in the Triangle.

Positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year? Surviving the Great Recession without job cuts

Fun fact about your company:

All of our team members participate in the YMCA Bright Beginnings summer program to help underprivileged kids prepare for the new school year.

FAST 50

Apple Rock Advertising and Promotions Inc., dba Apple Rock Displays

Description: Manufacturers displays and provides services to the event industry, including trade show exhibits, graphics and audio/visual equipment

#49

Top executive: Eric Burg, CEO

Address: 7602 Business Park Drive, Greensboro 27409

Phone: (336) 232-4791

Website: www.applerock.com

2010 revenues: Undisclosed

Founded: 1988

No. of Triad employees: 40

No. of employees total: 47



Burg

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Offices outside Triad: Five (Las Vegas, Chicago, Atlanta, Raleigh and Charlotte)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010? Doubled our manufacturing space to almost 10,000 square feet; brought in

a CNC router (engraving machine) and other new equipment (such as printers) to increase our production capacity

What factors outside of your control helped you grow? A down economy forced our customers to be very aware of advertising costs. The quality and

value of what we offer made more sense for many of them.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Added locations or broadened service territory? Offices in Chicago and Atlanta

Added products or services? Interactive technology such as mobile applications

Added employees? Eight, mostly in manufacturing and sales

"We would have grown even faster except that..." Consumer confidence and uncertainty over U.S. debt made businesses slow to spend on advertising.

What's your outlook for the next three years? Steady growth as economy recovers and government debt is addressed.

How have changes in technology impacted your business? Helps us better measure what our customers want; creates quality business leads using real-time technology

Positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year? Receiving the SHARP award from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration recognizing our efforts in worksite safety and health. We were one of only 103 small businesses selected nationwide.

Fun fact about your company? Celebrating our company's birthday (it's a paid holiday)! We always celebrate with team-building activities such as zip lining, white water rafting and skeet shooting.



FILE PHOTO

Neeta Singh is president of Tiger Controls Inc. in Greensboro.

Tiger Controls Inc.

Description: Distributor of electronic, electrical and industrial components for the utility industry

Top executive: Neeta Singh, president

Address: 7615 Business Park Drive, Greensboro 27409

Phone: (336) 889-6265

Website: www.tigercontrols.com

2010 revenues:

\$7 million

Founded: 1999

No. of employees total: 19

Offices in Triad: One (Greensboro)

Primary reasons your company grew between 2008 and 2010?

Increased our performance grade (on-time delivery) from 97 percent to 99 percent; began attending more trade shows to dig up leads, which led to new customers and an increase of sales in 2010; improved our quality control program, which gave us more feedback from our customers via reports about any delivery errors

What factors outside your control helped you grow? A slower economy has led companies to outsource more buying, which results in more sales for us.

Describe operational changes: Have you...

Expanded square footage? Increased 150 percent (from 3,000 square feet to 7,500 square feet)

Added products or services? 10 new product lines for utility industry

Added employees? Three 2008-2010, mostly sales; has added eight this year, ranging from sales/admin to technicians and inspectors

What's your outlook for the next three years?

Our goal is to become certified as a safety supplier of electrical and electronic components for the nuclear industry. That means all products must be powered-cycled and rigorously field-tested to ensure success. Failure of the item could cause a radiation leak, so gaining certification is closely regulated. If you can get into that market however, it's fairly protected.

What factors will determine if that outlook holds true? Continued federal funding for research and development at the Department of Energy; growth of new utility plants

Any acquisitions, product launches, or geographic expansions in the next two years? We'd like to add some major product lines and expand into Tennessee, Georgia and the New England states.

Positive development that energized or boosted morale in the last year?

Moved to a larger facility; added bonus structure for both management and salespeople.

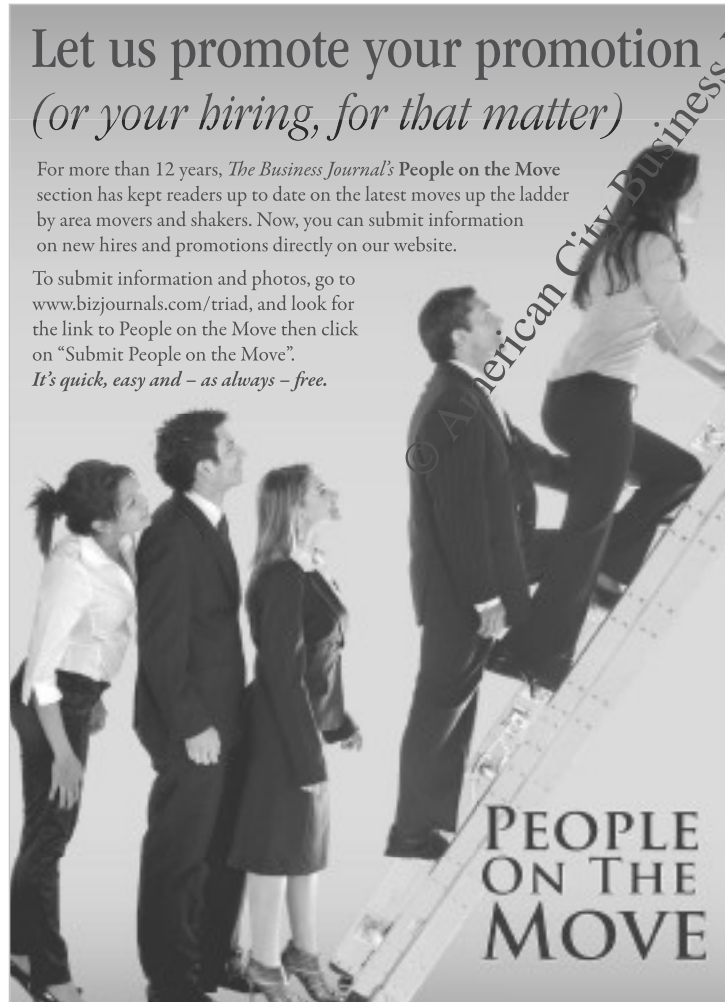
Fun fact about your company: We always have a Christmas party at Jack and Neeta's house with a live DJ and catered dinner featuring American, Indian and Italian food.

Let us promote your promotion (or your hiring, for that matter)

For more than 12 years, *The Business Journal's* People on the Move section has kept readers up to date on the latest moves up the ladder by area movers and shakers. Now, you can submit information on new hires and promotions directly on our website.

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Success seems to be largely a matter of hanging on after others have let go.

William Feather



Anyone who owns or runs a business knows the score — times are tough and getting tougher. It's not a time for shirkers. It's time for all of us to work smarter and harder. Let's get busy.

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