KANSAS CITY'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE

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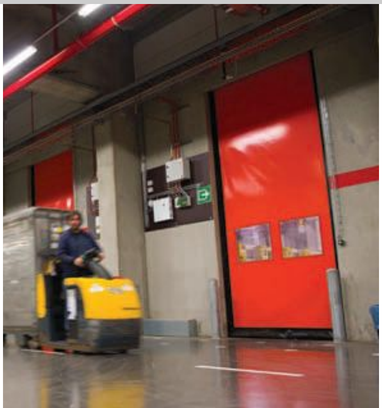


CONTENTS

INGRAM'S
JULY 2020 • VOLUME 46, NO. 7

Features

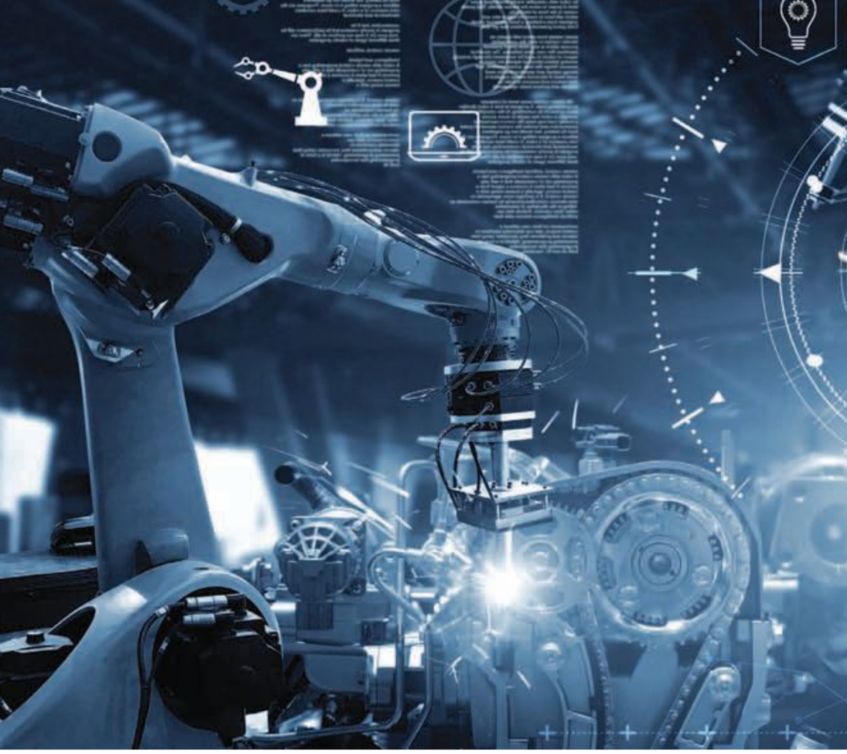
Talk of the Town

Perspectives

Business & Commerce

Leads & Lists

Special Sections



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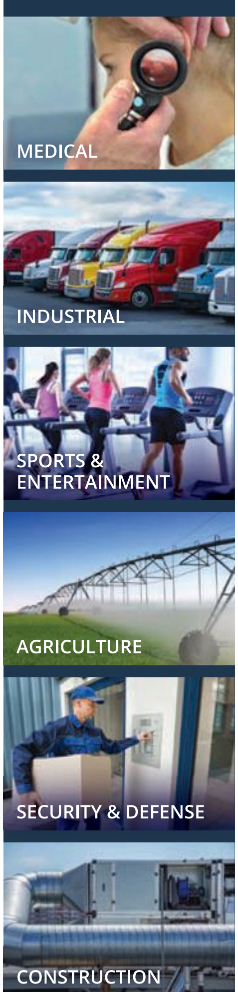

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Keep Your Feet on The Ground and Keep Reaching for the Stars

Thirty five years is a long time to administer the Corporate Report 100 ranking, and it's hard to believe that our ownership team just concluded its 24th consecutive ranking. We've seen it all over the years and I can't begin to tell you how much work and time this project takes, not only for companies and their accounting firms; it also takes a remarkable amount of work and diligence from our team.

Why do we do it? The short answer is that the Corporate Report 100 is the publication's biggest annual competitions and it's a tradition. It's also one of the most-anticipated reports the business community enjoys each year. I personally believe it's appreciated because we're able to put large and small businesses on the same playing field to allow them compete fairly with growth metrics.

I have plenty of great memories with the Corporate Report 100 competition, but one of my favorites was the annual phone call from the late Neal Patterson. Cerner has earned it spot on the CR100 ranking on 22 occurrences, and its highest rank was 4th place in 1987 and again in 1990. That performance over the years has earned Cerner the No. 1 rank on our All-Time Winners Honor Role.

After the first few years, Neal would call and simply say, "Well?" I knew it was Neal. He wanted to own the CR100 and it was fun to see how this inordinately successful icon of business valued this program. Neal always pressed for the outcome—not just the percentage, but the actual rank. As the years passed, it would become increasingly challenging to earn a place in the CR100.

A few years before Neal passed away I got the call. "Well?" We belly laughed hysterically after I told him Cerner ranked No. 101. Neal was less interested in any one year's ranking than he was in the longevity of being on the Corporate Report 100 ranking. He knew that maintaining success and growth of 25 percent or more each year would ensure that Cerner would own the all-time record of appearances and it would contribute to building a massive organization.

He also knew that when revenues exceeded $1 billion, that goal became more challenging. A lot more challenging. Cerner's record may one day be surpassed, but we're proud to have navigated that journey with our friend Neal, Cliff Illig and the good folks at Cerner.

The Top 10 Tradition

When we bought *Ingram's* in 1997 we established a theme that year of "On the Fast Track" with a front-cover image of sprinters coming out of the blocks at the UMKC track. Craig Sands was our photographer in this era and he did an extraordinary job, especially on the 1998 front cover "Climbing to the Top." Craig literally climbed on top of the spire of 1201 Walnut and shot an exec in a suit with a briefcase climbing a ladder with one hand. We received a call from OSHA, and I simply marveled at the power of Photoshop.

In 2001, we started the tradition of inviting the CEOs and occasionally a couple from each of the Top 10 companies. That cover was shot in Victory Lane of the new Kansas Speedway. Each of the Top 10 companies wore different-colored embroidered shirts with checkered flag accents. A couple years later we convened at the T-Bones stadium near the Speedway in printed jerseys. The photo shoot on the field during the game and entertainment that day was a hoot. We had teams racing around the bases, doing push-up competitions on top of the dugouts and about anything else that would entertain.

We were shooting the cover at the J.C. Nichols Fountain in 2005 when all hell broke loose and the rain chased everyone into Frandizi's at 46th and Main—our contingency bar. We shot the best cover we could in a restaurant full of wet people.

Things do indeed change with time, as does the Corporate Report 100 ranking, but I genuinely hope this competition continues long after we're gone. We're proud of the CR100 program and to provide our readers an annual report on the firms that are enjoying significant growth.

It's with pride that we introduce to you our 35th Class of Corporate Report 100 winners and the fastest-growing companies headquartered in the KC region.

I'd like to share a quote from the late Casey Kasem to encourage and challenge each company on *Ingram's* CR100 and all that aspire to be: *"Keep your feet on the ground and keep reaching for the stars."* Or should it say, *"Climbing to the Top."* I

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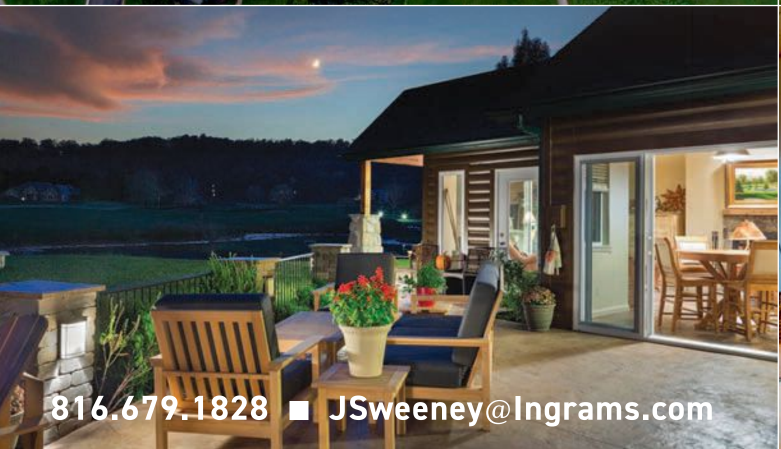
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Thanks, Ingram's

I wanted to say thank you and convey my appreciation for the article in *Ingram's!* ("Cool Stuff Made in Kansas," June 2020). I've always enjoyed your magazine and its insights, so it was extra special to see my work featured there.

Dierk Van Keppel, Owner
Rock Cottage Glassworks, Merriam, Kan.

Kansas Kudos

Thank you again for including me in the 50 Kansans You Should Know for 2020. What an honor to be among so many distinguished Kansans, and I so appreciate being mentioned!

Jan Peters, Reg. Dir. of Client Relationships
Kansas Manufacturing , Great Bend, Kan.

… and Again

Great job on this year's 50 Kansans You Should Know (*Ingram's*, June 2020). Several included from Garden City. I think this is a great tradition for *Ingram's* and the Kansas City business community.

Mark E. Rude, Executive Director
Southwest Kansas Groundwater
Management District No. 3, Garden City, Kan.

Loved Ingram's Kansas Edition

A quick note of appreciation for *Ingram's* team to shed such great light on our Sunflower State last month. There are so many treasures throughout our region and we don't often assess the impact of these assets and hardly ever package them in a way that sells Kansas so well. *Ingram's* June publication did that and more. It was great to see every page dedicated to Kansas and its unique products and especially it's our greatest export—hard working people that call Kansas home.

Jim Stallings, Sedgwick County, Kan.

Have something to say about what you've read in Ingram's? E-mail your comments to Editorial@Ingrams.com. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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CLAY COUNTY

County Gets COVID Aid

The Kansas City Council has allocated $2.5 million to low-income households and small businesses in Clay County, money coming from the city's share of federal assistance under the CARES Act. Northland Neighborhoods, Inc. will get $1 million for emergency rental, rapid rehousing, utility or nutrition assistance to low-income households experiencing economic or health impacts from COVID-19. The city also directed $1.5 million to the Economic Development Corporation of Kansas City for grants of up to $50,000 to businesses in the Kansas City portion of Clay County.

Cerner Adding, but Cutting Too

Cerner Corp., the region's largest private-sector employer, has plans to add 5,000 jobs before the end of the year, but even with that, the health-care technology has cut 100 other jobs—about half in the KC area—as its business model evolves. The cut is part of Cerner's ongoing push to drive efficiencies and focus on key growth areas, company officials say, and to trim $200 million in costs to improve its operating margin.

JACKSON COUNTY

Blue KC Provides Funding Relief

Blue KC Funds Employer Aid Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City has announced it will direct nearly $18 million in financial relief for employers and members as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact business operations. Employers will be able to use credits for certain health care premiums, and providers will be able to obtain advance value-based payments starting next month.

Adieu, Sprint Center

The biggest venue in Downtown Kansas City has a new name: The Sprint Center, which opened with that name in 2007, is now the T-Mobile Center, reflecting the merger between the two telecom giants earlier this year. Company officials say Kansas City can expect other changes in the coming months, with new signage in August and a change in the color palette from yellow to pink.

Feds Engage on KC Crime

The White House will send federal agents to Kansas City to help address growing levels of violence in the city. Operation: Legend, as the initiative is called, follows the death of 4-year-old LeGend Taliferro in a random shooting last month. The Justice Department will lead the effort to expand law enforcement capabilities. Like other urban areas, Kansas City has seen an explosion in gun violence this year, and with 100 homicides through early July is on pace to break the homicide record of 153 fatalities.

Midtown Redevelopment

Three historic buildings along Troost Avenue are being restored as office and retail space, a project that will include a museum of regional Native American culture. The Troost Midtown Project was approved for tax incentive assistance more than a year ago, and Midtown Development Partners expects to see the first tenants move in this fall, with the project completed by spring.

Mask-Use Mandate Extended

Mayor Quinton Lucas has extended indefinitely an executive order making use of face-masks within the city limits to help contain the coronavirus outbreak. Originally scheduled to last two weeks when it went into effect June 20, the order requires anyone entering businesses or other public places within the city limits to wear protective

Correspondent

News Updates from the Capital cities

Washington | Jobs Surge Back in June

Total non-farm payroll employment in the U.S. rose by 4.8 million in June and the unemployment rate declined to 11.1 percent, Bureau of Labor Statistics announced, numbers that reflect the continued resumption of economic activity after government-imposed business closures during the COVID-19 outbreak. Employment in leisure and hospitality, two areas gutted by layoffs and closures, rose sharply in June, while other sizeable gains came in retail trade, education and health services, manufacturing, and professional and business services. The jobless rate fell 2.2 percentage points, and the number of unemployed people fell by 3.2 million, to 17.8 million..

Jefferson City | Punitive-Damage Access Restricted

Gov. Mike Parson has signed into law a measure to control the number of lawsuits against businesses in Missouri. The law focuses on certain legal claims seeking damages for injuries or other harm caused by businesses' products or actions. Business groups complained that it was too easy for plaintiffs to seek punitive damages on top of actual damages, pressuring businesses into larger settlements. Under the new law, punitive damages will be allowed only when proven by clear and convincing evidence that the defendant "intentionally harmed" someone "without just cause" or acted with "deliberate and flagrant disregard for the safety of others".

Topeka | Embattled Labor Department Chief Resigns

To the grim toll of job losses imposed by a global pandemic, add one high-ranking state official in Kansas: Labor Department Secretary Delía García resigned in June, following two months of intense criticism over the inability of thousands of newly jobless workers to file for unemployment insurance. Ryan Wright, chief of staff for Gov. Laura Kelly, will hold the interim role at KDOL until a permanent replacement is found. García's resignation came after weeks of struggles processing unemployment claims during the COVID-19 outbreak. As layoffs ballooned in early March, the state's on-line system effectively shut down as it became overwhelmed with people attempting to file new jobless claims. I masks. The extension comes as Missouri and Kansas report a new surge in the numbers of people testing positive for Covid.

KANSAS

JOHNSON COUNTY

NPC International File Bankruptcy

Months of speculation that NPC International was in untenable financial peril proved correct this month as the largest Pizza Hut franchisee in the world filed for bankruptcy protection in federal court. One of the KC region's biggest private companies, Leawood-based NPC had been struggling early in recent years with revenues that had plateaued at roughly $1.6 billion. But the closing of nearly all its in-store dining operations during the COVID-19 pandemic kicked the legs out from under its revenues. The company has 1,227 units in 27 states, producing roughly 20 percent of the nation's Pizza Huts. It also has 393 Wendy's restaurants in eight states, making it their largest franchisee.

LEAVENWORTH COUNTY

Cushing Hospital Closing

Citing financial strains that have hammered health systems nationwide during the COVID-19 pandemic, Saint Luke's Health System says it will close Cushing Hospital in Leavenworth on Oct. 1. Saint Luke had invested more than $20 million in that facility in the previous five years, and will keep its primary care practice there open, but will attempt to transition more patients to telehealth services. About 70 employees at Cushing are eligible to apply for other opportunities within the health system. The closure will leave St. John Hospital, operated by Prime Healthcare, as the primary acute-care hospital in Leavenworth.

SHAWNEE COUNTY

Animal-Health Campus Coming

GO Topeka, the economic-development arm of that city and Shawnee County, has announced plans to develop a large-scale animal health innovation campus there. Two national real estate developers, Clark Enersen Partners and BioRealty, Inc., have been chosen to identify and evaluate prospective locations, and their findings are expected to be presented later this year or early 2021. The campus would include an animal-health and ag tech start-up accelerator program, plus research and development labs and office spaces for startups and corporate innovation partners.

WYANDOTTE COUNTY

NASCAR, Sans Fans

Citing health concerns over the lingering COVID-19 pandemic, the Kansas Speedway will host the rescheduled July NASCAR Cup Series without fans in attendance. Fans who bought tickets will automatically receive a 120 percent credit to their account within the next five to seven business days, speedway officials said. They remained optimistic that fans could return to the speedway in the fall for the NASCAR Playoffs over the weekend of Oct. 16-18. I

Home Rule for Police in KC? Not So Fast

Jack Cashill
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History offers some sound arguments against local control. As do recent events.

Kansas City is the only major city in the country whose police force is controlled by the state. There is a two-word answer to the question of why this is so. Those two words are "Tom Pendergast."

Elected to no office, "Boss Tom" effectively ran Kansas City from 1911 to 1939. It was not until 1932, however, that Pendergast was able to prove the wisdom of Lord Acton's famed caveat: power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

A surprise decision by the Missouri Supreme Court made this possible. For the previous 50 years, KCPD operated under the authority of a Board of Police Commissioners appointed by the Missouri governor.

For some years prior to 1932, City Manager Henry McElroy had challenged the board for budgetary control, indeed for control in general. In March 1932, the court sided with McElroy and turned control of the Police Department over to the city.

The City Council promptly passed an ordinance making the police a department of city government. Under the ordinance, the police chief reported directly to McElroy, which was fine with Boss Tom, since McElroy reported directly to him.

> We can thank the legacy of Tom Pendergast for the current governance of the Kansas City Police Department. Local control in the 1930s produced carnage in the streets.

The Home Rule era lasted seven years. It was no sane person's idea of a golden age. As local historian Bill Worley observed, "Police controlled by City Hall ultimately gave free rein to Pendergast and the machine, along with a sense of invulnerability."

Things spiraled out of control rather quickly, and 1933 has gone down in history as the "wide open" year. McElroy's own daughter Mary could attest to that. In May, a crew of kidnappers snatched the 25-year-old from her bubble bath. She was released after McElroy paid a hefty ransom. It was that kind of year.

Three weeks later, the year's most celebrated bit of lawlessness played out at Union Station. Likely orchestrated by Pendergast ally Johnny Lazia, the "Kansas City massacre" resulted in the death of three Kansas City police officers, an FBI agent, and the prisoner whose impending transfer to Leavenworth prompted the fireworks.

The everyday rackets, however, were responsible for eroding the social fabric of the city—prostitution and gambling most notably. Once confined to the speakeasies, gambling spread, as Worley notes, "into department stores, drug stores, and mom-and-pop grocery stores." Those were the days.

The year 1934 was in many ways worse than 1933. Not only was it the hottest year in Kansas City to that point—1936 would be even hotter, with 53 days over 100 degrees—but it was the most politically chaotic since the Civil War.

If Pendergast could not control the physical climate, he surely did control the political climate. On Election Day in March 1934, hoodlums cruised from polling place to polling place soliciting votes the old fashioned way—with bat and gun.

The Associated Press captured the gist of the 1934 election thusly: "Big Tom Pendergast's Democratic machine rode to overwhelming victory today after a blood-stained election marked by four killings, scores of sluggings and machine-gun terrorism."

The mayhem continued for five more years all but unchecked until the IRS caught up with Pendergast in 1939. With Boss Tom's downfall, the governor was able to get a law passed that returned control of the KCPD back to the state. Since then, the mayor of Kansas City gets just one vote on a five-member board, whose other members are appointed by the governor.

In 2019, virtually all the mayoral candidates pushed for Home Rule, Mayor Quinton Lucas most forcefully. "I unequivocally stand for local control," Lucas told KCUR at the time. "I do think it's important that a police department is accountable to the people of a city."

In recent weeks, Lucas has doubled down on that stance, and few dare say otherwise. Long time police commissioner Alvin Brooks is among those who support Lucas's position based on the premise that "we're far from being another Pendergast or mafia era."

But are we? Truth be told, Kansas City is more of a one-party town than it was in 1932. And in the '30s, there were countervailing forces to one-party control. These have largely disappeared.

The Kansas City Star, once a powerful force for reform, now contents itself with parroting the party line, calling state control "oppressive and undemocratic." As to the civic leaders who opposed Pendergast, well, their heirs have for the most part moved to Kansas. So, for that matter, have the editorialists at the newspaper.

Proponents of Home Rule look to what St. Louis has done. They just don't look too closely. In 2012, Missouri voters approved the return of the St. Louis police to city officials after 150 or so years of state control.

"Local control will make our city better and safer for generations to come," said Mayor Francis Slay in August 2013, when Home Rule went into effect.

Better and safer? The residents of St. Louis might take issue with that boast. In 2014 St. Louis shot to the top of the charts as America's most murderous city and held onto that dubious honor through 2017.

For any number of reasons, including the KCPD's professionalism and Mayor Lucas' leadership, Kansas City fared better during recent disturbances than most large cities.

In the course of the George Floyd unrest last month, four St. Louis police officers were shot—in a single day. Retired St. Louis police captain David Dorn, a 77-year-old African American, was shot and killed responding to an alarm at a shop being looted. Better and safer?

For any number of reasons, including the professionalism of the KCPD and Lucas' own adroit leadership, Kansas City fared better during the disturbances than just about any other major city in the country.

"Local control has been studied for decades, and the case is now absolutely clear, and irrefutable," argues *The Star*'s Dave Helling. "It will bring accountability and responsibility to a department that too often acts as if it's immune to meaningful citizen oversight,"

Sure, I'll buy that. Now try to convince the people who already enjoy local control, like the citizens and business people of St. Louis—or, for that matter, Minneapolis. I

The views expressed in this column are the writer's own, and do not necessarily reflect those of *Ingram's* Magazine.

Jack Cashill, Senior Editor, Editorial@Ingrams.com

The Era of Big Complacency Is Over

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When the COVID-19 crisis has passed us, business will operate in a whole new world.

For 35 years now, *Ingram's* has spotlighted companies with extraordinary revenue growth, the kinds of entrepreneurial ventures that can become pillars of the regional economy decades from now.

Or, in some cases, be gone years—even months—from now.

This year, our appreciation for rapid growth has assumed an entirely new dimension.

Thanks to a global pandemic, overreaching governmental officials, wildly flawed models of death and disease and a public just a little too willing to be told how to behave, tens of thousands of American companies that started 2020 flush with optimism aren't even in business today. And it's not because they just stopped growing by government edict.

There's a lesson for every business in the COVID-19 experience, and that lesson is this: It's not just grow or die. It's grow and prepare, or die.

Early on in this crisis, as companies were just beginning the experiment of moving people out of warehoused office settings to work remotely from home, I had the privilege of chatting with Neal Sharma of DEG, the digital marketing and communications company in Overland Park that for years has claimed a spot on the Corporate Report 100 list of fast-growing companies.

> When this black swan flew in March, too many small companies got their wings clipped. Let's all hope an important lesson has been learned.

If you ever get a chance to corner Neal for a brief conversation about business, bring a digital recorder, because he's going to quickly spout more thought-leadership guidance in five minutes than most executives can amass in a year. He understood, even before the first of millions of unemployment claims would be filed around the nation, that the concept of operating a business was about to change forever.

And he knew that a good many of his executive peers and lots of small business owners were about to see the rug pulled from under their companies.

"You can empathize with the fear of the startup entrepreneur or that the small business owner is feeling," he said. "I think all of us can empathize with those feelings of uncertainty and anxiety."

Which begs the question: How could any business that had solid prospects ahead for 2020, that had full pipelines of work set up, not be prepared for the unexpected? How did they go from boom times to living, as many of their employees had been, the equivalent of paycheck to paycheck?

Will the experience of COVID-19 redefine what it means to succeed in business, and the very concept of a capital reserve itself?

"I think many businesses don't have to confront the dangers of complacency until a crisis hits," Sharma said. "When it does, they are forced to look at every aspect of what they've crated and determine if that is sustainable. The places where they have sought comfort in the past are not places where they can seek comfort as easily in the future. They are going to have to contemplate the next emergency with a greater degree of urgency and focus than they ever have before."

That's especially true for those close to retirement age, he said, people who feel as though they had build something solid only to find out just how fragile it can be. "I think a lot of owners do a good job of anticipating the trade-offs and planning for their wins and losses in a normal business environment, but they just don't consider what to do during a black swan event, a major, unanticipated economic disruption on a scale like this."

Going forward, they will—*if*. If, somehow, they have been able to cling to business life, able to retain staff by the grace of a Paycheck Protection Act loan, able to reconfigure their business model to accommodate a smaller customer footprint or fewer people inside the building in the era of social distancing.

What many businesses ran into as the panic set in back in March was a lack of capital reserves, the failure to have maintained solid working relationships with bankers who could quickly throw out a PPP lifeline, or a plan to keep employees productive if the worst happens, whether that's a tornado, flood or invisible threat flowing in from Wuhan.

"If you're not planning for the black swan," says Sharma, who almost seamlessly moved 300 employees from office settings to remote work venues at their homes, "you may not have the resources to easily weather them, or the options that a larger business might have."

The real lesson of COVID-19, he says: "You can't afford to be complacent. Nobody can, any more." I

PPP: Did It Hit the Mark?

by Dennis Boone

Bankers reflect on the lifeline Washington tossed to U.S. business as COVID-19 set in.

The second quarter of 2020 is in the books, and it will go down as a historic three months for American business, American banking—and eventually, the American taxpayer. The latter will be on the hook for trillions in money borrowed to stave off the economic calamity of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

A major pillar of that spending was the Paycheck Protection Program, just one piece of the CARES Act passed by Congress in late March, as millions of workers were being laid off, furloughed or scaled down in salaries and hours at work. The program included two phases, the first of which was depleted of its funding within days of the program's launch. Given the ravenous demand for that assistance, it's somewhat surprising that the add-on PPP had $130 billion still available through the end of June.

For more than 143,000 companies in Missouri and Kansas, the assistance was a lifeline. It won't be enough to ensure that all will survive a self-imposed national recession, but the money in general found its way to most of the companies facing the greatest challenges, regional bankers say. In doing so, the program overcame a hectic start, but achieved most of its broader goals.

"The first couple of weeks of the program were rocky, as rules were issued, changed and then finalized," says Paul Holewinski, president and CEO of Dickinson Financial Corp. "Those were hectic times as the process was being built out, as banks, clients and the SBA were all trying to figure out how to get loans/grants to businesses to avoid a cascade of small business bankruptcies."

Well over half a trillion dollars found its way to those companies, but the true test is yet to come, Holewinski said. "I believe the more challenging part of the program awaits, as banks and clients work to apply the forgiveness rules to the loans that were made. While recent SBA rule changes that extended the Covered Period and provided greater flexibility in use of proceeds that qualify for forgiveness, more is needed to simplify the process."

Commerce Bank President Rob Bratcher believes that, on balance, the money ended up where it needed to, despite the rough start. "You had the Treasury driving this, trying to leverage the SBA, but the SBA was never really built to administer anything close to that type of lending volume," Bratcher said. "Given the circumstances, I think it went as well as it could, but there was a lot of frustration in terms of the way guidance was coming out for lenders. A lot of us were trying to work together to urge the SBA and Treasury to at least spend a little time thinking through the areas that could be potential pitfalls or put out better guidance."

Tom Terry, chief credit officer for UMB Bank, saw a number of positives come out of the program, including the speed that opened the spigot, the add-on funding, and the positive re-employment numbers that followed. "I also believe that PPP is a signif-

"PPP is a significant factor in why (thus far) Commercial Real Estate (particularly Multi-Family) has not been hit as hard as expected," Terry said. "Though this may change as the COVID-19 recovery is slowing down and a pause in reopening the economy is occurring."

— TOM TERRY, CHIEF CREDIT OFFICER, UMB BANK icant factor in why (thus far) Commercial Real Estate (particularly Multi-Family) has not been hit as hard as expected," Terry said. "Though this may change as the COVID-19 recovery is slowing down and a pause in reopening the economy is occurring."

The flip side of it, he said, was the lack of sufficient funding at the outset. "This approach created a gold-rush mentality and put tremendous pressure on the banks to process these loans quickly," he said. "Congress should have communicated that there would be enough money for all "qualified" applicants and many of the frustrations from both the borrowers and the banks would have been lessened if not eliminated.

As challenging as it was for lenders, the program created riddles that business executives are still trying to resolve.

"When you get to ground level and talk with small business owners, the biggest thing they struggled with was the set of restrictions on the money," Bratcher said. "Everyone wanted to save as many jobs as we could, but there are so many other expenses than just payroll. … But there definitely are some small companies that, regardless of the stimulus, may not be able to ever recover."

Figures from the Small Business Administration show that, among the Missouri companies receiving assistance, the average loan came to slightly more than $99,000. On the Kansas side, it was a bit lower at $93,000. In each case, companies in the region lagged behind counterparts nationwide, where the overall average loan was more than $106,700.

"I believe that the program worked as intended to reach those small businesses most in need," Holewinski said. "In the PPP loans that Academy Bank made, over 91.2 percent of the loan amounts were less than $350,000 and over 60.4 percent were less than $50,000." That, he said, helped a lot of local small businesses keep workers employed. And with funds still available for use, he said, that "seems to indicate that the PPP program nationally reached the right eligible businesses in need."

Given where business is after the capital infusion, and where the economy stands with the Fed essentially vowing to hold interest rates near zero through 2022, what will be the impact on banks?

"That's a great question and is largely dependent on the pace of the reopening," Terry said. "The early signs were somewhat positive with an improved jobs report and increased economic activity. The recent increase in positive COVID-19 cases has created a pause in the reopening in some markets and a pullback in other markets. If that scenario is prolonged, then lending volume would decrease."

Some sectors will pull through this stronger than others, so it's a certainty that many lenders will be lasering in on companies that operate in what's considered an essential industry, especially those with strong balance sheets and a history of performance in unsettled times.

"There are also many sectors that are challenged in this environment," Terry said. "Industries that are negatively impacted by prolonged high unemployment would be challenged. Those would include hospitality and possibly certain segments of commercial real estate. Another industry that is impacted is aerospace. Also dependent on the pace of reopening and travel."

And any company that does work for municipalities, as with road work, he said, "could certainly be negatively impacted in the next one to three years due to reduced tax revenue caused by COVID-19 and the quarantine. Construction is also an industry that is currently performing well, but could suffer from a prolonged slowdown and really feel that impact in 2021 and beyond."

For those companies who are open again, but trying to calculate how to make their revenue model work with floor plans that may scale back customer density by half or more, Holewinski offered some advice:

"Communicate, communicate, communicate," he said. "This mantra works well in good times and bad. Talk with your banker and help them to understand how your business is being impacted so the banker can respond to help with the financial tools at their disposal. The specific fallout of the pandemic isn't still fully known at this point, but bridging the time between now and then will certainly require collaboration with your bank."

A business impacted by COVID-19 that is not actively managing its situation with the help of its financial partners, he said, will likely recover much slower and suffer longer lasting impacts from the pandemic than one that is engaged with an active dialogue. "The community banking model built on relationship banking has never been more important," Holewinski said. "Lean on your banker to help in these times." I

Coping With COVID: How Deadly Is It?

- A nagging problem for health-care providers, researchers and governments attempting to understand the public health risk of COVID-19 is the great unknown: How many people have actually been infected? Answering that question can go a long way to providing assurances that economic activity can safely be resumed at pre-COVID levels.

- Increasingly, studies peg the true infection rate at four times the numbers of known cases. Through early July, that would imply nearly 18 million infections across the U.S. With 135,870 deaths, that suggests a rough infection fatality rate of about three-fourths of 1 percent. And that's considerably lower than another metric called the case fatality rate—the percentage of deaths among known patients. For the U.S, the CFR was 4.21 percent in early July.

- Closer to home, the CFR among the 17,893 cases identified in Kansas was just 1.64 percent. In Missouri, largely because of the severe outbreak in the St. Louis area, the rate was 4.05 percent for its 27,183 cases.

The PPP in Action
From an overall allocation of more than $521 billion under the Paycheck Protection Act, nearly 4.9 million U.S. companies received low-interest, potentially forgivable loans designed to keep people on the payroll. Overall, more than 143,000 companies in Missouri and Kansas benefited, but not quite to the same extent as companies nationwide:

	Loans	Value
U.S.	4,885,388	$521,483,817,756
Kansas	51,872	$4,996,112,228
Missouri	91,498	$9,143,522,129

COVID Discussion in the Workplace: Know the Limits

Employers have a fine line to walk balancing workers' safety and privacy considerations.

The COVID-19 pandemic presents challenges to our economy and our very way of life. With infection numbers growing, businesses will be dramatically impacted for the foreseeable future. Much has been written about what we can and should do to best protect employees and customers during these most difficult times. But we must also consider what can and *should* be said as we wrestle with this ongoing issue.

Communication of information and ideas is perhaps never more important than it is today. But are there limits on what employers should be telling employees about COVID? Or what employees ought to be able to say about COVID? This article offers a few suggestions.

What should we tell employees about possible workplace COVID exposure?

The Americans with Disabilities Act generally prohibits employers from sharing employees' health-related information except in narrow circumstances. The EEOC has taken the position that employers can release the names of employees diagnosed with COVID only to those who need to know an employee's diagnosis to prevent the spread of COVID to others. For example, the person in charge of tracing infected workers' contacts will need the names of those who test positive, but front-line supervisors likely only need to know an infected employee is on leave, not the reason for the leave.

> Legal land mines regarding potential defamation, discipline and workplace gossip require employers to understand the risks of discussing COVID on the job.

The ADA's rule limiting disclosure presents challenges for employers that want to notify people about potential COVID exposure. As a general rule, it is permissible to notify employees that they may have been exposed to COVID on a particular date in a particular section of the workplace, but infected employees should not be identified by name. The EEOC has recognized that people may guess the identity of the infected individual, but advises against confirming names even if the guesses are correct.

Is it defamation to openly discuss COVID diagnoses?

Probably not, but it's possible. Although the law varies somewhat from state to state, most states allow an action for damages for defamation, which is often referred to as libel (if in writing) or slander (if verbal). Defamation involves a false and defamatory statement that is communicated to others and that causes damage to reputation. Most states also require some degree of fault, such as that the speaker was negligent in making the comments.

Application of these rules could create exposure for making comments about COVID if the comments meet all of the elements of the state law definition of defamation. Thus, for example, if a manager falsely reports that an employee has tested positive, does so with the requisite degree of fault, and the report causes damage to the employee's reputation, there could be liability for defamation. That said, it seems unlikely that all of these elements would be established in most circumstances. Case in point—if the employee in fact tested positive, there was no false statement and thus no defamation. It is more likely that open discussion of positive COVID diagnoses would run afoul of the ADA (as discussed above), or could lead to a claim of invasion of privacy.

Can employees be disciplined or discharged for falsely claiming to be COVID-positive?

As a general rule, employers are free to impose discipline and to discharge for any reason that is not prohibited by law. This concept flows from the doctrine of employment at will, which provides that, absent an employment contract, employment is terminable at the will of either the employer or the employee for any reason or no reason at all. Although employment decisions cannot be motivated by protected characteristics like disability, gender, race or age, there is no protected right to falsely report that one is COVID-positive.

But this is an area that warrants caution. Employees who mistakenly believe they are COVID-positive may enjoy at least some protection from the ADA and/or the Family and Medical Leave Act. Consequently, before imposing discipline, an employer should confirm that the report was deliberately false as opposed to simply mistaken. This is also an area where consultation with an attorney is well advised.

Can employees be disciplined or discharged for gossiping about workplace COVID exposure?

Maybe. There is no inherent right to gossip about other employees' health conditions. But if the purpose of the discussion is to advance the collective interests of employees in maintaining a safe workplace, then OSHA and/or the National Labor Relations Act may be implicated. Thus, again, the prudent approach would be to consult with counsel before taking action.

In sum, there are potential pitfalls in regulating workplace discussion of COVID issues. Care should be exercised before taking action. I

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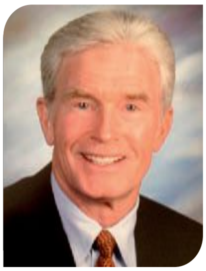
The Fed Sends Up a Red Flag



History suggests lower market prices are just over the horizon.

There is no doubt that rising coronavirus cases are starting to impede commerce again. Many states have mandated masks in public places, in an attempt to avoid reversal of the gradual business and social reopening process.

If there is any good news associated with Covid-19, it is that most young people have proven to be asymptomatic or quick to recover from what to them is generally a non-life-threatening illness. It also should be encouraging that hard lessons learned about protecting the older and most vulnerable Americans should help avoid repeating mistakes that resulted in a few states' still having Covid-19 death rates over 6 percent among those tested positive for the Wuhan coronavirus.

As expanded testing discovers more people infected with the Wuhan coronavirus, the death rate as a percentage of infected people continues to significantly decline. Already, 15 states report a COVID-19 death rate (per verified case) of less than 2 percent. However, the overall coronavirus death rate in the U.S. is still near 4.5 percent. A few Eastern states keep it that high (only slightly below the worldwide COVID-19 death rate of about 4.6 percent). Specifically, New York, New Jersey and Massachusetts combined account for 42 percent of all of our country's COVID-19 deaths.

> If you had asked me in early March if 20 million people could still be out of work by the end of the second quarter, while stock averages would stage a record rate of recovery before July, I would have told you that you might be missing some marbles.

Coronavirus hospitalization rates have recently risen in some new hot spots, like Houston, Miami, and Phoenix. However, there is no sign of hospital capacity concerns that would require returning those states or cities to economic lockdowns or much stricter social distancing. So, while we are not out of the coronavirus woods yet, it is unlikely we'll see a return to the draconian government restrictions that crippled America's economy starting in the spring.

If you had asked me in early March if 20 million people could still be out of work by the end of the second quarter, while stock averages would stage a record rate of recovery before July, I would have told you that you might be missing some marbles. But the Fed flooded the financial system with so many digitally printed dollars that more than a few of those electronic greenbacks found their way into the stock market.

However, the Fed may have freaked out the financial markets late last week by ordering banks to preserve their capital (by not raising their dividends, and while also suspending stock buy-backs). Specifically, the Fed told banks that they cannot pay out any dividends that exceed their average quarterly profits in the four most recent quarters. To admit there has been a negative impact on normal banking conditions (from COVID-19) is an understatement, but were these limitations really needed? Even though many big banks had already agreed to suspend stock buy-backs during the second quarter, the Fed also barred all banks from any stock buy-backs in the third quarter. The Fed said that limiting shareholder payouts would help keep banks healthy during what could be a prolonged recession.

Unfortunately, investors will have to wait for earnings season to reveal just how good or bad business conditions have been within the banking sector. But the Fed's actions last week suggest they aren't liking what they are seeing.

That's why those tempting 4 percent-to-8 percent past dividend yields (regularly thrown off by many of the leading mega and regional bank stocks) might not be as likely, and should not be expected for the time being. There are plenty of other places to go in the stock market for dividends yielding 3 percent to 5 percent that should be "good money" now and for the foreseeable future. Buying bank stocks that are being deeply discounted right in front of earnings season is, in my view, one trade to pass on.

The bottom-line question that many investors are now asking is: What does the Fed know that the stock market does not know? Is there now a more serious risk of a prolonged recession? Clearly, prolonged coronavirus possibilities could delay a full economic recovery (which remains on the minds of all investors). When markets go almost straight down or straight up, it is like the forced stretching of a rubber band: Eventually, it snaps back. We witnessed extreme selling, which snapped back to extreme buying, which now most likely needs to snap back to some lower level.

The very first hints of a turning tide are here. History suggests lower market prices are just over the horizon. I

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The views expressed in this column are the writer's own, and do not necessarily reflect those of *Ingram's* Magazine.

A Two-Way Street

by Dennis Boone

Kansas City's police officers don't operate in a silo; they're part of the community, and need to be part of the solution, a police official says.

The nation is at a crossroads with its approach to public safety. The KC Police Department, then, is attempting to play both traffic cop and, at the same time, avoid getting run over in the national mania to strip resources away from urban law enforcement.

Perhaps more people calling for police defunding would have different views on what's really needed if they could spend a few minutes with Sgt. Jason Cooley. He's the community interaction officer for the Kansas City Police Department, responsible for making connections between residents of the city and the 1,300-member department charged with their public safety.

In a wide-ranging interview recently with senior editors of *Ingram's*, Cooley ran through an impressive list of the Kansas City's community-policing initiatives, Chief Rick Smith's advocacy for programs to support current officers and recruit new ones, and assessed what the city should be doing to both promote its successes—relative to what we've seen in peer cities—to create a better foundation for business, jobs, education and the role all three play in getting to a lower crime rate.

A lower crime rate leads to fewer tense encounters between police and criminals.

Coming off several weeks of relative calm following the May 30 rioting on the Plaza, Cooley was optimistic, but not entirely convinced, that the city was out of the woods for further outbursts. The violence, which grew out of what were ostensibly peaceful demonstrations against police brutality following the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis earlier that week, belied a different agenda by those using Floyd's death as a pretext for darker motivations.

For those in the former group, Cooley was supportive. He was less supportive for those who came spoiling for a fight.

"We're all good with peaceful protests, all day long," he said. "Any enforcement actions that happened to be taken were the result of trying to provide boundaries to the protesters. When they stepped out of those, and on a larger scale, assaulting us, that's a much higher level."

More than 240 Kansas City police officers were physically assaulted during that weekend in late May and early June, but the sheer numbers of them exposing themselves to potential violence was in itself the result of Chief Rick Smith's determined effort to prevent a second night of rioting. He did that by summoning roughly 1,000 officers to the Plaza on Sunday, May 31, and over the course of the next week, that show of force produced the desired response: Protesters backed down here in ways they didn't around the nation.

"The difficult part for officers in all this," Cooley said, was that you have police officers who suit up, gear up day in and day out, kiss their families goodbye and come to help serve others." But those officers are human, too, and Cooley asks why concern over the welfare of protesters isn't balanced by concern about the police called in to maintain order.

While they exist to protect and to serve, Cooley noted, "sometimes the police need to be served, too; sometimes we need help." But when police needed the backing of civic leadership, he says, the lack of it was telling. "We understand that, since we were in a battle zone at that time—some partners and upstanding citizens don't want things to come out just then; we get that. But officers were like 'Where is our community when we need support, when we need help?' So yeah, it's been some tough times. But it's a job. It's what we do."

The question facing Kansas City's leadership is, what is it prepared to do to improve the climate here? In the current environment, it's almost impossible to raise the question of why disproportionate outrage is being directed at police while, at the same time, far more people, the vast majority of them young black males, are being gunned down in the streets—and not by police.

Cutting police funding, as Cooley notes, isn't going to help address homicide clearance rates or deter street crime. In fact, he says, just the opposite.

"My argument would be for additional funding; we don't need fewer officers, we need more," he said. During Smith's 2½-year tenure as chief, the city has gone from 1,275 sworn officers to 1,350. But the number of officers by itself isn't the key, Cooley says—it's the way they are deployed, especially in service to Smith's commitment to community policing.

"With more officers, we can be more responsive to 911 calls, we can be more visible," he said. "That doesn't mean we have to police with an iron fist, but we would be able to enhance community policing efforts."

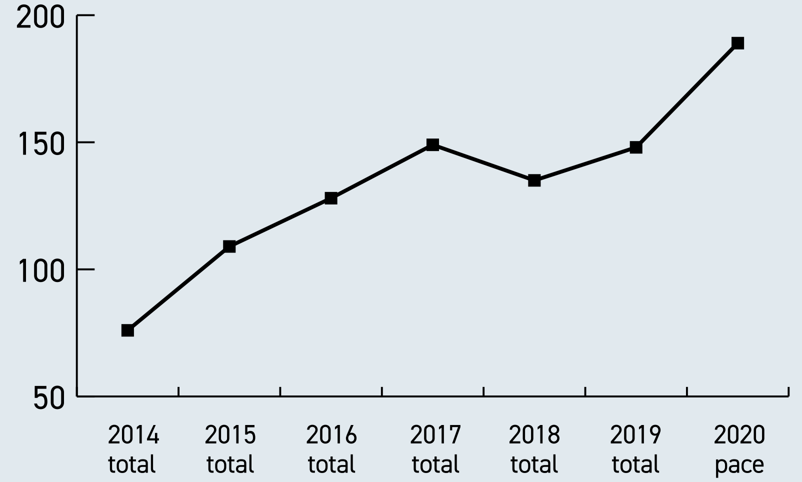
Over the previous decade, some of those initiatives were gutted, with corresponding increases in violent crime. Under previous Chief Rick Corwyn, the department had three Police Athletic Leagues. Today it has one. Community Action Network centers have been cut to just two, and the drug-fighting DARE unit has been halved with its staffing. "There's more we can do with community policing if we had more staff," Cooley says,

"I would argue, personally, that if people want to see a better system and want more layers of accountability to create a better environment, they should look to Kansas City. We're the only one in the nation like this, and I think we do it pretty well."

— JASON COOLEY, KCPD COMMUNITY INTERACTION OFFICER

A Dubious Distinction

Kansas City is on pace to set a record for homicides in 2020, with 101 as of July 13. If this trend holds, the city's rate will be up nearly 150 percent from its low in 2014.



and Smith has acted on that very belief.

Among the other initiatives he has supported, Smith has championed placement of social workers in each of the city's six police patrol divisions, and last year, they produced 2,207 referrals to officers. "That's huge," Cooley said. Smith also brought back the community interaction officer roles eliminated under Daryl Forte, then doubled it to have a CIO in place for day and night shifts at each division. Last year, they attended 1,007 community meetings and events.

"They do fantastic work, they are passionate about what they do, and they are highly successful," Cooley said. Yet those same officers, summoned to the Plaza in late May, were physically assaulted by the people they seek to serve.

For whatever criticisms are lobbed at the KCPD, Cooley says, it's worth noting that not a single building in Kansas City burned during the late May rioting. That's something few urban communities can boast, and he believes that Smith's work with community policing, and engagement of church leaders during the height of the protests, helped create an opportunity to let tensions dissipate. The June 3 Unity March from the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art to Mill Creek Park, and the 10-mile prayer chain down Troost on June 19 also acted as civic balm.

First, however, it must deal with the gun violence, where police are still trying to understand what has placed the city on its torrid pace for lethality. As of mid-July, the city stood at 100 homicides, on pace not just to break, but to shatter a nearly 30-year-old mark of 153.

"What I do hear in some circles it that it's marijuana, could be marijuana-related," Cooley says. "In the '80s and '90s, it was crack and PCP, now people are killing themselves over marijuana." That's an ironic development, given the increasing legalization of the drug across the nation.

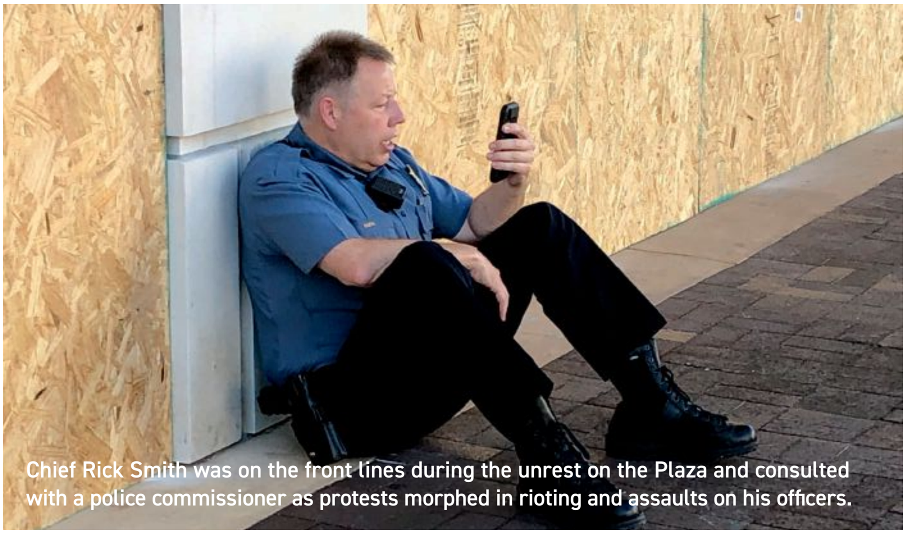
But there's more at work, he says. "Disrespect on a Facebook posts, the social media piece," Cooley says. The psychologically disruptive response to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated job loss, particularly among low-wage workers, plays a role too. "We even had a recent incident of family members shooting it out," Cooley says. "Because of everything going on and things we've not dealt with in our lifetimes, I think that's had an impact on people's mental health as well. So it's a mix of gangs, guns, social media—these are just trying times."

Longer-term, though, the city has some work cut out for it on the civic end, not just the law-enforcement end. Currently, there are calls for bringing the KCPD back under local control, having been made a ward of the state during the Pendergast crime era a century ago. That, Cooley says, is precisely a formula for less accountability in law enforcement.

"We have more layers of accountability in Kansas City than any municipality it the nation," he says. "Around the nation, people are calling for change, they are calling for that change here, but we changed decades ago. I would argue, personally, that if people want to see a better system and want more layers of accountability to create a better environment, they should look to Kansas City. We're the only one in the nation like this, and I think we do it pretty well."

The business community, as well, has a role that isn't being filled now, he believes.

"Why isn't leadership having a full-on recruitment for businesses to come to Kansas City right now?" he asks. "You have CHOP in Seattle (since disbanded by that city), a whole district where business can't open because that city is allowing that to happen. Why not reach out to those through the EDC or other organizations to recruit those companies here? It's a perfect opportunity to bring industry back to Kansas City, and industry equals jobs. When you have jobs and education, our crime rates are going to go down. Let's talk about how Kansas City can be the heartbeat of the nation." I



Chief Rick Smith was on the front lines during the unrest on the Plaza and consulted with a police commissioner as protests morphed in rioting and assaults on his officers.

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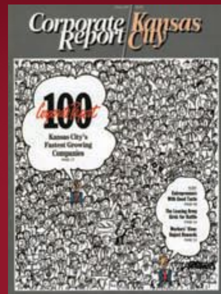

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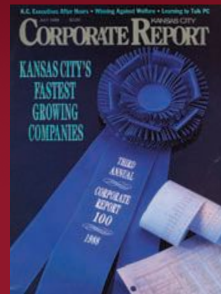

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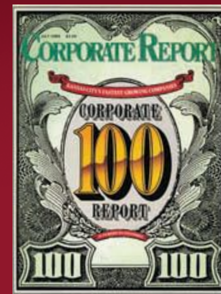

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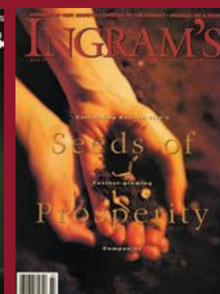

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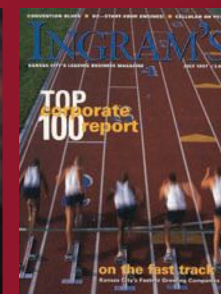

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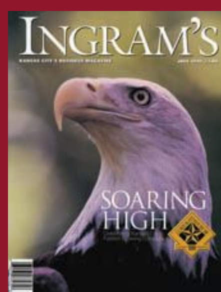

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Ingram's is honored to serve as a steward of business and to archive the fastest growing companies in the Kansas City region.

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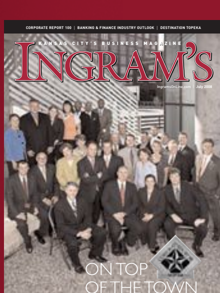

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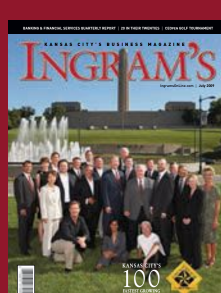

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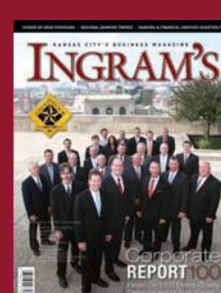

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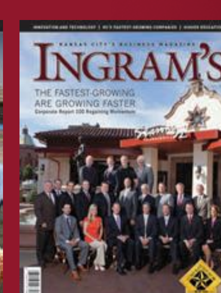

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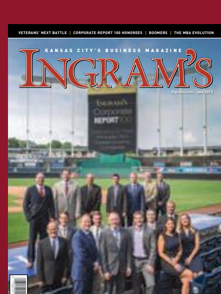

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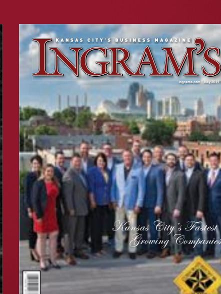

2019

100 FASTEST-GROWING COMPANIES 2020

35TH ANNIVERSARY
Ingram's

The faces behind the masks are smiling as their firms are enjoying massive growth

Xxx

Kansas City Celebrates the 35th Class of Ingram's Corporate Report 100

Hitting 35, or so we've been told, portends the onset of a mid-life crisis. But as the Corporate Report 100 hits that milestone, there's plenty of youth reflected in a roster of the region's fastest-growing companies.

More than 40 percent of this year's honorees—41 to be precise—are showing up in the fast-growth lane for the first time. Only three companies—Henderson Engineers, DEG as well as Intouch Group—crack the line-up this year with a double-digit history of CR100 appearances.

So, yes, youth is served with this prestigious collection of high flyers. Or perhaps a better metaphor is fast-lane truckers. Just as in 2019, logistics companies operating in the trucking/transportation space dominate the Top 10, where Draiver, Dynamic Logistix

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE 2020 CR100

- Across all 100 companies, the average growth rate was 126.09 percent, with combined 2016 revenues of $4.46 billion surging to $10.3 billion last year.
- Seven companies came out of nowhere to claim Top 10 rankings in their first appearances, but the biggest leap among previous honorees was 79 spots. Pivot International, which clocked in at No. 90 in 2019, soared to No. 11 this time around.
- The oldest company on the list is Pioneer Music, which traces its roots to 1869, when it opened as a hardware implements company. For this list, Pioneer and Spencer Fane (No. 100, founded in 1879) are the only holdovers from the 19th century to be kicking things into high-growth gear in the 21st century.
- Three companies with double-digit appearances just did find their way onto this year's list: Henderson Engineers shows up for the 16th time (No. 91), DEG for the 15th (No. 97) and No. 98 Intouch Group is back for a 10th time. Longevity on the CR100 matters.

Corporate Report 100 No. 1 Companies
(1986-2020)

For 35 years, Ingram's has had its finger on the pulse of Kansas City's fastest-growing companies with our Corporate Report 100. Tens of thousands of companies have submitted financial-performance figures over that time, and well more than 1,200 have earned their way onto this prestigious ranking at least once. Glancing through the No. 1 honorees in each of those years evokes images of companies that went from startup to titan ... or to something else. Fast growth for many has been the pathway to bigger and better things. For others, it's been more than a curse, it was a riddle that couldn't be solved. But each year was a snapshot in time, taking us back to what were once halcyon days for many. The upshot of all that change? While most of the companies recognized over the past decade are still hard at work, 16 of the 25 honored through 2010 have been acquired, moved, or ceased operating in Kansas City. Perhaps the ancient Romans had it right: All glory is, indeed, fleeting.

1986	**United Telecommunications (formerly Sprint)**
1987	**Innovative Software**
1988	**Wrenn Insurance Group**
1989	**Hall-Kimbrell Environmental**
1990	**PSI - Hall Kimbrell**
1991	**Oread Laboratories**
1992	**American Italian Pasta**
1993	**TouchFax Information Systems**
1994	**MacHardware, Inc.**
1995	**Empower Trainers & Consultants**
1996	**Spencer Reed /Personnel Connection**
1997	**J.M. Neil & Associates**
1998	**Intermedia Media Works**
1999	**Innovision Corporation**
2000	**NetSales**
2001	**RiverPoint Group**
2002	**Inergy, LP**
2003	**Freightquote.com**
2004	**RED Development**
2005	**Sunlight Saunas (Sunlighten)**
2006	**Evolv Solutions**
2007	**Nextaff**
2008	**Acceleration, LLC**
2009	**SFP Specialty Fertilizer Products**
2010	**BATS Global Markets (now Cboe)**
2011	**Rhythm Engineering**
2012	**Nextaff**
2013	**The Logistics Store**
2014	**Pendo Management Co.**
2015	**Foodlinks, Inc.**
2016	**40 Digits**
2017	**Vazquez Commercial Contracting**
2018	**Aratana Therapeutics**
2019	**Dynamic Logistix**
2020	**Amply Media**

(Ingram's 2019 No. 1 CR100 company) and Tallgrass Freight all found spots.

Through the years, *Ingram's*—and before that, *Corporate Report Kansas City*, has researched the area's fastest-growing companies to honor their accomplishments. In the process, we have expanded the coverage area to include 22 counties, which includes Topeka in the west and Sedalia in the east, from St. Joseph in the north to Harrisonville in the south.

What we have found over the decades—and this year is no different—is that growth is a result of a necessary combination of risk-taking, faith, timing, a little luck and mostly, a lot of hard work. None of the companies on this 35th list—or any of the previous 34—got there by accident. Whether it's the small business that has grown to a second or third location, or the corporation that has ignored the expected limits of the marketplace and reached for the stars, these entrepreneurs will show, if pressed, some seriously worked-to-the-bone fingers.

A great deal has changed since that first year, not only with the composition of the companies recognized, but with the internal dynamics of Corporate Report 100 itself.

When it first debuted in 1986, the CR100 sported some pretty incredible growth percentages from top to bottom. Five-figure-type percentages. Why? Well, before there was a low-end threshold to qualify for consideration, some companies secured more than their share of recognition with artificially low baseline numbers, often because they didn't start to collect revenues until the fourth quarter of their founding year. That's been fixed: The threshold for entry now is four-quarter revenues of $200,000 in the baseline year with revenues required in the first quarter, and $1 million for the most recently completed comparison year.

Additionally, we've adopted a standard since 2016 to measure companies on a more level playing field, requiring accrual-based accounting, since CPAs generally see that as a better measure of true growth than cash-based accounting. That can be a challenge for some who didn't have sophisticated accounting systems in previous years, but the ability and relative ease to convert revenues in this day and age helps us ensure a greater level of integrity in the final CR100 ranking list.

As you stroll through the list of the 2020 Corporate Report 100, keep this in mind: These are just successful companies at the top revenue line. They are exemplars of what every business should strive to attain: A reach that may extend beyond their grasp. Many of the companies honored over the years, including one called Sprint Corp., not so long ago the region's biggest private employer, are no longer with us. Clearly, attaining a No. 1 ranking is no assurance of success into perpetuity.

So here's to every one of these 100 enjoying similar success—and avoiding similar fates. I


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NUMBER ONE

(Front, l-r): Alyssa Guenther, Content Studio Leader; Kristin LaBatt, Content Studio Leader; Danee Greenwald, Senior Recruiter-HR Generalist; (standing, l-r): Lance Hemenway, Chief Creative Officer; Ryan Schaar, CEO; Chad Wessel, Vice President-Finance.

Amply Media

Gross Revenue: 2019: $68,770,256 | Growth: 5,136.15%% | 2016: $1,313,375 | Average Annual Growth Rate: 1,712.05% | Full-time employees: 38 | 1st Year

It's a clear, straightforward mission at Amply Media: The company is all about "creating powerful, engaging and personal connections with audiences," says CEO Ryan Schaar. Amply Media has built an online content network of more than 40 individual entertainment Web sites that deliver on-demand, bite-size, content, to a growing network to more than 100 million subscribers. The goal: "We would love to see Amply Media become a content creation giant in the industry," Schaar says, and last year, it took another step in that direction, with the unique user tally rising 50 percent to hit 60 million. The company's content focuses on the most popular verticals in the industry today: news, weather, entertainment, shopping, parenting and more. The biggest challenges around achieving and maintaining four-figure growth, Schaar says, have been two-fold: "First, as the business began to grow, we needed more resources focused on maintaining the verticals that were driving the growth. But we also wanted to continue to test new verticals that people would love," he says. "So balancing our resources between the more established verticals while making sure we were also creating new web sites was difficult." The second challenge, he said, is one many executives can relate to: "finding and recruiting enough top-tier talent to keep up with our recent growth." So too, he says, has been a positive, collaborative culture. At any fast-growth company, he says, "you will be faced with many challenges, but I truly believe they can all be overcome if people attack them with a positive mind-set and work together with the end goal in mind. One of our core values is to be 'bullish on the future.' It reminds us to not let challenges become setbacks, but instead learn from them."

(l-r): Randy Klindt, Partner; Jonathan Chambers, Partner; Abby Carere, VP-Marketing and Communications; Andy Burger, VP-Operations; Michael Byrne, VP, Information Systems.

2

Conexon

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $14,191,136 2016: $908,229

Growth: **1,462.51%** Average Annual Growth Rate: 487.50%

Full-time employees: 71

Conexon works with rural electric cooperatives to bring fiber connections to homes in rural communities, providing end-to-end broadband deployment and operations support, including construction management, securing financing and conducting economic feasibility analytics. It has assisted more than 160 electric cooperatives, 40 of which are deploying fiber networks, with more than 100,000 connected fiber-to-the-home subscribers across the nation. The company attributes its strong growth to client acquisition through conferences and speaking opportunities and referrals from existing clients, along with the growing demand for gigabit-class broadband services outside of dense population centers. In 2018, the Federal Communications Commission awarded more than $200 million in broadband funding to a consortium of electric cooperatives to build out gigabit-capable networks. It was the largest and most successful bidding consortium in FCC history—one assembled, designed and led by Conexon, the company says.

(l-r): Co-owners Marty Johnston and Josh McDaniel.

3

AstraWorks

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $9,290,857 2016: $599,341

Growth: **1,450.18%** Average Annual Growth Rate: 521.48%

Full-time employees: 6

AstraWorks is a national recruiting agency, with extensive experience in the construction design-build market, and there, it's far from alone: "There are a lot of large well-established competitors in our market," says partner Josh McDaniel, "Also, the demand for talent is high. We had to find our competitive advantage and play to our strengths." That, he says, has meant diversifying the company's recruiting efforts to serve national clients within a variety of industries and markets, and it has paid off with substantial growth. "I think we were disciplined and consistent in carrying out our plans," McDaniel says. "Good fortune plays a part, as well as having great clients who are willing to give you a chance. As a young company, that means a lot. When we got those opportunities, we did everything we could to deliver the right people to our clients." If there's a lesson to be learned from the firm's growth experience, he says, "we'd spend more time on creating protocols, frameworks, processes and training. We've been playing catch-up the last year. It's a lot of work, but it's important for training new hires and optimizing to consistently perform at a high level."

CEO Jeff Auslander says one of the biggest challenges emerging from back-to-back Top 10 finishes in the Corporate Report 100 is ensuring that a culture of success and entrepreneurship is safeguarded as the staff expands.

4

Dynamic Logistix

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $80,840,094 2016: $6,547,752

Growth: **1,134.62%** Average Annual Growth Rate: 378.21%

Full-time employees: 47

Another in a series of fast-growth success stories amid a booming logistics sector in Kansas City, Dynamic Logistix is back for a second consecutive bite at the Top 10 CR100 apple. The company, says CEO Jeff Auslanter, has achieved its success through a mixture of hard-working employees and 21st-century shipping technology that helps shippers reduce costs and wasted time. "Our software solution provides increased visibility, automation, integration and reliability to manufacturers," says Auslander. "Our employees have created a great culture of hard work and camaraderie that enhances the offerings we provide our client-partners." Dynamic Logistix is a prime example of how growth imposes ever-changing demands on leadership trying to keep it under control. The difference between managing growth that led to a No. 1 finish last year, compared to the pace set in 2019, Auslander says, has centered on issues of scalability—correctly positioning the company to eventually achieve $500 million or more in sales—while protecting the culture that created that success in the first place.

Zarif Haque, left, and his team at Draiver have found fertile ground in the vehicle-moving space. They've succeeded, but it took some doing: "Disrupting an industry that is over 100 years old is very difficult," he says.

5

Draiver

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $10,844,704 2016: $964,789

Growth: 1,024.05% Average Annual Growth Rate: 341.35%

Full-time employees: 15

This Overland Park company just missed a spot in CR100 last year because its 2015 revenues were too low. Clearly, that's no longer a problem. Draiver provides software and labor to manage and execute the relocation, repositioning and routing of vehicles, serving clients in the trucking sector, car dealerships, auctions, car rentals, propane delivery and car sharing. Revenues have soared as it has expended operations to move vehicles in 30 states, started working with car dealerships and offering remote test drives, service pickups and drop-offs and vehicle deliveries for vehicle purchases or leasing. "Disrupting an industry that is over 100 years old is very difficult," founder Zarif Haque says. "We introduced a new patented software, redefined labor force and insurance structures, and had to create national operational reach remotely from Kansas. This was a long journey, but after we created solutions for each of these ends, the vehicle delivery logistics industry took notice." Looking back, he says, "There are plenty of things I would do differently, but I am not sure it would have changed the outcome."

(l-r): Max Bartlett, Executive VP Sales; Dustan Fankhauser, Owner and Founder.

6

LED Direct

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $2,629,500 2016: $264,902

Growth: 892.63% Average Annual Growth Rate: 297.54%

Full-time employees: 6

With a brand new business, as LED Direct was in 2016, "we had to build up trust with contractors and electrical engineers. We had to show them our products were high quality and our pricing was competitive," owner Dustan Fankhauser says. It takes a long time for contractors who are used to doing things a certain way to change their habits and an even longer time for engineers. But the determination paid off. "It helped that we had been in the lighting business for 12 years, so we had some relationships," Fankhauser says. "We also developed a business model that emphasized a level of service not many of our competitors can provide." Presto: "We quickly gained traction in our market and now our projects and products help sell themselves," he says. Fast growth "taught me the best way to grow quickly is to hire good people and give them the foundation, but let them use their strengths to grow their book of business," Fankhauser says. "My experience has also taught me to not try and grow too quickly. Our pace has been strong, but we are more concerned with growing our business very strategically."

(l-r): Founder and CEO Damon Anderson; David Barnes, COO and Co-Owner.

7

Tallgrass Freight

3rd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $41,770,031 2016: $4,666,731

Growth: 795.06% Average Annual Growth Rate: 265.02%

Full-time employees: 23

Tallgrass Freight is a full-service logistics-solution provider serving small and mid-sized companies that need shipping in Less than Truckload (LTL) and Full Truckload (FTL) volumes, along with flatbed and intermodal services. Consistent growth, says CEO Damon Anderson, comes from hiring and retaining "the highest-caliber freight agents in the country." The goal, Anderson says, is to have a staff that can ensure customers will have the truck they need, when they need it, and that deliveries arrive on time and intact at the best possible prices. That approach has allowed the Shawnee-based company to expand its sales force to 19 states. "Kansas City's strong presence in the freight industry means we can identify top talent, and that foundation has allowed us to build an unparalleled team," Anderson says. Looking forward, he says, "growth has happened when we've focused on culture, doing things right and to the best of our ability and having fun. We are weathered and ready for more challenges."

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(Front, l-r): Rachel Huff, Art Director; Caleb Asher, President/CEO; Andrew Ross, Director-Video Production; (back) Seth Stephens, VP-Business Development; Jessica Horton, VP-Accounts-Operations; Collin Billau, Director-Digital Development.

8

Sprout Creative

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $2,165,070 2016: $267,066

Growth: 710.69% Average Annual Growth Rate: 236.90%

Full-time employees: 11

A full-service marketing and creative agency, Topeka-based Sprout is spreading its wings by opening a KC Crossroads office in its quest to serve clients with design and storytelling services. With skills that included brand development and graphic design, creative writing and video production, effective social media campaigns and digital marketing, the firm has found that growth flows from a deliberate focus on securing new accounts with companies that fit its own strengths, an effort that has paid off with work that serves clients across the nation. "We tried to support existing clients in a way they deserve, while adding new ones," said Caleb Asher, president and CEO. "Sometimes this meant supporting larger clients with greater attention, while ensuring existing clients received an appropriate level of service, without sacrificing relationships." He also said rapid growth taught "the importance of working on the business, rather than working in the business. The transition from working on nearly every aspect of the company to leading the company has been critical for growth, but often a challenge."

(l-r): Jason Mendenhall, Project Manager; Kirk Kreisel, President and Founder; Rondle Dines, Business Development Manager.

9

Artisun Solar

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $8,023,688 2016: $1,062,845

Growth: 654.93% Average Annual Growth Rate: 218.31%

Full-time employees: 5

The reputation you make out of the gate is one that will carry you to the finish line. Just ask Kirk Kreisel. "I started Artisun Solar in 2011 as a construction company that would install solar PV systems on commercial and industrial sites for other area developers during the Missouri solar boom at that time," he recalls. "We quickly grew and were considered by our customers as one of the best contractors in our quality, performance, and ability to delivery our projects on time and on budget." An engineer by training, he found that the transition from contractor to a full-service solar company wasn't easy, especially for a young entrepreneur with a family. "We grew steadily during that period and were soon working with some of the largest solar developers in the country, installing projects for end-user customers like Targets and Kohl's as well as working on utility scale projects for large power producers," he says. But with a good team, and what he calls "the good fortune of being in the right industry at the right time," he's on track for bigger and better things. "I feel that we are still growing and improving in what we do every day," he says.

Joe Gianni, President and Founder.

10

Gianni Custom Homes

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $6,250,081 2016: $840,230

Growth: 643.84% Average Annual Growth Rate: 214.61%

Full-time employees: 4

Joe Gianni is going to shoot straight with you about it: The Great Recession took a heavy toll on his company, which once specialized in building higher-end homes. Surviving that construction downturn, a decade ago, when so many didn't, required a pivot to the center of the market. It worked, but it wasn't easy. "One of our biggest challenges was overcoming our personal weariness after being severely hurt, and surviving the market crash," Gianni says. "Flipping homes, remodel projects and what build jobs we did, have kept us alive during that time. It surely took some time for us to venture back in." By finding a more affordable selling price point and architecture plan, he says, the family business turned things back to growth mode. "Once we found success in building spec homes again, this helped us overcome some of our concern," he says, and the addition of more model homes has driven record sales and bought time for reinforcements: "My wife and I work for the company full-time," he says, and now, "we have involved our grown children to help keep up."

11 Pivot International

5th Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $195,309,805 2016: $29,107,615

Growth: 570.99% Average Annual Growth Rate: 190.33%

Full-time employees: 646

Engineering design and manufacturing services are the foundation, but CEO Mark Dohnalek has built on it by snapping up other companies and bringing them into the Pivot International fold. The Lenexa company has been on an acquisition tear, snagging seven other companies in just the past four years. That gives Pivot 12 locations worldwide, and a footprint in 14 different industries. Engineering technical capabilities and manufacturing know-how keep the pedal to the metal on growth, Dohnalek says.

12 Odimo Architecture

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,568,660 2016: $241,720

Growth: 548.96% Average Annual Growth Rate: 182.99%

Full-time employees: 9

This regional architecture and interior design practice has been making a splash with its work in higher education, affordable housing, and urban-core commercial work—witness the firm's recognition as the AIAKC Firm of the Year in 2019. Among its impressive list of clients in the education space are the University of Missouri, UMKC and Missouri Science & Technology, KU and K-State. Its office work remade the Signal Theory ad/communications firm, and on the retail and housing side, Prairie Fire development, Boulevard Lofts and more.

13 Warrior Developments

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,388,551 2016: $217,356

Growth: 538.84% Average Annual Growth Rate: 179.61%

Full-time employees: 11

With services in preconstruction planning, design development and general construction, Warrior Developments declares that "we exist to build great things." It previously found a fertile niche with government projects, performing work that includes HVAC and electrical system installation, as well as interior finishing. Owner Joshua Hall says the linchpin for growth was the attainment of certification as a service-disabled, veteran-owned small business, combined with improved marketing tactics and a new division focused on residential work.

14 Midwest Comfort Homes

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $3,034,857 2016: $490,047

Growth: 519.30% Average Annual Growth Rate: 173.10%

Full-time employees: 6

Coming off a Top 10 finish in the 2019 CR100, Midwest Comfort Homes produced another solid four-year run through 2019, capitalizing on its strengths in a construction sector super-niche: Disaster restoration. The company not only offers the hands-on work to repair damage from fire, flood, storm or other cataclysmic events, but it also helps customers with the mitigation and insurance aspects of recovering from damage to their homes.

15 Rx Savings Solutions

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $17,479,538 2016: $3,102,227

Growth: 463.45% Average Annual Growth Rate: 154.48%

Full-time employees: 130

New products, new services, new marketing approaches. All, says founder Michael Rea, were pillars of growth at this SaaS provider of solutions for saving on prescription drug costs. But one other element may trump them all: The simple need for those services in a time of spiraling medication costs. Rea, a pharmacist himself, was inspired to address the need when a patient asked him which of her eight monthly prescriptions she could skip to have enough money left over for rent.

16 Universal Construction

4th Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $81,692,833 2016: $16,059,272

Growth: 408.70% Average Annual Growth Rate: 136.23%

Full-time employees: 25

One of the Kansas City region's longest-running family-owned success stories, Universal Construction is now five generations deep in ownership since Archie Smith laid the foundation for the current company with masonry contracting back in 1887. Since incorporating nearly 90 years ago, this contractor now based in Kansas City, Kan., has completed more than a billion dollars' worth of projects in 22 states. Recent projects for area school districts include the Park Hill innovation studio and the performing arts wing in Liberty.

17 HJM Architects

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $2,290,000 2016: $480,000

Growth: 377.08% Average Annual Growth Rate: 125.69%

Full-time employees: 10

Give credit to Richard and Kara Hu at HJM: not only are the firm's principal and office manager able to orchestrate a rapid-growth dynamic, they perform the most delicate of balancing acts with eight designers trained in Kansas: Half, including the Hus, are KU grads; half are K-Staters. Must get interesting around Sunflower Showdowns in football and basketball. With offices in Waldo, HJM has certification as an MBE, DBE, and SLBE firm.

18 ProcureIT Network

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $6,834,780 2016: $1,455,262

Growth: 369.66% Average Annual Growth Rate: 123.22%

Full-time employees: 2

Chris Martin's team at ProcureIT Network may have their collective feet firmly on the ground, but they most assuredly have their heads in the cloud: The firm based in Grain Valley provides migration services for clients moving data from on-premises and data-center storage to Amazon Web Services and Azure cloud-based storage. The company's goal, Martin says, is to provide clients with the best ROI on their tech investment.

19 Empowered Electric

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $7,543,312 2016: $1,666,389

Growth: 352.67% Average Annual Growth Rate: 117.56%

Full-time employees: 35

The Three E's of success at Empowered Electric: Entrepreneurship, expertise, and experience. The commercial electrical contractor blended the entrepreneurial energy of Josh Levin with the savvy of long-time industry veteran Paul Shoemaker in 2014. Things clicked right away. A seven-fold year-over-year increase in revenues in 2015 had the company up and running, and the addition of hard-working, competitive field employees helped secure new opportunities and build relationships with larger general contractors.

20 Lead Bank

4th Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $53,278,000 2016: $11,913,000

Growth: 347.23% Average Annual Growth Rate: 115.74%

Full-time employees: 47

Real people, real businesses. They are top of mind at Lead Bank, a community bank that has exponentially grown the size of its own community. A strategic focus on diversification of its service lines has expanded its customer base from 5,000 in 2017 to more than 180,000 last year, with more than a four-fold increase in revenues as a result. Two key groups targeted for growth are small businesses and "creating financial pathways to those, who in the past, have been unbankable," officials say.

21 Fire Door Solutions

2nd Year

Growth: 337.84% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 112.61%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $33,126,770 | 2016: $7,565,903 | **Full-time employees:** 158

From startup to national footprint in less than eight years: That's how impressive the growth has been at Fire Door Solutions, which opened its own doors in 2012. "Knowing others' lives depend on our lives," as the company says, is a cultural value nearly unique to this Stilwell company, which offers both products to help control structural fires as well as services ranging from inspections, surveys and replacements to repairs and remediation.

22 Apollo Insurance Group

4th Year

Growth: 314.24% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 104.75%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $4,700,000 | 2016: $1,134,612 | **Full-time employees:** 6

Apollo Insurance Group's first splash in the CR100 pool came three years ago, following 2016 growth of better than 343 percent. Things cooled off a bit—if triple-digit growth is your idea of "cooling off"—at 162 percent and 116 percent. But 2019 was another big year for Scott Eckley's Leawood based health-care insurance brokerage, again over threefold growth. The reason, the company says, is fairly simple: "We pride ourselves in ensuring we help keep our clients' money in their pocket instead of giving it to the insurance company."

23 Callahan

1st Year

Growth: 303.45% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 101.15%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $55,878,560 | 2016: $13,850,082 | **Full-time employees:** 60

So you want to handle your own marketing data analysis, do you? With apologies to that other Callahan figure, do you feel lucky today? Well, do ya? If not, perhaps this Lawrence-based company can help you find the marketing gold you're digging for in that mountain of digits. The firm mixes front-end data analytics with creative services on behalf of such big-name clients as Galliprant (canine medication), Lee Jeans, MGP Ingredients, Boost Mobile and Bushnell Golf.

24 Friend That Cooks

3rd Year

Growth: 282.33% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 94.11%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $2,728,699 | 2016: $713,699 | **Full-time employees:** 32

No personal chef on the payroll at your home? No problem: Friend that Cooks can do the grocery shopping, meal prep and cooking for you. In that sense, says founder Brandon O'Dell, Friend That Cooks is selling "friendship, healthy eating, free time, and peace of mind." Since its launch in Wichita in 2007 (O'Dell later moved things to Kansas City), it has expanded to 18 cities, mostly in the Midwest, plus Florida and Washington, D.C.

25 Tickets for Less

2nd Year

Growth: 277.64% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 92.55%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $59,469,725 | 2016: $15,747,655 | **Full-time employees:** 38

Some day soon—we all hope—stadiums and concert venues around the nation will be full once again. When that day comes, Tickets for Less plans on being there to provide access to major-league baseball, football and basketball contests, NCAA competitions, theater shows and live music venues. The company flashed its power to pivot this year by rolling out its Fansurance Guarantee, assuring ticket-holders refunds for canceled events, or assured access to events that are postponed.

26 LotPop

1st Year

Growth: 270.42% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 90.14%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,940,377 | 2016: $523,825 | **Full-time employees:** 20

As new car sales have fallen in recent years, automotive dealers have shifted gears to focus more on used car operations. That's where LotPop comes in with a suite of products and services that help dealers increase their used-car sales and get past the two drags on performance for most: issues with staffing, and with processes. It offers consulting services, deep data analytics on sales and guidance on use of virtual lot walks to drive customers in.

27 KMG Hotels

1st Year

Growth: 267.81% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 89.27%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $35,791,890 | 2016: $9,731,048 | **Full-time employees:** 500

With 15 hotels between the Kansas City region and St. Louis, KMG Hotels flies some of the most familiar flags in the hospitality industry: Courtyard by Marriott, Hampton by Hilton, Holiday Inn, Springhill Suites and Candlewood Suites. The North Kansas City-based company, founded in 2015, has found its way in the extended-stay space because "hard work, commitment and the spiritual strength of the KMG family have been the building blocks of the KMG Hotels brand," owners Jay and Sanjya Koshiya say.

28 CMG Midwest

1st Year

Growth: 255.64% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 85.21%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $3,687,576 | 2016: $1,036,874 | **Full-time employees:** 8

On time, under budget. Prime directives for Construction Management Group, from Cleveland, Mo. Labeling itself a full-service turnkey construction company is no stretch: CMG's stable of talent includes real-estate agents and inspection services, radon testing and mitigation—tenant leasing through its partnership with Platinum Leasing Group. With a construction-management focus on single-family residences and multi-family in the large portfolio and institutional investor market, CMG operates in both KC and Denver.

29 Flight Schedule Pro

1st Year

Growth: 251.30% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 83.77%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $2,396,331 | 2016: $682,124 | **Full-time employees:** 14

Flight Schedule Pro offers web and mobile software platforms used by over 900 flight schools—and more than 9,000 flight instructors—to streamline flight operations and improve the flight-training experience. The latter is a key piece of helping organizations increase student retention. Among the company's clients are training centers and flight schools, higher-education institutions and flying clubs, and the platform offers tools for flight scheduling, training, maintenance and billing.

30 Rank Fuse Digital Marketing

2nd Year

Growth: 247.14% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 82.38%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,370,645 | 2016: $394,836 | **Full-time employees:** 6

Whether its for search-engine optimization, paid search advertising, content or Web site development, this full-service digital marketing agency flexes between B2B, B2C or white-label client services. Kevin Pike used his prior experience in the field to set out on his own in 2015, and says he found a formula for growth by drawing on the mentorship he received earlier in his career, then translating it into a highly customized and advanced suite of digital services.

31 HYR Global Source

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $9,750,000 | 2016: $2,858,175
Growth: 241.13% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 80.38%
Full-time employees: 90

From the company's home base in Overland Park, HYR and its staff of 90 reach across the U.S., Canada and India with software development and IT services. The core of the business is assisting clients with cloud-migration needs, with service lines that include full-stack development, digital transformation, cloud consulting, mobile development, and data analytics, among others. CEO Raj Yampati attributes strong growth in recent years to new products and services.

32 EDZ Systems

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,087,000 | 2016: $321,228
Growth: 238.39% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 79.46%
Full-time employees: 35

A certified minority/woman-owned business EDZ Systems works primarily with law firms, corporate legal departments, government agencies and commercial businesses, providing staffing, consulting and systems-integration services. CEO Elizabeth DeZeeuw says introduction of EDZ's Intelligent Resources Management System was the spark that lit the fast-growth fire for the Overland Park firm. That platform helps companies leverage resources, maximize efficiencies and improve time management and financial reporting.

33 Garcia Architecture

3rd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $4,965,580 | 2016: $1,474,302
Growth: 236.81% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 78.94%
Full-time employees: 29

The company's description says everything you need to know about where its design services can be applied, with designed "life spaces where people live, work, play, heal, learn and worship." Over the years, it has had a hand in designing workplaces for some of the region's best-known brands, from Sprint to MRIGlobal, Farmland Industries and Hoescht Marion Roussel, as well as smaller companies like law firms and other office spaces.

34 Inspired Homes

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $27,862,470 | 2016: $8,280,099
Growth: 236.50% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 78.83%
Full-time employees: 21

This Downtown Kansas City-based home builder has found its sweet spot for mid-range residential construction in the range between $290,000 and $500,000, building homes in seven developments ringing the area, in Lee's Summit, Olathe and Lenexa. With eight floor plans ranging from 1,688 to 4,579 square feet in the appropriately named Opus model, Inspired Homes leverages technology to help people put personal custom touches on their vision of the American Dream.

35 Native Digital

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $3,100,449 | 2016: $926,295
Growth: 234.72% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 78.24%
Full-time employees: 24

Bringing together a team of consultants, strategists and creatives, Native Digital assists clients with brand strategy, creative messaging, in-house activation and performance marketing. It offers a robust suite of services that touch on every aspect of corporate and strategic communications and strategy—from market intelligence to logo creation, web content and sales collateral, SEO and social media, team workshops and workflow consultation, among others.

36 Agforce Transport Services

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $67,218,572 | 2016: $20,110,000
Growth: 234.25% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 78.08%
Full-time employees: 74

One of the fastest-growing third-party logistics providers in the nation, Agforce Transport Services says growth flows from its commitment to "building lasting partnerships based on transparent, responsive communication, industry expertise and a relentless drive to create the best possible customer journey." The company delivers flexible, adaptive solutions to complex supply chains, suppliers, partners and end users. "We're not one of the super-sized logistics providers, and that's a good thing," says CEO Michael Preisinger.

37 Hollyday Med Spa + Aesthetics

3rd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $4,490,990 | 2016: $1,380,392
Growth: 225.34% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 75.11%
Full-time employees: 13

There's more to looking good than what you see on the outside. That inside-out approach to wellness is at the center of what Holly Post and her team of health professionals and aesthetics experts do at this Waldo-area rejuvenation clinic. They offer basic and advanced skin care, injectable and body-care services, including non-surgical body sculpting. Success there, Post says, comes from top-tier professionals using the best products, techniques and machines in the business.

38 Global Soft Systems

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $2,376,697 | 2016: $735,675
Growth: 223.06% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 74.35%
Full-time employees: 30

For nearly 20 years, Global Soft Systems has helped clients apply technology solutions to common business problems like cost control, ensuring system stability, and improving efficiency. Founder Gopal Aedma and his team serve both Fortune 1000 companies and fast growing mid-sized companies across a variety of industry segments. Among its services, the firm based in Overland Park offers Web development, data warehousing, ERP guidance and quality assurance.

39 Prineta

3rd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,947,114 | 2016: $608,350
Growth: 220.06% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 73.35%%
Full-time employees: 5

Prineta, based in Overland Park, is a payment-solutions company that provides full-service ATM placements and payment services for businesses across the U.S. and Canada. It quickly evolved into that model after initially launching as a payment-processing service in 2009, and now has ATM contracts with many big-names. While the focus has shifted, Prineta retains some of its role as an independent sales agent for multiple payment processors, including high-volume merchants and pay-at-the pump for unbranded gas stations.

40 Generator Studio

3rd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $3,915,401 | 2016: $1,235,483
Growth: 216.91% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 72.30%
Full-time employees: 15

Founded by Tom Proebstle, who serves as design director, Generator Studio is a full-service architecture and interior design firm that specializes in high-end residential, hospitality, not-for-profit, corporate office and sports venues. Its portfolio of work includes far-flung venues like the locker room for the Brooklyn Nets of the NBA and the NHL Seattle Ice Center, and close-to-home projects like the renovation of the historic Kansas City Star building into a mixed-use Downtown development and the tennis pavilion at the Carriage Club.

Climbing to the Top

A Kansas City tradition continues with Ingram's 35th annual salute to the pillars of business growth.

Ingram's editor and research team are proud to support the greater Kansas City business community and to recognize the achievement of extraordinary performance. Corporate Report-Kansas City started the Corporate Report 100 ranking of the region's fastest-growing companies in 1986 and *Ingram's* has proudly continued the mission since.

Congratulations to this year's honorees and the more than 1,200 companies who have earned a place in history on the CR100. **We're honored to serve.**

INGRAM'S

Corporate Report100

41 JR & Co.

2nd Year

Growth: 213.83% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 71.28%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $51,663,126 | 2016: $16,461,908 | Full-time employees: 245

This Kansas City company specializing in commercial and residential roofing, sheet metal, solar and general construction now operates in more than 20 states, with offices in Iowa, Florida and Colorado, and another coming on-line in Wichita. "We have grown by providing our client's multiple synergistic capabilities to build part, or virtually all, of the entire building envelope," says owner Jonathan Schilling. The solar division launched in 2019 is also a growth diver, as is its expanding footprint with government and military contracts.

42 Unlimited Logistics

2nd Year

Growth: 211.19% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 70.40%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $48,109,267 | 2016: $15,460,000 | Full-time employees: 30

A refrigerated truck hauling produce from Point A to B runs at 50 percent efficiency if it's empty on the return trip. Jimmy Connell, building on the produce-shipping strengths of the company his father founded, launched Unlimited Logistics in 2008, tapped into the Midwest's rich protein supply chain to haul beef, pork and poultry, along with nursery items, to help carriers fill out their round-trip schedules. The Stilwell company also arranges dry, flatbed and parcel loads.

43 CrossFirst Bank

7th Year

Growth: 210.36% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 70.12%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $224,933,000 | 2016: $72,476,000 | Full-time employees: 349

Founded in 2007 at the onset of a deep recession, this Leawood-based bank has simply thrived by embracing the foundations of meaningful banking—service and trust. "We recruit only the best bankers and invest in their strengths," says Chairman Mike Maddox. That has yielded a multi-state powerhouse with a combined $5 billion in assets, with more to come. Ahead, says Maddox, will be more organic growth, select acquisitions and new market development, along with improved profitability, efficiency and high-level talent.

44 Facility Systems

2nd Year

Growth: 202.54% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 67.51%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $5,546,382 | 2016: $1,833,291 | Full-time employees: 12

With a global pandemic inspiring second thoughts about workplace design, Facility Systems Work Environments + Design seems poised to ride a growth rocket into the coming years. The family-owned company based in Overland Park designs, builds, furnishes and supports corporate office spaces. Interior design—everything from window treatments to telescoping glass walls—and space planning are two primary service lines. Recent growth followed the addition of an architectural products division.

45 e2E

2nd Year

Growth: 196.52% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 65.51%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,884,701 | 2016: $635,613 | Full-time employees: 23

Seasoned professionals at e2E provide business-management strategies and services to assist companies on the path from entrepreneur to Enterprise. The firm offers services in budgeting, accounting, HR, payroll, tax and marketing, allows widget-makers to focus on a better widget. Growth, the company says, "can be attributed to three main factors: talented staff, great client service and a strong partner network. Nearly 100 percent of e2E's new clients have come from referrals through connections with management, staff, clients or network partners.

46 Nickle & Suede

2nd Year

Growth: 193.59% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 64.53%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $5,200,000 | 2016: $1,771,194 | Full-time employees: 32

Banking another strong year coming off a Top 10 CR100 finish in 2019, Nickle & Suede is the entrepreneurial dream of Kilee Nickels, come to life. The company carved out its niche by offering leather earrings in its own signature tear-drop shape, and has grown the product line to include hats, sweatshirts and T-shirts, plus art prints, candles and more. The big and bold earrings make a statement, Nickels says, and inspire confidence in the women who wear them. Growth followed, she says, because "courage is contagious."

47 Al J. Mueller Construction

1st Year

Growth: 181.09% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 60.36%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $44,263,075 | 2016: $15,747,003 | Full-time employees: DD

Founded in 1974, this St. Joseph-based company makes its mark with buildings that serve the bioscience, commercial, health care, industrial and non-profit sectors. A design-build general contractor, it works primarily with pre-engineered metal building systems as well as conventional and specialty construction. One of the reasons for the long-term success, officials say, is the staff longevity: many have between 20 and 30 years of experience in construction estimating, management, and project development.

48 Firelake Construction

3rd Year

Growth: 176.67% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 58.89%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $18,046,436 | 2016: $6,522,673 | Full-time employees: 83

For Firelake Construction owner and CEO Jackie Foley, you can't spell "growth" without T-E-A-M. "Firelake prides itself on building a great team, and we believe our people are our greatest asset," says Foley. The Lenexa general contractor, which specialties in security-system solutions and IT settings, places a high value on empowering its people for success. "We invest in our business and we are selective in the projects we bid," Foley says. "Quality and safety are king."

49 IBC

4th Year

Growth: 164.47% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 54.82%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $18,856,773 | 2016: $7,130,022 | Full-time employees: 95

Brandy McCombs just keeps feeding fuel into the growth engine at IBC, which thrives on two distinct operating units, one for interior trim carpentry, and one for traffic-control systems—you no doubt drive past their orange-and-white road-work signage around the region. Growth, she says, followed after the company added extra services to assist customers. Along with that, she says, "we have great people who work at IBC."

50 Voepel Property Management

2nd Year

Growth: 163.01% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 54.34%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $2,508,392 | 2016: $953,740 | Full-time employees: 25

This residential property management company, specializing in single-family and multi-family properties in the greater Kansas City metropolitan area, assists landlords with marketing, leasing, tenant selection/screening, maintenance, and renovations. Key development projects that led to growth, says Brent Voepel, include an in-house maintenance/renovations team, allowing the firm to expand operations with a physical office on the UMKC campus and a 6,000 square-foot maintenance facility in Raytown.

51 Compost Connection

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $3,561,719 | 2016: $1,374,889 | **Growth: 159.06%** | Average Annual Growth Rate: 53.02% | **Full-time employees:** DD

The bane of homeowners everywhere: a collection of brush that seems to yield more branches every year, or bags of lawn clippings that accumulate every week or two for half the year. That's where Compost Connection steps in, now with 52-week collection service and three different plans depending on your yard-waste volumes. The company has the contract with the city of Kansas City to conduct the semi-annual lawn and leaf pickup program.

52 Leap Hospitality

3rd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $4,491,708 | 2016: $1,776,418 | **Growth: 152.85%** | Average Annual Growth Rate: 50.95% | **Full-time employees:** 3

Leap Hospitality, founded in 2006, serves clients in that space, primarily restaurants and bars, but also offering products and services for hotels, casinos, retail stores, offices and education/health facilities. It also provides consulting services to help entrepreneurs with concept development, staff recruitment and logistics solutions. The latter includes custom transportation and warehouse solutions for customers around the world, tapping into a network of 1,000 tractor trailers and straight trucks.

53 CityWide Electric

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $20,000,000 | 2016: $8,100,000 | **Growth: 146.91%** | Average Annual Growth Rate: 48.97% | **Full-time employees:** 27

Based in Shawnee, CityWide Electric is a full-service electrical contractor celebrating 20 years of providing start-to-finish solutions in all project sizes, across the full gamut of venues: commercial, industrial, residential and data/communications, with design-build services as well. Growth over the past three years, says President Jeff Stoneburner, can be traced directly to an increase in management and estimating staff, which created more opportunities for successful bid results.

54 Assel Grant Services

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,048,837 | 2016: $427,255 | **Growth: 145.48%** | Average Annual Growth Rate: 48.49% | **Full-time employees:** 14

When she founded Assel Grant Services in 2007, Julie Assel drew on years of experience as a grant-writer to envision a company that would help non-profits maximize their grant-seeking opportunities. Today, the company boasts the nation's largest collection of certified grant professionals under one roof, securing a combined $182 million in grants since its founding for non-profits working on children's causes, visual and performing arts, health care, education, social services and more.

55 Staco Electric

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $46,508,015 | 2016: $19,126,051 | **Growth: 143.17%** | Average Annual Growth Rate: 47.72% | **Full-time employees:** 172

Fast growth isn't normally a dynamic for companies about to celebrate 50 years in business, but Staco Electric is on the march in a five-state area from its home in south Kansas City. Founded in 1971 as a specialist installing and servicing commercial electrical systems, it has expanded into data and communications contracting, with clients in health-care, manufacturing and office settings, plus installation of utility-system components and renewable energy systems.

56 Crema

4th Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $5,077,684 | 2016: $2,097,012 | **Growth: 142.14%** | Average Annual Growth Rate: 47.38% | **Full-time employees:** 34

Adidas, Black & Veatch, Lockton—with clients of that size and influence in their respective sectors, the folks at Crema had certainly made an impression. The Crossroads-based agency helps companies wring the most out of their digital dollar with services like software and app development, web design, and instructional workshops, all aimed at helping companies create a culture that values its on-line potential and understands the true ROI of integrated software.

57 Columbia Construction

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $9,400,000 | 2016: $3,900,000 | **Growth: 141.03%** | Average Annual Growth Rate: 47.01% | **Full-time employees:** 38

Small but versatile, Columbia Construction in Spring Hill works in commercial as well as residential settings, with single-family, multifamily and remodeling capabilities. Founded by Joe Grossman in 2007—just before the broader construction industry started tanking—Columbia operates with separate divisions that focus on interior finish, roofing and concrete. The company's growth stems in part from the personalized customer service and an average of more than 23 years of industry experience from is senior staff.

58 Environmental Works

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $42,038,216 | 2016: $17,632,547 | **Growth: 138.41%** | Average Annual Growth Rate: 46.14% | **Full-time employees:** 252

A full-service environmental consulting and industrial-services firm, EWI is led by a management team that implemented a new company culture in 2015, pushing authority and responsibility down the organization. Result? A meritocracy where the best people deserve to be surrounded by the best. That, the company says, led to recruitment of top talent. And, by extension, led to growth and expansion from two to 10 locations over the past four years and growth from 85 employees to 250 today.

59 Hepacart

5th Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $7,209,229 | 2016: $3,037,777 | **Growth: 137.32%** | Average Annual Growth Rate: 45.77% | **Full-time employees:** 19

Things have been looking up for Hepacart, and in a world of heightened awareness about environmental and infection control, the future is promising. The Lenexa company designs and produces equipment used by hospitals to control dust and reduce the spread of infectious disease. Expansion into overseas markets and new product development have been the keys to growth there, says President Mark Farnsworth, who notes that "the demand for infection prevention has been a large contributing factor."

60 Royal Creations

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,408,577 | 2016: $596,356 | **Growth: 136.20%** | Average Annual Growth Rate: 45.40% | **Full-time employees:** 12

This design-build residential landscape construction company crafts high-end outdoor living spaces—think landscaping, patios, fire pits, seat walls, retaining walls, drainage solutions, lighting, and the whole nine yards. Growth has come from a key differentiator: the company does most of the work itself, rather than relying on subcontractors. And it hasn't hurt, officials say, to have on-boarded key talent from competitors in late 2018. The staffing additions included a vice president of sales and new skilled production positions.


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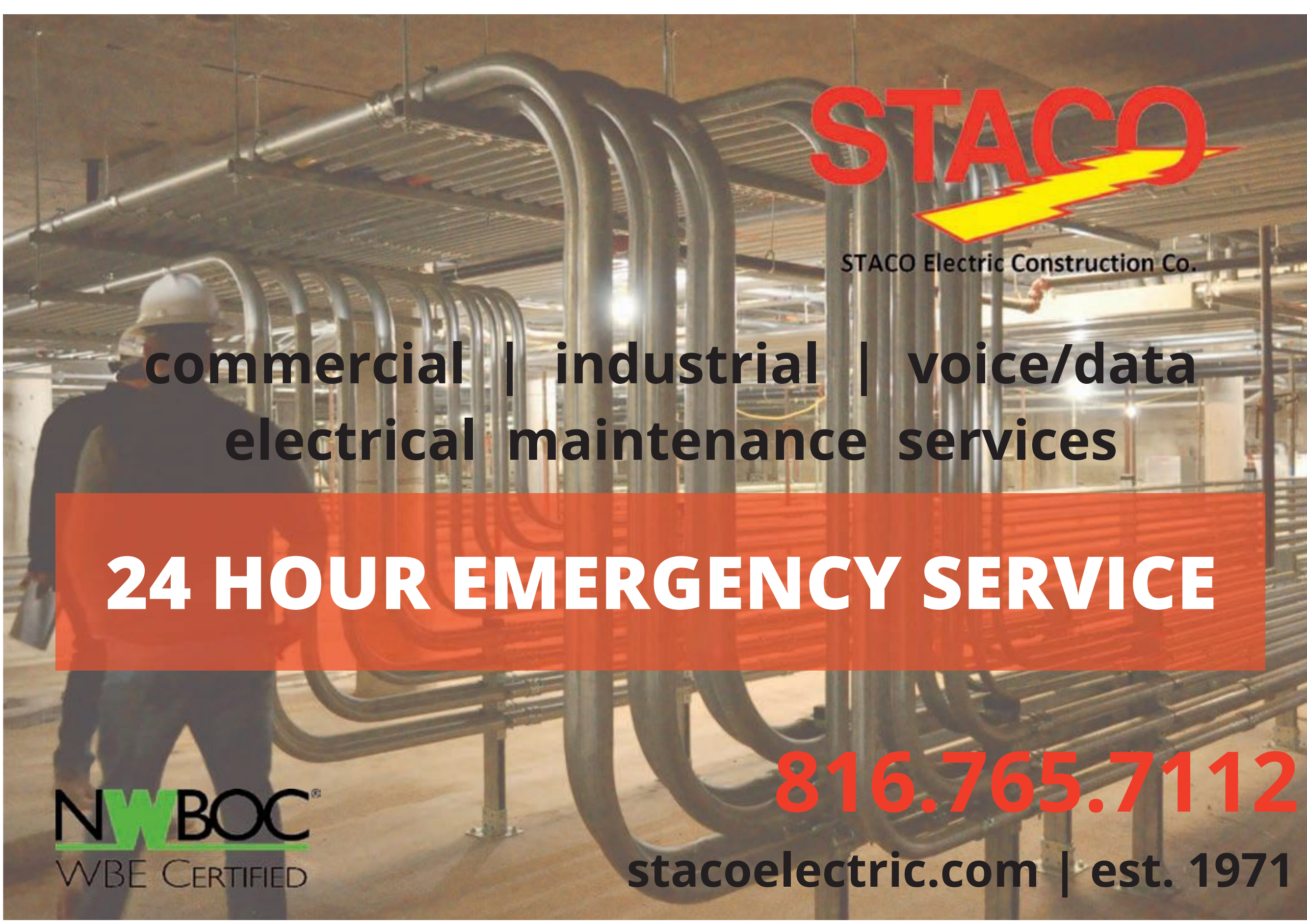
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61 Lever1

Growth: 135.87% Average Annual Growth Rate: 45.29%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $3,060,603 2016: $1,297,584 **Full-time employees:** 30

1st Year

Flourishing in Kansas City's River Market area, Lever1 is a professional employer organization that offers outsourced business services such as human resources, payroll, employee benefits and workers' compensation administration. Under Erica Brune, who serves as president, and CEO Chuck Gragg, who learned a few things about rapid growth during the ascent of Gragg Advertising, the firm focuses on small and mid-size business clients.

62 Managed Energy Systems

Growth: 133.97% Average Annual Growth Rate: 44.66%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $2,706,976 2016: $1,156,991 **Full-time employees:** 8

1st Year

Vlad Kaufman's value proposition for manufacturers and clients isn't merely the prospect of a lower energy bill: It's a guaranteed savings. As part of its consulting work with corporations, the Overland Park company reviews utility bills for hidden savings, seeks out energy incentives for them, and installs energy-efficient equipment with quick returns. The client roster includes some big names in construction and energy-hungry fields, including Superior Bowen, Geiger Ready Mix, Sioux Chief, Herzog Enterprises and Hilton Hotels & Resorts.

63 Wellsky

Growth: 132.34% Average Annual Growth Rate: 44.11%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $342,000,000 2016: $147,200,000 **Full-time employees:** 1,415

2nd Year

Back in 2016, it was Mediware Information Systems, and the company was big. But by 2019, flying the Wellsky flag as its brand, it was a lot bigger. That's tough to do with nine-figure revenues, but Bill Miller's team at Wellsky continues to knock it out of the park. The Overland Park firm provides IT solutions and services across a spectrum of health care, including medical centers and clients in home health, hospice, blood-management and other niches. More than 10,000 clients around the world turn to Wellsky for their IT needs.

64 KBP Foods

Growth: 128.60% Average Annual Growth Rate: 42.87%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $870,708,000 2016: $380,887,909 **Full-time employees:** 11,625

7th Year

Hard to imagine now, but there was a time when KBP Foods wasn't a growth monster in fast-food dining. Founded in 1999 with five restaurant locations, it now has nearly 800 KFC, Taco Bell, Pizza Hut and Long John Silver's units nationwide, pushing it to the threshold of $1 billion in revenues. That's a long way from the company that debuted in the CR100 nearly a decade ago with 2011 baseline revenues of just over $75 million.

65 Pioneer Music

Growth: 125.74% Average Annual Growth Rate: 41.91%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $30,704,909 2016: $13,602,160 **Full-time employees:** 36

2nd Year

Consider this: When this wholesale B2B company was founded in 1869, there were no TVs, radios, mobile devices, electronic surveillance systems, no Roku, Android or iPad—or about anything else we take for granted today. Yet more than 140 years later, Pioneer Music plays on, embracing new technologies related to all things sound. As the company declares on its Web site, it is "always open to change, but never forgetting of our roots,"

66 Prairie Elder Care

Growth: 124.39% Average Annual Growth Rate: 41.46%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $2,872,154 2016: $1,279,988 **Full-time employees:** 36

3rd Year

As with so many successful entrepreneurial ventures, especially those grounded in family, Prairie Elder Care was conceived as a matter of need. Sisters-in-law Mandy Shoemaker and Michala Gibson saw a need for better elder care, specific to those afflicted with dementia, In 2014, the former educator (Shoemaker) and nurse (Gibson) launched the company to address what they saw as a gap in care for those patients. The company's success attests to the numbers of cases where other families are dealing with the same issues.

67 Universal Auto Plaza

Growth: 119.37% Average Annual Growth Rate: 39.79%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $31,861,777 2016: $14,524,541 **Full-time employees:** 47

3rd Year

People who grasp the value proposition of a new car—and how it changes the moment you leave the dealer's lot—have helped Universal Auto Plaza thrive as an independent dealer selling used vehicles from its Blue Springs base. The goal, says the company, is simple: helping consumers buy a great product at a fair price. That means understanding that consumers are more knowledgeable, have better research tools available, and are looking for the kinds of deals they can find only with fully reconditioned vehicles.

68 High Prairie Landscape Group

Growth: 117.68% Average Annual Growth Rate: 39.23%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $3,230,789 2016: $1,484,217 **Full-time employees:** 32

2nd Year

Robyn Schmitz wrote the book on outdoor living. This is a literal statement: Her "Outdoor Living: A Guide to Design, Construction & Budgeting" was published two years ago, a manifesto, if you will of doing landscaping and outdoor living spaces the right way. She founded High Prairie Landscape in 2010, frustrated by what she saw as a lack of ethics—specifically, excessive corner-cutting by area landscapers—and the company specializes in patios, fire pits/fireplaces, retaining walls, outdoor kitchens, water usage and other amenities.

69 Mer-Sea & Co.

Growth: 117.10% Average Annual Growth Rate: 39.03%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $7,134,411 2016: $3,286,167 **Full-time employees:** DD

1st Year

Their husbands' work brought Lina Dickinson and Melanie Bolin to the Kansas City area, far from the shores that offered them inspiration and solace. They bridged that distance by launching Mer-Sea with a series of fragrances that recalled the coastal experience, and have expanded on that with clothing, beachwear, accessories and beauty products that build on an oceanic theme because, they say, "the sea, to us, represents a place to play, unwind, recharge, and chase adventure."

70 Custom Truck One Source

Growth: 115.97% Average Annual Growth Rate: 38.66%

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,029,917,000 2016: $476,888,000 **Full-time employees:** 1,457

1st Year

One of the Kansas City region's newest billion-dollar companies, Custom Truck One Source crossed that prestigious revenue line in 2019, riding a national reach that helps construction and transportation companies (along with those in oil/gas, forestry and rail services) secure the heavy-duty equipment they need to succeed. With more than 3,000 units in its product lines, it offers a huge range of machinery and trucks from 26 locations across the U.S. and Canada, along with parts, service and support.


LEVER
1

71 Kansas City Bier Co.

Growth: 115.72% Average Annual Growth Rate: 38.57%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $5,241,764 2016: $2,429,845 **Full-time employees:** 40

2nd Year

Craft beer production in the U.S. has more than doubled in the past decade, and helping slake that thirst for beer aficionados in this market is Kansas City Bier Co., a wholesale brewery distributing its products in the two-state area, but perhaps better-known for its Waldo home featuring a German-style tasting room and Biergarten. Growth has come, the owners say, by filling a market niche left untapped by major brewers: high-quality, authentic German-style beer, especially lager varieties.

72 Good Energy Solutions

Growth: 113.45% Average Annual Growth Rate: 37.82%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $6,392,892 2016: $2,994,993 **Full-time employees:** 18

2nd Year

A full-service energy partner offering comprehensive consulting and services in electrical, renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy management in the central US region, Good Energy Solutions was founded in 2007. Growth in the past four years, says Shana Good, has come from a laser focus on customer service for projects small and large, in both residential and commercial properties. Among other accolades, the company was named the Small Business Development Center's Kansas Business of the Year in 2019.

73 TGS

Growth: 112.86% Average Annual Growth Rate: 37.62%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $116,867,093 2016: $54,902,100 **Full-time employees:** 71

7th Year

The brand that evolved out of Technology Group Solutions represents a certified minority and woman-owned full-service IT integrator. Founder Lenora Payne now leads one of the region's larger private companies, offering data-center hardware, software, security platform and end-user devices for the private and public sectors. Payne pegs the growth there to a customer-centric philosophy "that enables us to take on the trusted adviser role to provide an all-encompassing solution for our clients IT needs."

74 Platinum Realty

Growth: 111.99% Average Annual Growth Rate: 37.33%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $41,341,941 2016: $19,502,038 **Full-time employees:** 17

9th Year

Change, says Scott DeNeve, is good, and he ought to know: The residential realty firm he founded 15 years ago is changing the dynamic on agent compensation, with nearly 2,000 agents now assisting sellers and buyers. "There is still a part of me that enjoys being the underdog," says DeNeve. "I think that's what I like the most about expanding the company into new markets: We get to be the underdog. The competition doesn't like us because we represent change, and we don't mind the fight."

75 Umzuzu

Growth: 111.44% Average Annual Growth Rate: 37.15%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $3,148,083 2016: $1,488,853 **Full-time employees:** DD

2nd Year

Umzuzu is a Zulu word, and it means "moment." Indeed, for the team at this IT-services company, we are living in a transformative moment where digital information is changing the world, especially the world of commerce and industry, much as electrification did 150 years ago. The company has been thriving by delivering on the proposition it says, "that it is less expensive for a business of any size to consume technology services from a specialized provider than it is to purchase, install, support and upgrade legacy on-premises software products."

76 Hometown Lawn

Growth: 109.69% Average Annual Growth Rate: 36.56%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,406,596 2016: $670,791 **Full-time employees:** 14

1st Year

David and Holly Brucker will tell you, forming a business in the middle of the greatest recession in recent history and in an industry that has no barrier-to-entry might have seemed foolish. But they believed that need, desire and hard work could formulate success. A decade after their they began their family business offers lawn, landscape, irrigation and drainage solutions for more than 2,500 municipal, commercial and residential clients looking for landscape construction and improvement and maintenance services.

77 Re/Max Heritage

Growth: 109.52% Average Annual Growth Rate: 36.51%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $8,923,455 2016: $4,259,012 **Full-time employees:** 7

3rd Year

With more than 120 affiliated agents available to serve home buyers and sellers, Re/Max Heritage of Blue Springs crashes the Corporate Report 100 house party for a third straight year, riding the crest of a pre-COVID wave that lifted many a realty boat in 2019. Its part of the national Re/Max network that started with a single office in Denver in 1973, which grew to become one of the world's largest real-estate franchisors.

78 Seastnan Medical

Growth: 106.24% Average Annual Growth Rate: 35.41%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,782,829 2016: $864,433 **Full-time employees:** 9

1st Year

If you haven't brushed up on your Gaelic lately, Seastnan means "bodyguard," and that's precisely what this Kansas City medical-services company founded by Olivia Fisher aims to do for their clients. The Seastnan team works with physicians at 14 area hospitals—neurosurgeons, orthopedic and vascular surgeons, and hospital staff—to provide neurodiagnostic services for surgery patients.

79 Oakes Auto

Growth: 105.69% Average Annual Growth Rate: 35.23%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $68,001,960 2016: $33,059,911 **Full-time employees:** 82

3rd Year

An energy trader who worked nights, Dan Oakes founded Oakes Auto as a one-man show in 2010, focused on quick turnover, and expanded his high-volume model each year (leaving the energy job behind in 2013). Without a major vehicle brand affiliation or a high-visibility location, he used strategic digital marketing to build a customer base. Relocating from Merriam to Kansas City, Kan., and adding parts and service, then aligning with the Kia and Mitsubishi brands and adding locations in St. Louis and Des Moines, all combined to drive growth.

80 Cornerstone Companies

Growth: 105.38% Average Annual Growth Rate: 35.13%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $6,900,000 2016: $3,359,576 **Full-time employees:** 47

1st Year

This risk-management company specializes in insurance products covering commercial and personal property and casualty, surety, and employee benefits. Amazing employees helping amazing clients solve complicated problems, says the firm. Cornerstone's employees, clients, and centers of influence are the reason for its continued success. We truly have great people all working very hard for a common initiative. Providing positive problem solving solutions to help each other achieve our respective goals.

81 Alight Analytics

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $6,570,000 | 2016: $3,240,728
Growth: 102.73%
Average Annual Growth Rate: 34.24%
Full-time employees: 51

Michelle Jacobs and Matt Hertig founded Alight Analytics in 2007, and their goal was simple: Help others in similar roles manage a universe of data that can inform better marketing decisions. They developed ChannelMix, a data management platform designed for marketers by marketers, helping them corral data from on- and off-line sources, social sites, search and display sources, They offer services in lead generation, eCommerce analytics, paid media, search marketing, social engagement, Web-site performance and analytics.

82 Propio Language Services

8th Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $14,324,470 | 2016: $7,158,508
Growth: 100.10%
Average Annual Growth Rate: 33.37%
Full-time employees: 30

In an increasingly connected world of commerce—and in a nation with increasing presence of languages other than English—Propio Language Services thrives. Investment in people and technology, says CEO Marco Assis, has increased capabilities: more than 4,000 interpreters can translate in 250 languages for over-the-phone interpreting, or 125 languages for translation services, and 40 languages for on-site interpreting. "We are becoming a technology-first company that focuses on the people living and working in our communities."

83 Wellington

4th Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $6,666,000 | 2016: $3,331,710
Growth: 100.08%
Average Annual Growth Rate: 33.36%
Full-time employees: DD

Wellington helps build brands. It's that simple. It does that by organizing and executing events, incentive and gift programs, strategic meetings, marketing campaigns and other functions that go beyond brand-building to strengthen communities, too. Its services include marketing, logistics, virtual meetings, gifts, association management, content production and event execution, and the client roster includes global brands like Ford, Lexus, Toyota, Nissan and General Electric.

84 Sage Restoration

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,198,358 | 2016: $617,073
Growth: 94.20%
Average Annual Growth Rate: 31.40%
Full-time employees: 10

Founded in 2010, Sage Restoration is a woman-owned and entrepreneurially led business that is dedicated to helping families, property managers, and business owners recover from stressful situations—fires, water damage, problem mold in the walls, or even a hoarding situation. Owner Stephanie Sage says that, "seven days a week, 24 hours a day, we are ready to go on-site for extreme remediation projects." An increase in insurance industry claims and commercial work, she says, were prime growth factors since 2016.

85 Midway Ford Truck Center

2nd Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $772,504,414 | 2016: $398,167,176
Growth: 94.02%
Average Annual Growth Rate: 31.34%
Full-time employees: 242

At some point, you figure the baseline becomes too large to support monster growth. Midway Ford has not reached that point. The full-line truck dealership, selling new Ford, Western Star, Autocar and Fuso trucks, also thrives by providing parts and high volume but exceptional service out of its Kansas City location. Employee-owned Midway has earned Ford's President Award for the past 19 years, and is a 25-time winner of the vehicle-maker's Top 100 Award for sales volume.

86 Dimensional Innovations

4th Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $61,839,395 | 2016: $32,267,664
Growth: 91.65%
Average Annual Growth Rate: 30.55%
Full-time employees: 219

Nobody will accuse the designers at Dimensional Innovations of failure to think big. Tucker Trotter has assembled a team of sky's-the-limit visionaries who craft some of the most engaging fan experiences for people who visit sports venues, museums, libraries and gathering places that attract large audiences. Those skills have made the Merriam firm a hot commodity among pro and college sports teams (including the Royals Hall of Fame), companies (including Dairy Farmers of America), organizations (like the Big 10 Conference headquarters).

87 KC Constructors

1st Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $3,955,649 | 2016: $2,072,356
Growth: 90.88%
Average Annual Growth Rate: 30.29%
Full-time employees: DD

The standing joke in construction is that you can have a project fast, cheap or good—pick any two. At KC Constructors, the menu reads: Reliable. Responsible. Reasonable. And you don't have to pick two, the company promises to deliver on all three. Based in Lee's Summit, this general contractors specializes in clinic-type settings for medical and dental practices, ranging from minor tenant improvement to full-building projects in the $2 million range.

88 Chelsoft Solutions Co.

4th Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $8,502,617 | 2016: $4,503,300
Growth: 88.81%
Average Annual Growth Rate: 29.60%
Full-time employees: 70

Being in the IT sector, Kiran Chelluri can appreciate Moore's Law regarding the doubling of computer processing power every 18 months. The Chelluri Corollary to that dictum addresses revenue, not chip capacity. The Olathe firm has demonstrated a relentless but consistent growth since it debuted here in 2016, steadily increasing revenues through its suite of services that include IT training, along with support and business consulting services.

89 Garney Construction

8th Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,108,910,032 | 2016: $589,177,525
Growth: 88.21%
Average Annual Growth Rate: 29.40%
Full-time employees: 1,350

One of two Kansas City companies to cross the billion-dollar revenue threshold this year, Garney Construction is a national powerhouse in water infrastructure projects, such as treatment plants and systems for water supply, reclamation, pollution control and other functions. Its clients run the gamut from federal, state and local governments to industrial giants and private owners. Founded by Charles Garney in 1961, it became 100 percent employee-owned in 1995.

90 D.H. Pace

4th Year

Gross Revenue: 2019: $677,575,710 | 2016: $360,012,142
Growth: 88.21%
Average Annual Growth Rate: 29.40%
Full-time employees: 2,483

It's hard to imagine a company's purpose boiled down to three words more effectively: "We're everything doors," says Rex Newcomer, CEO at D.H. Pace. The Olathe-based company specializes in commercial and industrial sectional doors and access systems, plus residential garage doors and openers. Organic growth and acquisitions over the years now have D.H. Pace operating in more than 50 cities in at least 20 states. Last year alone, its sales increased by $127 million—23 percent—as it added roughly 500 net new jobs.

91 Henderson Engineers

Growth: 87.88% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 29.29%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $192,000,000 | 2016: $102,192,605 | Full-time employees: 514

16th Year

Celebrating 50 years in business since Fran Henderson first opened the doors, Lenexa-based Henderson Engineers is a national design firm with offices in 10 other cities, including major metro areas like New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Dallas, Phoenix and Bentonville. Wait—Bentonville? Arkansas? You bet. The home of Walmart is a natural fit for a firm that helped develop the combined grocery-department store model that made it the world's largest retailer.

92 Tricom Technical Services

Growth: 86.37% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 28.79%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $23,596,183 | 2016: $12,660,981 | Full-time employees: 152

1st Year

Revenues approaching $2 million a month are a long way from the early days of Triple Computer Technical Services, which started in the studio apartment of co-founder Matt Sharples. That was in 1994. A quarter-century later, he and his team at Tricom provide temporary IT talent for corporate clients nationwide, operating from its Kansas City and the Minneapolis area. The company also offers immigration and visa services, plus payroll support.

93 Weichert, Realtors Welch & Co.

Growth: 86.00% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 28.67%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $7,080,750 | 2016: $3,806,925 | Full-time employees: 5

2nd Year

In a booming housing market like Kansas City saw throughout 2019, a lot of realty companies did quite well. Only a comparative handful, though, earned their way onto this list. For Weichert, Realtors Welch & Co., the path to CR100 was paved with customer service, finding buyers for new homes, wedding buyers and sellers of existing homes, or dealing with land acquisitions, land planning and other realty services. Volume, as well, helped, with more than 3,700 home sites to meet the needs of just about any buyer.

94 The Purple Guys

Growth: 84.26% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 28.09%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $6,775,991 | 2016: $3,677,320 | Full-time employees: 40

3rd Year

This Kansas City, Kan.-based IT solutions provider has frequently flirted with CR100 status, a sign of steady, measured growth, and returns 13 years after its first appearance. Its managed IT services help corporate clients avoid those bills for after-hours support, hardware installation, software updates, and myriad special projects that detract from an executive's focus on day-to-day business needs. It offers 24/7 monitoring, remote support and maintenance programs designed to head off problems before they become problems.

95 Leigh & O'Kane

Growth: 84.21% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 28.07%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,750,000 | 2016: $950,000 | Full-time employees: 9

1st Year

Structural engineering and infrastructure design constitute the wheelhouse for this Lee's Summit company founded in 1986. Its team works on buildings, bridges, and infrastructure, and has produced additional growth with the addition of construction services, including special inspections and material testing that yield additional quality control on various projects. They work on all building types, from wood structures to steel, masonry, and concrete.

96 KC Blueprint & Planroom

Growth: 82.85% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 27.62%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $1,611,564 | 2016: $881,348 | Full-time employees: 6

3rd Year

Don't let the name conjure up limited images of what they do here; KC Blueprint & Planroom is fully digital, expanding on its roots in printed construction documents. From business cards and stationery on the small end to large-format digital printing in black and white or full color, this North Kansas City enterprise serves clients as a certified WBE/DBE company in both Missouri and Kansas.

97 DEG

Growth: 82.17% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 27.39%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $69,752,789 | 2016: $38,289,545 | Full-time employees: 320

15th Year

Digital marketing and analytics gave the former Digital Evolution Group entrée into an emerging market in the 1990s, and today, as a local headquartered subsidiary of Isobar, the growth beat goes on for the Overland Park firm. The company helps corporate clients and non-profits strengthen their brand by mining customer data, then delivering insights into those behaviors, to create more meaningful experiences.

98 Intouch Group

Growth: 80.57% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 26.86%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $184,000,000 | 2016: $101,900,000 | Full-time employees: 600

10th Year

One of Kansas City's shining examples of entrepreneurial hope wedded to the American Dream, Faruk Capan turned digital marketing in the pharmaceutical space into a regional powerhouse after founding the company on his own in 1999. During this ranking period, Intouch Solutions reorganized into a network of enterprises that includes a full-service creative agency, a joint venture global agency with Healthware International, a full-service media agency, a technology and production services hub, and a full-service analytics practice.

99 Wagner Logistics

Growth: 78.72% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 26.24%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $68,200,000 | 2016: $38,161,300 | Full-time employees: 543

1st Year

Most of us don't have to worry about were to put a thousand pallets, or more, at any one time when space is running tight. For those who do, Wagner Logistics operates in 14 locations nationwide, with properties that include 12 warehouses in eight states, and offering shipping and storage services with contract warehousing, local and nationwide transportation, and fulfillment centers that allow shippers to reach 80 percent of the nation's consumers within two days. Founded in 1946, the company is based in North Kansas City.

100 Spencer Fane LLP

Growth: 77.99% | Average Annual Growth Rate: 25.99%
Gross Revenue: 2019: $130,796,000 | 2016: $73,484,000 | Full-time employees: 482

1st Year

Recalling the tortoise and the hare, Spencer Fane crosses the finish line at No. 100, making the fast-growth list for the first time in its 141-year history. We just knew it was a matter of time before Spencer Fane would make the CR100. The firm began with a pair of lawyers who relocated to Kansas City from Osceola in 1879, and throughout its history has wielded its legal might as a full-service business law firm to represent management exclusively. It has 19 offices in nine states, including Colorado, Texas, Nevada, Arizona and Florida.

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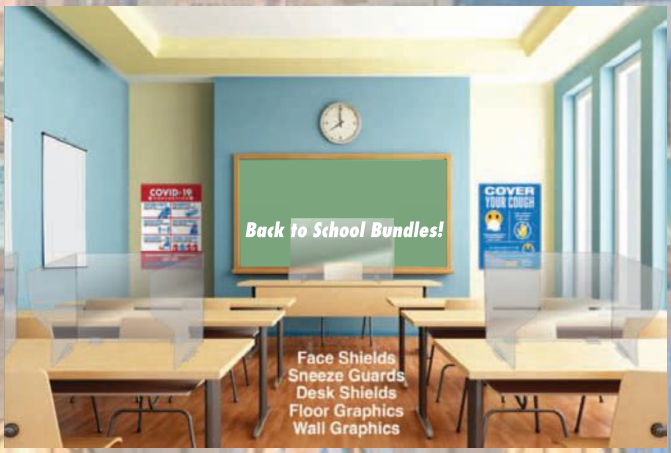

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Ingram's CORPORATE REPORT 100

Recognizing Kansas City's 100-Fastest Growing Companies Since 1985

Rank	Company	% of Growth	2016 Revenue	2019 Revenue	Years Honored	Highest Rank	Year Established
1	Amply Media	5020.18%	$1,313,157	$67,236,000	1	1	2016
2	Conexon	1462.51%	$908,229	$14,191,136	1	2	2015
3	AstraWorks	1450.18%	$599,341	$9,290,857	1	3	2014
4	Dynamic Logistix	1134.62%	$6,547,754	$80,840,094	2	1	2013
5	Draiver	1024.05%	$964,789	$10,844,704	1	5	2013
6	LED Direct	892.63%	$264,902	$2,629,500	1	6	2016
7	Tallgrass Freight	794.99%	$4,666,731	$41,766,940	3	7	2012
8	Sprout Creative	710.69%	$267,066	$2,165,070	1	8	2013
9	Artisun Solar	654.93%	$1,062,845	$8,023,688	1	9	2011
10	Gianni Custom Homes	643.85%	$840,230	$6,250,081	2	10	1995
11	Pivot International	570.99%	$29,107,615	$195,309,805	6	3	1972
12	Odimo Architecture	548.96%	$241,720	$1,568,660	1	12	2015
13	Warrior Developments	538.84%	$217,356	$1,388,551	1	13	1997
14	Midwest Comfort Homes	519.30%	$490,046	$3,034,857	2	5	2010
15	RX Savings Solutions	463.45%	$3,102,227	$17,479,538	1	15	2012
16	Universal Construction	408.70%	$16,059,272	$81,692,833	4	16	1931
17	HJM Architects	377.08%	$480,000	$2,290,000	1	17	1984
18	Procure IT Network	369.66%	$1,455,262	$6,834,780	1	18	2013
19	Empowered Electric	352.67%	$1,666,389	$7,543,312	1	19	2015
20	Lead Bank	347.23%	$11,913,000	$53,278,000	4	20	1928
21	Fire Door Solutions	337.84%	$7,565,903	$33,126,770	2	21	1982
22	Apollo Insurance Group	314.24%	$1,134,612	$4,700,000	4	7	2012
23	Callahan	303.45%	$13,850,082	$55,878,560	5	7	2010
24	Friend That Cooks	282.33%	$713,699	$2,728,699	1	24	2007
25	Tickets for Less	277.64%	$15,747,655	$59,469,725	3	8	2004
26	LotPop, Inc.	270.42%	$523,825	$1,940,377	2	18	2013
27	KMG Hotels	267.81%	$9,731,048	$35,791,890	1	27	2015
28	CMG Midwest	255.64%	$1,036,874	$3,687,576	1	28	2013
29	Flight Schedule Pro	251.30%	$682,124	$2,396,331	1	29	2005
30	Rank Fuse Digital Marketing	247.14%	$394,836	$1,370,645	1	30	2015
31	HYR Global Source	241.13%	$2,858,175	$9,750,000	2	12	2013
32	EDZ Systems	238.39%	$321,228	$1,087,000	1	32	2015
33	Garcia Architecture	236.81%	$1,474,302	$4,965,580	3	33	1989
34	Inspired Homes	236.50%	$8,280,099	$27,862,470	2	8	2013
35	Native Digital	234.72%	$926,295	$3,100,449	2	6	2014
36	AgForce Transport Services	234.25%	$20,110,000	$67,218,572	1	36	2015
37	Hollyday Med Spa + Aesthetics	225.34%	$1,380,392	$4,490,990	3	14	2004
38	Global Soft Systems	223.06%	$735,675	$2,376,697	1	38	2004
39	Prineta	220.06%	$608,350	$1,947,114	2	10	2009
40	Generator Studio	216.91%	$1,235,483	$3,915,401	3	19	2009
41	JR & Co.	213.83%	$16,461,908	$51,663,126	2	39	2014
42	Unlimited Logistics	211.19%	$15,460,000	$48,109,267	2	42	2008
43	CrossFirst Bank	210.36%	$72,476,000	$224,933,000	7	13	2008
44	Facility Systems	202.54%	$1,833,291	$5,546,382	2	44	1985
45	e2E, LLC	196.52%	$635,613	$1,884,701	2	33	2013
46	Nickel & Suede	193.59%	$1,771,194	$5,200,000	2	4	2014
47	Al J. Mueller Construction Co.	181.09%	$15,747,003	$44,263,075	1	47	1974
48	Firelake Construction	176.67%	$6,522,673	$18,046,436	3	24	2011
49	IBC	164.47%	$7,130,022	$18,856,773	4	8	2009
50	Voepel Property Management	163.01%	$953,740	$2,508,392	2	50	2012

Rank	Company	% of Growth	2016 Revenue	2019 Revenue	Years Honored	Highest Rank	Year Established
51	Compost Connection	159.06%	$1,374,889	$3,561,719	2	15	1992
52	Leap Hospitality	152.85%	$1,776,418	$4,491,708	3	32	2006
53	CityWide Electric	146.91%	$8,100,000	$20,000,000	2	53	2000
54	Assel Grant Services	145.48%	$427,255	$1,048,837	1	54	2007
55	Staco Electric	143.17%	$19,126,051	$46,508,015	2	55	1971
56	Crema	142.14%	$2,097,012	$5,077,684	4	14	2009
57	Columbia Construction	141.03%	$3,900,000	$9,400,000	1	57	2009
58	Environmental Works, Inc	138.41%	$17,632,547	$42,038,216	2	58	1992
59	Hepacart	137.32%	$3,037,777	$7,209,229	5	7	2006
60	Royal Creations	136.20%	$596,356	$1,408,577	1	60	2003
61	Lever1	135.87%	$1,297,584	$3,060,603	1	61	2012
62	Managed Energy Systems	133.97%	$1,156,991	$2,706,976	1	62	2013
63	Wellsky	132.34%	$147,200,000	$342,000,000	2	63	1980
64	KBP Foods	128.60%	$380,887,909	$870,708,000	7	18	1999
65	Pioneer Music	125.74%	$13,602,160	$30,704,909	2	65	1969
66	Prairie Elder Care	124.39%	$1,279,988	$2,872,154	3	9	2014
67	Universal Auto Plaza	119.37%	$14,524,541	$31,861,777	3	34	2012
68	High Prairie Landscape Group	117.68%	$1,484,217	$3,230,789	2	30	2013
69	Mer-Sea & Co.	117.10%	$3,286,167	$7,134,411	3	2	2013
70	Custom Truck One Source	115.97%	$476,888,000	$1,029,917,000	2	70	2003
71	Kansas City Bier Co.	115.72%	$2,429,845	$5,241,764	2	20	2014
72	Good Energy Solutions	113.45%	$2,994,993	$6,392,892	2	72	2007
73	Technology Group Solutions	112.86%	$54,902,100	$116,867,093	7	9	2005
74	Platinum Realty	111.99%	$19,502,038	$41,341,941	9	7	2008
75	UMZUZU	111.44%	$1,488,853	$3,148,083	2	68	2008
76	Hometown Lawn	109.69%	$670,791	$1,406,596	1	76	2010
77	Re/Max Heritage	109.52%	$4,259,012	$8,923,455	3	16	2013
78	Seastnan Medical	106.24%	$864,433	$1,782,829	1	78	2011
79	Oakes Auto	105.69%	$33,059,911	$68,001,960	3	15	2010
80	Cornerstone Companies	105.38%	$3,359,576	$6,900,000	1	80	2013
81	Alight Analytics	102.73%	$3,240,728	$6,570,000	1	81	2007
82	Propio Language Services	100.10%	$7,158,508	$14,324,470	8	21	1998
83	Wellington	100.08%	$3,331,710	$6,666,000	4	10	1994
84	Sage Restoration	94.20%	$617,073	$1,198,358	2	67	2010
85	Midway Ford Truck Center	94.02%	$398,167,176	$772,504,414	2	85	1961
86	Dimensional Innovations	91.65%	$32,267,664	$61,839,395	1	86	1993
87	KC Constructors	90.88%	$2,072,356	$3,955,649	1	87	2007
88	Chelsoft Solutions	88.81%	$4,503,300	$8,502,617	4	7	2010
89	Garney Construction	88.213%	$589,177,525	$1,108,910,032	8	29	1961
90	D.H. Pace	88.209%	$360,012,142	$677,575,710	4	75	1973
91	Henderson Engineers	87.88%	$102,192,605	$192,000,000	16	12	1994
92	TriCom Technical Services	86.37%	$12,660,981	$23,596,183	1	92	1994
93	Weichert, Realtors Welch & Co.	86.00%	$3,806,925	$7,080,750	2	71	2000
94	The Purple Guys	84.26%	$3,677,320	$6,775,991	3	77	2001
95	Leigh + O'Kane	84.21%	$950,000	$1,750,000	1	95	1986
96	KC Blueprint Co.	82.85%	$881,348	$1,611,564	3	28	2004
97	DEG	82.17%	$38,289,545	$69,752,789	15	13	1999
98	Intouch Group	80.57%	$101,900,000	$184,000,000	10	6	2005
99	Wagner Logistics	78.72%	$38,161,300	$68,200,000	6	44	1950
100	Spencer Fane	77.99%	$73,484,000	$130,796,000	1	100	1879

Organizations with the most appearances in the 35-year history of *Ingram's* Corporate Report 100:

Company	# of Years on CR100	Highest Rank on CR100 (Year)	Revenue From First Year on Corporate Report 100 (Year)	Revenue from Most Recent Year on Corporate Report 100 (Year)
Cerner Corp.	22	4 (1987, 1990)	$17,356,000 (1987)	$4,425,267,000 (2016)
SKC Communication Products	19	23 (1997)	$38,000,000 (1991)	$125,000,000 (2013)
Lockton Companies	18	36 (1986)	$6,700,000 (1986)	$727,727,000 (2008)
Henderson Engineers	16	12 (1994)	$3,164,000 (1994)	$1192,000,000 (2019)
Acendas	15	19 (1993)	$18,000,000 (1991)	$174,325,805 (2013)
Burns & McDonnell	15	27 (2002)	$974,040,000 (1992)	$2,679,000,000 (2016)
DEG	15	13 (2012)	$1,412,760 (2005)	$69,752,789 (2019)
Gragg Advertising	14	4 (2010)	$2,358,000 (1998)	$41,849,630 (2014)
American Italian Pasta Co.	13	1 (1992)	$38,000,000 (1991)	$628,162,000 (2010)
Boulevard Brewing Co.	13	45 (1995)	$2,198,000 (1995)	$28,791,818 (2011)
Brungardt Honomichl & Co. (formerly BHC Rhodes)	13	6 (1997)	$3,850,000 (1997)	$20,695,730 (2017)
CRB	13	42 (2017)	$3,900,000 (1991)	$366,500,000 (2016)
EPIQ Systems	13	12 (2004)	$14,820,000 (2000)	$474,740,000 (2015)
Applebee's International	12	5 (1991)	$38,000,000 (1991)	$1,220,000,000 (2006)
Bob Hamilton Plumbing, Heating, Rooter & A/C	12	50 (2017)	$1,979,000 (2001)	$24,509,190 (2017)
City Wide Maintenance	12	34 (2006)	$19,433,000 (2005)	$140,643,470 (2016)
Gould Evans	12	19 (1990)	$1,260,000 (1989)	$37,073,953 (2016)
Euronet Worldwide	12	2 (2000)	$41,500,000 (2000)	$1,664,150,000 (2015)
NIC, Inc.	12	14 (2002)	$56,966,128 (2000)	$272,100,000 (2015)
Short Circuit Electronics	12	18 (2009)	$1,600,000 (2001)	$14,998,845 (2013)
Trozzolo Communications Group	12	40 (2006)	$2,036,000 (2001)	$20,824,000 (2016)
Affinity Group Management	11	12 (2014)	$8,160,000 (2007)	$38,537,363 (2017)
Alexander Open Systems	11	9 (1998)	$7,530,000 (1998)	$157,000,000 (2012)
Grafton, Inc.	11	10 (1992)	$1,306,000 (1992)	$10,300,000 (2013)
PB&J Restaurants	11	16 (1992)	$6,157,000 (1992)	$73,538,664 (2017)
Challenger Teamwear	10	3 (2007)	$2,848,625.06 (2006)	$13,171,081 (2015)
CyDex, Inc. (acquired by Ligand Pharmaceuticals)	10	10 (2003)	$1,360,878 (1999)	$12,745,000 (2008)
DeBruce Grain (acquired by Gavilon)	10	37 (2009)	$270,000,000 (1988)	$4,625,881,535 (2010)
Freightquote (acquired by C.H. Robinson)	10	1 (2003)	$46,200,000 (2003)	$580,000,000 (2013)
Garmin International	10	13 (2008)	$345,000,000 (2001)	$2,946,400,000 (2010)
Intouch Group	10	7 (2010)	$9,518,412 (2008)	$184,000,000 (2019)
The Mutual Fund Store (acquired by Financial Engines)	10	6 (2003)	$3,266,764 (2003)	$89,100,000 (2015)
Treat America Food Services/Company Kitchen	10	30 (2009, 2007)	$17,837,086 (2003)	$106,000,000 (2012)
Will & Grail (formerly Salva O'Renick)	10	30 (2010)	$5,238,000 (2000)	$4,324,000 (2015)
VSR Financial Services *	10	39 (2004)	$5,875,000 (1990)	$95,570,000 (2008)
Bank of Blue Valley	9	27 (1996)	$9,193,000 (1996)	$52,948,456 (2004)
Black & Veatch	9	54 (2008, 1992)	$1,400,000,000 (1997)	$3,600,000,000 (2004)
Central Packaging	9	16 (2003)	$1,235,275 (2003)	$6,187,992 (2013)
DataSource	9	7 (2001)	$3,910,000 (1994)	$52,700,000 (2012)
ECCO Select	9	8 (2001)	$2,768,398 (2001)	$31,370,000 (2016)
EPR Properties	9	2 (2001)	$55,300,000 (2001)	$313,100,000 (2011)
Hoefer Wysocki Architects	9	32 (2002)	$3,220,000 (2002)	$10,706,582 (2010)
IDEX, Inc. (now Capistol)	9	41 (1997)	$1,381,000 (1997)	$5,791,000 (2006)
Inergy LP (acquired by Crestwood Partners)	9	1 (2001)	$223,139,000 (2002)	$1,800,000,000 (2010)
Manning Construction	9	19 (2005)	$5,238,000 (1999)	$24,487,000 (2013)
Midway Ford Truck Center	9	30 (1995)	$273,057,000 (1995)	$772,504,414 (2019)
Nicholson Kovac *	9	36 (1998)	$11,839,000 (1998)	$14,072,564 (2005)
Platinum Realty	9	7 (2011)	$2,979,534 (2010)	$41,341,941 (2019)
Proforma Promotionally Yours (now Sourcepoint)	9	4 (2008)	$2,025,800 (2008)	$5,443,317 (2016)
Snake 'n Rooter of KC	9	4 (1996)	$1,100,000 (1996)	$2,383,842 (2004)
Two West, Inc.	9	13 (2001)	$1,000,000 (2001)	$9,824,723 (2016)
USA 800, Inc.	9	28 (1988)	$4,798,000 (1988)	$31,275,849 (2012)
Wrenn Insurance (part of Affinity Management Group)	9	1 (1998)	$4,073,000 (1987)	$2,273,000 (2005)
Astra Group *	8	7 (2003, 2004)	$2,819,546 (2003)	$44,851,985 (2010)
Bishop-McCann	8	29 (2008)	$7,600,000 (2002)	$51,198,192 (2012)
Checkdate Solutions	8	4 (1999)	$1,282,000 (1998)	$5,865,808 (2006)
Consolidated Lumber Co.	8	8 (1988)	$10,000,000 (1987)	$52,022,000 (1995)
Garney Construction	8	29 (2004)	$178,000,000 (2004)	$1,108,910,032 (2019)
GreenSoft Solutions (acquired by Layered Technologies)	8	10 (2007)	$1,650,000 (2002)	$12,677,678 (2010)
Hometown Hearing and Audiology *	8	21 (2011)	$2,246,100 (2005)	$9,385,000 (2012)
KRM (Kellan Restaurant Management)	8	48 (2003)	$16,194,975 (2002)	$82,426,959 (2015)
Propio Language Services	8	21 (2016)	$2,082,929 (2013)	$14,324,470 (2019)
Retirement Planning Group	8	20 (2008)	$1,139,700 (2008)	$4,240,000 (2015)
Spencer Reed Group	8	1 (1996)	$1,642,000 (1994)	$66,923,000 (2001)
TK Architects International	8	17 (1997)	$3,500,000 (1997)	$5,699,247 (2016)

* No Longer in Business

Getting Bigger?

Enter Your Organization in Ingram's 36th Annual Corporate Report 100

Submit at Ingrams.com

CORPORATE REPORT 100 — THE 36th YEAR — 2021

Applications Due by Friday, June 18, 2021

Continuing a Kansas City tradition, *Ingram's* will salute the region's fastest-growing companies in its 36th annual Corporate Report 100 competition, to be published in the July 2021 edition. The report will measure growth between fiscal 2017 and 2020. Public and private for-profit companies **HEADQUARTERED IN KC'S 22-COUNTY METRO AREA, WITH AT LEAST $200,000 IN SALES IN 2017 AND $1 MILLION IN SALES IN FISCAL 2020, ARE ELIGIBLE.**

INGRAM'S
CORPORATE REPORT 100
Kansas City Area's 100 Fastest-Growing Businesses

CORPORATE REPORT 100 NOMINATION FORM (PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY)

Company Name: ____________________
CEO's Name: ____________________
Address: ____________________ City: __________ State: _____ Zip: _______
Phone: __________ Fax: __________ E-mail: __________ Web site: __________

Communications/Marketing Manager: ____________________ e-mail: __________
Where is your company headquartered? (**Must** be "headquartered" in KC's 22-County Metro Area) ____________________

GROSS REVENUES
Consolidated from **all** operations/subsidiaries. Please **DO NOT** round dollars to nearest thousand. ***Show revenues to decimal***.
(must have had at least $200,000 in sales in fiscal 2017 and $1 million in sales in fiscal 2020):

Fiscal 2017: __________ Fiscal 2019: __________
Fiscal 2018: __________ Fiscal 2020: __________

BUSINESS SUMMARY
Full-time or full-time (equivalent) employees as of 12-31-2020: __________
Year business was founded: __________
Describe company's primary business: __________

INDICATE THE REASON FOR YOUR RECENT GROWTH (check one or two):
☐ Service ☐ New Offices/Location ☐ Other: ______
☐ New Products/Services ☐ Acquisitions ☐ Marketing

PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY YOUR COMPANY GREW FROM 2017 THROUGH 2020
(Please be specific. May submit on another page):

IS YOUR COMPANY'S PRIMARY ACTIVITY CLASSIFIED AS (check one):
☐ Retail trade ☐ Manufacturing ☐ Services
☐ Wholesale trade ☐ Construction ☐ Other:

IS YOUR BUSINESS (check one):
☐ Publicly held ☐ Privately owned ☐ Family owned

OTHER LOCATIONS: ____________________

SIGNATURE: __________ **TITLE:** __________
PRINT NAME: __________ **EMAIL:** __________

To be considered for CORPORATE REPORT 100, Return or Submit at Ingrams.com or email to Editorial@Ingrams.com by Friday, June 18, 2021
2049 Wyandotte, Kansas City, MO 64108 ■ Phone 816.842.9994 ■ Fax 816.474.1111

CR100 Criteria / Requirements

To qualify, your company must meet each of the following qualifications

- Be headquartered in KC's 22-county area.
- Be an independent company, (not a subsidiary or division of another company)
- Have started earning revenue by March 31, 2017.
- Had revenues of no less than $200,000 in 2017.
- Had revenues of no less than $1,000,000 in 2020.
- Report all revenues for any companies acquired during the period 2017-2020.
- Report all revenues on the accrual basis. Companies that regularly report financials on a cash basis **MUST SUBMIT CONVERTED, ACCRUAL-BASED REVENUE FIGURES.**

Revenues must be verified with following documentation, along with the name and contact number for your company's CPA:

■ **Corporate Tax Return**: Include the first page and the page that indicates that accrual accounting was used to prepare the return.
■ **Financial Statements**: Audited, reviewed or compiled preferred, including the accounting opinion letter and income statement from financial statements that have been audited, reviewed or compiled by an independent accounting firm.

There are a few limited exceptions to these requirements.

Q&A … With Mark Dohnalek

The CEO for one of the area's fastest-growing companies talks growth, acquisitions, corporate cultures, COVID-19, supply chain dynamics, conditions in Asia and what might lie ahead.

Q: A lot of the news about your company lately has been about acquisitions, but there's more going on here, isn't there?

A: A lot of people think our growth has been largely acquisition-oriented. But that just complemented the growth; most of our growth has been organic. But certainly the acquisitions have added to it—the growth isn't the result of rolling a bunch of companies into it.

Q: Can you tell us about the underlying strategy on those moves, and what you were looking in for in each company you brought on board?

A: What was planned right from the start was, I needed to grow this company organically and with targeted acquisitions. We're a contract services company, a design-services company and a manufacturing-services company. Often, companies like that are relatively concentrated with their customers. So in looking to broaden our customer base, I needed to look for targeted ones to speed that up. The targets were twofold initially: targeted tech that could expand our capability, though we weren't weak in that area, but knew it could be augmented. And a particular emphasis was to find good companies with good manufacturing and engineering capabilities.

Q: Where did you turn to get the ball rolling on identifying candidates? Does that start with, for example, investment bankers?

A: We did talk to some investment bankers, but also some of it was networking, working in this industry and just talking to people. And the more I talked with them, the more they realized we were one of those kinds of companies that might be looking. As time went on, the word got out, so working with investment bankers and brokers didn't seem to be needed.

Q: Did you have to walk away from any targeted companies, or were you able to land every one you went after? And either way, what were the attributes that those companies had, or lacked, that led to your decisions?

A: You have to read the ownership group, too. After assessing the company, in any acquisition strategy, you buy organizations, not people. It has to have organization, even the small ones. Yes, an organization is the people, but if it's a one-man band, those are not of interest—he might retire, and then where are you? I wanted senior management to stay on and run the business.

Q: Those purchases are coming at a time when a lot of Baby Boomers are looking to sell their companies and get into retirement. What's your take on buyer-seller dynamics right now—especially with any pressure those owners might have to capture the value of their enterprises before they're really hurt by he COVID-19 slowdown?

A: I'll tell you how I think this virus thing is going to shake out. I think it's going to accelerate the sales process in that demographic. If you think about it, if you're 69 or 70 years old, you've lived though some tough times in your mid-50s, your late 50s and now you have another life-changing event with this pandemic. This will probably shake a lot of people out. I think a lot of M&A people will be pretty busy post-COVID.

> "There's no question (COVID-19) has altered the concept of a totality of off-shore sourcing. That genie is not going back in the bottle."
>
> —MARK DOHNALEK
> OWNER/CEO, PIVOT INTERNATIONAL

Q: For those caught in that squeeze, they really have a tough choice between selling now or going back and trying to, in effect, rebuild a business from the ground up, right?

A: Yes. No one saw this coming, all the sudden it was forced on you. No business, it doesn't matter what kind, no business can survive with a 50-percent revenue loss. You can't survive long-term, anyway. I told my folks in early February, "I know it's going to be bad. You watch, it's coming." But we never laid anybody off through this, you just have to persevere. We're making money, not as much as last year, but better than some people. We've been able to keep our plants open."

Q: Is that because the types of manufacturing lend themselves to that kind of spacing with the floor plan or product, as opposed to meatpacking or vehicle production lines?

A: Right. We were able to space people out, stagger some shifts. Some of this is done with individual work stations anyway, and already have that separation. But we had to do some things to augment that.

Q: Back to acquisitions—what were the common threads among those candidate companies that indicated to you they'd be the right fit, strategically and culturally? What aspects were on your checklist to ensure the right fit?

A: From the engineering-development side of the acquisition, we're looking for technical expertise that we might not have. When we find that, then we ask, does that culture fit with what we have? We spend a great deal of time trying to find out if that culture does match. At some places doing acquisitions, they will consolidate the new addition into their operation and move on. But then there's a bolt-on strategy, and I'm a big believer in that. You use your corporate channel for financing and treasury functions, but keep those businesses co-existing in their entrepreneurial culture. The people that made those companies successful, made them interesting enough to be acquired, why wreck that? I've seen so many acquisitions in the corporate world, and a lot of mistakes made like that. They lose the people, they lose that identity, then wonder two or three years later, where did all the sales go? They lost contact with their customers. We help with expertise we can offer, but we have them drive that business rather than consolidate management and try to drive things from corporate.

Q: Speaking of culture, what have these experiences taught you about incorporating new service lines into the existing culture, retaining the best parts of what you'd previously created, and adopting new aspects from those joining forces with you?

A: We have contacts with all of them regularly, and we look at best practices in what we bring to the table. We have more than 100 design engineers now, so we have scale with engineering development, scale with our global supply chain. Those are two factors that none of these companies would have had on their own because of their small scale. Most of these don't have global supply chain. We have offices in Taiwan, in China, and in America. That helps us buy better and larger quantities. By engaging the business on that front, you try to match the culture. If you don't see that when reviewing them, you don't move forward, you probably just move on.

Q: With companies acquired in several nations, has there been a challenge in producing cohesive policy, such as a unified benefit strategy, or coordinating operations?

A: With benefits, within one-year time period, we try to roll all of them into our benefits. But we don't force international acquisitions into the U.S. model, and we try to make everything pretty close to equal. What we used to do in the early days was, if their health care was serving their needs, leave them on that for a period. Now we don't; in a very short period, we roll them into ours. Usually they get an expanded benefit package and there's a cost savings at that point. Employees have lower cost and broader benefits. Most acquisitions are not large scale companies; maybe some day we'll buy a big one, but for now, these are usually win-win situations for smaller companies.

Q: How many countries does your footprint hit now?

A: We're in the Philippines, China, Taiwan, the U.K. and the U.S. And we have a sales person in Hong Kong, so 12 locations worldwide.

Q: Hong Kong, China, Taiwan … interesting times, eh?

A: No doubt about that! There are lot of challenges, trade and the dustup with the U.S. and China among them. That's been going on for a year and a half. And if we didn't have a strong global supply chain in place, we would have been in trouble. Some companies had no options. We were like big corporation in a way, because we had a China and Taiwan presence, but our manufacturing was in the Philippines, so we avoided all that dust-up. But I'll tell you: Everybody in the electronics world, one way or the other, they are sourcing their components from China. Even if they buy them over here, it's just U.S. distribution and they are coming from over there.

Q: There was a lot of talk in March and April about supply chain awareness in the U.S. and over-reliance on China. Do you see a reawakening coming?

A: The consumer ultimately drives things, so you have to look at the entire picture. That's an issue that is never going to go away. But there's no question this has altered the concept of a totality of off-shore sourcing. That genie is not going back in the bottle. Critical supply chain, medical supply chain—it doesn't mean that's coming back to America; some will go to Mexico, some will go to Europe, some will go to Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam. But for certain, it's going to be out of China. Health care, the costs are going to go up because goods are going to be made in Joplin, Mo., vs. Shanghai, and as a society, for a while we're going to have to tolerate that.

Now, More Than Ever, Think Talent Retention

Investing in employees now can pay big dividends with loyalty and productivity.

The pandemic has definitely changed the workplace and most likely for years to come. Every company is doing its best to sail these uncharted waters. But for fast-growth companies, where hiring and often takes place at accelerated rates and where turnover can inflict disproportionate pain, the current situation is particularly acute.

Not only has the current environment changed office aesthetics, it has changed people. Layoffs and furloughs have caused stress and anxiety. Uncertainty about continuing to provide for your family or achieve work goals is certainly on most minds.

Now is the time to invest in your employees to ensure retention. Insuring retention not only means investing in your employees but also listening more closely than ever to their needs as we navigate the new social environment.

A report from LinkedIn's Global Talent Trends 2020 showed employees stay 41 percent longer at companies that hire from within. Such a choice not only helps the bottom line for a company, it also improves employee loyalty. Turnover from a lack of internal career opportunities costs close to $49 million each year, as estimated in the report. Since 2015, internal hiring has only increased 10 percent!

The trends report showed that the most important aspects of retaining talent were:

1. Employee experience
2. People analytics
3. Internal recruiting
4. Multigenerational work force

Growing Challenge

With more than one-third of employers (39 percent) concerned about losing their top talent, employee retention remains critical. Employers who hope to retain valuable staff continue to look for new ways to keep top performers in-house. The LinkedIn report states that in order to retain talent, companies will need to do a better job understanding employee needs and wants from an empathetic standpoint.

> There are good reasons to focus on retention: If employees don't find what they are looking for at your organization, they may find it with another employer.

Investing in Employees

Empathy is the ability to understand or identify with another person's situation or feelings. In this vein, companies are choosing to shift their focus from shareholder value to an investment in their employees. This includes digging into human behavior, recruiting from within and focusing on the various needs of a multigenerational work force.

Finding an individualistic approach could be more important than ever considering the wide range of generations in the workplace. Today, employees include representation from the Boomers, GenX, Millennials, and the beginning of Gen Z. Each generation possesses its own wants and desires for a workplace where one would want to stay. In response, companies are updating policies to better appeal to a multi-generational work force and placing an increased focus on improving the employee experience to increase retention (77 percent).

Boosting Retention

- Open the lines of communication and to be receptive to different concerns and requests for flexibility due to the changes in social and work environments.
- Foster a positive employment culture—employees spend a lot of time at work, so make it an environment designed to emphasize communication and collaboration across departments.
- Make communication a priority—no one wants to be the last to know. When in doubt, over-communicate to employees and make check-ins a priority so you know what is on employee's minds.
- Generate growth opportunities—explore how improvements in compensation and benefits, training, flexible work schedules and a purposeful mission can make people more willing to happily remain in a workplace.
- Reduce micromanagement—the core of employee retention is having good managers. Leadership must demonstrate appreciation and not be afraid to hire smart employees who desire to challenge the status quo.

If employees do not find what they are looking for at your organization, there's always another employer who might better fit the bill. ■

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Heroes Welcome
Here's to all the soldiers, sailors and airmen returning from overseas deployments, along with their fellow servicemen and women standing watch around the globe and here at home. The team at Ingram's thanks you for your dedicated service, and for the sacrifices you've made on the nation's behalf. We hope you'll call the KC area home and become engaged in our community.
As these dedicated servants re-enter the civilian work force, we encourage employers throughout Missouri and Kansas to consider the unique skills they can bring to your organization. Hire a military veteran—it's the right thing to do.
INGRAM'S
The Kansas City area is the proud home of Whiteman Airforce Base and Fort Leavenworth. Also in Kansas is Fort Riley (Junction City) and McConnell Airforce Base (Wichita). Fort Leonard Wood is located in St. Robert, MO.

Documentation

The Paper Chase

Business owners looking to sell in the near term need to understand the challenge they'll face putting their company's affairs in order.

by Dennis Boone

For business owners planning to sell their companies in the near term, a storm may be brewing.

In broad terms, say professional-services executives, buyers will be looking for historical and current documentation in categories that can be broken down into finances, taxes, operations, compliance, personnel and intellectual property. There are others, but those will generally be the prime needs.

Too often, small business executives who have been focused on growing their companies and the day-to-day needs aren't current across the board. Anyone who plans on selling in the next couple of years must understand what's coming down the road and start preparing now.

"There needs to be a certain level of organization," said John Shoemaker, a senior manager for CBIZ in Kansas City. "All those are going to apply to almost every transaction. When that happens, where we see things go off the rails, is when you have an unprepared seller who gets all these due-diligence requests from a buyer, and they are immediately overwhelmed. They can't devote the appropriate attention to any one of those needs."

Too often, business owners offering unsatisfactory responses to buyer questions will only generate more questions—and too many questions soon turn into red flags. If appropriate thought hasn't gone into documentation prep, it has a snowball effect.

"Put yourself in the buyer's shoes," Shoemaker says. "Getting information that is often prepared late, is incomplete—that doesn't inspire a lot of confidence. It often turns into a buyer digging in even more." With that compounding effect, he says, "people forget why they got into bed with each other to begin with. That's where it really goes sideways."

It's important, as well, to understand that the type of business being sold will shape a buyer's documentation needs. Businesses of different sizes, or coming from different sectors, are going to get different due-diligence requests.

"If you're a manufacturer, people will be all over your environmental records; if you're in software, they'll want to know about your tech staff and IP protections," said Ed Wilson, a partner at Husch Blackwell. "What's universal to all, typically, is how you own your assets and IP, do you have good title and can you show it."

Another aspect, he said, typically with employees, covers non-disclosure agreements: "Are people restricted in some respect from leaving and trying to steal all your employees, or take your secret sauce and going to a competitor?"

Missteps can entail the most fundamental of questions, Wilson said. "You'd be shocked, especially among smaller companies, how often people can't even document who owns their companies. It might be a cousin who claims you promised him 2 percent a year ago, but you didn't document it," he said. "Or maybe you told an employee you'd give them 5 percent if they stayed on board."

Too often, Wilson said, inaccuracies or incompleteness require additional time to address—time that could be spent on ensuring the business is operating at its best. Without that, an owner is putting the company's valuation in peril.

Lisa Epps, a lawyer specializing in tax issues for Creative Planning, noted that many buyers—especially larger ones—are looking for financial statements from at least three, and possibly five years, all compiled using Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Believe it or not, that can be an issue.

"Every small business owner knows what GAAP means, but a lot of them still don't do things according to GAAP," Epps said. Use of those principles is intended to bring some discipline to the process; in most cases, Epps said, "the buyer wants things to be stated as broadly as possible; the seller wants them as specific as possible."

Patrick Respeliers, a partner at Stinson LLP, said some of the issues on financials stem from smaller companies' use of less sophisticated accounting processes. Reliance on off-the-shelf bookkeeping software usually won't be enough when it's time for due-diligence requests.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED IN THE SMALL BUSINESS SALE PROCESS

STRUCTURE/ TERMS

- Non-Disclosure Confidentiality Agreement
- Business Formation Documents
- Offer-to-Purchase Agreement

FINANCE & TAX

- Personal Financial Statement Form for Buyer to Complete
- Corporate or Schedule C Tax Returns for Past 2-3 Years
- Financial Statements for the Current and Past 2-3 Years
- Statement of Seller's Discretionary Earnings or Cash Flow
- Financial Ratios and Trends
- Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivables Aging Reports
- Outstanding Loan Agreements
- Asset Depreciation Schedule from Tax Return
- Note for Seller Financing

OPERATIONS

- Equipment Leases and Maintenance Agreements
- Inventory List with Value Detail
- Product/Service Descriptions and Price Lists
- Supplier and Distributor Contracts
- Business Plan
- Client List and Major Client Contracts
- Marketing Plan and Samples of Marketing Materials
- List of Opportunities for Improvement with Revenue and Profit Projections for Each
- Business Procedures Manual
- Photos of Business
- Documents Unique to Your Business
- Product/Service Descriptions and Price Lists
- Supplier and Distributor Contracts
- Business Plan
- Client List and Major Client Contracts
- Marketing Plan and Samples of Marketing Materials

COMPLIANCE/ LEGAL/IP

- Building or Office Leases
- Business Licenses, Certifications and Registrations
- Professional Certificates
- Insurance Policies
- Copies Proving Ownership of Patents, Trademarks and Other Intellectual Property
- List of Fixtures, Furnishings and Equipment with Value Detail
- Description of Liens

PERSONNEL

- Staffing List with Hire Dates and Salaries
- Employment Agreements
- Employment Policy Manual
- Organization Chart

"A lot of smaller firms don't have audited statements," he said. "Depending on the relative size between a public company that may be buying, there may be a requirement to file audited financials with SEC. In those situations, a buyer is going to insist on audited financial statements."

All of this, these professionals say, can add up to unanticipated costs for sellers. They will need to plan not just for the time to gather documents, but for the expense of generating them.

With taxes in particular, says Sean Haggerty of CBIZ, much is riding on the structure of sale. By purchasing a company's assets, a buyer is absorbing elements of a company into its own. That's different, in tax terms, from buying the equity. In the latter case, he said, "you inherit what the seller was doing historically" and are responsible for tax consequences of prior years. Hence the heightened diligence.

Given that, Haggerty said, there are no valid reasons for not having tax documentation buttoned up if you plan to sell your company. "I'd be very skeptical of companies if they aren't meeting their filing requirements," he said.

In sum, Haggerty said, if your documentation isn't buttoned down, "now you're talking a lot more time and expense for sellers. People are surprised, once you get lawyers, accountants, investment bankers and others at the table with billable hours, and their eyes get wide open looking at the costs to do this. The more sophisticated understand that it's just the cost of doing business. Some will balk at the cost and try to do it all on their own. The problem is that a cost-efficient route may save expenses, but you also get what you pay for, so you may end up reducing the value of the business by more than the expenses you've saved." I

INGRAM'S YEAR IN TRANSITIONS

Topics we'll explore throughout 2020:
- **AUGUST** Retirement Lifestyles
- **SEPTEMBER** Structuring the Deal
- **OCTOBER** Timing a Sale
- **NOVEMBER** Exiting the Business
- **DECEMBER** Philanthropic Strategies

Investing in a Black-Swan Environment

COVID-19 threw a wrench into a strong economy, creating both challenges and opportunities for investors trying to navigate new terrain.

These are certainly challenging times in which we live. Over the many decades we have been serving clients, it feels like we have seen everything. There have been wars, oil price spikes and crashes, mild recessions, deep recessions, computer driven bear markets, and tech and real estate bubbles.

Given the significant amount of uncertainty that has kept the market pundits worried over the course of the past decade like Brexit, the Trump presidency, health-care reform, North Korea, Russiagate and trade wars, it took a virus to bring the global economy to its knees and end the historic bull market.

Such is the case with a "black swan" event, where an unpredicted crisis comes out of nowhere. The swiftness of economic devastation, not to minimize lives lost to COVID-19, has been extensive and brutal.

In the U.S., more than 38 million workers have lost their jobs because of the forced lockdown of businesses and stay at home edicts implemented by cities and states. The unemployment rate spiked from under 4 percent to near 15 percent in a matter of weeks. In response, the avalanche of grants, loans, and government stimulus provided to businesses and individuals, as well as massive bond purchases by the Federal Reserve, has been unprecedented. The world's central banks are committing stimulus funds that far exceeds, by multiple times, what was done during the financial crisis of 2008/2009.

The tug of war between investors that foresee a V-shaped recovery and those that expect a slow and drawn out recession produces the extreme volatility exhibited in the stock market. As cities and states began reopening, the market rallied. However, a myriad of potential negatives exist including a sustained spike in coronavirus cases and hospitalizations, higher federal and state taxes needed to pay for debt accumulation, a fading of optimism for a coronavirus vaccine, uncertainty surrounding the presidential election, and a potential "new normal" of lackluster spending by consumers.

While the health-care system is important to society, consumer spending is a critical engine of the global economy, providing more than two-thirds of U.S. Gross Domestic Product. Small businesses account for approximately half of U.S. employment, and it will take time to fully recover.

Significant industry changes are occurring and some businesses might be permanently displaced. Even with massive help from government, it is uncertain if many small businesses will survive. While ecommerce has been taking market share from brick-and-mortar retail for years, the closing of "nonessential" businesses, which are primarily consumer discretionary retail stores, solidifies Amazon as the retailer of choice.

Video calls have become the new normal. Bandwidth demand will continue to increase, as a growing acceptance of remote working may become a reality. More regulations to keep employees safe in the workplace will be enacted at a time when companies seek to lower infrastructure costs. The list of changes goes on.

We also anticipate that sporting events will come back soon as most sports junkies, desperate for fresh content, like seeing history being made, rather than reliving it in reruns.

Though there are so many uncertainties flowing through the market, these are truly exciting times to be an investor.

Though there are so many uncertainties flowing through the market, these are truly exciting times to be an investor.

At Kornitzer Capital Management, our core strategies are based upon identifying long-term trends that provide the "hunting areas" for companies that are the beneficiaries of those trends. We do this so our investments have a potential long-term tailwind pushing their business strategy regardless of the current economic conditions.

For us, long-term trends are decades or more. The changes adopted over the past several months, since "social distancing" has become the norm throughout the world, are hopefully a once-in-a-lifetime event. New "normal" social behaviors, that otherwise would have taken a generation to adopt are being widely accepted overnight.

It will take more time to determine if this is indeed the "new normal" or not, but regardless, when one's life or loved one's life is in peril, inconveniences are more readily adopted. As we learn more about the COVID-19 virus and how to treat, prevent, and attack it, society will return to normal. Black swan events come and go, but human ingenuity prevails long-term. ∎

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Cash-Strapped? It Might Be Convertible Weather

Convertible notes offer an alternative when assessing business financing options.

As a business attorney, I am often asked by our clients, "how should I fund my business." My first response is always "with money." I say that tongue and cheek, knowing what my client is really asking is, "where do I find money to grow my company and what do I have to give up to get it." And to that question, there are many answers, but one solution that has been growing in popularity for a few years now is "with convertible debt."

First, let's exhaust a few potential funding sources before we unpack the nuances of the convertible note, which, by the way, is popular year-round and in any climate. The easiest way to fund a start-up or pre-revenue venture is with your own money. The next best way is to convince your rich relative that they should give you some of their money simply because they love you and in which case it becomes your money, with some potential negative tax consequences. Next option I always suggest —your bank. SBA, LoC, HELOC, etc.

I speak to students of all ages at UMKC, the Kauffman Center, and the KU School of Business about entrepreneurship and the law. There is a common misperception amongst these students that all you need is a good idea to take to some rich investors somewhere and they will write you a check for millions of dollars. OK, maybe I'm exaggerating, and perhaps I'm a little jaded when it comes to any scenario close to that, but that sequence of events couldn't be further from reality.

What is a realistic approach, after exhausting the options above is offering a potential investor the best of both worlds—debt or equity? That's what a convertible note does. It gives the investor the ability to lend you money, with security and payment terms, while giving them upside. That upside is the mechanism to trade in the debt they have provided you for direct ownership in your company. They can do it under the terms of the note when they see that they chose to take a chance on a winner—a company that utilized the money they borrowed to become profitable. What's better than that? Name a better way to fund your pre-revenue unicorn; I'll wait…

> Convertible notes give investors the ability to lend money, with security and payment terms, while giving them a chance to share in the company's ownership.

Inside the Framework

OK. Let's drill down on the framework of a convertible note. A convertible note is a security under federal and state securities laws. Therefore, in order to take advantage of Rule 506(d) of the Securities Act of 1933, the company should make sure their investors our accredited investors and that anyone the company is paying to help raise capital is a registered broker dealer. As a security, a convertible note is first and foremost a loan. A loan, which traditionally has principal, interest, a term, repayments and amortization. However, a convertible note is primarily short-term debt (usually a year or 2) in which the investor receives an option to convert this debt into ownership in the borrower entity. The conversion can work both ways. This means that the investor usually has the option to convert it prior to the maturity and forgo the repayment of the debt or it automatically converts to equity if the debt has not been paid by the maturity date.

One important aspect here is that the company and the investor can determine the valuation of the company at a later date when the company goes out to raise additional funding. However, investors must be careful not to allow the repayment terms or the conversion at maturity to get pushed out too far. This can allow the company to increase the valuation in an effort to diminish the value of the equity being converted. This can feel like the future equity is being diluted, because in theory, it is. Conversely, this may push an investor to convert the debt to equity sooner if the company shows profitability at an early stage. Finally, convertible noteholders generally enjoy a discount rate on future raises for taking a risk at such an early stage.

Convertible debt continues to gain popularity and that means that it continues to evolve. There are many nuances to making a convertible note do what it needs to do in order to satisfy both the investor and the early-stage company. At the end of the day, it is a great option to fund your company and often an even better option to invest in one.

John Kennyhertz is a partner at the Kennyhertz Perry law firm in Kansas City.
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E | john@kennyhertzperry.com


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Golf Course Estate Home

Your Home at the Lake

315 Country Ridge Drive

This large home includes 4 bedrooms, 10 beds, 3.5 baths, kitchen, dining . . . and much more!

There's a lot of dough rolled into this beautiful vacation rental lake home at 315 Country Ridge Dr., in more ways than one. The home was built in 1999 by the Wolferman family from Kansas City, which is famous today for its gourmet English muffins. You may reserve this beautiful home as a rental.

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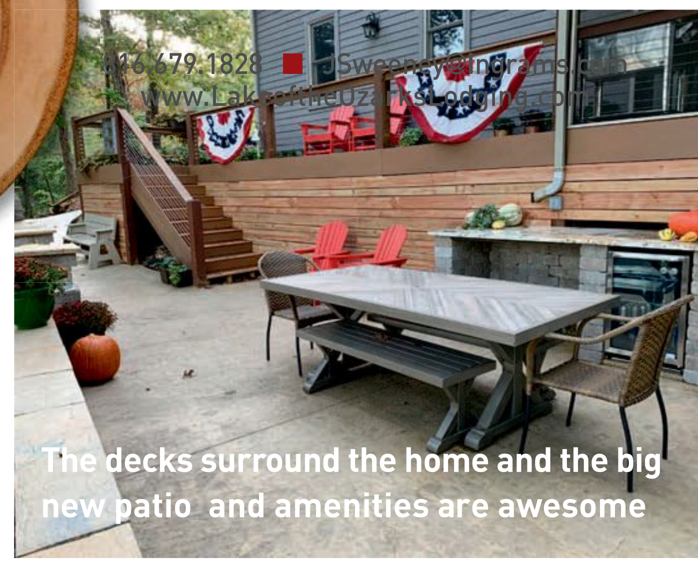
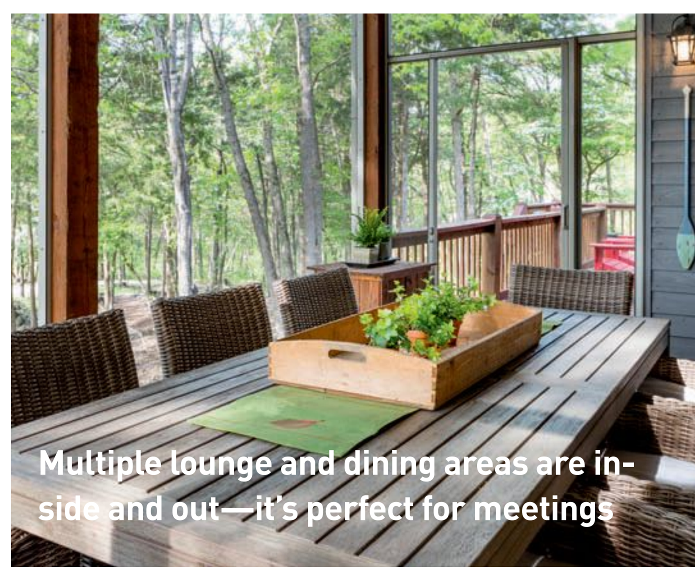
Samsung 65" Curved 4K Ultra High Definition Smart TV



The decks surround the home and the big new patio and amenities are awesome



Multiple lounge and dining areas are inside and out—it's perfect for meetings

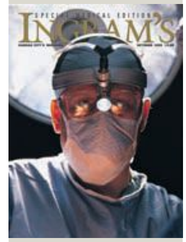
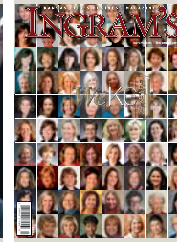
Bedroom 4: Two queen beds as well as two twin XLs (perfect for families)

Bedrooms with 40" Smart TVs

Master/Bedroom 1: Two Twin XL beds converts to one California King

INGRAM'S 46TH YEAR — 5 MONTH EDITORIAL and PLANNING CALENDAR

INGRAM'S

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
EDITORIAL FEATURES AND OVERVIEW	Transitions & M&A Retirement Planning All About Boomers	Ingram's 250 The Most Powerful Business Leaders in the KC Region	Ingram's Special Medical Edition Agribusiness	Engage Kansas City: Preparing for the Future Parting Thoughts	Ingram's Annual Philanthropy Edition Tributes
INGRAM'S AWARDS Competition and Recognition Programs	Best of Business Kansas City Awards	The Most Powerful Business Executives in the Region	Top Doctors 20 in Their Twenties	WeKC–Women Execs Rainmakers	Corporate Champions Philanthropist of the Year
INGRAM'S MONTHLY EDITIONS **Editorial Columns** ■ Sales Moves: Jeffrey Gitomer ■ Between the Lines: Jack Cashill ■ Made in KC ■ The Black Book (Profile) **Guest Columns** ■ Wealth Management ■ Small Business Adviser ■ Technology ■ Of Counsel ■ Sales & Marketing ■ Financial Adviser					
INDUSTRY OUTLOOK	Wealth Management Industry Outlook	Ingram's 250 General Assembly and Special Report	Agribusiness Industry Outlook	Commercial Real Estate Industry Outlook	Philanthropy Industry Outlook (Giving Back)
QUARTERLY REPORTS	Healthcare and Insurance Q3 Quarterly Report	Banking and Financial Services Q3 Quarterly Report	Education and the Workforce Q4 Quarterly Report	Construction and Development Q4 Quarterly Report	Healthcare and Insurance Q4 Quarterly Report
NEW **TRANSITIONS SPECIAL SECTION** (SPECIAL AD RATES) (Sponsorship, advertising and profile opportunities—available and encouraged)	**Transitions** ■ **Retirement Lifestyles** Making the most of the next stage in your life	**Transitions** ■ **Structuring the Deal** Setting the terms for a successful sale	**Transitions** ■ **Timing a Sale** Guidance on knowing when to pull the trigger on a deal	**Transitions** ■ **Exiting the Business** Understanding your role after the sale	**Transitions** ■ **Philanthropic Strategies** Aligning with causes; setting personal goals
INGRAM'S MONTHLY EXPERT Q&A **INSIGHTS:** SPONSORED CONTENT	Expert Q&A: ESOP Insights: Sponsored Content	Expert Q&A: Venture Capital Insights: Sponsored Content	Expert Q&A: Health & Benefits Insights: Sponsored Content	Expert Q&A: Corporate Responsibility Insights: Sponsored Content	Expert Q&A: Planned Giving Insights: Sponsored Content
INGRAM'S MONTHLY LEADS & LISTS (includes the Greater Kansas City area and often times statewide MO and KS)	■ Top Area Hospitals and Medical Centers (Ranked by Admissions) ■ Top Area Health Care Insurance Providers ■ Utility Companies (MO & KS) ■ Military Installations (MO & KS) ■ Veteran and Military Support Agencies	■ Top Area Wealth Management Firms ■ Top Area Banks (Ranked by Assets) ■ Top Area Credit Unions ■ Top Area Mortgage Companies ■ Top Area Venture Capital Firms	■ Top Area Hospitals and Medical Centers (Ranked by Revenue) ■ Top Area Private High Schools ■ Top Area Public School Districts ■ Top Area Ad Agencies, Marketing Firms ■ Labor Unions	■ General Contractors ■ Engineering Firms (Licensed Engineers) ■ Top Area Commercial Realtors (Ranked by Space Managed) ■ Top Area Women-Owned Businesses ■ Top Area Minority-Owned Businesses	■ Foundations and Charitable Trusts ■ Non-Profit Organizations ■ Elected Officials (Fed, State, County) ■ Top SBA Lenders ■ Top Area Travel Agencies

COPING WITH COVID-19 (EACH ISSUE) AND WEEKDAYS ON INGRAM'S eNEWS AND EXECUTIVE INSIGHTS
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CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS — NEW — EACH MONTH, WE WILL SHOWCASE ONE OF THE AREA'S MOST IMPORTANT CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE — INGRAM'S INCLUDES PRINT AND ONLINE ANNOUNCEMENTS "ONES TO WATCH & PEOPLE ON THE MOVE"

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New vehicles to convey your marketing message, along with time-tested winners like Ingram's Profile pages. Your chance to connect directly with our audience of affluent and influential readers. Insights: Sponsored Content is available in Ingram's print and online digital products.

NEW

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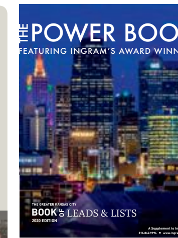
- Content you can tailor to most effectively reach your target audience.
- Extend the reach of your marketing dollar with content that readers will both use and *share.*
- Profiles that don't just connect with potential customers, they drive customer response.

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Special Edition
AD/MATERIALS DEADLINE	Friday, August 7	Friday, August 28	Friday, September 27	Wed., October 28	Monday, November 30	Wed., October 28
DISTRIBUTION DATE	Tuesday, August 11	Tuesday, September 1	Tuesday, October 1	Friday, October 30	Wed., December 2	Friday, October 30

SPECIAL EDITION (November 2020)



THE POWER BOOK

I Influential
Ingram's 250
Women Executives - KC
40 Under Forty
Best Companies to Work For
Corporate Report 100
Best of Business Kansas City

II Community
Ingram's 2020 Community Calendar
Non-Profit Organizations
Foundations and Charitable Trusts
Airlines Serving KCI
Airports
Elected Officials (City)
Elected Officials (County, State, Federal)
Military Installations
Veteran Support Organizations

III Business Services
Accounting, Consulting Firms
Law Firms
Economic Development Agencies
Chambers of Commerce
Ad Agencies and Marketing Firm
Digital Marketing Firms
Largest Employers
Labor Unions
Private Companies
Public Companies
Public Sector Employers
Staffing Agencies
Minority-Owned Businesses
Women-Owned Businesses
Hotels
Convention & Meeting Space
Private and Public Golf Clubs
Travel Agencies
Small Business Development Centers

IV Financial Services
Banks (ranked by Branches)
Banks (Ranked by Assets)
SBA Lenders
Mortgage Companies
Credit Unions
Wealth Management Firms
Independent Insurance Agencies
Venture Capital Firms

V Education and Healthcare
Private Colleges and Universities (Undergrad)
Private Colleges and Universities (Graduate)
Public Colleges and Universities (Undergrad)
Public Colleges and Universities (Graduate)
MBA Programs
Community Colleges
Technical Schools & Colleges
Public School Districts
Private High Schools
Nursing Programs
Hospitals & Medical Centers
Health Insurers
Home Health Care Agencies
Assisted Living Communities
Retirement Communities

VI Construction and Real Estate
General Contractors
Architecture Firms
Engineering Firms
Commercial Realtors (Sales)
Commercial Realtors (Space)
Residential Realtors
Res. Real Estate Teams
Home Builders
Utility Companies
Labor Unions

Polybags with Ingram's November Edition

Your Vacation Home on the 17th Green

Lodging Rates

Lodging Rates: April 2020 through March 2022

Sleeps up to 10 (10 beds in 4 bedrooms) Beds in three bedrooms (King or 2 Twin XLs). 2 Queens and 2 twins in large bedroom.	**In-Season**	**Off-Season** (Nov.-March)
Friday and Saturday (per night) Sunday - Thursday (per night)	$677 $597	$464 $432
7 Nights (One Week Special) (average per night)	$3,850 ($550)	$2,191 ($313)
5 Night Special (Sunday to Friday) (average per night)	$2,191 ($438)	$1,795 ($359)

In-Season: April 1 through October 31; Off-Season: November 1 through March 31.
Check in: 1:00 pm / Check out: 11:00 am; A minimum of two night stay required.
Memorial Day, 4th of July and Labor Day holidays require a 3 night stay: $878 per night.
Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's holidays: $798 per night.
One time cleaning fee: $150 for the home.

Prices subject to change

Cottage 21 & Cottage 22 on the 16th Hole

Lodging Rates: April 2020 through March 2022

Sleeps Four Adults Per Cottage Two bedrooms in each cottage (King or Twin XL beds)	**In-Season** (April-Oct.)	**Off-Season** (Nov.-March)
Friday and Saturday (per night) Sunday - Thursday (per night)	$341 $297	$232 $216
7 Nights (One Week Special) (average per night)	$1,925 ($275)	$1,095 ($156)
5 Night Special (Sunday to Friday) (average per night)	$1,095 ($219)	$895 ($179)

In-Season: April 1 through October 31; Off-Season: November 1 through March 31.
Check in: 1:00 pm / Check out: 11:00 am; A minimum of two night stay required.
Memorial Day, 4th of July and Labor Day holidays require 3 night stay: $439 per night.
Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's holidays: $399 per night.
One time cleaning fee: $70 per cottage/$140 total for both cottages.

www.LakeoftheOzarksLodging.com
www.OldKinderhookCottages.com

The Marina at Old Kinderhook is on the 12 mile marker of the Big Niangua. Access to the Lake of the Ozarks is a short 2 minute drive from Your Home at the Lake.

Reserve **Your Home at the Lake**
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Reserve Your Stay at
The Premier Golf Vacation Rentals
at Old Kinderhook
Cottages 21 and 22 on the 16th
Par 3 Hole of Old Kinderhook
Perfect for Retreats, Meetings and Reunions
18 Beds/8 Bedrooms in Three Golf Course Homes
Your Home at the Lake
LakeoftheOzarksLodging.com
LakeoftheOzarksLodging.com
Vacation Homes on the Golf Course at Old Kinderhook
315 Country Ridge
Vacation Home on the 17th
Green of Old Kinderhook
Lake of the Ozarks Lodges
(fractional ownership)
315 Country Ridge
4 BR/10 Bed Vacation Rental
Cottages 21 & 22
2020-2022 Rates

Your Vacation Home and Meeting Place on the 17th Green of Old Kinderhook

Available for Groups of up to 10 Guests

- Golf Groups
- Corporate Retreats
- Family and School Reunions
- Family Vacations
- Select Wedding Parties
- Couples and Great Friends

Your Home at the Lake

315 Country Ridge Drive

This large home includes 4 bedrooms, 10 beds, 3.5 baths, kitchen, dining . . . and much more!

There's a lot of dough rolled into this beautiful vacation rental lake home at 315 Country Ridge Dr., in more ways than one. The home was built in 1999 by the Wolferman family from Kansas City, which is famous today for its gourmet English muffins. You may reserve this beautiful home as a rental.

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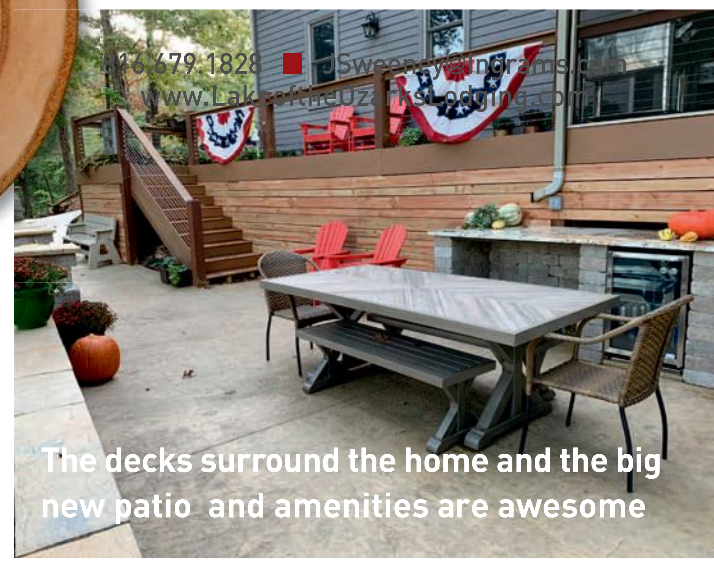
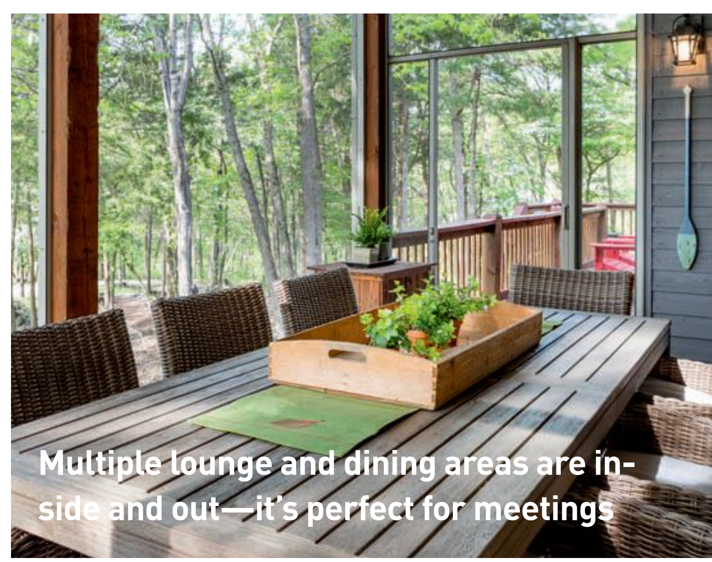
Samsung 65" Curved 4K Ultra High Definition Smart TV



The decks surround the home and the big new patio and amenities are awesome



Multiple lounge and dining areas are inside and out—it's perfect for meetings

Bedroom 4: Two queen beds as well as two twin XLs (perfect for families)

Bedrooms with 40" Smart TVs

Master/Bedroom 1: Two Twin XL beds converts to one California King

Bedroom 3: Two Twin XL beds convert to one California King

Master Bedroom with 40” Smart TV

Your Vacation Home on the 17th Green of Old Kinderhook

Bedroom 1: Two Twin XL beds convert to a California King

Bedroom 2: Two Twin XL beds convert to one California King →

Cottage 21 on the 16th Hole at Old Kinderhook

About Cottage 21 (1,300 square foot unit includes two bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen, dining, living room)

- Inspired by world-class golf resorts like Pebble Beach, Cottage 21 offers a casual lodging experience in a great environment.
- Additions include a beautiful timber frame living room and patio overlooking the pond, 16th green and Old Kinderhook Valley.
- Beautiful hickory cabinets and Portofino granite countertops in the kitchen and master bath. New slate tile in common areas.
- Large new Jacuzzi whirlpool in the master bath as well as six person Master Spa hot tub located on the Bomanite patio.
- Washing machine and dryer located in the master bath. Large new LG and Maytag stainless steel appliances.

Cottage 22

Available for up to 4 Guests per Cottage or Groups of 8 if you reserve both attached Cottages 21 & 22

- Golf Groups
- Corporate Retreats
- Family and School Reunions
- Family Vacations
- Select Wedding Parties
- Couples and Great Friends

About Cottage 22 (1,300 square foot unit includes two bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen, dining, living room)

- **Inspired by world-class resorts like Beaver Creek, Cottage 22 offers a casual lodging experience in a great environment.**
- **Additions include a beautiful master bedroom and patio overlooking the pond, 16th green and Old Kinderhook Valley.**
- **Beautiful maple cabinets and Uba Tuba granite counters in the kitchen and master bath. New slate tile in common areas.**
- **Large new Jacuzzi whirlpool in the master bath as well as six person Master Spa hot tub located on the patio.**
- **Washing machine and dryer located in a hallway. Large new LG and Maytag stainless steel appliances ... and much more!**