



PRESS RELEASE

May 2, 2005
For immediate release

For more information, contact:
Lora Cuykendall, Communications Director
503.552.6752 / 503.888.8113
lcuykendall@portlandalliance.com

Portland Business Alliance announces winners of Top Ten Growth Awards

Freightliner, Oregon Aero and Witham & Dickey take top spots

PORTLAND – The Freightliner Group, Oregon Aero and Witham & Dickey have been named as the region’s fastest growing businesses in their size categories in the Portland Business Alliance’s annual Top Ten Growth Awards.

“We created the Top Ten Growth Awards 20 years ago as a way to spotlight companies that are making major contributions to the economic growth of the region,” said Sandra McDonough, Portland Business Alliance president and CEO. “This year’s winners demonstrate that businesses of every size and in a broad range of industries are growing and prospering in Portland and the region.”

Other Top Ten winners include Edelman, Convergence Networks, The Fruit Company, Oregon Financial Services Group, Buena Vista Custom Homes, Umpqua Bank and Market Contractors.

Winners will be honored at the Alliance’s Annual Meeting, one of the largest gatherings of business and civic leaders in the state. The May 18 event will be from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at the Oregon Convention Center. Top Ten Growth Award winners also are profiled in the May edition of *Oregon Business* magazine.

Awards are given in three categories: for small, medium and large businesses. Winners are determined by the number of full-time-equivalent employees added in 2004, the percent increase of gross revenue/sales over the previous year, and the length of time in business. (Firms have to be in business two years before they are eligible.) The Alliance received more entries this year than ever before.

MORE

**Portland Business Alliance
Top Ten Growth Award winners – 2**

Top Ten Winners - Snapshots

LARGE BUSINESSES

First place: Freightliner Group

North America's leading commercial vehicle manufacturer, based in Portland, increased its workforce by 718 to 3,543 in 2004, posting \$12.4 billion in gross revenue, a 27 percent increase over 2003. As the company has grown, so has its presence in Portland, adding more than 1,000 employees over the past 18 months, bringing its local workforce to 4,400 people. Freightliner has 2,600 people on its corporate headquarters staff and is continuing to invest significantly in its Portland operations, especially on the engineering and information technology fronts. The company expects to reach \$15 billion in revenue/sales in 2005.

Second place: Umpqua Bank

Umpqua Bank, headquartered in Roseburg, added 52 employees in its Portland-area operations, bringing the local workforce to 292, with revenue increasing by 23 percent over 2003. The bank has 93 locations between Sacramento, Calif., and Bellevue, Wash. Umpqua Bank works to create a welcoming, nontraditional atmosphere for its branches, offering personalized services and encouraging community involvement by its employees through a paid volunteer program. Umpqua Bank is a subsidiary of Umpqua Holdings Corp., headquartered in Portland.

Third place: Market Contractors

Market Contractors, founded by John Boden in 1978, provides commercial general contracting services for retail, financial/banking and medical/dental clients throughout 13 western states. The firm provides program management, tenant improvements, remodels, buildings, facility maintenance and fixture installations. Its workforce grew from 86 to 108 in 2004, with a 33 percent increase in gross revenue.

MEDIUM BUSINESSES

First place: Oregon Aero

Oregon Aero designs and manufactures more than 500 products for general aviation, the military, specialty industries and consumers that prevent and eliminate pain, reduce noise and improve impact protection. The company was founded in 1989 by CEO and President Mike Dennis. The company added 36 people for a full-time workforce of 70 in 2004, with a 133 percent increase in gross revenue/sales.

MORE

**Portland Business Alliance
Top Ten Growth Award winners – 3**

Second place: Oregon Financial Services Group

Oregon Financial Services Group has developed a strong niche market by specializing in working with family businesses. The company helps family business owners and their key employees develop and protect wealth, implement retirement strategies and provide for succession planning. The company added 12 employees to reach a workforce of 62 in 2004, with a 58 percent increase in gross revenue/sales.

Third place: Buena Vista Custom Homes

Buena Vista Custom Homes has found success by serving homebuyers who are in the “first move-up” phase. The company added 11 employees in 2004 for 29 full-time employees and revenue that increased 273 percent. Owner Roger Pollock also won the 2004 “Building Excellence Award” from the Portland Metro Homebuilders Association.

SMALL BUSINESSES

First place: Witham & Dickey

Matt Witham and Bill Dickey specialize in commercial printing, direct mail and promotional products. After starting out with a small duplicator press in 1996, they now have seven presses in their 7,500-square-foot facility. Employment grew by 6 people to 15 in 2004, with a 225 percent increase in gross revenue/sales. Witham & Dickey’s Homestead Greeting Cards division sells hundreds of thousands of custom greeting cards created locally, and sold nationwide.

Second place: Edelman

Edelman’s Portland operations grew from 6 to 22 employees in 2004, with a 147 percent increase in gross revenue/sales. The public relations and marketing firm has leveraged its global reach to serve a wide variety of local clients, including those in the enterprise software, computer hardware, semiconductor, nanotechnology, telecommunications, banking, retail, transportation, government and broadband areas.

Third place: The Fruit Company

The Fruit Company expanded its mail-order fruit and gift business from 9 to 19 employees in 2004, with an increase of 114 percent in gross revenue/sales. Offering more than 75 different gifts, the company’s mission is to deliver the best-tasting fruit in the world. Oprah Winfrey and her “O” Magazine recognized the quality of the company’s products by selecting Fruit Company’s gifts to feature on the cover of her holiday gift guide.

Fourth place: Convergence Networks

Convergence Networks offers the owners of small and medium size businesses a comprehensive array of management services and support, acting as an in-house IT source. Headquartered in Portland, the company’s workforce grew from 9 to 22 in 2004, with an accompanying 107 percent increase in gross revenue/sales.