

# Local Companies Make 'Fastest-Growing' List

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Special to The Daily News

For the first time, Inc. magazine and its Internet counterpart, Inc.com, have published a list of the 5,000 fastest-growing private U.S. companies, which together produced \$194 billion in revenue in 2006 or about 1.5 percent of the national gross domestic product.

Of the nine West Tennessee companies that made the 2007 list, six are based in Memphis and the other three are in Collierville, Millington and Jackson respectively.

The local companies and their rankings are Memphis-based Sunshine International (1,309); Millington-based Unistar-Sparco Computers (1,489); Memphis-based Pro Tech (1,947); Plan Express of Memphis (2,398);

Memphis-based Lokion (3,446); Gary Austin Advertising of Jackson (3,682); ADC Integrated Systems of Memphis (3,836); Collierville-based VersaTube Building Systems (4,059); and Memphis advertising agency archer>malmo (4,231).

To determine a company's rank on the list, Inc.com analysts reviewed revenue growth from 2003 to 2006. To be included, companies

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needed a minimum of \$200,000 in revenue in 2003 and \$2 million in 2006, and all had to be independently operated as of Dec. 31.

## Winning combinations

Unistar-Sparco Computers of Millington led the West Tennessee entrepreneurial ventures in revenue generation with \$26.1 million for 2006.

Specializing in computer and electronic sales and information technology support, Unistar-Sparco's revenues grew at a rate of 214.9 percent from 2003 to 2006.

"We have more than 300,000 IT products available online," said president and founder Sootsong Lim. "We use several warehouses throughout the country and we do international shipping."

Lim launched the business in 1996.

"We are one of the very first companies that had a Web site doing e-commerce and we were used as a model," he said.

Lim and his general manager, Eduardo Perez, emphasize a small-company commitment to one-on-one customer service. The company has 20 employees.

"We keep the prices similar to what a large company can offer but with the service of a small company," Perez said.

As for future growth, Unistar-Sparco marketing manager T.K. Baker said the target is to acquire additional government contracts and add more IT solutions to meet customers' needs.

VersaTube Building Systems in Collierville had revenues of \$10.1 million in 2006. The company and its 38 employees manufacture and distribute steel structures, such as carports, garages, horse barns and livestock shelters.

Marketing and advertising director Gregg Rezabek said VersaTube management is proud of what has been accomplished since the business opened in 1994.

"That is a testament not only to the hard work of our people, but also the VersaTube brand," Rezabek said. "We are the first company to offer complete metal building package kits to the marketplace."

The firm supplies metal building packages to national retailers as well as independent dealers.

## Diversity stressed

All the local companies that made the 5,000 list opened within the past 20 years, except for one, archer>malmo, founded in 1952 by Ward Archer Sr.

It enjoyed \$13.8 million in revenue and a growth rate of 53.3 percent between 2003 and 2006.

Russ Williams, who has been president and CEO of the advertising firm since 2001, attributes the agency's longevity to a strong set of values that have governed the company since its founding. He said those values include embracing a diversity of thought and always treating employees and clients with a great deal of respect.

"We very much appreciate that objective recognition of our success, and the most critical judgment is the judgment we make about ourselves," Williams said. "We are a very ambitious group of people who are anxious to continue raising the bar on the quality of our work. In our business, quality of growth is more important than quantity of growth."

For more information about the 5,000 list, visit [www.inc.com](http://www.inc.com).

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