

The going gets

The Portland Business Alliance's Top 10 Growth Awards

THE PORTLAND BUSINESS ALLIANCE'S TOP 10 GROWTH AWARDS for 2003 show beyond a shadow of a doubt that, after a long hard slog through recession, many firms are seeing business take off again. The winners range from financial and legal services companies to homebuilders and medical software developers. The number of applicants spiked this year compared to the previous two years, a welcome sign of economic vitality. And this year's awards recognize 11 winners, due to a tie for fourth place in the small business category. All in all, the numbers are looking good. "Portland might outperform the state in 2004 or 2005," says Art Ayre, the state employment economist. "I would be surprised if it bled more."

— Oakley Brooks and Brandon Sawyer

R.F. Stearns

What they do: Structural steel and design

Location: West Linn

Years in existence: 22

Revenue growth: 235%

Employment growth: 17 to 21

How did you do it?


Steve Miller, president: We suffered from post-9/11 blues, making for a below-average 2002. With opportunities less available, we focused on building a backlog of projects for late '02 and '03. As interest rates remained low, construction activity began to increase and we built a solid portfolio of work throughout the Northwest and Hawaii.

What were some hurdles to growth?

As a design/build contractor, Stearns is often chosen for schedule-critical and complex projects, which require investment in knowledge, systems and personnel. Often we grow our expertise by developing our employees internally, but it takes a number of years.

What's the outlook for growing in Oregon?

Today we hear many more positive stories

concerning growth and investment in market sectors such as health care, multi-story residential, retail, churches, education facilities and office construction. Stearns offers unique design/build skills in these areas. There are signs that the overall health of the state is improving. The combination of a rebounding economy and Stearns' high customer satisfaction is our best indicator of future success. 

2003 Top 10 Growth Companies

	Revenue Increase 2002-2003	Employment Increase 2002-2003
Large		
Merix	24%	45%
The Standard, part of StanCorp	18%	7%
Qmedtrix Systems	89%	99%
Medium		
Market Contractors	66%	39%
Bridge City Legal	69%	88%
Cleaner Image	27%	67%
Small		
Buena Vista Custom Homes	5,567%	500%
Gravitate Design Studio	460%	133%
SoftSource Consulting	358%	150%
Mortgage Trust	138%	144%
R.F. Stearns	235%	24%

Large = more than 100 employees in 2002

Medium = 25 to 100 employees in 2002

Small = 1 to 25 employees in 2002

Top 10 Growth survey methodology

Scores for the winners were calculated using the following formula:

- Revenue/sales growth — 40% of score
- Employment growth — 35% of score
- Years in business — 15% of score

OREGON BUSINESS
MAGAZINE

2003 TOP TEN
▲
GROWTH
AWARDS

EXTRAORDINARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

18TH ANNUAL TOP 10 GROWTH AWARDS PRESENTED AT OUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP BREAKFAST

Oregon's largest gathering of business professionals
and civic leaders

Featuring ten businesses whose growth in sales
and number of employees has contributed to the economic
stability of the region

We welcome

Craig Barrett, CEO, Intel Corporation

Who will give the keynote address

Tuesday, May 11th, 2004

7:30 am-9:00 am

Oregon Convention Center

Order your tickets now! This event sells out early!

www.portlandalliance.com or 503-224-8684



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Greater Portland's Chamber of Commerce