

The New York Times

September 27, 2009

THE COUNT

Displaying Resilience in a Downturn

By PHYLLIS KORKKI

Some businesses thrive in spite of a downturn — or even because of it.

A look at the industries that showed the biggest sales increases from September 2008 through August 2009, compiled by **Sageworks**, shows which kinds of privately held companies had the least cause for economic complaint.

If the data are any guide, alternative energy companies still have a way to go in gaining a foothold. Oil and gas extraction businesses showed the biggest sales increase over the period, at 30 percent.

Farm- and food-related businesses filled out 4 of the top 10 spots on the list. These include tortilla manufacturing, reflecting a robust Hispanic population and the growing love that non-Hispanics have for this type of food.

Coming in at No. 10 were technical and trade schools. What's a likely reason for their rising fortunes? People have flocked to them after being laid off by businesses that have followed a more predictable pattern and lost sales during the downturn.

Top-performing privately held companies by industry

Ranked by sales growth over the 12 months through August.



Source: Sageworks THE NEW YORK TIMES