
MASTER-BUILT BUSINESS



SPONSORED BY THE INC. HONOREES WHOSE BRAND PROFILES APPEAR ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES

When you're aiming to build a fast-growing enterprise, you have to work from the bottom up. Don't overspend on fancy office space when you can start out remote; don't go on a hiring frenzy until you've identified your unmet needs. And, whatever you do, don't start out by pitching your product before you have a semblance of a plan. The key to a sturdy business is to establish, early on, the policies and structures that will get you from point A to point B and point C with as few rehab projects as possible. A sound foundation is less likely to crack over time—or, worse, cave in under the weight of your growing company.

Still, while every venture is different, you can always follow blueprints from the business people who have turned their ideas into veritable skyscrapers. One pro tip: You'll need a reliable team that's familiar with operating amid ambiguity and has firsthand knowledge of running a fast-growing company. Even then, growth can get away from you, so slot in quality-assurance checks along the way. Step back as you pick up speed. Don't fear tweaking the design you once envisioned. So long as your foundation is solid, you can do anything.

Now, don your hardhats, grab your power tools—and let the business-building begin.

GROW YOUR OWN WAY

1 | Scott Curley

Co-CEO

FINISHLINE TAX SOLUTIONS

“It’s important for us to not be rigid. We’re constantly looking for ways to be more efficient and more innovative to maintain a fluid operation through which we may pivot at a moment’s notice. That’s helped us adapt to the kinds of changes that fast growth commands.”

Plano, Texas-based tax-resolutions firm FinishLine is a 2022 Inc. 5000 honoree.

2 | Kaleda Connell

CEO

KILO

“Let everyone be a grownup. We don’t micromanage or have many meetings. We trust that everyone will get the work done that they need to get done, and if they don’t, it’s very apparent, as we are a small team. We reward on the basis of a job well done and not on tenure. We are also very clear that we are a team, not a family.”

Kilo, a Royal Palm Beach, Florida-based management software maker for gym owners, is a 2022 Inc. 5000 honoree.

3 | Michael Ly

CEO

RECONCILED

“Make sure your team is on the same page and laser-focused on problem areas that may be slow-

ing down the process. Often the founder is the person who becomes the slow cog in the wheel. I don’t get out of the way; I’m the accelerant.”

Reconciled, a virtual book-keeping and accounting services company headquartered in Burlington, Vermont, is both a Power Partner Award winner and an Inc. 5000 honoree for 2022.

4 | Abeer Raza

Co-founder and CMO

TEKREVOL

“Strategies and revenue channels can fail from time to time, and campaigns can stop yielding results. As such, we’ve always tried to grow our revenue streams horizon-

tally as well as vertically, to be ready if and when some of our drivers stop performing; a new revenue driver fills the gap to keep our momentum strong.”

TekRevol, a Houston-based digital solutions provider that develops custom software and mobile apps, is on the 2022 Inc. 5000.

More than

80%

OF CEOs SAY THAT
SCALING THEIR
BUSINESS IS THEIR
PRIMARY GOAL.

Source: 2022 Inc. 5000
CEO Survey

2.

1.

3.

SPREAD, FROM LEFT: COURTESY SUBJECTS (4); JULIE ADAMS; COURTESY SUBJECT



Be it a burst pipe or a wiring issue, hiccups abound in any building project. Here are some strategies—from meditation to macromanagement—for overcoming obstacles.



5 | Charis Jones
Founder and CEO
SASSY JONES

“I have a life recipe that works well for my productivity and the growth of my company. It’s simple but not easy. It’s meditation. A healthy mindset and laser focus are among the strongest tools a CEO can have. Meditating every morning for a minimum of 15 minutes allows space, clears the way for sharper decision making, and ultimately increases my overall ‘unfuckwithability.’”

Sassy Jones, a Richmond, Virginia-based jewelry and accessories brand, landed on the Inc. 5000 list in 2020 and 2021.

6 | David Kern
President
KERN TECHNOLOGY GROUP

“The defense industry has huge barriers to entry. From managing security clearances to obtaining government approval for your accounting system, there were many ‘frogs’ that needed to be eaten if we wanted to overcome these challenges. We identified these pain points and knocked them out as soon as we could. That allowed us to jump on opportunities when we found them.”

Defense industry service contractor Kern Technology Group, headquartered in Virginia Beach, Virginia, has made the Inc. 5000 for each of the past three years by “eating frogs,” a term coined by productivity consultant Brian Tracy, based on a quote by Mark Twain, that refers to tackling potential roadblocks swiftly.

6.

Inc. 5000
COMPANY
SPOTLIGHT**N°3076**
2022 Ranking**307%**
3-Year
Growth**17**
Years In
Business**\$35.4M**
2021 Revenue

Charting a Course to the American Dream

Paramount Business Jets brings ethics aboard its business model.

Ask anyone who's lived the American Dream, and they'll tell you it happens through hard work. Richard Zaher, the founder and CEO of Paramount Business Jets, clearly put in the effort and perseverance. However, it was ethics and competence that helped land his company on the 2022 Inc. 5000 list of America's fastest-growing private companies.

In the 1980s, Zaher's family fled war, immigrating to America with just \$35. His mother—known for her “golden voice” throughout Central Asia—continued as a full-time Voice of America broadcaster and worked weekends at a convenience store. At 12, Zaher emulated his mother's work ethic and bought a lawnmower at a yard sale, fixed it, and started a business cutting lawns. Over the years, he worked in dozens of jobs, including dishwasher, grocery store bagger, busboy, costumed character, and door-to-door vacuum cleaner salesman.

CREATING A CULTURE OF KINDNESS

Through those varied experiences, he says he learned the importance of kindness. But after graduating from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, he worked as a private jet charter broker in a company with a cutthroat culture. At times, fistfights broke out over leads, he says. After he was shorted on a commission, he decided it was time to make a change. He requested \$5,000 from his father to start his own jet brokerage firm.

At first, he struggled to find clients. Then he had a clever idea: He'd plan the most luxurious private jet trip he could think of, traveling to all seven Wonders of the World. At \$375,000 per person, he figured it likely wouldn't sell, but it did get his company featured in private jet magazines. That's when business began to pick up.

By 2013, Paramount Business Jets made the Inc. 5000 list for the first time, landing the 409th spot with an impressive three-year growth of 1,093 percent. Zaher says the company set itself apart with a principled business model at a time when headlines read, “Why Are Private Jet Brokers So Sleazy?”

When the pandemic shut down air traffic in March 2020, Paramount Business Jets initially lost \$1 million. However, the next



Richard Zaher, founder and CEO,
Paramount Business Jets

month, the company made up revenue by filling in for grounded commercial flights, flying medical personnel and moving Covid test kits. “We were resourceful, cost-effective, and ready to help in any part of the world,” Zaher says.

GENERATIONAL ROLE MODEL

“What we have done is we have maintained our integrity over the years, and of course we provide a very competent service,” Zaher says. He is also the director of Best You Best Me, which funds charity projects that support acts of kindness. The father of four young children feels it's important to give back. “I have all the reasons in the world to be a role model—to teach my kids how you should be in order to be successful,” Zaher says.

PARAMOUNTBUSINESSJETS.COM

Surround yourself with the right people, and breaking new ground will be easier than you think. Here's how to find—and keep—that talent.

1 | Cheryl Gentry
CEO
GLOW GLOBAL EVENTS

“Hire for attitude and train for skill. It’s much easier to teach new employees the skills they need to do their jobs than it is to change their attitudes. Hire candidates with the right attitude, and then train them in the specifics to excel in their roles. This will save you time and money in the long run.”

Glow Global Events, a New York City-based event planning company, made the Inc. 5000 list in 2020.



3.

2 | Liz Steblay
Founder and president
PROKO AGENCY

“A part-time CFO propelled our business by analyzing profitability metrics and suggesting tweaks to our pricing and business model. A sharp executive assistant will expand your capacity as a founder to get so much done as well.”

ProKo Agency, a Del Mar, California-based HR firm, was on the Inc. 5000 list in 2021.

3 | Chanie Gluck
Founder and CEO
4D GLOBAL

“As a fast-growing company, we don’t have time to train leaders on how to lead. Experienced leadership is a must. Find those people, pay them well, and watch them thrive.”

4D Global, a Scottsdale, Arizona-based medical-billing staffing company, is a 2022 Inc. 5000 honoree.

Nearly

2/3

OF FOUNDERS SAY THAT FINDING AND RETAINING TOP TALENT IS THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE TO GROWING THEIR COMPANY.

Source: 2022 Inc. 5000 CEO Survey

1.

2.

Inc.5000
COMPANY
SPOTLIGHT

N°3385
2022 Ranking

5X
Inc.5000
Honoree

\$100+M
Annual Wholesale
Revenue

400+
Locations
Nationwide



Mattress and Home Furnishing Franchise Feels Right at Home with Rapid Growth

Retail Service Systems’ BoxDrop® franchise empowers entrepreneurs with a proven business model and no royalty payments.

At Retail Service Systems (RSS), there are no sales goals. Yet the parent company of the mattress and home furnishings franchise brand BoxDrop® is in the rarefied air of making the Inc. 5000 list five years in a row as one of the fastest-growing franchise opportunities nationwide.

In the age of e-commerce, RSS generates 98 percent of its revenue through brick-and-mortar retail locations. In less than a decade, the company has grown from 17 locations to 400 and from less than \$5 million in wholesale revenue to more than \$100 million.

RSS offers its BoxDrop® Mattress and Sofa franchisees a piece of the \$120 billion home furnishings industry by sourcing and manufacturing high-quality, private label products at significant discounts. They offer products that customers can’t get anywhere else.

“We’re a rodeo in an elevator,” says CEO Scott Andrew—disruptors who keep growing upward. In 2018, RSS recognized expansive opportunities in germ remediation, and scaled, then sold, an additional franchise, bioPURE, “before Covid was even a word we all knew.”

↓
Jerry Williams,
president of Retail
Service Systems,
at the company’s
Dublin, Ohio
headquarters.



EMPOWERING ENTREPRENEURS

RSS attributes its rapid growth to a simple mission statement displayed on a sign near the front door of its Dublin, Ohio, headquarters: “Empowering Entrepreneurs.” They do that by offering a low franchise fee and no royalty fees. Royalties for other franchises typically run 4 to 12 percent of annual revenue, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration.

“We’re really in the business of helping people become successful entrepreneurs,” Andrew says. Instead of regional managers, who focus on sales numbers, they offer customized training from division coaches, who maintain successful BoxDrop locations of their own.

“Our franchise model is designed to lower the initial capital requirements and the overall risk of business ownership,” says David Wilson, chief marketing officer. RSS offers a “success-aggressive, risk-averse” franchise model that includes proprietary digital and social media marketing methods, sales methods, and business operation practices.

“Because we’ve successfully defended it in state and federal court as providing the user with a competitive advantage in the marketplace, we can claim publicly that it’s a trade secret,” Andrew says.

The business attracts a wide range of franchisees, including corporate executives, recent college graduates, former athletes, veterans, pastors, salespeople, and blue-collar workers. What’s more, the referral ratio for new locations is 74 percent, which Andrew says is three times the industry average for enterprise level franchises with more than 250 locations.

INTERNET INSENSITIVE AND RECESSION RESISTANT

How does a brick-and-mortar location make it in the digital-first 2020s? Andrew and Wilson cite three major factors. First is the size of the market and the company’s role in it. The continued growth of the number of American households and RSS’s relative “sliver” of the business leaves room for growth.

Second is the industry’s “internet insensitivity.” When it comes to choosing home furnishings, brick-and-mortar locations have an advantage.

“You want to lie on the bed, right?” Wilson asks, citing high return rates on mattresses ordered online. “These brands are scrambling to get into retail, because customers want to touch it, feel it, envision it in their home.” BoxDrop’s nationwide customer review ratings average 4.9 stars out of five on Google and Facebook.

Third, they say their business model is recession-resistant because they can offer discounts for high quality merchandise in an industry that’s expected to grow as people continue to invest in their living spaces, post-pandemic.

A SUCCESSFUL PIVOT

While other franchises with physical locations suffered from shutdowns and reduced traffic during the Covid outbreak in 2020, RSS’s sales grew significantly. As big-box furniture stores began closing nationwide, RSS read every state and federal pandemic-related business regulation to find ways for BoxDrop franchisees to stay open. As a result, their 2020 sales were up 52 percent over the year before.

“We literally pivoted our model to take advantage of the chaos that was going on in the marketplace,” says Andrew, adding that BoxDrop closed just 30 locations and only briefly.

FRANCHISE OF THE TIMES

Though there are other franchises that are committed to their franchisees’ success, BoxDrop provides an affordable, flexible, and risk-averse business model for exclusive brands in a protected territory.

“Statistics show you have an easier time getting into Harvard than you have becoming an owner of a Chick-fil-A,” Andrew says, who expects BoxDrop to grow to 2,000 locations nationwide by 2028. The company is also adding a hybrid e-commerce program.

“At BoxDrop, if you have a good work ethic, and you come in, follow the system, and follow the coach, you’ll be successful,” Wilson adds.

RETAILSERVICESYSTEMS.COM

↓
Inside the BoxDrop
Mattress & Furniture
Clearance Center
in Castle Rock,
Colorado.



TAKE IT FROM THEM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 91



When in doubt, look to advice from the building pros who've been there, done that.

1 | **Anthony Coombs** Founder **SPLENDIES**

"In the early days of my company, we ran into an unenviable problem: We didn't have enough inventory to fulfill orders. I went out on a walk and came up with a novel solution: a waitlist. Because we were up front with the situation, fewer than 1 percent of consumers on the waitlist canceled their orders. We eventually fulfilled every one. The takeaway? The waitlist created a sense of FOMO among people, and get-

ting off the waitlist was almost as exciting to them as getting their package."

Coombs's Santa Monica, California-based underwear subscription company landed on the Inc. 5000 in 2021.

2 | **Mackey McNeill** Founder **MACKEY**

"Managing, communicating, and acknowledging the stress of change isn't for the faint of heart. While I thrive on change, most people do not. Letting the team know why we must switch gears makes it easier, as does listening to their frus-

trations, even when you can't take them away. For me personally, breathing and meditation help. So does staying grounded in our *why* and in my belief that the universe is always conspiring for my highest good, even when what is coming at me is something I would have never chosen."

McNeill's Bellevue, Kentucky-based financial growth coaching and CFO advising firm is on the 2022 Inc. 5000.

3 | **Norm Brodsky** Entrepreneur-in-residence **BIRTHING OF GIANTS**

"When my first Inc. 5000 company, Perfect Courier, was growing fast—covering 17 states and booking more than \$100 million in sales in just six years—it was easy to think that everything I touched

would turn to gold. That all changed when that company crashed along with the stock market in 1987. One habit I picked up from that catastrophic business failure is this: Whenever I sit down at a meeting with my trusty yellow legal pad, I write 'stupid, stupid, stupid' on the first page, because I know there are other—sometimes better—ideas in the room."

Brodsky has founded three Inc. 5000 companies and today serves as entrepreneur-in-residence at Birthing of Giants, a fellowship program for owners of fast-growing businesses.

4 | **Paul Goldman** Founder and CEO **MUSERK**

"Even when we were just a couple of people, we always thought of ourselves as a large team and tried to mimic larger company processes. It helped by training us as we grew—kind of like a vision-boarding strategy."

Muserk, a Nashville-based global rights management company for music and video content, is a two-time Inc. 5000 honoree, for 2021 and 2022.



Inc. 5000
COMPANY
SPOTLIGHT**Nº1783**
2022 Ranking**3X**
Inc. 5000
Honoree**\$250M**
Medical Care
Provided, 2022**\$800M**
Medical Liens
Serviced**gain**
servicing

The Company Leveling the Insurance Playing Field

Gain's artificial intelligence-powered platform makes it simple for health care providers to diversify payment methods for uninsured and underinsured patients.

Thirty million U.S. residents lack health insurance, according to a 2021 National Health Interview Survey. Yet less than half of Americans have enough savings in their bank account to cover an unexpected \$1,000 expense, a 2022 Bankrate survey found. So, what happens when someone is injured in an accident, such as a car crash?

Reid Zeising, CEO and founder of Gain (formerly Cherokee Legal Holdings), a medical lien servicing and legal funding company, believes anyone injured through no fault of their own deserves quality medical care, regardless of their financial or insurance status. He started Gain in 2011 to provide financial options to personal injury victims while they awaited their settlements. In 2016, he expanded his mission with a subsidiary—Gain Servicing—that uses an innovative artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled platform to provide Letter of Protection (LOP) servicing and collections to doctors. LOPs are legally binding contracts stating that health care costs will be paid after a successful settlement or judgement.

Gain's services make it simpler for doctors to accept LOPs as payment so they can focus on providing quality medical care to those in need. In 2022, Gain Servicing accounted for 65 percent of Gain's total revenue. This year, it will rise to 85 percent.



Reid Zeising, founder
and CEO, Gain

A GREAT HUMBLING

"We exist to even the playing field with insurance companies," Zeising says. But he hasn't always taken a mission-first approach to business. When he worked in investment banking and hedge fund management, money and ego were his drivers. This changed in 2007 when he completed a two-year, semi-hostile takeover of a public company—then watched as the market downturn pummeled the business. "I was deeply humbled and reemerged to find a higher purpose helping others rather than myself," he says.

PEOPLE + TECH

Gain's 100-plus employees share Zeising's commitment to caring for the "millions of Americans who have been taken advantage of by the insurance industry." Proprietary technology also fuels success. Historically, doctors have had lower collections and higher write-offs when attempting to self-service these complex claims. Gain's LOP servicing platform streamlines the process, while its managed services team handles the communications, operating, legislative, judicial, and insurance defense challenges that make these collections complicated. Practitioners can then focus on patients—including the underinsured and uninsured—confident they will be compensated. "We collect, on average, almost 900 basis points more than providers do if self-servicing these accounts," Zeising says.

Gain creates value for legal teams, too, by streamlining processes and mitigating risk. "Most businesses have some form of zero-sum game, some form of taking from one group to give to another. Not us. I've never seen a business so supportive of the collective good of all its stakeholders." Honored with three Inc. 5000 designations, 15,000 law firm partners, and 3,000 health care clients, Gain is well-positioned for continued growth. But more important to Zeising is the company's long-term goal: juxtaposing the third-party liability industry and creating a fairer insurance system for all.

[GAINSERVICING.COM](https://gainservicing.com)