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And the Award Goes To...

Congratulations to our fifth annual batch of fast-growing private companies — American Speedy Printers, InSource, Premise Corp., Specialty Printing, and Oakleaf Waste Management.

Private companies are a mainstay of Hartford's business community, and the annual Business Champions Awards provide not only recognition but reinforcement that these growing companies, and their peers, are what put the grow in growth.

Small companies are nearly all privately held. They create most of the jobs in our economy and are a major source of creativity and business advancement. Private companies are a formidable charitable force in the community; most of Hartford's most generous philanthropists made their mark building private companies.

The companies listed here provided their business results to the MetroHartford Alliance, which tabulated the entries and forwarded the lists of leading companies to the Hartford Business Journal. To respect the nominees' desire to keep operating details private, specific sales and profit information were not provided to the newspaper on the companies' percentage growth in revenues. That growth percentage was the basis for determining this year's Business Champions.

American Speedy Printers was the leading growth company among those firms with 10 or fewer employees, doubling its revenue in just a year. Its strategy was a common one: co-opt the competition by buying them out, but it has maintained the relationships of its acquisition through good service.

Among companies with 11-75 employees, the Canton firm InSource grabbed the award. It's 103 percent revenue growth demonstrates what can be done when one man makes a leap of faith into his own business.

Although not technically an award winner, Premise Corp. is being recognized for distinguished achievement. It competed in the same category as InSource. Where that company had 103 percent growth, Premise came in at

a very close second, with 100 percent growth year-over-year. The firm's unique software for helping hospitals manage patient beds is story worth telling, and retelling, in its innovation.

And if hospitals want to make sure they've got patient management right, pharmaceutical companies want to insure patients have the right medication. For Specialty Printing, that elevates the art of label makin— specialty labels for thousands of companies, in many industries. But it is our nation's pharma explosion that's propelling the Connecticut company's growth.

This year, Oakleaf Waste Management snagged not just one, but two honors. It is the fastest growing company in terms of revenue for firms with 176-500 employees, and it is the fastest growing company overall in terms of employee growth. That's a pretty good haul for a company that coordinates the hauling of trash, but never actually gets its own hands dirty.

Congratulations to the successful companies who are profiled and listed in this special pull-out section of the Hartford Business Journal. We look forward to seeing their companies — and yours — next year.

— The Editors

