

Inc. 500 | 5000 Newsletter

Produced by the Inc. 500|5000

AUGUST 2010

Lights, Camera...Inc. 500|5000!

Congratulations to this year's 2010 Inc. 500|5000 fastest-growing companies! The 2010 list has launched on Inc.com - you can find it [here](#) - and the Inc. 500 issue of Inc. magazine is on newstands. We at Inc. are truly inspired by the innovation, perseverance and business acumen of those companies who have not only survived the economic downturn, but grown in the process. This year's list speaks to the collective strength of private companies everywhere, to the power of the entrepreneurial spirit and to the bright future of American enterprise.

Whether or not you are on the 2010 list, we invite you to join us to celebrate, network and learn at the [Annual Inc. 500|5000 Conference and Awards Ceremony](#), held September 30-October 2, 2010 at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in Washington, D.C.

Once again, congratulations and here is to your continued success!

COMPANY SPOTLIGHT: FLEET FEET Fast on their Feet:



How this fast-growing company is helping runners, walkers and everyone else put their best foot forward.

There is no denying that exercise is good for you. Every other scientific study seems to discover more benefits of a consistent fitness regimen. But for some of us, regular fitness in practice can be a little daunting, made even more so by the regimented training calendars and rippling cover models in spandex shorts that seem to represent the athletic industry in the minds of many non-runners. Whether you're a professional athlete or one of us who thinks an "interval" is just a mathematical expression from high school, this four-time Inc. 500|5000 company is on a mission to bring together the athletic community nationwide and get us all out on the run.

Fleet Feet, Incorporated sells specialty footwear, apparel, and accessories, with an added focus on helping bolster bashful beginners and grow the athletic community. Starting out with a single store in Sacramento, California, Sally Edwards and Elizabeth Jansen opened Fleet Feet in 1976 in response to what was at the time a male-dominated sport and a small, exclusive triathlon industry. In 1980, the partners found their store growing at such a rate that they decided to start offering franchises to let others open their own stores under the Fleet Feet brand. Edwards led Fleet Feet for the following thirteen years, growing the number of stores nationwide, until Tom Raynor purchased Fleet Feet from Edwards in 1993 and moved headquarters to Carrboro, North Carolina....
[story continued at the bottom of the page]



CLICK HERE to see the
2010 Inc. 500|5000 List

Congratulations to this year's 2010 honorees!

Don't forget to join us to celebrate, network and learn at the [Annual Inc. 500|5000 Conference and Awards Ceremony](#), September 30-October 2, 2010 in Washington, D.C.

CLICK HERE
to receive 2011 updates

CEO SPOTLIGHT



Mehul Sanghani
CEO
[Octo Consulting Group](#)

Company snapshot:

A first-time Inc. 500 honoree (debuting at No. 23 with an impressive 7,224% growth and over \$13 million in 2009 revenue), [Octo Consulting Group](#) is a management and technology strategy consulting firm for Federal Government agencies. Clients include the FBI, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Army, and the Department of Labor.

[Check out Octo Consulting's Inc. 500 listing](#)

Hop, Skip or Jump? HopStop.com



Chances are, you've either heard of this fast-growing company or missed a meeting or two if you haven't. **HopStop.com** is a transit routing site (and mobile application) determined to help solve the great metropolitan mystery for many a tourist, business traveler, new kid on the block and urban resident –getting around. And for HopStop.com, it's not just getting from here to there; it's getting there quickly, efficiently, and via your preferred methods of transportation. That's transit made to order, just the way you like it.

HopStop.com was founded by native Nigerian Chinedu Echeruo, who, upon moving to New York City after Harvard business school, found

himself baffled by the many interconnected but dismally unconnected New York City transit systems—a siloed web of numerous transit systems (MTA, Metro North, PATH and New Jersey Transit to name just a few, let alone the trains, buses and shuttles that comprise each one). According to HopStop, New York City is the (yes, *the* one and only) largest and most complex mass transit system in the world – a formidable conundrum even for a Harvard grad or local city resident, let alone a weary traveler. And what's more, HopStop recognized that no two travelers or city residents are completely alike in their travelling habits, preferences, budgets or physical abilities. The daytime NYU student might prefer the minimal amount of subway time in favor of a longer walk or a bus, while a business traveler with an early morning meeting on Wall Street may want to get downtown as quickly as possible based on time of day and arrival frequency.

The solution? An interactive website that... [story continued at the bottom of the page]

Onwards and Upwards for Private Companies in New Orleans



If you think that the greater New Orleans area might be down for the count, all you have to do is take a look at this year's **2010 Inc. 500|5000 List** to see that neither hurricanes nor oil can halt *les bons temps* ("the good times") in the Big Easy.

In fact, to locals, there is no other place to do business. New Orleans resident and CEO of number 324 on this year's Inc. 500 list, **AAC Enterprises**, Justin Hartenstein, rose

to the challenge of establishing a business in 2005, a year torn apart by Hurricane Katrina. The company, which sells custom lighting for use in automobiles, had barely filed its first official paperwork when Katrina hit, destroying all of it and even what was to be their first office space. But even in her wake, while he waited in Atlanta for shipping services to be reinstated so that he could bring AAC back to its home city, he had no doubt that New Orleans was still the place for him and his business. "It was hard for us to come back and there were a lot of obstacles," said Hartenstein, who set up shop in a flooded garage when he couldn't find any warehouse space. "Even though I was distracted trying to help friends and family rebuild their homes and lives, I knew I had a business with great potential for growth," Hartenstein recalls of the sobering time. "It was truly just focus and commitment to my business that allowed me to prevail despite the hardships." Today, with a growth rate over 900 percent on the Inc. 500, the company is expanding beyond automobiles into the film and home industries, and remains a proud

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**Featured Inc. 500|5000
Partner:
Florida Chamber of
Commerce**

The Florida Chamber unites Florida's business community as a powerful federation of employers, chambers of commerce and associations, representing more

example of what New Orleans businesses and communities are truly capable of.

And as for the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, aptly named the greatest environmental disaster in U.S. history, New Orleans businesses are once again working to overcome. **Greater New Orleans Inc.**, a regional economic development agency and Inc. 500|5000 partner, recently launched the Coastal Vitality Project, a program partially funded by Chevron which will help market the area, support workforce development and nurture small business growth and entrepreneurship. "Following Katrina, the region saw significant economic gains and regrowth, which are now being threatened by the effects of the oil spill," says Michael Hecht, CEO of Greater New Orleans, Inc. According to him, the program aims to empower and assist the business community by "providing technical assistance to small businesses, finding new opportunities for our workers, and communicating to the national business community that New Orleans continues to be a viable location for business expansion and new investment."

With innovation, resilience, and hope, New Orleans businesses continue to show us all their collective might. And if you have any doubt about the area's ability to come back (and back again), just ask the New Orleans Saints about Super Bowl XLIV. We at Inc. expect to see more and more New Orleans businesses gracing the Inc. 500|5000 list for years to come.

Photo by [Shubert Ciencia](#)

At the Top of our Lungs: 2010 Top Lists are now **Live and Well on Inc.com**

As a part of the nationwide Inc. 500|5000 list, you can find our annual Inc. 500|5000 Top Lists [here](#), which rank companies by growth in various categories.

2010 honorees- you may have made one of these lists in addition to your overall Inc. 500|5000 ranking so be sure to check them out!

- [Job creators](#)
- [Revenue](#)
- [Employee count](#)
- [Women Entrepreneurs](#)
- [Minority entrepreneurs](#)
- [Industry](#)
- [Metro area](#)
- **Stay tuned for a new multiple-year honoree top list!**

Top List Teamwork: This year, in addition to these annual Top List rankings, we have created additional [top lists](#) with the help of our partners, The [National Association of Women Business Owners \(NAWBO\)](#), [Women's Presidents' Organization \(WPO\)](#), [Florida Chamber of Commerce](#) and the [Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce \(FSHCC\)](#). You can find these Inc. 500|5000 Partner Top Lists [here](#).

Fast on their Feet (*continued*)

Tom Raynor infused the business model with new aspects of inclusion, comfort and community. He structured the franchise in a way that would encourage employees to become owners themselves and grow the local athletic community around them. "Nearly 25 percent of our store owners are former store employees. We've combined the strengths of individual entrepreneurship and cooperation to build a nationwide retail network with a focus on people and community."

In further support of this goal, a few years ago Fleet Feet started a training program for people that "thought they could not run a mile" and who don't exercise at all, let alone regularly. Last year this program was the largest beginner running training program in the United States, helping people who never thought they could exercise find the support, structure and, of course, the apparel (including biomechanical gait analysis, specialty sport bras, etc.) that they need. Today, there are 90 stores operating similar programs around the country this spring and will train up to 20,000 men and women to run/walk their first 5k.

than 139,000 grassroots members
with more than 3 million employees.



KEY DATES: INC. 500|5000

- **Inc. 500 issue of Inc. magazine hits newsstands**
This week!
- **Inc. and DHL Present: "Business Without Borders" Event Series**
September 15: Philadelphia
September 16: Boston
September 21: Dallas
September 23: Seattle
October 6: Chicago
October 7: New York City
October 13: Atlanta
October 19: San Diego
[Click here to attend one or more of these events](#)
- **Inc. and Ink from Chase Present: "The Way I Work" Event Series.**
August 3: Columbus
August 11: San Francisco
September 14: Chicago
September 23: New York City
[Click here to attend one or more of these events](#)
- **The Annual Inc. 500|5000 conference and awards ceremony**
September 30-October 2, 2010 - Washington D.C.
[Click here to register](#)
- **Inc. and Winning Workplaces present the new Inc. Leadership Conference - Creating Competitive Cultures**
October 27-29, 2010 - Denver, Colorado
[Click here to register](#)

Hop, Skip or Jump? (continued)

...goes beyond the basic mapping offerings of their bigger search engine competitors. Instead, HopStop sought to provide a personalized and seamless transit-only tool for navigating the sea of transportation options, stops, routes, timetables, and who knows (other than HopStop) what else. After surmounting the technical challenge of building such a site, HopStop first launched the product for New York City, after which it began expanding in to other markets.

According to Joe Meyer, who became CEO in April of 2008 with the continued counsel of founder Chinedu Echeruo, HopStop was one of the pioneers of the transit industry (yes, even before Google maps blossomed into what it is today), and thus was able to build and maintain a loyal and active community of users. This growing community has become one of the cornerstones of HopStop's success – providing huge amounts of diverse feedback through "Facebook, email, and even in person." HopStop responds to this feedback on a daily basis with real-time edits to the site, a feedback cycle that Meyer cites as a key to HopStop's success as a personalized transit tool.

In addition to the resources it takes to maintain such an open relationship with their customers, the transit industry itself presents enormous technical challenges, especially when those customers depend on the accuracy of the information within a shifting web of transitory (no pun intended) transit systems. This requires a combined framework of both automatic and manual processes to consistently deliver on such an immense mathematical data challenge within which there are hardly any "constants"...all while HopStop adds another market to the mire per month on average.

Currently, HopStop services 16 major metropolitan areas in the United States and Europe, approximately 12 of which were added in the last year or so. They are launching four more just this month —Pittsburgh, Milwaukee, Sacramento and Seattle. Although the product's initial focus was on intra-market transit (i.e. New York City and its many surrounding boroughs), "the users are discovering on their own how to use it for inter-market transit"—from Baltimore to Boston, for example, while using intra-market transit functions within each city and its suburbs.

Ultimately, it's safe to say that we haven't seen the last—or even the most—of HopStop. With a popular iPhone app leading the charge, HopStop is expanding quickly into the mobile space. "Last year, 5% of our searches were mobile – this year, its 20 percent," says Meyer, making it easier for Harvard grads and average Joe's alike to embark on the urban unknown with the clout, convenience and confidence of a seasoned pro.

Inc. would like to thank the following partners for their support of the 2010 Inc. 500|5000:

				
				
				

For a complete list of Inc. 500|5000 partners, [click here](#).

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