

• FranchiseTimes •  
**FAST 55**

The 2009 Fast 55 companies are all over the map—find out which industries are seeing quadruple-digit growth

**Healthsource  
Chiropractic**

Vermillion, Ohio

**Instant  
Tax Service**

Dayton, Ohio

**SuperSlow Zone**

Winter Park, Florida

**Auction It Today**

Howell, Michigan

**Fast 55 Sponsor:**

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Franchise Information Services

## Get out the map

Growing a company is no Sunday drive in the country. It takes hard work, the right franchisees and a staff who knows where they're going and how to get there. Early in the franchise timeline is the time to start mapping out your journey. After all, even companies on the fast track need to obey the speed limit. That's why in addition to our listing of the Fast 55, we've profiled three companies in niches where growth is slightly uncharted.

# What recession? Economy doesn't slow the Fast 55

We've put the 55 fastest growing, young companies on the map. After you peruse the list, keep turning the pages to read about three unique companies with unique niches to fill.

By Darrell Johnson

The biggest economic downturn in decades started showing itself in the latter part of 2007. You might expect that many franchise companies started slowing down during that period. Yet the strength and adaptability of the franchise business model once again came shining through. The strength was demonstrated with the top 10 franchise companies averaging more than 1,300 percent growth over a four-year period, about the same as the previous year.

No doubt, in anticipation of the turmoil in the financial market and its impact on all of us, the health, tax and fitness sectors held the top positions this time around. It is clear from this year's list that the franchising business model can be successfully applied to a multitude of industries and sectors, adjusting to the changing demand for products and services.

Leading the list was Ohio-based HealthSource Chiropractic. The company's average unit growth over the past five years exceeded 2,000 percent as it has attracted chiropractic physicians

Industry	# Franchises
Beauty-Related	1
Personnel Services	1
Security-Related	1
Computer Products and Services	2
Decorating & Home Design	2
Education-Related	2
Maintenance Services	2
Restaurants (Sit-Down)	2
Retail Food	2
Retail Stores	2
Sports & Recreation	2
Business-Related	3
Real Estate	4
Child-Related	7
Fast Food Restaurants	7
Health & Fitness	7
Services-General	8

to open units.

HealthSource is one of seven health and fitness franchises on this year's list, including two of the top three (Florida-based SuperSlow Zone is No. 3). This may demonstrate a desire by consumers to relieve economy-induced stress. But it's also reflecting a mounting demand for health care by an aging public, as well as continued demand for fitness by consumers worried about their weight.

It's notable that there are also two sports-related franchises on the list, and many service providers are health-related, like No. 21 BrightStar Healthcare, which provides medical personnel services.

Consequently, the list also demonstrates the weakness of the restaurant sector, or at least the sheer difficulty that franchises have in breaking into the food market.

The 10 food franchises on this year's list is the lowest in the six-year history of the Fast 55. There were 15 on the list last year,

including two in the top 10. No food franchise made the top 10 this year and only two were in the top 25.

Many analysts consider the restaurant sector to be overbuilt, especially casual-dining establishments, and say that thousands of units must close in the coming years for supply to equal demand.

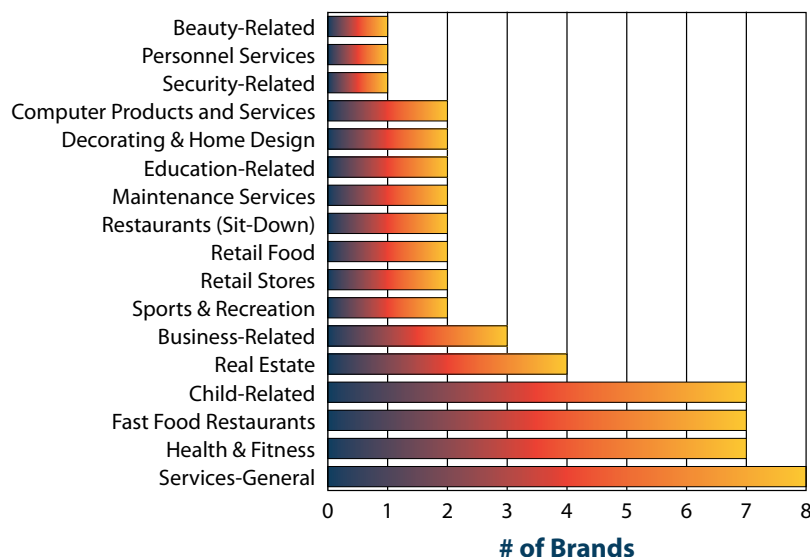
In addition, seven of the food franchises on the list, including No. 12 Mr. Pickle's Sandwich Shop and No. 18 Garlic Jim's Famous Gourmet Pizza are considered quick service. Quick-service and fast-casual restaurants are benefiting from an economic environment in which consumers are increasingly frugal in their food choices.

Most concepts this year reflect a recent trend towards consumer and residential services.

That observation is more understood by looking at the 13 repeat winners from the 2008 list. All but one of them came from non-food sectors.

This partially reflects the gen-

## Fast 55 Concepts by Industry



erally lower investment levels that many non-food brands offer, and lower-investment franchises may be getting a boost in today's tight credit environment. Yet it also reflects the adaptability of the business model to sectors with a minimal previous franchising presence.

For instance, the most frequent industry for the 55 on this year's list, with 10 concepts, is general services.

The brands in this category are in a wide range of industries where franchising is less common. They include wireless services (Cellairis Franchise Inc., No. 9 and Yakety Yak Wireless, No. 49), dry cleaning (CD One Price Cleaners, No. 17, and Door-to-Door Dry Cleaning, No. 47) and even DNA testing (DNA Services of America, No. 10). It also includes two companies in the franchise-heavy shipping industry (Goin' Postal, No. 20, and eShipping, No. 24).

Many of these concepts are targeting subsectors, rather than a broader category. This year's list includes 17 different industries and 40 different sectors, plus many other subsectors.

For instance, No. 7 Guard-A-Kid specializes in security for children by providing identification cards. No. 34 Young Chefs is a specialty education franchise that teaches kids how to cook.

Even the food franchises on the list show their specialization—the list includes one salad franchise (Tossed, No. 44) and one selling soup (Original Soup Man, No. 45).


This specialization has created opportunities for many of the hundreds of new brands that we have identified and began tracking in recent years. In this year's list there are 17 industries and 40 sectors represented. **ET**

*Darrell Johnson is CEO of FRANdata.*

## Defining the Fast 55

In order to make the Fast 55, a ranking of the fastest growing, young franchises, a franchise company must meet these two criteria:

- 1) They must be a brand that has been franchising for five years or less.
- 2) They must exhibit positive franchise unit growth for each year during this period.



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'09 RANK	'08 RANK	'07 RANK	BRAND	FRANCHISOR	STARTED FRANCHISING IN	INDUSTRY	SECTOR	2002-2007 AVERAGE UNIT GROWTH %
1	NA	NA	Healthsource Chiropractic	Healthsource Chiropractic, Inc.	2005	Health & Fitness	Health - General	2185%
2	NA	NA	Instant Tax Service	ITS Financial, LLC	2004	Business-Related	Tax Services	1755%
3	NA	NA	SuperSlow Zone	SuperSlow Zone, LLC, The	2004	Health & Fitness	Fitness Centers	1450%
4	NA	NA	Auction It Today	Auction It Today, Inc.	2004	Retail Stores	Retail Stores - General	1441%
5	NA	NA	Premier Rental-Purchase	Premier Rental-Purchase, Inc.	2005	Decorating & Home Design	Furniture Stores/ Home Furnishings	1230%
6	NA	NA	Math Monkey	Vedic Math Development Corp.	2005	Child-Related	Children's Educational Program	1200%
7	NA	NA	Guard-A-Kid	Guard-A-Kid Franchising Corp.	2005	Child-Related	Security	1169%
8	NA	NA	World Properties International	World Properties International, Inc.	2005	Real Estate	Real Estate Brokers/Services	1119%
9	NA	NA	Cellairis	Cellairis Franchise, Inc.	2005	Services-General	Fax, Communication, Cellular	911%
10	NA	NA	DNA Services of America	DNA Services International, Inc.	2005	Services-General	Service - General	883%
11	NA	NA	Intero Real Estate Services	Intero Franchise Services, Inc.	2005	Real Estate	Real Estate Brokers/Services	820%
12	NA	NA	Mr. Pickle's Sandwich Shop	Mr. Pickle's Inc.	2005	Fast Food Restaurants	Sub Shops	803%
13	11	NA	1-800-Pack-Rat	1-800-Pack-Rat, LLC	2005	Services-General	Storage Services	767%

## Abrakadoodle abrakadoodle

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'09 RANK	'08 RANK	'07 RANK	BRAND	FRANCHISOR	STARTED FRANCHISING IN	INDUSTRY	SECTOR	2002-2007 AVERAGE UNIT GROWTH %
14	NA	NA	Mr. Sandless	Mr. Sandless Franchise, LLC	2005	Maintenance Services	Interior Products and Services	723%
15	NA	NA	1-800-DRYCARPET	1-800-DRYCARPET Systems, Inc.	2005	Maintenance Services	Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning	696%
16	NA	NA	Sotheby's International Realty	Sotheby's International Realty Affiliates,	2004	Real Estate	Real Estate Brokers/Services	668%
17	NA	NA	CD One Price Cleaners	Cleaners Depot Franchise, LLC	2005	Services-General	Dry Cleaning/Laundry	664%
18	NA	NA	Garlic Jim's Famous Gourmet Pizza	Garlic Jim's Franchise International, Inc.	2004	Fast Food Restaurants	Pizza	607%
19	NA	NA	Parisi Speed School	Parisi Franchise Systems, LLC	2005	Sports & Recreation	Sports - General	591%
20	NA	NA	Goin' Postal	Goin' Postal Franchise Corporation	2004	Services-General	Mailing, Packaging, Shipping	587%
21	NA	NA	BrightStar Healthcare	BrightStar Franchising, LLC	2005	Personnel Services	Medical Personnel Services	577%
22	NA	NA	Partner On-Call Network	Partner On-Call Network, LLC	2005	Business-Related	Business Consulting	571%
23	NA	NA	Abrakadoodle	Abrakadoodle, Inc.	2004	Child-Related	Children's Educational Program	569%
24	NA	NA	eShipping	eShipping, LLC	2005	Services-General	Mailing, Packaging, Shipping	558%

## Instant Tax Service



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#2

## Which Wich?



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Which Wich? is a sandwich concept that offers over 50 different combinations of superior hot sandwiches using an interactive ordering system in a hip and casual environment. One focus: the best possible "wiches", served in an edgy yet inviting environment. Simply grab a brown paper bag (your order form) and a red Sharpie® to create your custom "wich". Our elements make Which Wich? a concept that customers want to return to day after day.



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'09 RANK	'08 RANK	'07 RANK	BRAND	FRANCHISOR	STARTED FRANCHISING IN	INDUSTRY	SECTOR	2002-2007 AVERAGE UNIT GROWTH %
25	NA	NA	Rapid Refill Ink	Rapid Refill Corp.	2004	Computer Products and Services	Software & Accessories	555%
26	NA	NA	College Assistance Plus/CAPlus	College Assistance Plus, LLC	2005	Education-Related	Education Related Services	532%
27	NA	NA	NYPD Restaurants	New York Pizza Development, LLC	2004	Restaurants (Sit-Down)	Italian Restaurants	490%
28	NA	NA	The Paul Green School of Rock Music	Paul Green School of Rock Music Franchising	2005	Child-Related	Children's Educational Program	490%
29	10	NA	Z-Coil Pain Relief Footwear	Z-Tech, Inc.	2005	Health & Fitness	Health - General	488%
30	NA	NA	Amplifon Hearing Aid Centers	National Hearing Centers, Inc.	2004	Health & Fitness	Medical/Dental Products	480%
31	NA	NA	Beverly Hills Weight Loss & Wellness	BevCorp International, Inc.	2005	Health & Fitness	Diet and Weight Control Center	470%
32	NA	NA	Envirian	Envirian, LLC	2005	Real Estate	Real Estate Brokers/Services	445%
33	13	NA	123 Fit	123 Fit Franchising, LLC	2005	Health & Fitness	Fitness Centers	441%
34	15	NA	Young Chef's	Young Chef's International, LP	2005	Education-Related	Education Related Services	439%
35	NA	NA	Fresh Coat	F.C. Franchising Systems, Inc.	2005	Decorating & Home Design	Painting Services	433%
36	NA	NA	Athletic Republic	Acceleration Products, Inc.	2005	Sports & Recreation	Sports - General	425%
37	NA	NA	Which Wich	Which Wich Franchise, Inc.	2005	Fast Food Restaurants	Sub Shops	407%

## Wings Etc., Inc.

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Wings Etc. is a family-friendly (but somewhat irreverent) concept that puts a different spin on sports bar franchises: it doesn't look or feel anything like a franchise. Instead, it's like a laid-back, locally-owned hangout. Like your friendly neighborhood "joint"—but in a good way.

Behind the scenes there's a proven system, with low break-even, startup, and operating costs, plus full training, operations and marketing support. (Our next four openings are second or third units for existing franchisees!)

Franchise Times  
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## DNA Services of America

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#10



## "Partner" On-Call Network LLC

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Franchise Times  
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#22

# Ready to roll

## Saving rock 'n roll one franchise at a time

The Paul Green School of Rock prepares kids for a life of rock 'n roll—either on the stage or in their garage.

By Nancy Weingartner

**R**aise your hand if this was you: Your mom nagged you about practicing the piano; your parents bought you a drum set, but it didn't have a high-hat; the only songs your music teacher taught were classical and not anything you'd be caught actually listening to.

No wonder none of us grew up to be rock stars. But there is hope for future generations, thanks to a fast-growing franchise based in Philadelphia aptly named the Paul Green School of Rock.

"We're changing the paradigm," says Matt Ross, president of the School of Rock. Not only are kids playing music they like, but they live the rock star dream—performing live to a large audience. After they take a private lesson, students return a second time each week to practice with their fellow band members for an upcoming show. "With a concert date on the calendar, they work harder, learn quicker," Ross says.

And they look forward to it.

"How many 14-year-olds get together and say, 'Let's go to my house and practice Mozart together,'" he asks. Point well taken.

Students play loud music by the likes of The Who and Led Zeppelin, "with an electric guitar in hand."

Paul Green—think of the Jack Black movie of the same name, "School of Rock"—came up with the idea in 1998, after deciding he was a better teacher than rock star. The school became a franchise once Green understood the business was replicable. When parents of his students started approaching him to open schools in the suburbs, he had his pool



**Matt Ross played** a little guitar himself before becoming president of The School of Rock.

of franchisee candidates.

The model employs "real working musicians" as teachers, and the instruments taught include everything you'd find in a rock band, including vocals.

The student ratio is 60/40 boys to girls and the core group is ages 8 to 18, Ross says.

For the rehearsal groups, kids are grouped by skill level and instrument—how they do it is part of their proprietary system.

What takes the school out of traditional, in-home music lessons is that students have an opportunity to play live music in rock-style venues. The All Stars—handpicked by Green—tour the country, playing music festivals. "They play hundreds of shows to audiences of 50 to 20,000," Ross says. "A lot of kids go on to college, still playing in bands and writing music."

One of Green's success stories is brother and sister duo, Eric and Julie Slick, who went on to be part of The Adrian Belew Power Trio. Julie learned to play bass at the school and her younger brother was brought in to play drums. Eric went on to teach drums at the Philadelphia school.

"For me success is that kids learn to play and play forever," Ross says. Being a creative kid who may not be good at sports can play havoc on a child's self-esteem, Ross points out. Music



### At a glance

**Franchise Fee:** \$67,500

**Ad fund:** 1 percent

**Royalty:** 7 percent

**Tagline:** "Saving rock 'n roll one kid at a time."



**Paul Green, founder** of the Paul Green School of Rock Music, gives kids music they actually want to play.

can be the outlet that lets the kid "hit it out of the park."

The franchise fee is \$67,500 and the royalty is 8 percent, with 1 percent going into the brand fund. The target franchisee is a career musician, but Ross says that "more often than not, it's a successful business person with a love for music." Most either have kids who play or they played when they were kids.

But that doesn't mean they'll take anyone who has ever held a guitar. "We're discriminating," he says. "My goal is to have a 100 percent success rate."

Currently there are 29 schools open, with another 50 units in development agreements. And while, they don't want a School of Rock on every corner, they play equally well in suburbs and cities. And even overseas. "When you're singing The Beatles, it's a universal language," Ross says.

Check out the Web site. Each school has a Web page with locally inspired graphics that rocks. [ET](#)

# In the zone

## Company builds muscle fast by going slow

SuperSlow Zone gives its clients a workout, and they don't even need to change out of their work clothes.

**M**ost of us don't relish the idea of exercise. We don't have the time, the motivation, nor the interest, But we know we need to. Therein lies the rub.

So it seems a little disconcert-

ing that a fast-growing franchise entering the fitness fray is called SuperSlow Zone. The exercises may be done slowly on Nautilus equipment wearing your work, not workout, clothes, but the time frame is fast—20 minutes twice a week.

The idea behind SuperSlow, is based on a \$3.2 million study that came out of the University of Florida School of Medicine about 26 years ago, which tested the effects of exercise on women with osteoporosis, according to Madeline Ross, CEO and founder of SuperSlow Zone franchise.

The study found that the positioning of the equipment and the client was critical to building muscle quickly. So, for instance, on a leg press, the person extends their legs for 10 seconds and then retracts them for 10 seconds. The exercise is done with heavy weights until muscle fatigue. There are numerous pieces of equipment that give a full-body workout, where the trainers "track time under load" for that 10/10 cadence.

"Muscle is built during recovery," Ross says. "We produce muscle three-times as fast (as traditional methods). Clients love it."

The program has been accredited by the IACET, an organization that also accredits the American Physical Therapy Association, Ross says.

The locations SuperSlow Zone moves into characterizes the clientele. Rather than traditional gyms, the centers are positioned as professional or clinical offices. "They look like a



### At a glance

**SuperSlow Zone**

**Corporate version:**  
SuperSlow Fitwell

**Franchise fee:**  
\$40,000 for individual locations

**Desired partners:**  
Multi-unit franchisees who can develop territories

**Units open:** 30/40  
in pipeline

lawyer or CPA's office and they don't smell like a gym," she says. Décor is "clean, lighted, devoid of distraction," and the temperature is kept at 68 degrees—to eliminate the need for showering after a session. And as with professional buildings, clients are able to park right outside the main door and walk in.

While each client has their own personal trainer, three training sessions could be going on at the same time, as exercisers rotate through the equipment.

"We target the 40- to 60-year-old, busy, non-exercise lover," Ross points out. "At 40 on up, they've been on the planet long enough to know they should exercise." If not intellectually, then by the minor to major health issues aging presents.

*SuperSlow continued on 25*

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by Entrepreneur Magazine, 2008 and 2009



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– Robert Woods, Master Franchise Owner, Charleston, SC

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# 'CSI' (your town)

## DNA testing gets community minded

DNA Services of America can help clients determine paternity or see whether they have genetic markers for certain diseases, among other things.

And it can give a scientific boost to that genealogical hobby.

In a single day, Jeffrey Martin's business might settle a paternity suit, customize a genetically correct nutritional program or help reconstruct a family tree.

He's tested the saliva and blood on driver and passenger air bags to determine who was actually behind the wheel in a devastating car accident. And he's helped another client who wanted to see if she had any genetic markers for breast cancer, after her mother and sister were diagnosed with the disease.

Testing DNA is no longer the domain of crime labs. Martin's Lafayette, Louisiana-based DNA Services of America, has brought it to the community level. And the uses for his services are more diverse than determining paternity. One of the largest groups to benefit from the science is "recreational genealogists," the second most popular hobby in the U.S., Martin says.

"We know we're selling information—peace of mind," he says. They're also selling a trusted relationship. "Our clients often share

their stories with us...Our case managers are located within the community and they'll be there throughout the entire process," he stresses.

Some of the more traditional reasons for testing DNA are to determine health risks—whether you're an identical twin (not always evident by just looking)—and who really is related to whom when there's property or money to inherit. But a new twist on the scientific advances is to determine a person's nutritional needs. A person's genes are analyzed and the tests provide the information needed to individually formulate "genetically guided" nutritional supplements. The first month's supply of supplements are "delivered directly to our clients," Martin says.

"(Working with) DNA is attractive, 'sexy,' if you will," Martin says. "Shows like 'CSI' may have created a public awareness" of DNA testing.

The collection process is simple: a cheek swab, which is sent to a laboratory. The cost depends on the results being sought. A typi-



### At a glance

**Franchise Fee:**  
\$30,000 based  
on population

**Ad fund:** 2 percent

**Royalty:** none, but  
there is a charge for  
services

cal paternity test runs \$450. For other results, the panels can run from \$50 to \$175.

This may seem pricey when an Internet site claims they can do a paternity test for as low as \$79.

"Test results are only helpful if people are certain they are true," Martin says. "Like most products and services, DNA tests are not all equal."

*DNA continued on 70*

## DIGIKIDS®

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## Too Hotties Haircuts

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'09 RANK	'08 RANK	'07 RANK	BRAND	FRANCHISOR	STARTED FRANCHISING IN	INDUSTRY	SECTOR	2002-2007 AVERAGE UNIT GROWTH %
38	20	NA	Heidi's Brooklyn Deli/Soup N' Juice	Naples Franchising Systems, Inc.	2005	Fast Food Restaurants	Fast Food - Other	383%
39	44	NA	AccuDiagnostics	AccuDiagnostics Franchise Group, LLC	2005	Security-Related	Security- Products and Services	381%
40	NA	NA	Children's Technology Workshop	CTWorkshop Licensing USA, Inc.	2004	Child-Related	Children's Educational Program	358%
41	23	NA	Billboard Connection	Billboard Connection, Inc.	2004	Business-Related	Advertising and Promotions	358%
42	NA	NA	DIGIKIDS	DIGIKIDS, Inc.	2004	Child-Related	Security	356%
43	32	NA	Senior Helpers	SH Franchising, LLC	2005	Health & Fitness	In-Home Health Care	350%
44	NA	NA	Tossed	Tossed Franchise Corporation	2004	Fast Food Restaurants	Soups and Salad Shops	350%
45	NA	NA	Original SoupMan	Kiosk Concepts, Inc.	2004	Fast Food Restaurants	Soups and Salad Shops	348%
46	5	NA	Parable	Parable Franchising, LLC	2004	Retail Stores	Retail Stores - General	344%
47	14	NA	Door-To-Door Dry Cleaning	Door-To-Door Dry Cleaning Franchise System	2005	Services-General	Dry Cleaning/ Laundry	342%
48	21	NA	TeamLogic IT	TeamLogic, Inc.	2005	Computer Products and Services	Computer - Other	336%
49	24	NA	Yakety Yak Wireless	Yakety Yak Wireless, Inc.	2005	Services-General	Fax, Communication, Cellular	330%
50	NA	NA	Chester's	National Flour Mills and Supply Company, L	2004	Fast Food Restaurants	Chicken Fast Food	318%
51	NA	NA	Oogles N Googles	Oogles N Googles Franchising, LLC	2004	Child-Related	Fitness and Amusement Centers	308%
52	NA	NA	Entrée Vous Kitchens	Entree Vous Franchising, LLC	2005	Retail Food	Specialty/Gourmet Retail Foods	306%
53	12	NA	Facelogic	Facelogic International, Inc.	2005	Beauty-Related	Cosmetic Aids/ Services	292%
54	NA	NA	Wings Etc.	Wings Etc., Inc.	2005	Restaurants (Sit-Down)	Sports Bar	292%
55	NA	NA	Too Hotties	W.B.B.B.S., Inc.	2005	Beauty-Related	Beauty - General	283%



FRANdata is the franchise industry's source for objective information and analysis. With a vast store of information about franchisors, the franchise concepts they sell, and the franchisees who invest in their units, we help with business planning, competitive analysis, and targeted marketing. Our goal is to help the franchise world make better decisions through information, research and analysis. To learn more about FRANdata, visit [www.frandata.com](http://www.frandata.com) or call 800.485.9570.