



**charleston - digital - corridor**

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

02

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

**[2008]**

2009

**innovate.**



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**“The Digital Corridor  
will continue leveraging  
its growing network  
to create opportunity  
during these uncertain  
economic times.”**

**– Ernest Andrade  
Director, Charleston Digital Corridor**

**A**midst the economic uncertainty gripping our nation and the world, trying to make predictions for the year ahead is challenging. While many of us are questioning the fundamentals of our economic system, it is encouraging to note that Charleston's knowledge based community continues to thrive.

Employment levels at Digital Corridor companies have remained strong in 2008. Today, there are 239 employment opportunities available in the Digital Corridor's Talent Portal and, according to Corridor Members hiring in 2009, this robust trend will continue. Further, the 2008 average wage level for Digital Corridor Companies is again over twice the state and regional per-capita wage levels. It is also important to note that while many companies may not add a large number of jobs, they are seeking better, more experienced candidates. These professionals will take our knowledge-based companies to the next level while training the others around them.

While opinions about when the economy will turn around is as varied as the number of business publications in circulation, the one thing on which they all agree is that the turnaround will happen in 2009. So rather than wait for this turnaround, the Digital Corridor, a leader in implementing value added business initiatives, will deliver even more value to our customer – Charleston's knowledge based companies.

While this is not the first time the City of Charleston has been through an economic crisis, it thrived by leveraging its strengths and utilizing

the combined strengths of local, regional and state governments, public/private partnerships and the private community. The recent partnership between the City of Charleston, the Medical University of South Carolina and South Carolina Research Authority to redevelop the old Mattress Factory on peninsular Charleston into a world class Innovation Center is another tangible example of creating opportunity in adversity and thriving during economic uncertainty.

Respectfully,



Ernest Andrade

Director, Charleston Digital Corridor

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**“Growing Charleston’s  
knowledge economy will  
require the Digital Corridor  
to stay highly focused on  
business development  
despite the current  
challenges.**

**– Kirk King  
Founding President & CEO, CSS, Inc.**



Since joining the Charleston Digital Corridor Foundation Board in 2004, I have experienced firsthand how the organization develops programming that enables member companies to adapt to an ever changing business environment. The Digital Corridor helped CSS cut through the red tape and deal with business issues not directly related to our client satisfaction. As a result, my company has been able to concentrate on customer acquisition, retention and improving our bottom line.

Value added business assistance is a critical component for companies particularly given the present sobering global economic conditions. While we cannot control the current macroeconomic environment, the Digital Corridor must continue to provide relevant business programming and services while aggressively positioning Charleston's knowledge economy for future growth.

To further expand Charleston's knowledge economy, new avenues of innovation must be explored. Made evident by company press releases and media coverage in general, companies are allocating a lot of money to the development and adoption of clean and green technology. Supporting the advancement of clean technology locally will allow us to capture some of those dollars in our community. Surya Biofertilizers represents the first company in the Digital Corridor capitalizing on clean technology and demonstrating that true innovation occurs when clean technology intersects with affordability.

In order to turn the economic tide in our community, the Digital

Corridor must continue to focus on business development while further leveraging its resource network. Positive strides have already been made with the redevelopment of an old industrial building in downtown Charleston into an Innovation Center. It is my belief that this building will serve as the incubator for new ideas and will fuel Charleston's knowledge economy in the years to come.

Looking forward to 2009 I know the road to success will be filled with many obstacles, but I am confident the market will recover and appropriately value our strategic initiatives.

Sincerely,



Kirk King

Founding President & CEO, CSS, Inc.  
Chairman, Charleston Digital Corridor Foundation





**Conceptual Rendering of the Charleston Innovation Center**

### **Brief**

In 2008 the growth of Charleston's knowledge economy was supported by local and international investments and the news of a new research center on peninsular Charleston. In addition to capital investments and infrastructure development, the Digital Corridor extended its reach into international markets with the commencement of UK-based Myconostica Ltd. and Surya Biofertilizers in Charleston.



### **Myconostica Ltd. Closes Oversubscribed \$7.7 Million Round, Establishes US Headquarters in Charleston**

Myconostica Ltd, a Manchester UK-based medical diagnostic company specializing in rapid and highly specific tests for life-threatening fungal infections, announces that it has closed a \$7.7 million oversubscribed round of financing from a number of leading private equity international investors. The new funds will be used to launch the company's first two products and establish the new US headquarters in Charleston, SC.

**source:** Myconostica – 04/09/2008

### **S.C. Helps Sabal Grow with Funding**

A two-year-old Daniel Island health care technology startup that is developing a mobile medicine cabinet has been administered a check to help grow its business. The funding is the second portion – or “tranche” in Wall Street lingo – of a roughly \$2.6 million pot of money that Sabal Medical Inc. raised with the help of the state of South Carolina earlier this year.

“We closed on this tranche as a result of reaching key customer milestones,” Bill Park, Sabal’s president and chief executive, said in a statement. “With our sales pipeline growing, we have some very exciting times ahead of us, and the additional funds will allow us to continue our commercialization efforts already under way and scale up as sales growth continues.”

**source:** John P. McDermott, The Post and Courier – 07/28/2008

### **Old Mattress Factory Christened as New Research Center**

The Mayor joined members of City Council, the Medical University of South Carolina and the S.C. Research Authority to announce a collaborative among the organizations to create a center aimed at fostering research, particularly in the health sciences.

“In times to come, when people realize we’ve become a national center for high-tech, intellectual, knowledge-based jobs, you will be able to trace that back to this moment,” Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. said.

**source:** Molly Parker, Charleston Regional Business Journal – 09/24/2008

### **Surya Biofertilizers Closes Initial Funding Round and Commences Operations in Charleston, South Carolina**

Surya Biofertilizers, LLC, a privately held company, offering proven, safe, environmentally-friendly fertilization products, announces it has commenced operations in Charleston, SC. Surya offers competitively priced, higher-yielding and pathogen-free alternatives to synthetic fertilizers for the agriculture, turf, nursery, landscaping and land reclamation industries. The funding for Surya Biofertilizers is comprised of Charleston-based investors, led by Jonathan Butler, co-founder of Automated Trading Desk.

**source:** Surya Biofertilizers – 10/29/08



**“The introduction of clean technologies is the next wave of entrepreneurship.”**

**– Jonathan Butler  
Co-Founder, Automated Trading Desk**

The mission of the Digital Corridor is to attract, nurture and promote Charleston's knowledge economy. Founded in 2001, as part of Charleston's overall economic development strategy, the Digital Corridor exists as both geographic sections of the City of Charleston and as a comprehensive set of core and value-added initiatives to benefit start-up and existing companies as well as those considering expansion or relocation.

The Digital Corridor team is comprised of relevant participants from the private, public and academic sectors. It is positioned to serve knowledge based companies as the portal to government, infrastructure, real estate, professional resources, financial incentives, capital, a trained workforce and peer to peer networking.

By knowledge based we mean a company or organization that utilizes or offers new or incrementally beneficial approaches to their respective fields. The types of companies include, but are not limited to, those in the fields of biotechnology and medical devices, telecom and network design services, software development and services, clean technology, professional consulting, web design and interactive marketing, motion picture/television production, defense and homeland security, engineering and technology products.

The Digital Corridor offers an expanded array of targeted programming and business services. Its initiatives include the Talent Portal, Corridor Roundtable, Touchdown Space, Corridor Fund, "Fridays @ the Corridor," and Corridor Properties. In addition

to these services, the Digital Corridor hosts two networking events – the Corridor Bash and the iFive:k. The Digital Corridor also assists with streamlined permitting and introduction to public officials and private vendors, all of which facilitate a company's transitional and ongoing business needs. The overriding goal is to offer tangible resources to Corridor companies. These companies validate our objectives to:

- Raise the per-capita wages in Charleston, and
- Create employment for South Carolina graduates while reducing brain drain

Funding for the Charleston Digital Corridor is provided through membership dues, support from businesses and individuals dedicated to the development of a high-wage, knowledge economy and the City of Charleston.



### Brief

History has proven that diversity in employment is critical to a community's overall economic vibrancy. In the Charleston region, the current economic drivers include the Port of Charleston, Medical University of South Carolina, visitor industry, SPAWAR and the manufacturing sector. The Digital Corridor is strengthening Charleston's economy by creating employment opportunities while raising the per capita income of Charleston residents.

### **Attract, nurture and promote Charleston's knowledge economy**

The Charleston Digital Corridor utilizes a combination of state and local business incentives and leverages the area's superior livability, to appeal to knowledge based business. Once a company has located to Charleston, the Digital Corridor draws on private and public resources to assist them in cultivating their business.

### **Develop and retain a highly educated talent pool**

Recognizing that a highly skilled workforce is critical to growing Charleston's knowledge economy, the Digital Corridor provides a linkage between qualified career seekers and knowledge based employers while acting as a liaison between higher education institutions and the corporate community.

### **Provide on-going business assistance**

The Digital Corridor paves the way for companies, ranging from early stage startups to mature enterprises, wishing to commence operations or relocate to Charleston. Assistance includes, but is not limited to, capital and financial incentives, site acquisition, access to talent, networking, temporary office space and an introduction to qualified professionals in the knowledge community.

### **Support & drive public and private initiatives that benefit Digital Corridor companies**

The Digital Corridor staff complements regional economic development efforts by staying abreast of international, state and local policy initiatives that benefit Digital Corridor companies. Further, the Digital Corridor initiates and supports favorable legislation that has a positive impact on Charleston's knowledge economy.

### **Market the Charleston Digital Corridor as a compelling, infrastructure-rich place to live and work**

The Digital Corridor's marketing effort is tailored to reinforce Charleston's reputation as the premier destination for knowledge based companies. Charleston's unique blend of historic buildings, southern culture, pristine beaches and corporate infrastructure offers the optimal living and working environment.

### **Engage relevant resources whose goals and objectives align with the mission of the Charleston Digital Corridor**

The Digital Corridor's support of Charleston's knowledge economy is facilitated through the many contacts and relationships nurtured by Digital Corridor staff, collaborating partners and the City of Charleston.



**Fridays @ the Corridor**

**Got TALENT?**

TALENT PORTAL

**EXPERIENCED**

CORRIDOR ROUNDTABLE

**TOUCHDOWN**

**Space**

Fridays@the  
**Corridor**



Corridor  
**Properties**

**START IT UP!**

CORRIDOR FUND



## Talent Portal

Since inception, the Talent Portal has been pivotal in matching potential employees with member companies seeking talent. With the introduction of a daily snapshot showing the number of jobs available and a simplified skills bank repository, the Talent Portal features an accurate picture of employment opportunities within Charleston's knowledge economy.

## Corridor Roundtable

The Corridor Roundtable has evolved into a network of professional resources committed to further developing Charleston's knowledge economy. The Resource Directory features business professionals, investors, consultants and other individuals relevant to the needs of our members. In 2008 our professional resources assisted members with legal advice, human resources, financial assistance, public relations, and marketing.

## Touchdown Space

Over the past year the Touchdown Space was occupied by Noah Schiffman, a former black-hat hacker turned security consultant to Fortune 500 companies and various government agencies. Mr. Schiffman moved on to accept the role as CIO/CSO of a Department of Defense contractor. The Touchdown Space is currently occupied by Gregory Zaic, a Principal with Nexus Medical Partners and staff from UK-based Myconostica during the transition to their US Headquarters in Charleston, SC.

## Fridays @ the Corridor

The monthly "Fridays @ the Corridor" series continues to educate and network our members and resources through value-added presentations and lively group discussions. This year we heard from experts in business strategy, marketing, public relations, human resources and employment law. "Fridays @ the Corridor" presentations are now available as Podcasts on our website allowing those interested to stay informed even if unable to attend.

## Corridor Properties

The Digital Corridor maintains a partial list of desirable properties and locations for knowledge based businesses. During the course of the last year the Digital Corridor has assisted several members and resource partners in finding space to fit their unique needs.

## Corridor Fund

The Charleston Digital Corridor operates a small fund to support early-stage companies. In addition to the Corridor Fund, the Digital Corridor provides guidance and resources to members seeking to raise start-up capital, follow-on funding or secure a loan. Over the past year, three Digital Corridor members have successfully closed on funding received from our financial resources.





**Corridor Bash**

### **Brief**

The Digital Corridor's marketing effort is balanced between recognizing Charleston's most innovative companies and networking local knowledge professionals while promoting Charleston as "the" destination for entrepreneurs.

## iFive:k

The Charleston Digital Corridor Foundation hosted the second annual evening Innovator's 5K run / walk / shuffle on Thursday, April 17th, 2008. With start and finish lines at the Charleston Maritime Center, runners and walkers traveled through historic downtown Charleston and finished with a post-race celebration on the Harbor.

With over 300 participants, including 23 company-sponsored teams, the second annual iFive:k race was a huge success. The venue for the race, undoubtedly one of the best in the country, has fast become a favorite with participants and provides a great opportunity for Corridor members, resources and others to 'actively' network.



## Contributions to Education

The Charleston Digital Corridor Foundation donated a portion of the proceeds from the second annual iFive:k race in the form of scholarships to Burke High School graduating seniors Blakely Frederick and Felicia Fleming, both seeking higher education in a technology related field.

In July of this year, the Charleston Digital Corridor Foundation was a sponsor of the C.E. Williams Middle School robotics team's trip to Suzhou, China. The team represented South Carolina as one of only six teams in the country at the RoboCup's World Championship.

## Charleston Life Sciences

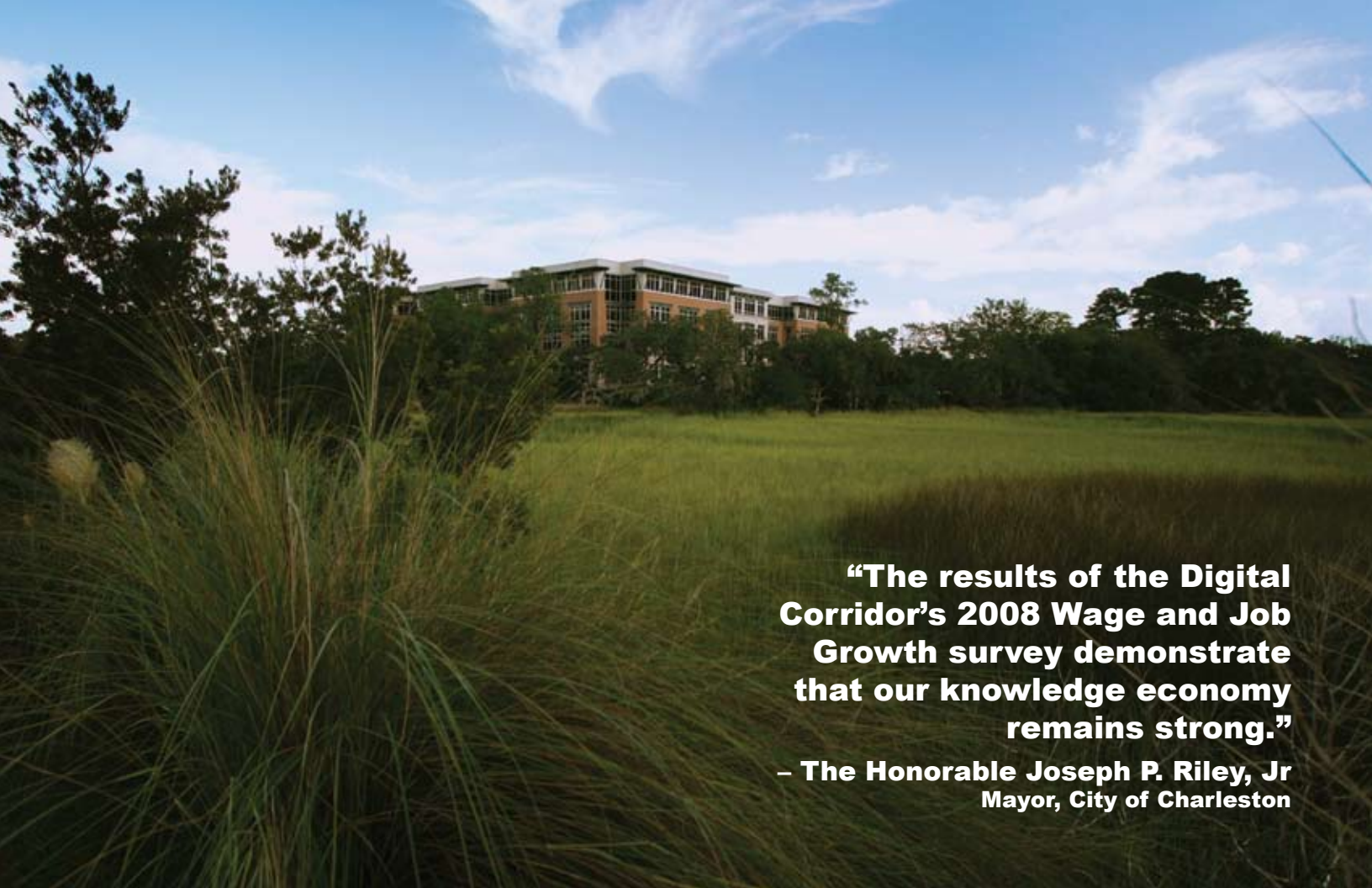
Charleston Life Sciences enters the second year of uniting, engaging and promoting life science companies in Charleston. Mayor Joseph P. Riley attended the January Quarterly Meeting of Life Sciences in 2008 and asked members of the group what they saw as the number one issue encumbering life science growth in Charleston. The overwhelming response was the need for physical infrastructure (wet labs). In September of 2008, the Mayor formally announced a partnership with South Carolina Research Authority, Medical University of South Carolina and City of Charleston for the development of a new research center in downtown Charleston. With this facility slated to open in fall 2009, the group can now focus on other pressing issues facing life sciences including the acquisition of talent and raising capital.



## Corridor Bash

The 5th Annual Corridor Bash was held at the Charleston Maritime Center on Thursday, October 9th, 2008. The beautiful setting and casual environment provided the perfect backdrop for our members and resource providers to gather for what has become the premier networking event for Charleston's knowledge economy.





**“The results of the Digital  
Corridor’s 2008 Wage and Job  
Growth survey demonstrate  
that our knowledge economy  
remains strong.”**

**– The Honorable Joseph P. Riley, Jr  
Mayor, City of Charleston**

## Sixth Annual Wage Survey

In its sixth annual Wage and Job Growth survey, the Charleston Digital Corridor is pleased to report that the average wage for reporting Digital Corridor companies in 2008 is \$76,144. This figure is more than double the average annual wage for the State of South Carolina and the Charleston-North Charleston statistical metropolitan/non-metropolitan area. Companies participating in the survey also reported employment growth of 213 employees over the past twelve months.

The latest data available from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (May 2007) reports the average wage in the Charleston-North Charleston statistical metropolitan/non-metropolitan area is \$35,540 while South Carolina's average wage for all occupations is \$34,650.

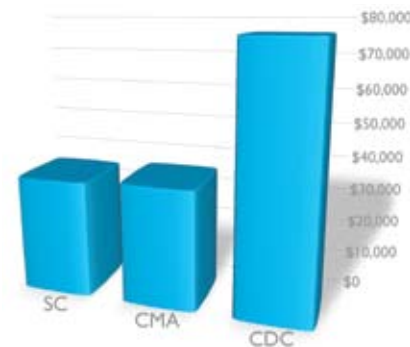
"It is wonderful to be reporting these numbers today," said Charleston Digital Corridor Director, Ernest Andrade. "As of this morning, our companies have approximately 273 career opportunities posted on the Digital Corridor's Talent Portal. With increased capital inflows into Digital Corridor companies, I predict that Charleston's knowledge economy will hold its own in 2009," he added.

"The results of the Digital Corridor's 2008 Wage and Job Growth survey demonstrate that our knowledge economy is strong," Mayor Joseph P. Riley stated. "The recently announced partnership between the Medical University, South Carolina Research Authority and the City of Charleston to develop an Innovation Center in downtown Charleston demonstrates the City's commitment to leveraging our

assets to strengthen and grow Charleston's innovation economy," he added.

## 2008 Wage Survey

Average annual wages for South Carolina (SC), Charleston Metro Area (CMA), and the Charleston Digital Corridor (CDC).




SC = South Carolina Annual Mean Wage Estimates, May 2007 (US Dept. of Labor - Bureau of Labor Statistics)

CMA = Charleston Metropolitan / Non-Metro Statistical Area Mean Wage Estimate, May 2007 (US Dept. of Labor - Bureau of Labor Statistics)

CDC = Charleston Digital Corridor Annual Wage for Reporting Corridor Companies in 2008



A nighttime photograph of a city street. On the left, a multi-story light-colored building with many windows is visible. In the foreground, a palm tree stands on the sidewalk. The street is paved and has some parked cars further down. On the right, there are more buildings, some with arched doorways and balconies. A few flags are visible on poles. The sky is dark with some light clouds. The overall atmosphere is urban and historic.

**“The iFive:k provided an invaluable opportunity for our company to unite as a team in a positive, high energy atmosphere. I find it very refreshing to connect with like-minded professionals outside of the typical business environment. This is a not-to-be-missed event, and we look forward to participating again next year with much anticipation.”**

**– Mike Carter**  
**eGroup Principal Consultant**

## 2008-2009 Board of Directors

### **Kirk King**

Founding President and CEO, CSS, Inc.  
Chairman



### **Jonathan Alba**

COO, JSJ Pharmaceuticals  
Vice-Chairman



### **Jonathan Butler**

Co-Founder, Automated Trading Desk  
Secretary/Treasurer



### **Daniel Dechert**

President & CEO, NanoScreen  
Board Member



### **Mason Holland**

Chairman of the Board and Co-Founder, Benefitfocus  
Board Member



### **Stephen M. Lanier, Ph.D.**

Associate Provost for Research and Pharmacology  
Professor, MUSC  
Board Member



### **The Honorable Joseph P. Riley, Jr.**

Mayor, City of Charleston  
Board Member

The Charleston Digital Corridor Foundation (CDCF) is a 501 (c) 6 non-profit corporation. It supports the development of the Charleston Digital Corridor through an expanded array of programming and networks. The Foundation is governed by a distinguished seven member Board of Directors.

The CDCF enables the Digital Corridor to:

- Expand programming to benefit Charleston's growing knowledge-based community,
- Develop membership and sponsorship programs making the Digital Corridor self sufficient, and
- Provide services to knowledge based companies regardless of their physical location.

Advanced Chromatography Systems  
 Advantage Chromatography  
 Applied Technology & Management  
 AT&T  
 Barefoot Group  
 Barnwell Whaley Patterson & Helms, LLC  
 BB&T  
 Belimed  
 Benefitfocus, Inc.  
 Blackbaud, Inc.  
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 C3 Technology, Inc.  
 Cantey Technology  
 CarePoint  
 Charleston Wealth Management  
 Chastain Construction, Inc.  
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 Connect Solutions, Inc.  
 CSS  
 Cyber Sprocket Labs  
 Daniel Island Company  
 Digital CPE, LLC  
 Digital Lifestyle Outfitters  
 Dockview Productions

DP Professionals  
 ECPI College of Technology  
 EDDSA LLC  
 eGroup  
 eThority  
 FirstString Research, Inc.  
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 Nexsen Pruet, LLC  
 Penn Atlantic, Inc.  
 Plecco Technologies  
 Premiere Communications & Consulting  
 ROK Technologies  
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 Rotomotion, LLC  
 Sabal Medical, Inc.  
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 Shippers Commonwealth  
 Slant Media, LLC  
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 SourceNet Medical Billing Associates, LLC  
 Step Ahead Web Strategies  
 Surya Biofertilizers  
 T-Mobile  
 Technology Partners Management Group  
 Telogical Systems  
 thatworks  
 Trevelino/Keller Communications Group  
 WareOnEarth Communications, Inc.  
 Workplace Benefits



**fin.**



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