

SCORECARD | DALLAS' TOP 100 COMPANIES



Michael Hogue/Staff Artist

Fewer public companies

The ranks of publicly held companies based in North Texas have fallen steadily from 2005's 200 to 131 this year. Reasons behind the drop include:

Bankruptcy. The recession took its toll, forcing some companies to seek bankruptcy protection.

Mergers and acquisitions. Energy and telecommunications saw a wave of acquisitions shrink the number of companies. Private equity firms also snapped up some of the region's fastest-growing firms.

Moving. Several companies moved their headquarters elsewhere, including overseas.

On the bright side

Local economic development officials say they're not overly concerned about the drop and point to positive signs:

Jobs. The region didn't see jobs plunge like they did in other areas in the recession, and the area appears poised for job growth.

More than HQs. Dallas has attracted more regional divisions and North American headquarters for foreign firms.

Recruiting efforts. Recent trade missions by local officials to California and Illinois may pay off.

Still thriving

By ERIC TORBENSON
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For an economy that's outperformed most others, North Texas has seen a surprising decline in the number of publicly traded companies.

The region featured 200-plus companies in *The Dallas Morning News'* annual list as recently as 2005. This year's edition tracks 131, down from 137 a year ago.

Fewer companies based here translates into fewer decision-makers, fewer high-level jobs and perhaps a tougher environment for charities looking for corporate sponsorships. But top business leaders say that the region continues to thrive and that the decline isn't wor-

Dallas' list of public companies may have shed a few names, but the region is fertile ground for job growth



Inside

See the rankings of the top 100 public companies in Dallas-Fort Worth based on 2010 revenue. 7-9D



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risome just yet. "If it's a one- or two-year thing, it's not a concern," said

Jim Oberwetter, president of the Dallas Regional Chamber. "If what we're seeing is a real

trend, then it's something to be concerned about."

What matters more in his mind are how many jobs come from the companies rather than the raw number of firms based here. He notes that Hewlett-Packard Co.'s acquisition of Plano-based Electronic Data Systems Corp. gave it room to expand operations here, and while North Texas may be losing a headquarters, many more jobs could flow from the transaction.

"HP could easily add 3,000, 4,000 more jobs here," he said. "That's the kind of growth potential here that makes me less concerned about the total number of

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ECONOMY

Dallas and high tech: a rich history

Area's wealth of expertise keeps businesses flourishing as landscape continuously shifts

By VICTOR GODINEZ
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The Dallas-area technology landscape is shifting again.

AT&T Inc. and Texas Instruments Inc., the transplant and the institution, are driving the region's latest tech reinvention with a pair of multibillion-dollar acquisitions.

But those companies won't necessarily get a stranglehold on the region's technology economy.

Indeed, if there's a lesson to be learned from those massive growth spurts and others before, it's that the next round of local high-tech innovation and business success could come from anywhere.

"Because our environment is rich in technically strong people, entrepreneurs, investors, it has been able to thrive in multiple time frames and attract and nurture many different kinds of technically rich businesses," said Robert Potter, a Las Colinas-based business and technical consultant at R.J. Potter Co. "Some have come and gone, others have survived, and others have evolved as the opportunities have presented themselves."

It's easy to forget or miss the complex history of the Dallas-area tech economy as new technologies and companies emerge and thrive while their predecessors are

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Strategist teaches workers to dazzle

"Visualize blue," Steve Harvill says as a blank giant video screen transforms into a spectrum of blues at a recent presentation to product designers at J.C. Penney Corp.

"Now visualize dazzling blue."

An iridescent butterfly takes over.

The 55-year-old principal of Creative Ventures Inc. in Dallas is driving home a point about how we think.

The first vision represents a rudimentary idea. Useful, perhaps, but hardly game-changing. The second is the truly remarkable — you can't get it out of your mind.

Too many of us think in



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a single shade of blue — be it navy, baby or periwinkle, Harvill says. "The hippocampus of your brain has stuck you in a comfort zone. If you don't break out of it and recalibrate your thinking, you'll never get your ideas to dazzling blue."

Corporations around the country — AT&T Inc., Apple Inc., Pfizer Inc., Wells Fargo & Co. and Southwest Airlines Co., to

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Next Sunday: Manage your wealth

In today's economy, few of us feel rich. But we all need to make the most of the assets we have, and that's where wealth management comes in. The May 22 Business section will include stories on estate planning, local hedge funds, investing in gold, the high-end home market and more.

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