



21 FIRMS WORTH FOLLOWING

These firms may not have cracked our CI Industry Leaders lists, but they are blazing trails through the industry with their unique business approaches. *By Tom LeBlanc*

WE ARE EXTREMELY PROUD of our CI Industry Leaders lists, the top five integrators in eight important vertical markets. We feel confident that each list contains five integrators that are truly at the top of the industry when it comes to serving clients in those markets.

That being said, it's obvious that the firms on our lists aren't the only industry leaders. Indeed, there are dozens of integration firms not reflected on CI Industry Leaders that are blazing trails.

We aren't second-guessing our choices. Absolutely not. As editors covering this industry, however, we regret not getting a chance to write about some of the exciting, trend-setting integration firms that didn't crack our lists.

They may not be CI Industry Leaders, according to our 2012 lists, but they are indeed integration firms worth following. Check out these 21 impressive companies.

ACCENT ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS INTEGRATORS Bridgeville, Pa.

YOU KNOW THOSE residential integration firms that brazenly – yet half-heartedly – diversify and bid low on commercial projects, wreaking havoc on project margins and blackening the eye of the industry? These aren't those guys. These are smart business people that in 2008, despite a healthy residential business, saw a need to diversify. Its transition

to commercial was anything but impulsive, as documented by CI sister publication *CE Pro*. First, the company focused on tightening operations, getting better at tracking costs and estimating man-hours. Then the Florida-based firm strategically launched a Pennsylvania location to focus on fire, burglary, surveillance, network infrastructure, access control and

65% This many of its commercial projects were in K-12 and higher-ed markets.

audio/video. The 13-year-old company with 75 employees and now four locations has appeared on *Inc.* magazine's fastest growing companies list four straight years.

	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Revenue (2011)	Total Revenue from Commercial Projects (2011)	No. of 2011 Installations	Percentage of Projects Featuring 3+ Product Categories*	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE** DERIVED FROM									
								Offices	K-12	Higher-Ed	Healthcare	Hotels	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Entertainment
Accent Electronic Systems Integrators accentesi.com HQ: BRIDGEVILLE, PA	4	75	13	\$19M	\$14M	300	65%	10%	55%	10%	5%	5%	5%	5%	0%	0%	5%

*FIND COMPLETE LIST OF PRODUCT CATEGORIES IN COMMERCIALINTEGRATOR.COM VERSION OF INDUSTRY LEADERS COVERAGE. **REFERS TO 2011 REVENUE.

KNOWLEDGE INFORMATION SOLUTIONS Virginia Beach, Va.

I ATTENDED some presentations on IT security during FOSE 2012, an IT conference and tradeshow focused on the government market. My major takeaway: Demand for cyber security measures is in its infancy and companies that can deliver it are positioned for tremendous

growth. KIS certainly fits that mold. The \$69.5 million integrator is very focused on helping clients overcome IT challenges, including security measures. At this point, the firm appears to be overwhelmingly focused on the government market, but cyber security concerns aren't lim-

100%
All of KIS's reported revenue comes from the government vertical market.

ited to those clients. It'll be interesting to see how KIS evolves as IT's roles and risks change.

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								Offices	K-12	Higher-Ed	Healthcare	Hotels	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Entertainment
Knowledge Information Solutions <i>kisinc.net</i> HQ: VIRGINIA BEACH, VA	2	49	29	\$69.5M	\$750,000	6	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%

AUDIO VIDEO SYSTEMS Chantilly, Va.

GOVERNMENT ISN'T ONE of the vertical markets in our inaugural CI Industry Leaders coverage. Had it been AVS certainly would have cracked that elite list. I had first-hand looks at the company's emphasis on engineered systems, appreciation of clients' classified information and its big-picture strategizing during a visit to president Peter Barthelson's

72,000-square-foot Barthelson Plaza, perhaps the most impressive integration firm headquarters I've seen. The company's grasp of the government market is documented in *CI's* June 2012 cover article, and AVS indeed earns 80 percent of its revenues in the government market. VP of business development Barry Goldin acknowledges that he'd

4 AVS did this many integration projects in 2011 earning \$71 million

like to see more diversification, but he'd like to see the 20 percent grow as opposed to the 80 percent shrink. If AVS commits itself to additional verticals the way it has seized the government market, it's sure to win a good chunk of some integrators' business.

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								Offices	K-12	Higher-Ed	Healthcare	Hotels	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Entertainment
Audio Video Systems <i>avsinc.net</i> HQ: CHANTILLY, VA	3	150	20	\$71M	\$71M	4	100%	25%	0%	10%	15%	0%	10%	80%	0%	25%	

AVITECTURE Sterling, Va.

AVITECTURE IS ONE OF THOSE integrators that has been around forever — 40 years, to be precise — and is structured such that it will always be around. One might expect a four-decade-old integration firm to struggle with AV/IT convergence, but Avitecture reports that

20% Avitecture included video walls in this percentage of its 323 projects in 2011.

25 percent of its projects in 2011 include IT solutions. One might expect that with its close proximity to Washington, D.C., the firm would rely on the government market, but its projects are well distributed through nine

vertical markets. Painting Avitecture as "solid" probably doesn't pay proper respect to its impressive portfolio of high-profile installations, but it probably makes some of those projects possible.

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Avitecture <i>avsinc.net</i> HQ: CHANTILLY, VA	1	90	40	\$28M	\$28M	323	100%	85%	5%	10%	5%	5%	2%	2%	20%	0%	6%

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ZELLER DIGITAL INNOVATIONS (ZDI) Normal, Ill.

FOR A FIRM THAT HAS ONLY EXISTED for five years, Zdi has already received a good deal of recognition. Lead engineer Jay McArdle, for instance, was recognized as the 2011 InfoComm Young AV Professional of the Year, and was invited to that year's InfoComm 100, an annual gathering of industry leaders

designed to assess and chart the course of the industry through an agenda designed by InfoComm's Leadership Development Committee. However, when *CI* asked Jay McArdle who the most important employee at Zdi is he cited his brother Aaron McArdle. "He is the face of Zdi and keeps everyone motivated and

80% Zdi does this percentage of its work in education markets, split about evenly between K-12 and higher education.

collectively moving towards the company's vision." Count *CI* among those in the industry that will follow Zdi.

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Zeller Digital Innovations (Zdi) zellerdigitalinnovations.com HQ: NORMAL, ILL.	1	27	5	\$4.5M	\$4.5M	350	95%	5%	40%	40%	10%	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%

COMMERCIAL SOUND & VIDEO Seattle

WITH \$7 MILLION REPORTED REVENUE in 2011, Commercial Sound & Video isn't the largest integrator, but it appears to be among the most diversified. It did business in eight vertical markets during 2011, but no market claimed more than 20 percent of the firm's

revenues. Healthcare, corporate, K-12, higher-education and government all claim between 15 and 20 percent of Commercial Sound & Video's revenues. The firm diversifies in other ways, positioning itself as a sustainability partner to its clients by touting support

100 Commercial Sound & Video reports this many 2011 projects.

of the Sustainable Technology Environments Program (STEP) and walking the walk by recycling packing materials, batteries, bottles and paper out of its headquarters.

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								Offices	K-12	Higher-Ed	Healthcare	Hotels	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Entertainment
Commercial Sound & Video commercialsound.com HQ: SEATTLE	1	30	24	\$7M	\$7M	100	100%	15%	15%	15%	20%	10%	5%	5%	15%	0%	0%

CORBETT TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS, INC. (CTSI) Chantilly, Va.

MOST COMPANIES are lucky to find one niche, but four-decade-plus-old integration firm CTSI has found several. It leverages its easy access to Washington, D.C., by doing half of its business in the government market, but it has also

carved out unique identities serving long-term senior housing facilities and houses of worship, K-12 and traditional healthcare facilities. CTSI markets itself as a one-vendor solution for its clients and backs that up by reporting to *CI* that

1969 CTSI was founded 43 years ago.

its 465 projects in 2011 included every product category we asked about — ranging from IT to surveillance to video walls to access control.

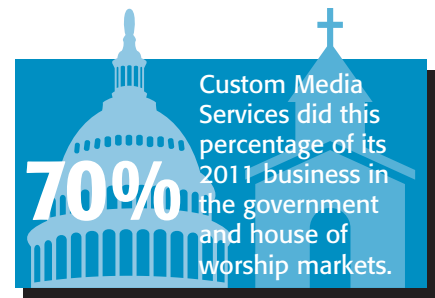
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								Offices	K-12	Higher-Ed	Healthcare	Hotels	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Entertainment
Corbett Technology Solutions, Inc. (CTSI) ctsi-usa.com HQ: CHANTILLY, VA	1	118	41	\$32.5M	\$32.5M	465	66%	20%	14%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%

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CUSTOM MEDIA SERVICES **Nashville**

YOU HAVE TO LOVE a firm that conveys to its clients that "integration" means more than hanging a flat panel on a wall. Custom Media Services, which specializes in communication display solutions, lists on its site the following steps involved in a traditional project: site

survey, proposal, credit approval, engineering, purchasing, installation, programming, training, documentation and much more. If only all integrators did as much to convey the complexity and value of an integrated solution as this \$9 million firm.



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Custom Media Services custommediaservices.com HQ: NASHVILLE	7	40	9	\$9M	\$9M	200	100%	5%	0%	5%	5%	10%	5%	35%	35%	0%	0%	

GENESIS INTEGRATION **Edmonton, Alberta**

NOT ONLY IS Genesis Integration one of Canada's largest integration firms, it's one of its fastest growing. Launched in 1990 with a staff of two, Genesis now reports 106 fulltime employees, six locations scattered across Canada's largest cities and did 1,922 projects during 2011. Nearly half of

Genesis' business comes from corporate and government markets, but it does more than dabble in every market C/ asked them about, except for retail. The integration firm's steady rise from small Alberta firm to big national player doesn't appear to be stopping anytime soon.



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Genesis Integration genint.com HQ: EDMONTON, ALBERTA	6	106	22	\$35M	\$35M	1,922	95%	22%	9%	13%	15%	2%	4%	2%	24%	0%	9%	

DELTA SYSTEMS INTEGRATION **Gresham, Ore.**

A TRUE REGIONAL NORTHWEST integrator that manages to leverage a national footprint through its PSNI member network, Delta Systems Integration isn't huge with \$10 million in 2011 revenue and 43 employees, but it manages to make a big splash in several

100% All of Delta's 150 projects in 2011 included audio.

markets while exhibiting particular strength in the corporate arena. The integrator has also shown itself to be a strong evangelist for the

integration industry, recently teaming with manufacturers on a multi-city tour touting the value of high-performance display solutions.

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Delta Systems Integration deltaav.com HQ: GRESHAM, ORE.	1	43	16	\$10M	\$10M	150	100%	40%	5%	15%	10%	3%	2%	10%	5%	0%	10%	

*FIND COMPLETE LIST OF PRODUCT CATEGORIES IN COMMERCIALINTEGRATOR.COM VERSION OF INDUSTRY LEADERS COVERAGE. **REFERS TO 2011 REVENUE.

MAD SYSTEMS Orange, Calif.

WE ADMIT A BIT OF BIAS when it comes to Mad Systems and its Orange ProAV division, since its business development manager blogs for *CommercialIntegrator.com*, but we don't think you'll disagree that it belongs on this list of integrators worth following. If Mad Systems has a core strength, it's in highly-design oriented and creative display solutions.

100% Each of the 20 projects Mad Systems did in 2011 included IT solutions.

With the omnipresence of flat-panel displays, there is escalating demand for the types of aesthetic, eye-popping solutions Mad Systems designs and implements on a routine basis. At \$5 million revenue reported in 2011, it's not an enormous integrator; meanwhile, it did

78 percent of that business in the entertainment market, often providing visual feasts for museum exhibits. The firm is poised to do more business in more markets, not necessarily because of a need to diversify, but because demand for their solutions is expanding.

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Mad Systems <i>madsystems.com</i> HQ: ORANGE, CALIF.	1	15	12	\$5M	\$5M	20	100%	3%	0%	15%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	78%	

IMMERSION GRAPHICS INC. (IGI) Commerce, Mich.

LOCATED 45 MINUTES from Detroit, IGI flies under the radar when people talk about how the U.S. automobile industry is coming back. Its projection solutions are suited for mission critical applications, and that can mean providing automobile engineers with the visuals

they need to create profit-driving vehicles. Of course, IGI, which also has locations near Indianapolis and Los Angeles, finds its solutions in demand by government clients as well. With its core strength in those vertical markets, which aren't represented in CI Indus-

.5 It's not difficult to spend half a day poking through the image galleries on *werigi.com*, which showcases some eye-popping video displays.

try Leaders lists (this first year), IGI flies under the radar again.

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Immersion Graphics Inc. (IGI) <i>werigi.com</i> HQ: COMMERCE, MICH.	3	25	12	\$8M	\$8M	388	95%	60%	0%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	30%	0%	0%	

VISTACOM Allentown, Pa.

IS \$19.5 MILLION INTEGRATOR Vistacom unique and worthy of being on a list of integrators to follow? Well, how many other integrators can pull together something like its Northeastern Pennsylvania (NEPA) Tech Expo. The annual tradeshow attracts 50-plus manufacturer exhibitors and 200-plus attendees. Vistacom, which does about a third of its busi-

ness in the higher-education market, hosts the event on a university campus. Marketing director Destiny Heimbecker recently told *CI* why Vistacom does the mini-tradeshow. "It gets our name out there in the region and in the verticals we're in, like education, government and corporate, and shows them that we're at the edge of our game." Meanwhile, the business

58 YEARS Vistacom has been in business for nearly six decades.

benefits are beyond measurement because it grows Vistacom's database of sales leads, which also get added to the company's regular email blasts and newsletters; coverage of the event by local newspapers puts the integrator's name in front of countless potential customers.

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Vistacom <i>vistacominc.com</i> HQ: ALLENTOWN, PA	1	62	58	\$19.5M	\$19.5M	215	85	26%	3%	34%	12%	0%	0%	1%	12%	0%	2%	

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ATRION NETWORKING Warwick, R.I.

CI SENIOR WRITER Craig MacCormack and I attended an Atrion event recently. I use the generic term "event" because there is no other way to describe it, but maybe "integration pep rally" is appropriate. The IT integration firm hosted 430 folks, mostly prospective clients, inside Gillette Stadium, overlooking the New England Patriots' home turf. Spectacular presentations by Atrion

73%

That's quite a revenue jump from 2011 to 2012, but Atrion's predicted \$78 million revenues for the fiscal year ending in June 2012 is up that much from \$45 million in the previous year.

executives never alluded to the possibility of installing products. Instead, they focused on educating clients on social, visual and mobile trends that may impact the way they do business. Craig wrote a CI Profile on Atrion, in which he noted that 55 percent of

the \$78 million integrator's sales stem from services. We thought that was a lot until the article was posted online and comment after comment was posted, mostly by clients or strategic partners, invariably touting Atrion's incredible service.

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								Offices	K-12	Higher-Ed	Healthcare	Hotels	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Entertainment	
Atrion Networking atrion.net HQ: WARWICK, R.I.	5	185	25	\$60M	\$45M	1,600	60%	0%	10%	20%	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

MANKIN MEDIA SYSTEMS Franklin, Tenn.

TECHNICALLY, MANKIN MEDIA is based in Tennessee, but you'd not be able to derive that simply by looking at the 14-employee firm's client base. From neighboring Kentucky to Texas to California, Mankin specializes in large, theatrical house of worship (HOW) solutions — and that's a good specialization

these days. The integrator did 16 projects in 2011, mostly churches but mixing in some other verticals and reporting \$4.87 million in revenue. Sometimes (and especially in the HOW market) being a local partner can be a selling point for integrators when bidding on projects. Its "Dream, Design, Deploy" process,

1 One wonders how Mankin manages 16 projects per year, scattered around the continent, with one location.

which is a nice way of leveraging the term "3D" in marketing, reassures prospective clients that Mankin will be side by side with them throughout the project.

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Mankin Media Systems mankinmedia.com HQ: FRANKLIN, TENN.	1	14	11	\$4.9M	\$4.9M	16	70%	5%	0%	20%	5%	0%	0%	60%	5%	5%	0%	

MEDIA MANAGEMENT Dallas

THIS \$5 MILLION FIRM is well-positioned for growth since it has positioned itself as a designer and provider of visual presentation solutions, a much-hyped integration category that probably deserves its hoopla. Most of Media Management's projects include video,

20% vs. 5%

Corporate solutions-focused Media Management included video conferencing in 20 percent of its projects vs. audio-only conferencing in 5 percent, reflecting a shift in demand.

often including video conferencing, digital signage and videos, and 75 percent of its 2011 revenue was derived from the corporate market. The 13-year-old firm is no stranger to the healthcare, government and house

of worship markets either. Also noteworthy is that Media Management does a nice job of using web content to educate companies about how to use video solutions to improve their communications.

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								Offices	K-12	Higher-Ed	Healthcare	Hotels	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Entertainment	
Media Management mmgt.com HQ: DALLAS	1	18	13+	\$5M	\$5M	100+	80%	75%	0%	0%	15%	0%	0%	5%	5%	0%	0%	

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SYNERGY MEDIA GROUP Pittsburgh, Pa.

INSTEAD OF ME TRYING to convey what makes Synergy Media Group a forward-thinking integration business, let's look at founder Bill McIntosh's comments on how he approaches hiring technicians and engineers in a recent "CI Profile of the Week" on *CommercialIntegrator.com*: "We've found a good number of applicants express themselves well and can 'talk tech' during the interview

process, but once they're in the field they're not as polished technically as they presented themselves. For this reason, when Synergy offers employment to a new applicant, we offer a three month 'trial' period to determine if their skill and personality mesh with our current set of installers. There's almost nothing worse than firing someone, so if you lay out the expectations of a trial run in the beginning,

99% Synergy did this amount of its 2011 business in the corporate and higher-education markets.

both parties understand the arrangement which creates a much smoother transition at the three month mark." His strategic, thoughtful approach reflects business leadership that's not common enough in this industry. His \$4 million firm shouldn't be underestimated.

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Synergy Media Group <i>synermediagroup.com</i> HQ: PITTSBURGH, PA	1	9	5	\$4M	\$4M	40	100%	39%	0%	60%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	

TOTAL VIDEO PRODUCTS Mickleton, N.J.

IT'S NO SURPRISE that TVP is enjoying success in its third decade, given how diversified the firm is. It reports \$15 million in commercial market revenue during 2011 and can credit more than 10 percent of that to four different

vertical markets — corporate, health care, K-12 and 30 percent in higher-education. A firm that has been around as long as TVP always runs the risk of becoming too old-school, but its emphasis on training seems to keep its

3 New Jersey-based TVP says it serves this many states (Pennsylvania and Delaware).

employees ahead of the curve. A recent slew of TVP employees becoming Cisco certified reflects an appreciation for AV/IT convergence.

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Total Video Products <i>totalvideoproducts.com</i> HQ: MICKLETON, N.J.	1	36	22	\$20M	\$15M	290	100%	17%	14%	30%	11%	8%	0%	3%	4%	1%	7%	

VIDEO CORPORATION OF AMERICA Somerset, N.J.

WITH \$60 MILLION reported revenue in 2011, there's no arguing that VCA isn't an integration force; after 40-plus years in business, there's no questioning its longevity; with 500 commercial projects during 2011, there's no minimizing its impact on the industry. VCA does a quarter of its business in corporate

and has strong presences in health care and higher education. The behemoth firm manages to remain nimble, including IT solutions in a third of its projects. Just like in basketball where it's tough to defend against a dexterous big man, integration firms bidding against VCA will have their work cut out for them.

\$45 million

This much of the firm's \$60 million in 2011 revenue comes from multi-system solutions (including three or more of CI's defined integration product categories).

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Video Corporation of America <i>vca.com</i> HQ: SOMERSET, N.J.	3	112	40	\$60M	\$60M	500	100%	25%	0%	15%	10%	3%	0%	2%	5%	0%	0%	

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BOND COMMUNICATIONS Dubai, U.A.E.

 **750**  Bond reports this many fulltime employees.

IT'S BEEN IN BUSINESS for 33 years but this Middle East-based integration firm headquartered in United Arab Emirates and with locations in Morocco and Qatar

deserves more global recognition. The IT-centric integration firm provides sophisticated solutions to a broad client base that includes resorts, smart

buildings, oil fields, corporate facilities, airports, malls, sports venues and government buildings.

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Bond Communications <i>bondcommunications.com</i> HQ: DUBAI, U.A.E.	8	750	33	\$55M	\$55M	7	100%	20%	0%	20%	10%	20%	0%	0%	10%	0%	20%	

LOGIC INTEGRATION Lone Tree, Colo.

8x Logic Integration is on pace to earn 8 times as much from commercial work vs. residential work in 2012.

IF YOU'VE KNOWN Logic Integration for a few years like I have, chances are you think of it as a residential integration firm. Times have changed and so has Logic Integration.

It's a commercial firm with pretty intense focuses on conference room solutions and digital signage. And it promotes its solutions better than 99 percent of the

so-called pure commercial firms out there, leveraging video in ways that most integrators only help their clients do. **CI**

	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Revenue (2011)	Total Revenue from Commercial Projects (2011)	No. of 2011 Installations	Percentage of Projects Featuring 3+ Product Categories*	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE** DERIVED FROM										
								Offices	K-12	Higher-Ed	Healthcare	Hotels	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Entertainment	
Logic Integration <i>logicav.net</i> HQ: LONE TREE, COLO.	1	11	8	\$2.7M	\$2.1M	82	78%	39%	4%	1%	2%	12%	2%	5%	24%	3%	0%	

*FIND COMPLETE LIST OF PRODUCT CATEGORIES IN COMMERCIALINTEGRATOR.COM VERSION OF INDUSTRY LEADERS COVERAGE. **REFERS TO 2011 REVENUE.