

# THE TENNESSEAN

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2010

From the front page of the Business Section

## Economy changes face of Future 50

Every year since the early 1990s, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce has honored private businesses expanding at a rapid clip with its Future 50 awards. The awards, sponsored in part by *The Tennessean*, are now entering their 19th year.

The idea is to cast a spotlight on corporate rising stars in the Nashville area — the kind of companies that are adding sales and

jobs, helping the local economy forge ahead in good and bad times alike.

The winners also reflect their times. This year, more than half of the 50 winners have technology-related operations. They develop and sell software;

handle online marketing chores; or provide electronic solutions to pay the bills, track financial records or interact with customers across a wide array of industries.

The flip side of that equation is that old-line firms don't show up on this year's list so much. For instance, the only construction company that pops up for the 2010 awards is the \$39 million-a-year in revenue SouthLand Constructors, based in Brentwood.

Three years ago its revenues nearly doubled year over year. For 2010-11, though, it projects sales to be flat as construction work slows because of a weakened economy.

After the lull, though, SouthLand expects its revenues to in-



» RANDY MCCLAIN

### » MCCLAIN FROM PAGE 1E

The small company now reports \$5 million a year in annual sales — and the owners expect to keep growing at a 25 percent clip or greater the next couple of years.

Turner and Tyner say their goal is to be a go-to provider in “e-discovery” as complex litigation keeps popping up in securities law, environmental regulation and other sectors. They want to work with clients in mid-size cities regionally where their high-touch, personalized approach might play best.

Think Nashville and Birmingham, Ala., rather than New York or Los Angeles.

DSi is now trying to land a deal to provide some document work in connection with the BP oil spill. Stay tuned to see how that works out.



**Tom Turner, left, and Kevin Tyner run DSi, a company that electronically screens documents for legal cases.**

crease by 10 percent to 12 percent a year. Still, SouthLand has managed to add 16 employees since 2007, and that's really the bottom line for any Future 50 winner.

### How to reinvent yourself

Compare SouthLand's growth rate with a tech company such as Future 50 winner Ingenuity Associates, also of Brentwood, which saw sales double last year for its infor-

mation technology consulting services. It has grown from three employees to 20 in a three-year period.

Then there's an evolving company such as DSi, Document Solutions Inc., which transformed itself from a photocopying service for law firms and a document-scanning provider into something much more. Today, partners Tom Turner and Kevin Tyner help attorneys and corporations with electronic screening of documents when complex lawsuits or other legal tight spots arise.

DSi uses intricate software and database analysis to weed through millions of files — electronic corporate records and untold numbers of e-mails — to help clients find the facts they need to mount a defense in court or in front of federal regulators.

### » MCCLAIN, 5E

Since the Future 50 program began, it has honored 951 companies with hundreds of millions of dollars in combined sales.

“Future 50 companies are a testament to the ideal business climate in Middle Tennessee, (and) the success of these companies helps drive economic growth,” said Ralph Schulz, the chamber of commerce's president and CEO.

“Recognition like this is so important for small-business owners and their employees. It can provide the exposure and motivation to propel them to a new level of success,” added Charles Sueing, the chamber's chairman for small business and owner of The Sueing Agency/Nationwide Insurance.

Randy McClain is business editor of *The Tennessean*. Reach him at 615-259-8882 or ramclain@tennessean.com.