

TOP 100 PRIVATE COMPANIES IN WHATCOM COUNTY

Based on 2019 sales.

The A's have it. Alpha. Axiom. And, Andgar.

In this annual ranking of the Top 100 Private-Owned Companies in Whatcom County, that trio stands out. To wit:

Seven years ago, the Alpha Group—anchored by Alpha Technologies in Bellingham—started its run of seven years at No. 1.

Three years ago, Axiom in Lynden and its founder/CEO Tim Koetje adorned the cover of the Top 100 issue.

They're both back in the brightest lights, Alpha because it transitioned to new ownership, and Axiom because it showed the most growth—over 30%.

Andgar, ranked No. 37, enjoyed a gain of about 20%.

The list reflects 2019 sales and employment figures that aggregately produced more than \$5 billion and created more than 16,000 jobs—about 59% of them locally.

Alpha Technologies went through its first full year under EnerSys (NYSE) in Reading, Pennsylvania, thereby joining two other local powers—Haggen and Hempler Foods Group—as still locally operated even though they have all become divisions of large conglomerates based elsewhere.

Hempler in Ferndale operates independently under the umbrella of Premium Brands (TSX) in Richmond, British Columbia. (Last year, company patriarch Dick Hempler, a former Business Pulse Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, died at 82.)

Haggen was sold in 2016 to Albertson's (Boise, Idaho) but operates out of Barkley Village in Bellingham. Haggen, ranked No. 2, was the perennial leader before Alpha took the lead in 2013. The top producer with local ownership is construction giant Exxel Pacific.

The newest accumulative results provide an added

important perspective this year: Given the nationwide economy shutdown during the first half of 2020, this listing will give a clear picture of the effects on Whatcom County's free-enterprise landscape.

The 2019 results indicate a consistent stability, with only a handful of companies showing a drop in revenues. Several companies, such as (alphabetically) Axiom, Barkley, Hardware Sales, Jansen, Roger Jobs Motors, and Skeers Construction, gained enough to move up in category and ranking.

Axiom made the largest gains in 2019—jumping into the \$80-plus million range, catapulting it from No. 20 to No. 13 with over a 30% increase in business and 155 more employees than in '18.

When Axiom was a front-cover story, Koetje told *Business Pulse* that their goal was \$100 million and 300 employees by the end of 2020. In June this year, on the rush of a continued rise in projects and constant hiring during the first quarter, he projected that they would meet or exceed that.

Other items of significant interest:

Drew Zogby assumed the president/CEO role at Alpha Technologies in Bellingham, while former top executive Fred Kaiser continues his career there on the board of directors and retains 3% stock ownership.

Two prominent companies sold: Diehl Ford was rebranded as Bellingham Ford & Lincoln within an automobile group in Aberdeen owned by Rich Hartman of Olympia. And, Anderson Paper & Packaging similarly continues in Ferndale but is now under the brand of Walter E. Nelson Company (home office in Portland, Oregon).

2020 RANK	2019 RANK	COMPANY	LOCATION	FOUNDED	EMPLOYEES		TOP EXECUTIVE(S)	SALES
					REGION	TOTAL		
1	1	Alpha Technologies An EnerSys Company	Bellingham	1976	400+	1500+	David Shaffer Drew Zogby	\$800M+
2	2	Haggen Inc.	Bellingham	1933	754	1963	John Clougher	\$450M+
3	3	Exxel Pacific Inc.	Bellingham	1989	65	200	Kevin DeVries	\$350M+
4	4	Dawson Construction Inc.	Bellingham	1983	150	250	Pete Dawson	\$120 - \$140M
5	5	Grizzly Industrial Inc.	Bellingham	1983	100	275	Shiraz Balolia	\$120 - \$140M
6	7	LTI Inc.	Lynden	1906	90	650	Jason Jansen	\$120 - \$140M
7	6	CHS Inc.	Lynden	1941	130	270	Don Eucker	\$95 - \$119M
8	N/A	Peoples Bank	Bellingham	1921	295	441	Charles LeCocq	\$95 - \$119M
9	8	Hempler Foods Group LLC	Ferndale	1934	130	190	Stephen Bates	\$95 - \$119M
10	9	Samson Rope Technologies Inc.	Ferndale	1878	200	320	Christian Rheault	\$85 - \$94M
11	12	Anvil Corporation	Bellingham	1971	275	470	John Mohoney	\$85 - \$94M
12	10	The Markets LLC	Bellingham	2008	360	410	Kevin Weatherill	\$80 - \$84M

THE MARKETS LLC — Here's a positive COVID-19 model: As 2019 gave way to a 2020 pandemic, Kevin Weatherill doubled down on his industry's customary extreme sanitation and health measures—ahead of the curve. In January, The Markets, which includes local stores The Market at Birch Bay and DaVinci's Market in Bellingham, bought a three-year supply of sanitary products.


"Because of what the World Health Organization was saying, we got prepared before the first cases were announced (in the U.S.) ...planning sessions with store managers, procedural posters, gloves and masks, a process for no-contact curbside service. We've stayed in good shape—no closings or quarantines. My team knows what to do."

Customer traffic dipped, but sales volume rose despite supply chain glitches. "We're responsible for 300-plus (employee) lives and customers' protection, so we've gone to school on this and developed a great game plan...done more than was required. And we're holding up..."

13	20	Axiom Construction & Consulting LLC	Lynden	2001	275	275	Timothy Koetje	\$80 - \$84M
14	14	Harris Pacific NW (formerly Diamond B Constructors Inc.)	Bellingham	1909	175	175	Pete Chapman	\$80 - \$84M

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15	N/A	Dewey Griffin Subaru	Bellingham	1967	98	98	Dick Meyer	\$80 - \$89M
16	16	Smith Gardens	Bellingham	1901	185	1100	Eric Smith	\$70 - \$79M
17	N/A	Haskell Corporation	Bellingham	1890	125	200	Fred Haskell	
18	15	IMCO General Construction Inc.	Ferndale	1978	65	160	Tyler Kimberly	
19	11	Trans-Ocean Products	Bellingham	1985	241	246	Murry Park	
20	21	Faithlife Corporation	Bellingham	1992	357	357	Bob Pritchett	\$60 - \$69M
21	22	Hardware Sales Inc.	Bellingham	1962	130	138	Jerry McClellan, Tye McClellan	
22	23	Hollander Investments Inc.	Bellingham	1996	30	500	Mark Hollander	
23	17	Alaskan Leader Fisheries	Lynden	1991	11	110	Rob Wurm	
24	28	Roger Jobs Motors	Bellingham	1985	65	65	Roger Jobs	\$50 - \$59M
25	25	Tiger Construction, Ltd.	Everson	1974	70	70	Scott Isenhardt	
26	29	Superfeet Worldwide Inc.	Ferndale	1977	90	150	John Rauvola	
27	32	Mills Electric	Bellingham	1911	200	200	John Huntley	
28	32	Strider Construction Co. Inc.	Bellingham	1988	100	130	James A. Gebhardt	\$40 - \$49M
29	30	Faber Construction	Lynden	1987	100	125	Rick Faber	
30	24	Mt. Baker Products Inc.	Bellingham	1993	135	135	Steve King	
31	36	Blythe Plumbing & Heating	Bellingham	1904	85	85	David C. Morse III	
32	37	Brim Tractor Company Inc.	Lynden	1966	70	70	Dan Brim	\$30 - \$39M
33	N/A	Walton Beverage Company	Ferndale	1931	130	130	Les Blouin	
34	41	Farmers Equipment Company	Lynden	1935	65	65	Kevin Pawlowski	
35	45	WRS (Western Refinery Services)	Ferndale	1990	215	225	Billy VanZanten	
36	39	Cowden Gravel & Ready Mix	Bellingham	1945	145	145	Brent Cowden	

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37	46	Andgar Corporation	Ferndale	1973	154	164	Todd Kunzman	\$30 - \$39M
<div><div></div><div><p>ANDGAR CORPORATION —An industry leader in sheet metal fabrication for nearly half a century, Andgar showed the second largest gain in revenues last year among the Top 100. One big announcement: Dave McCarty joined the Food Processing team as Director of Operations. Andgar’s diverse market includes agricultural waste solutions, berry processing, residential HVAC (heating, ventilation & air conditioning), and general contracting. They manufacture and distribute more than a dozen types of equipment specializing across the spectrum of strawberry, raspberry, blueberry, and blackberry production.</p><p>The company renamed after Andy Mellema and Gary VanLoo, who bought a small Lynden sheet-metal shop and grew it with the stated goal of producing “the highest quality products and superior service at a fair cost....through the application of biblical principles in our daily business activities.”</p></div></div>								
38	42	Saturna Capital Corp.	Bellingham	1989	65	82	Jane Carten	
39	N/A	Sanitary Service Company Inc.	Bellingham	1926	92	92	Paul Razore	
40	43	Scholten’s Equipment Inc.	Lynden	1980	34	52	Duane Scholten	
41	38	Brooks Manufacturing Company	Bellingham	1935	50	50	John Ferlin	
42	47	Bellingham Cold Storage	Bellingham	1946	200	200	Doug Thomas	
43	48	Morse Steel Service Center	Bellingham	2001	48	48	Mike Morse	
44	51	Vital Choice Wild Seafood & Organics	Bellingham	2001	45	45	Randy Hartnell	
45	40	DeWaard and Bode	Bellingham	1946	60	60	Jerry Roorda	
46	50	Sound Beverage Distributors Inc.	Bellingham	1950	85	90	Dean Shintaffer	
47	60	Jansen Inc.	Bellingham	1952	7	55	Grant Jansen	\$20 - \$29M
48	52	All American Marine Inc.	Bellingham	1987	59	78	Matt Mullett	
49	55	Bellingham Yacht Sales Inc.	Bellingham	1984	15	17	Nick Ouilette Dean Ouilette	
50	59	Hoagland Pharmacy	Bellingham	1981	66	66	Carson Huntoon	
51	64	Seeking Health	Bellingham	2010	25	25	Dr. Ben Lynch	
52	57	Bramble Berry Inc.	Bellingham	1998	95	95	Anne-Marie Faiola	

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53	62	Mt. Baker Imaging/Northwest Radiologists	Bellingham	1965	160	160	Dr. David Cahalan	\$20 - \$29M
54	54	Barron Heating & Air Conditioning	Ferndale	1973	143	147	John Barron	
55	N/A	Wood Stone Corporation	Bellingham	1990	100	100	Chris Trout	
56	72	MSNW Group LLC	Ferndale	1995	104	410	Janelle Bruland	
57	53	Walter E. Nelson Company (formerly Anderson Paper & Packaging Co. - sold 4/1/20)	Ferndale	1992	50	66	Rick Anderson	




WALTER E. NELSON COMPANY — Founder and former Owner/President Rick Anderson sold the paper & packaging distributing company he started 28 years ago to this Portland group that is the largest family-owned janitorial, chemical, and paper distributor in the Pacific Northwest. The buyer took over Anderson's Portland division in April 2019 and then on April 1 this year the new owners assumed reins of the Washington division, which also includes a paper manufacturing facility on the Ferndale site.

Anderson contracted to remain aboard as President of Nelson's Coordinated Division (Ferndale & Kent). His stepson, Chandler Inslee, was CEO of AP&P and also stayed in the company as Director of Human Resources for Nelson.

Their customer base extends into Lower British Columbia for paper and packaging, plus office, janitorial and safety products. and supply chain optimization programs. Business has remained steady in the transition.

58	56	Birch Equipment Rental & Sales	Bellingham	1972	54	82	Sara Rothenbuhler	\$20 - \$29M
59	58	DariTech Inc.	Lynden	1990	48	59	Ryan DeWaard	
60	74	Woods Coffee	Lynden	2002	200	350	Wes Herman	
61	66	Allsop Inc.	Bellingham	1964	23	36	Ryan Allsop	
62	67	City Mac	Bellingham	1992	30	75	Troy Curran	
63	83	Express Electric	Ferndale	1992	91	91	Roger Anderson	
64	69	G.K. Knutson Inc.	Bellingham	1997	80	80	Greg Knutson	
65	75	Woodstock International Inc.	Bellingham	1989	11	26	Shiraz Balolia	
66	71	Louws Truss Inc.	Ferndale	1952	10	135	B. J. Louws	

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67	77	Barkley Company/Talbot Real Estate	Bellingham	1990	14	14	Stowe Talbot Michael Bayless	\$15 - \$19M
68	68	Bellingham Ford Lincoln (formerly Diehl Ford)	Bellingham	1908	50	50	Julian Greening	
<div><div></div><div><p>BELLINGHAM FORD LINCOLN — A seamless transition took place last August. New ownership, new name, new management. Rich Hartman—owner of two dealerships in Aberdeen—bought and rebranded the Diehl Ford Bellingham. The 2019 numbers reflect a combined sales range and employee count.</p><p>New general manager Julian Greening led Bellingham Toyota/Mercedes-Benz for 17 years. “(Diehl) obviously has an incredible history to build on as the 12th oldest in America,” Greening said. Mike Diehl kept the family tradition going by becoming Finance Manager. He had headed the operation for 11 years after his father, Bob, ran it 28 years. Rounding out the management team: Shawn Gregory (sales) and Joe Smith (service).</p><p>The dealership overhauled the inventory, facility, service department, website to enhance Internet sales, and hours of operation to 7 days a week. “We’re super excited,” Greening said, “to grow this historical company on the full-service automobile landscape in Bellingham and Whatcom County.”</p></div></div>								
69	70	Infusion Solutions Inc.	Bellingham	2009	43	47	Rowena Birnel	
70	84	Larson Gross CPAs & Consultants	Bellingham	1949	100	104	Kelli Visser	
71	76	A.L.R.T. Corporation	Everson	1990	60	60	William Westergreen	
72	79	Bellingham Millwork Supply	Bellingham	1993	22	22	Dick Campbell	
73	88	Totally Chocolate Inc.	Blaine	1993	75	75	Ken Strong	
74	89	TriVan Truck Body	Ferndale	2003	85	85	Marty VanDriel	
75	80	Chuckanut Bay Foods	Bellingham	2008	95	95	David Loeppky Matt Roth	
76	82	Emergency Reporting	Bellingham	2003	88	105	David Nokes	
77	85	Lister Chain & Forge Inc.	Blaine	1911	37	37	Michael Stobbart	\$10 - \$14M
78	90	WesSpur Tree Equipment Inc.	Bellingham	2004	16	16	Ryan Aarstol	
79	86	Lynden Sheet Metal Inc.	Lynden	1940	60	60	Bobbi Kreider	
80	78	Airporter Shuttle/Bellair Charters	Ferndale	1985	145	145	Richard Johnson	

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81	97	Skeers Construction	Bellingham	1985	15	15	Dick Skeers	\$10 - \$14M
82	92	The Comphy Company	Ferndale	2003	35	35	Mia Richardson	
83	98	Whatcom Land Title	Bellingham	1982	73	73	Colleen Baldwin	\$5 - \$9M
84	96	Hytech Roofing	Bellingham	1952	34	34	Dan Gross	
85	93	Credo Construction	Bellingham	2001	50	50	Todd Lapinsky	
86	N/A	Natural Way Chiropractic	Bellingham	1995	31	50	Dr. Eddie Hansen	
87	N/A	Simple Box Storage	Lynden	1997	11	24	Ross Black	
88	N/A	Signs Plus	Bellingham	1992	35	35	Jim Sutterfield	
89	N/A	Reichhardt & Ebe Engineering Inc.	Lynden	1993	21	21	Luis Ponce	
We at Business Pulse magazine believe the following companies qualify for the list but were unable to confirm their numbers as of press time.								
	13	Bornstein Seafoods Inc.	Bellingham	1934	100	350	Colin Bornstein	
	18	Coleman Oil (formerly McEvoy Oil)	Bellingham	1932	32	32	Tim McEvoy	
	19	Healthy Pet LP	Bellingham	1985	84	158	Ted Mischaikov	
	26	Barlean's Organic Oils	Ferndale	1989	155	165	Bruce Barlean	
	27	Keith Oil	Ferndale	1959	7	10	Sam Boulos Yanolla Boulos	
	31	Family Care Network	Bellingham	1999	425	485	Dr. Marcy Hipskind	
	33	Seafood Producers Co-op	Bellingham	1944	11	250	Joe Morelli	
	34	SPIE - The International Society for Optical Engineering	Bellingham	1955	175	175	Kent Rochford	
	44	Specified Fittings LLC	Bellingham	1996	90	180	Tom Franzen	
	49	ProPack Inc.	Blaine	1991	50	200	Alex Snyder	
	65	Western Forest Products	Bellingham	1981	21	31	Jon Maulin	

CONGRAT



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to all the companies for their contributions to our local community!

