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## Isn't it time to turn our focus on the success stories?

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Haven't we heard enough of business layoffs, failures and despair? After all 90% of us are still working, there is the largest worldwide stimulus package in world history already in the pipeline and every economic dislocation provides opportunities.

Isn't it time to focus our attention on the success stories that are taking place even in the very teeth of the current financial storm?

There are many companies that are in fact prospering even while the economy shrinks. We can learn a lot by seeing how they do it.

The economic dislocations that we are now experiencing are forcing companies to review their existing contracts, their suppliers, their service providers, and their markets. This economic dislocation is giving small companies a once in a lifetime opportunity to acquire new customers, open entirely new markets and dramatically increase their market share. The world is indeed flat and those companies that can claim that they have even a 50% share of the world market are very few. For most small companies increasing their share of a world market just a few points is more than enough to greatly expand their business. For these companies, creating or opening up entirely new markets for their products or services can indeed make them prosper.

Since we oversee nearly a half a million s/f of office and retail and land development space in Fairfield County and New York, we get to work with a large cross section of national and international businesses including hedge funds, medical servicers, builders, real estate brokers, accountants, service companies, hi-tech, information software developers, dot coms, retailers, manufacturers, and packaging companies. Over the last few years, while we watched as some companies failed and some prospered, we learned that there were in fact some very striking similarities in the business behavior of those companies that prospered even when they were in very different types of businesses. There seem to be repeating similarities in the way very different business prosper that have more to do with how in tune they are with their customers and markets, and how energized, flexible and innovative they are, than it has to do with the type of businesses they are in. In the midst of all business collapses that we read about, there are those companies who not only surviving but prospering even in this economy. How do they do it? This is the first in a series of brief studies of small companies who are finding ways to prosper in the midst of the current very severe economic downturn that pervades our news every day.

Part two will appear in the April 10th edition of The New England Real Estate Journal.

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