

Best homebased businesses + Save on employee benefits

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100 brilliant companies.

10 smokin' hot industries.
\$5 trillion in opportunities.



Peter Hines, p.39 David Inns, p.40 Tim Sexton, p.46 Steven Lash, p.47 Ray Tuomey, p.48 Richard Archuleta, p.49

THEY'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES. DO YOU?

10 smokin'
hot industries.

100 BRILLIANT IDEAS.

Booze, Whoppers
and lottery tickets
are the only
recession-proof
commodities out
there, but we'd add
one more to the
list: brilliant ideas.

The 100 companies
featured over the
next 10 pages are
evidence that a
little brainpower,
determination—
and good timing—
can trump even
the worst Pepto-
Bismol market. >>

By Marc Peruzzi &
Pieter van Noordennen
Photos by David Johnson

category//Social responsibility: Nonprofit, schmonprofit. Today's do-gooders are making money *and* changing the world. Social entrepreneurship advocate Ashoka invests at least \$30 million in these businesses each year; and you can expect more where that came from.

A green machine

THEY'VE ALREADY HELPED AN ENTIRE FOOTBALL FRANCHISE STOP AND SMELL THE ROSES. AND IT'S ONLY GETTING BETTER.

The last things fans expected was for the Philadelphia Eagles to lead the eco-revolution on their not-so-green home turf. But that's the genius of Los Angeles-based The Sexton Company, the branding machine behind such environmental tours de force as *Live 8*, and more recently, the Eagles' eco-friendly reinvention.

The company is a study in irony: a little-known consulting business with a grass-roots mission that works with corporate giants to shape environmental policy. "We work with companies that have the opportunity to really move the needle in our culture," says co-founder Tim Sexton, 59. "If we can change the way people think by working with unexpected companies, that's what we want to target." The firm, which specializes in helping companies find the most marketable ways to advertise their socially conscious initiatives, spurred the Eagles to begin serving beer in corn-based cups and even plant a forest in the middle of Philly. Now, they're turning to their biggest project yet, morphing the second-largest utility company in the world, National Grid, into a green machine.

Lately, though, their future seems to hinge on whether they can keep the down economy from muddling their message. "Three years ago, when people asked us about the ROI for our services, it was hard to quantify beyond the intrinsic value your brand would garner from being a good citizen," says Sexton, who has seen sales double every year since 2006. "Now, as a result of our work, we're able to show customers that there is a real dollar value to add to that intrinsic value."

But co-founder Brendan Sexton, 63, is quick to point out the core of their business is about cultural change, not quick cash. "We don't preach an easy solution," he says. "We're very happy to help corporations reach a solution, but we're not into greenwashing." —Kim Orr



Brendan and Tim Sexton, and
Matt Walden (l. to r.)
Founders and Senior Partner
The Sexton Company