

Twenty to watch gave our readers plenty to talk about

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At the end of 2005, we told Business Journal readers about some local personalities whom we thought would be pretty active in 2006. Following is a summation of what they accomplished the past year.

Skip Rung
Aptly recognized by nanotechnology industry publication Small Times Magazine as an advocate for nanotechnology, Skip Rung just never quits.

Under his leadership, the Oregon Nanoscience and Microtechnologies Institute has received 50 percent more funding this year for its collaborative research across three state universities and a national lab.

ONAMI's accomplishments, including some technologies reaching early stages of turning into businesses, have won recognition from the governor, who has proposed an additional \$10 million investment for the center.

In 2007, expect to see ONAMI expanding its facilities, actively hiring, and moving some technologies toward commercial products.

Greg Drew
Since its spinout from California-headquartered NetIQ Corp. two years ago, WebTrends Inc. has grown both in stature and size under CEO Greg Drew.

This year, WebTrends acquired some huge new customers -- among them, Microsoft Corp. and Swedish furniture retailer Ikea.

As for revenue growth, the famously cagey Drew would say only that sales were up 25 percent in 2006. That would put revenue at somewhere close to \$80 million.

WebTrends has also been hiring, and now employs just over 350 people, up from about 220 at the time of the spinout. Employees who have been split between two downtown buildings are now consolidating onto five newly refurbished floors in the Pacific First Center.

Gale Castillo
The local face of the Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Gale Castillo, watched her organization grow 17 percent to 700 members this year.

Castillo has her eye on the South Waterfront development, and will be working to capitalize on opportunities for her member's there.

The chamber launched a handful of new programs in 2006, among them an English-language and

math-skills primer targeting construction entrepreneurs and a leadership-training program for public- and private-sector workers.

Lee Domanico

Chief Executive Officer Lee Domanico predicts Legacy Health System's 2006 financial loss won't be a repeat in 2007.

The hospital reported a net loss of \$9 million in 2006, but its 2007 fiscal year ending in March is looking good, the one-year Legacy president said. Look for margins in the 4 percent to 5 percent range.

Domanico led Legacy this year to settle a class-action lawsuit brought against it alleging unfair billing of uninsured patients. Legacy was one of more than 50 hospitals nationwide, including Providence Health System, hit with the class-action lawsuit.

Dr. Kenton Gregory

Frustrated by the slow pace to commercialize new medical technology, Dr. Kenton Gregory has formed a new corporation called the Oregon Biomedical Engineering Institute to help spinout discoveries from laboratories to businesses. In the past year, Gregory's research has centered around tissue engineering, cell therapies, advances in artery-propping stents and continued study of the shrimp-shell based chitosan for surgical applications.

Kenton, whose discoveries helped spawn fast-growing HemCon Medical Technologies Inc., says he'll complete three or four technology transfer deals in 2007, and is exploring a new business venture on the Oregon coast.

Gregory works at the Oregon Medical Laser Center located at the Providence's St. Vincent Medical Center campus, and is also a Providence Health System-Oregon employee.

Sohrab Vossoughi

Sohrab Vossoughi started the year signing 52 paychecks. He signs 104 today, as Ziba Design, the Portland company he founded more than 20 years ago, doubled its head count in 2006. Revenue grew 14 percent, thanks to the addition of roughly two dozen new clients. The industrial design firm's roster now includes such global players as CitiBank and Kraft Foods.

On behalf of Sirius, the firm also launched the much-anticipated iPod Killer, a portable satellite radio device that also records MP3s.

William Furman

Shareholders couldn't be happier with The Greenbrier Cos. CEO William Furman. The Lake Oswego barge and railcar maker's stock is on pace for a 25 percent gain in 2006, more than double the three major indices.

"Clearly 2006 was a year when we were able to implement significant strategic growth," Furman said. The company booked record profits -- \$39.6 million on \$954 million in revenue -- for the fiscal year ended in August.

The company's major deals include a \$100 million order from American Honda Motor Co. Inc. Greenbrier also grew the repair side of its business through acquisitions of Meridian Rail Services (\$227.5 million) and Rail Car America Inc. (\$34 million).

Peggy Fowler

On the morning of April 10, Peggy Fowler, president and CEO of Portland General Electric Co., suited up for a big day -- a medium-gray suit with a black collar -- and reported to the New York Stock Exchange. At 9:30 a.m. -- on the dot -- she rang the opening bell signaling the start of trading. With that, Portland's beleaguered electric utility officially severed itself from former parent Enron Corp. You'll find PGE in the NYSE listings under the symbol POR.

Brad Malsin

Brad Malsin, the ophthalmologist-turned-developer who led a feisty campaign to redevelop the Burnside Bridgehead neighborhood was no less feisty in 2006. As the year winds down, so too do renovations on the old B&O Warehouse.

Like the old commercials say: But wait, there's more.

Portland City Commissioner Sam Adams arranged for Malsin's firm, Beam Development, to team with Portland Affordable Housing Trust to purchase a former nursing home, Old Baptist Manner, on Northeast 82nd Avenue. The plan: Rehab the five-building complex and its 150 units into a residential enclave where artists can buy or rent their homes and have access to dining facilities, performance space (the old sanctuary) and exhibit space, and galleries. The city-funded Regional Arts Council will run the place.

Vicki Phillips

Vicki Phillips faced daunting challenges when she agreed in 2004 to helm Portland Public Schools. School funding was in tatters and relied on an about-to-expire personal income tax and the public was running out of patience with the crisis-driven school system.

This year, the powerhouse proved her mettle to the business community, which showed its enthusiasm for her leadership style by footing much of the bill for a school levy campaign. The campaign was a success, with voters easily agreeing to a three-year school tax in November's general election.

Jordan Schnitzer

The son of Arlene and Harold Schnitzer -- and president of Harsch Investment Properties -- tends to think big, and 2006 was as big as it comes. His company closed more than \$130 million of real estate acquisitions, more than twice the amount it invested in 2005. Key local transactions include the Greentree West Business Park in Beaverton and the former Federal Reserve Building in downtown Portland.

Bruce Wood

A year after leaving Opus Northwest to form his own company, Foundation Real Estate Development Co., Bruce Wood is involved in a dizzying array of projects. He teaches real estate development at Portland State University and introduced Portland to the concept of office condominiums. He teamed with occasional partner Tom Kemper to buy a struggling ice rink in Vancouver, a portion of which was converted into a new satellite campus for City Bible Church. And he revisited the scene of one of his biggest development successes: Bridgeport Village.

Bruce Warner

Relations between the city of Portland and the Portland Development Commission are more cordial under the low-key leadership of Bruce Warner, PDC's executive director since mid-2005. Warner keeps a lower profile than his predecessor, but the work of the commission presses on. PDC plays a small, medium or large role in any number of projects, from redevelopment of the Burnside Bridgehead to building a hotel at the Oregon Convention Center and promoting development at the South Waterfront.

Melissa Appleyard

The Portland State University professor can point to several successful outcomes of the first year of Lab2Market, the collaborative technology commercialization initiative she heads. Of the six technologies chosen by the Lab2Market advisory group to work with venture capitalists, entrepreneurs and MBA students, one has been formed into a company, another has secured beta customers, and all six have shored up their patent portfolios and firmed up commercialization strategies.

Ray Davis

The Umpqua Bank leader had a great 2006 on both the financial and aesthetic fronts. He first

spearheaded the purchase of Western Sierra Bancorp in February. Then, two months later, he unveiled plans for Umpqua's next stylish retail spaces. Work on the first "cafe" has already begun. Oh, and along the way, Umpqua released a "high-tech" annual report featuring flash animation, music and a video session with Davis himself.

Rob Langstaff, William Perez

The leaders of, respectively, Adidas America and Nike Inc. both avoided the media spotlight until it instead found them. Langstaff remained low-key even when the company closed its deal with Reebok and said goodbye to Salomon employees, who'd worked on the shoemaker's North Portland campus. As for Perez, his Oregon career effectively ended in February when company founder Phil Knight chased him from Nike's top spot.

Mike Scanlon

The Rose Quarter general manager for Global Spectrum, which runs the Rose Garden, continued making inroads toward boosting the facility's usage and Trail Blazers' ticket sales. The arena underwent a \$12 million face-lift designed to better serve customers in the Rose Garden's pricier seats. Scanlon's charges also secured a bevy of big-time concerts and other events, ensuring that the arena seldom went unused during 2006.

Dave Chen

Venture capitalist Dave Chen finished up 2006 with a number of accomplishments to point to, in a year that had "plenty of repair work." The Oregon Nanoscience and Microtechnologies Institute, which Chen chairs, is going strong, pulling in \$25 million in research funding this year.

The Oregon Innovation Council, a Chen-chaired economic development group, developed a series of recommendations for turning innovation into business activity, and saw Gov. Ted Kulongoski take up all of them.

Gerry Perkel

When Gerry Perkel first arrived at Planar Systems Inc. 15 months ago as the troubled company's new CEO, some feared he had been hired to groom Planar for sale.

After all, that's what Perkel had done at Hillsboro software company Merant PLC, now owned by Serena Software Inc.

Instead, Perkel has set the company's new direction: Exploit its traditional strength in custom-designed industrial displays by selling into high-profit niches.

Perkel made a big move in that direction this year, buying specialty display maker Clarity Visual Systems Inc., a privately held Wilsonville company.

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