

Florida Trend

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Heavy Hitters

Florida's most influential business executives and the state's top 350 public and private companies.

Our annual list of Florida's biggest public and private companies captures just how tough 2009 was for most businesses. Just one-third of the 150 public companies on our list, 53, reported revenue gains. Only 62 of the 200 private companies, 32%, posted an increase.

This year, we have combined the 350 list with a look at the most influential business executives in Florida. Among our "influentials" you'll find the likes of Mike Jackson of

AutoNation, Lesa France Kennedy of International Speedway Corp., Paul Reilly at Raymond James and Clarence Otis at Darden. We've also included heavy hitters from companies that aren't based in Florida — and therefore don't appear on the 350 list — but which have a major presence in the state, including Universal and Lockheed Martin.

A few big names fell off both lists this year, including Claire's Stores, Regal Marine, Gevity and Bankrate.

INFLUENTIALS

Security



George Zoley, GEO Group CEO, is a major political fund raiser.

GEO Group (Public No. 43), once known as Wackenhut Corrections, is one of the largest and most influential private prison operators in America, managing 60,000 inmates around the globe. The company recently bought Houston-based rival Cornell Cos. for \$685 million. The combined company will manage or own 97 correction and detention facilities and 32 behavioral health facilities and have revenue of approximately \$1.5 billion. The prison giant maintains large teams of lobbyists in Washington, D.C., Florida, Texas and other states where it does business. CEO **George Zoley** is an active campaign fund raiser; a Bush "pioneer" in 2004 for raising more than \$100,000, Zoley hosted a fund-raising reception for Senate candidate Charlie Crist at his Fort Lauderdale home in March.

Public Companies

43 GEO Group (46)
Boca Raton / **EMPLOYEES:** 13,026
REVENUE: \$1.1 B ↑+9.4% / **PROFIT:** \$65.9 M
Security/protection products and services