

14	www.mccarthy.com	Bournemouth	Retirement flats developer	24.1	370.2	104.1	8.06
16	MCCARTHY & STONE	Bournemouth	Retirement flats developer	24.3	370.2	104.1	8.06
57	INSURETY	Bristol	Income and health insurance products	24.2	6.4	0.9	1.07
98	COMMERCIAL	Cheltenham	Stationery and office machinery retailer	24.1	20.4	0.2	1.07
99	CARTY BUILDING CONTRACTORS	Swindon	Builder	23.9	4.4	0.6	1.07
101	GRAPHIC	Coventry	Printed circuit boards	23.9	13.9	2.3	1.06

Taking their chances

Insider's 2008 Growth 100 tables boast dozens of companies that have continued to innovate and expand into new markets, developing new products and services to leave the competition standing

Whether businesses are still relatively new or are well-established, those that are growing strongly are marked out by their willingness to innovate – and an ability to manage and martial their ambitions in a sustainable way.

To make our Growth 100 rankings of firms setting the pace in the South West, companies must have filed at least five years of figures to Companies House, allowing us to calculate an average percentage gain for each year.

Added to this, firms need to have registered positive turnover in their most recent filing, as well as a turnover of more than £1m in the first year – assuming they have filed every year (some smaller firms don't have to).

The only other essential rules relate to where firms are based. To qualify, companies must have a registered office in the South West. And they must not have overseas owners or be owned by – or indeed be – a quoted company.

We also try to weed out those whose growth is down to an accounting anomaly, such as when figures have been inflated by group company accounts being consolidated.

Armed with these simple criteria, we are able to compile our leaders list.

What's striking about this year's rankings is the variety of companies out there that are doing the business.

At the top of the list, fund managers rub shoulders with port operators, retail construction operations and engineering firms. Throw in a wireless informatics specialist, a financial adviser and a dedicated helicopter charter and sales business and it becomes clear that commercial success takes many forms.

Over the pages that follow, we have profiled a selection of those on the list to give you the story behind the business success.

One name that might be familiar to you, even if you aren't a dairy farmer, is the organic milk supplier and yoghurt-maker Yeo Valley, which supplies many of the major supermarkets from the village of Blagdon in Somerset.

It's one business that has made

