

Monday, October 6th, 2008

[Welcome!](#)[My Settings](#)[Login](#)[Register Now](#)[Contact Us](#)[Subscribe Now](#)[RSS Feeds](#)

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR INSPIRATION,  
YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PAGE.



**HARRIS**

WE'RE HERE TO HELP.

Get Email News Alerts

[DAILY NEWS](#) [THIS WEEK'S CRAIN'S](#) [INDUSTRY NEWS](#) [SOCIAL WHIRL](#) [LISTS](#) [PHOTO GALLERY](#) [PEOPLE](#) [COMPANIES](#) [VIDEOS](#) [REAL ESTATE DAILY](#)

[NEWS](#) [FOCUS](#) [BUSINESS OF LIFE](#) [PEOPLE](#) [GREG HINZ](#) [MARKETS](#) [OPINION](#)

[Home](#) > [This Week's Crain's](#) > >

[Email](#) [Print](#) [Reprints](#) [Digg](#) [del.icio.us](#)

Enter your email address for daily news alerts

 
 

OCTOBER 06, 2008

[Past Weeks](#)



Gail Adinamis, president and CEO, Clinical Resource Network LLC | Photo: Stephen J. Serio

From this week's Focus

## Sisters doin' it for themselves

By: Dee Gill October 06, 2008

Running a clinical trial for a new drug is a messy process, one that typically costs \$1 billion and drags on for seven to 14 years.

Most of these studies, required for Food and Drug Administration approval, are delayed by participants who weary of frequent trips to clinics. As they drop out, the drug companies have to find replacements and start over.

But five years ago, Gail Adinamis came up with a way to minimize disruptions. She sends nurses and medical technicians to the

patients' homes to draw blood, administer drugs and collect necessary data.

Today, four of the 10 biggest drugmakers in the country use her Deerfield company, Clinical Resource Network LLC, to conduct their trials — cutting dropout rates in some cases to 3% from upward of 60%.

That means companies get more products quickly to market, where a new drug can generate as much as \$2 million in sales a day. It also means a booming business for Ms. Adinamis, the 51-year-old president and CEO, who says CRN will generate \$10 million in revenue this year.

"We will be close to double revenues every year for a while," she says.

Twenty-five years ago, the idea that a woman could start a business like CRN was laughable. The general impression of women-owned businesses in the late 1970s, when they made up less than 5% of all companies in the country, was of "women making baskets and doing hobbies," says Hedy Ratner, co-president of the Women's Business Development Center in Chicago, which was founded in 1985 to counsel and finance women starting their own companies. "Nobody gave them much credibility."

But women-owned enterprises got a big boost in the mid-1980s, when city, state and federal governments created set-asides to award more contracts to them. Then, in the 1990s, the Internet enabled people to start businesses from home, and women jumped on those opportunities, Ms. Ratner says.

### 10 SECONDS OF COOL

Today 40% of American companies are owned by women, according to the Center for Women's Business Research in Washington, D.C. In Illinois, 343,331 such businesses generated \$51 billion in sales in 2006. Many women have not only started successful businesses but, like Ms. Adinamis, they have thought up new ways to work in old industries. Those new ideas are building some of today's fast-growing companies.

ADVERTISING

**TURN DOODLES  
INTO DINERO.**

Click here to learn more  
about the Harris H.E.L.P. Program.

[News](#) [Focus](#) [Business of Life](#)

### MORE FROM THIS WEEK'S **CRAIN'S**

**Bucksbaum's burden**

Four years after pulling off one of the biggest takeovers in REIT history, John Bucksbaum has opened the door to the sale of his own company, General...

[Read Now](#)

**Credit freeze chills Chicago**

[Courting market woes](#)

**The big con**

[Walgreen's déjà vu](#)

[Scandal endures, but giving rises](#)

[View All The Stories](#)

ADVERTISING

Nicole Loftus, for one, has crafted Chicago-based Zorch International Inc. into a \$22.6-million-a-year business in less than six years. In an industry full of cheap key chains and coffee mugs, she set her company apart by persuading corporations to use branded merchandise as an extension of their images. "It's 3-D advertising," says Ms. Loftus, 38, and should be more than "trinkets and trash."



Hedy Ratner, co-president, Women's Business Development Center

Now AT&T Corp., Citigroup Inc. and other companies call Zorch to place \$3-million orders for merchandise with their logos, including golf bags, computer cases, T-shirts and other items. Last year Zorch was the sixth-fastest-growing company in the country, according to *Inc.* magazine, with 2008 revenue set to exceed \$38 million.

Kim Kleeman, 34, built a textbook company by hiring and training teachers to write content for publishers. Circumventing an old tradition in which publishers managed freelance writers themselves, Shakespeare Squared has grown to \$2.5 million in annual revenue in five years.

As a mother of three, Ms. Kleeman tries to make her company as family-friendly as possible. The Glenview offices have two rooms dubbed "working parent offices," where playpens and sofas sit near the desk and phones, for use by employees with sick children. "Kids are in our office all the time, and that works fine," she says.

It certainly doesn't slow down business. This year, Ms. Kleeman expects Shakespeare Squared to post revenue of \$4 million to \$5 million.

Jennifer Bertoglio, 35, saw an opportunity while watching contract lawyers set up workstations in a cramped conference room at a big firm. Shortly after opening her own legal staffing company in 2005, she began offering an unusual benefit: space for temporary workers.

LawyerLink LLC, which employs 10 people, finds the professionals needed for temporary legal jobs and provides the space for them to work. The company recently moved from a 900-square-foot downtown office to a 15,000-square-foot one in the Sears Tower, where she has workstations for 100. In August, LawyerLink opened a second office in Houston and will open others on the East Coast, says Ms. Bertoglio, who declines to disclose revenue.

Running fast-growing companies leaves these women with little time to catch their breath and reflect. But when they do, it can be gratifying.

"We have three floors in this building now, and sometimes when I'm on the elevator between those floors, it hits me," Zorch's Ms. Loftus says. "And, yeah, those 10 seconds are so cool."

©2008 by Crain Communications Inc.

## What do you think?

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Login](#) | [Register](#)

Submit

Most Viewed Most Emailed Most Searched

### Today's Most Viewed Headlines

- [Citadel prowls the wreckage](#)
- [Credit freeze chills Chicago](#)
- [Even stalwart Northern Trust buffeted by financial gales](#)
- [Chef Bowles tweaks menu, atmosphere to boost namesake eatery](#)
- [Illinois delegation backs House bailout 13-6](#)

[View All of Today's News Headlines](#)

## USEFUL LINKS

### REVIEWS

[Special Car Review: Auto Week](#)  
[Chicago Restaurant Reviews](#)

### BUSINESS TOOLS

[Traffic](#)  
[Weather](#)  
[Big Dates](#)  
[New Business Licenses](#)  
[Bankruptcies](#)  
[Federal Tax Liens](#)

### SERVICES

[Classified](#)  
[Download Top Lists](#)  
[About Us](#)  
[Subscription Center](#)  
[Events](#)  
[Advertise with Us](#)  
[Contact Us](#)  
[Meeting Planners Guide](#)  
[Golf Guide](#)  
[Add Your Event](#)

### ALSO IN CRAIN'S

[Daily News](#)  
[This Week's Crain's](#)  
[Lists](#)  
[People](#)  
[Industry News](#)  
[Small Business](#)  
[Society](#)  
[Real Estate](#)

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR INSPIRATION,  
YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PAGE.



**HARRIS**

WE'RE HERE TO HELP.

[Privacy Policy](#) | [About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Back to Top](#)  
Copyright © 2008 Crain Communications, Inc.  
Hosting provided by ePublishing, Inc.