

2008 Top 50 Broadliners Weather the Storm with 10% Gain

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The nation's Top 50 broadline distributors grew by 10 percent as a group in 2008, an impressive gain considering the daunting challenges the industry faced. Together, they inched close to the \$100 billion mark, exceeding \$97 billion in sales for the year, comprising roughly 80 percent of total broadline sales of \$123 billion and 45 percent of total foodservice distribution sales of \$217 billion.

The group's performance is particularly noteworthy considering the foodservice industry as a whole contracted by -4.1 percent in 2008, according to Technomic. Some among them beat the odds to realize dramatic gains. Of the 50 companies, nearly half (22) had double-digit growth, 10 grew by more than 20 percent, and one – Doerle Food Services – topped the growth charts with a whopping 113 percent jump in sales from 2007 to 2008. The Broussard, Louisiana, broadliner expanded its capacity and picked up key chain accounts lost by larger competitors in its market. It makes its debut in the ID Top 50 this year, leapfrogging many of its peers to rank 28th with sales of \$226 million.

Second among the biggest movers, No. 3 Performance Food Group's 62% gain was due to the integration of volume from Vistar Corp. and Roma Foods, which came with its buyout by those firms' private-equity owners and subsequent merger last May. The company initially refused to report its volume for the year, and ID estimated its broadline segment sales to be flat. After initial publication of the ID Top 50, the company contacted ID with updated figures, necessitating some changes to the lineup.

2008 ID Top 50 Report

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RANK	COMPANY	HQ LOCATION	2008 SALES (millions)	2007 SALES (millions)	% CHANGE	\$ CHANGE	# DIST. CENTERS	# ACCOUNTS
23	WOOD FRUITTICHER GROCERY CO.	Birmingham, AL	275	224	23	51	1	3,600
24	C.A. CURTZE CO.	Erie, PA	274	274	0	0	3	7,850
25	MARTIN BROS. DISTRIBUTING CO.	Cedar Falls, IA	248	219	13	29	1	NA
26	FEESERS INC.	Harrisburg, PA	236	206	14	30	1	4,000
27	PATE DAWSON CO.	Goldsboro, NC	235	221	6	14	2	1,500
28	DOERLE FOOD SERVICES	Broussard, LA	226	106	113	120	3	2350
29	UPPER LAKES FOODS INC.	Cloquet, MN	220	191	15	29	2	3,500
30	ZANIOS FOODS	Albuquerque, NM	212	201	5	11	1	3,125
31	HAWKEYE FOODSERVICE DISTRIBUTION	Iowa City, IA	203	185	10	18	4	NA

10 Biggest % Sales Increases (2008 over 2007)		
1.	Doerle Food Services Broussard, LA	113%
2.	Performance Food Group Richmond, VA	62%
3.	Saladino's Fresno, CA	41%
4.	Merchants Foodservice Hattiesburg, MS	32%
5.	Maines Paper & Food Service Conklin, NY	30%