

BUSINESS MONDAY

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PACESETTERS

By **LARRY BIRGER**
Business Monday Editor

BY far the largest single segment of Dade and Broward's economy are small businesses. Their breadth and diversity are on display this week in the fourth annual Pacesetter awards program, sponsored by The Miami Herald.

Winning companies run the gamut from high-tech businesses in the water purification and software fields to mom-and-pop office supply companies and barbecue-sauce makers.

BROWARD

*All People's Manufacturing, Fort
Aquathin Corp., Pompano Beach
Bob Roth's New River Groves,
Playtown, Pompano Beach
Suncoast Marketing, Hollywood*

AQUATHIN CORP.

Growing sales for a basic product

Back to basics: Aquathin Corp. wants water to be just that, plain H₂O.

The Pompano Beach-based company, founded in 1980, manufactures and distributes purification systems that free water of salt, minerals and pollutants. Its best sellers are residential drinking systems that cost between \$450 and \$900. The company also targets offices and businesses. It offers 58 systems at prices ranging from \$49 to \$40,000.

President Alfred Lipshultz would not disclose the company's sales figures. But he said sales have grown by about 20 percent a year since it started until 1990. Recessionary trends last year slowed the company's growth to about 13 percent, he said.



Lipshultz

Lipshultz said Aquathin built its clientele through word-of-mouth recommendations. The company gradually developed an international network of 500 distributors. The company recruits them by placing ads in trade publications and trains them in three days.

Systems are now sold in the United States, Canada, Europe, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. Lipshultz said increasing concerns over the quality of drinking water will continue to open new areas for Aquathin.

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