

# MY BUSINESS IS BOOMING

Got a bright idea? There's \$787 billion in stimulus money up for grabs. These business-people are thriving not despite the climate, but because of it. By Michael V. Copeland



## Serious Materials

HIGH-TECH WINDOWS

While the door has closed on the housing boom, the government has opened a super-energy-efficient window. The idea: By offering tax credits to retrofit homes, schools, and government buildings with new windows, heating and cooling costs can be reduced by as much as 50%. That's been a boon for Ser-

ious Materials, based in Sunnyvale, Calif., and founded by techies in 2002 with the Moore's Law approach of bringing huge and continual improvement to the hidebound world of building materials. After conquering drywall, the company moved on to windows and this year alone snapped up two bankrupt window factories (including one in Chicago where workers hoping to save their jobs staged a sit-in). Result: Serious

has increased capacity 10-fold for its energy-efficient windows while generating hundreds of the green jobs that President Obama is so keen on. "When you add the money for retrofitting schools, there is \$60 billion out there that we can go after," says Serious CEO Kevin Surace. Though Serious now has revenues of \$50 million a year, "we're getting close on individual projects that are \$40 million to \$50 million," Surace says.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBYN TWOMEY

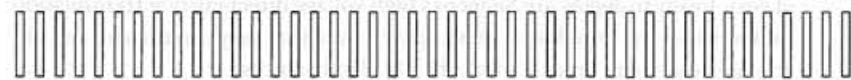


## Ice Energy

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY AC



History tells us it was wagon trains filled with Midwesterners, but it was air conditioning that settled the West. But the problem with AC is that when it's hot out, everyone wants to cool down at once. Meeting that demand often requires a burst of power from so-called peaking plants, typically natural-gas-powered jet turbines that generate electricity at a premium of 40% to 70% compared with the average price of power. So rather than blast your AC during the day, this Windsor, Colo., startup had a cool idea: generate a block of ice at night when energy is cheap. The insulated ice tank connects to your run-of-the-mill AC system and supplies six-plus hours of refrigerant without power-hungry compressors. Ice Energy already sells gear to building owners and also has corporate customers such as Warner Bros. Entertainment in Burbank, Calif. But CEO Frank Ramirez hopes the stimulus will free up funds for utilities to give them a shot. "The utility industry is not known for taking risks on things that are new," he says. "The funding ought to help overcome the inertia of doing things the old way."



PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL LEWIS

## McKesson

HEALTH-RECORD DIGITIZATION



You'll never get your neighbor's meds by mistake if McKesson gets a piece of the \$19 billion set aside for health-care IT. One program McKesson has launched: the Closed Loop Medication system, in which every medicine has a bar code that corresponds to a hospital patient. Before a pill is swallowed or an IV bag hung, the bar code is scanned bedside—and denied if there's been a mix-up.



## Makani Power

HIGH-ALTITUDE KITE MAKERS



As every kite-flying kid knows, when the wind is cranking, it imparts a huge amount of force. Makani, a startup on gusty San Francisco Bay, is developing giant high-altitude tethered kites, to be flown by robots in intricate patterns 24/7. With backing from Google's Energy Fund and hopes of tapping into the \$150 million stimulus for early-stage renewable-energy technologies, Makani aims to get a pilot launched within two years.



## Stoel Rives

RENEWABLE-ENERGY EXPERTS



"Shovel-ready" conjures images of guys laying asphalt, not lawyers toting briefcases. Still, the first call that plenty of companies make when seeking stimulus funds is to a sharp legal mind. "Our shovels are ready," jokes Graham Noyes, a Seattle-based attorney with national law firm Stoel Rives and one of the top renewable-energy lawyers in the country. He's already helped nail down \$40 million in federal funding for Bluefire Ethanol, which converts green waste to fuel for cars.