

Growth Companies

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Abercrombie & Fitch Co.'s shares gained 11% in recent trading after the New Albany, Oh.-based chain of teen-apparel stores reported that its same-store sales surged 22% in November, easily beating analysts' expectations.

Actuant Corp., a Butler, Wi. maker of motion-control systems and related products, is expanding its business with a deal to acquire Mastervolt, a maker of branded electronics, for \$150 million. The acquisition expands Actuant's business in the field of solar technology.

Aegon USA, a Cedar Rapids, Ia. unit of Dutch-based financial and insurance giant Aegon NV, will move into 140,000 square feet of space in Baltimore, Md., as part of a plan to consolidate certain Louisville, Ky. operations in Baltimore and in Little Rock, Ar.

Alaska Air Group Inc., Seattle, Wa., reported that its traffic in November increased more than 15%, on a nearly 10% increase in capacity.

AlienVault, a Campbell, Ca. security information and event management company, expanded in Europe, announcing that it opened new offices in the United Kingdom and Germany.

American Eagle Outfitters Inc., a Warrendale, Pa. apparel retailer, said that its sales in November increased 2%—to \$272 million, on flat same-store sales.

Asbury Automotive Group, a Duluth, Ga. chain of auto dealerships, announced its acquisition of Greenville Automotive Group. In another move, Asbury will sell its Nalley Motor Trucks division in Atlanta, Ga. to Rush Enterprises Inc. for an undisclosed amount.

AutoZone Inc., a Memphis, Tn.-based retailer of auto parts, reported its first quarter earnings jumped 20%—to \$172 million, on a 13% revenue increase—to \$1.8 billion.

Axcan Holdings Inc., a developer of gastrointestinal drugs, is expanding with an acquisition, saying it will acquire Eurand NV, a Netherlands-based firm that focuses on gastrointestinal, cardiovascular and other drugs, in a \$583 million transaction. Eurand has its U.S. commercial headquarters in Yardley, Pa.

Blyth Inc., a Greenwich, Ct. candle and fragrance company, reported third quarter net income of \$2.6 million, a turnaround from a \$1 million loss in the year-earlier period. Revenue slipped 3%—to about \$216 million. Looking ahead, Blyth reduced its outlook for the full year.

Bon-Ton Stores Inc., a York, Pa.-based department-store operator, reported that its sales increased nearly 3% in November from a year ago—to \$319 million, including a 2.9% increase in same-store sales

Cardinal Health Inc., a big Dublin, Oh. drug wholesaler, made another acquisition, this time overseas, announcing that it bought Zeullig Pharma China, a big Chinese pharmaceuticals distributor, in a \$470 million deal that includes the assumption of certain debt. This is the latest in a string of acquisitions for Cardinal, which recently said it would buy Kinray Inc., a New York-based drug distributor, for \$1.3 billion, and Healthcare Solutions Holding LLC for another \$517 million. Separately, Cardinal extended a supply contract with its biggest customer, Walgreen Co., for another two years, although term of the arrangement weren't revealed.

Carlisle Cos., a Charlotte, N.C. provider of construction materials, wrapped up its deal to acquire Hawk Corp., a Cleveland, Oh. manufacturer of aviation and automotive equipment, for \$388 million.

Castle Dental LLC, a unit of Smile Brands Inc. of Irvine, Ca., plans to open three more offices in the Houston, Tx. area next year as part of its ongoing expansion in that market.

Central European Distribution Corp., a worldwide vodka producer headquartered in Bala Cynwyd, Pa., is expanding with a deal to acquire the 20% that it doesn't already own of Whitehall Group, a top Russian vodka company, for \$81.5 million in cash and shares. The deal must be approved by regulators.

Champion AV, a heating, ventilation and air-conditioning equipment company in San Antonio, Tx., more than quadrupled its space to increase its residential-service business as it anticipates hiring additional employees.

CMI Freight-Trans Inc., a Chicago, Il.-based intermodal company, plans to build a 50,000-square-foot facility in Memphis, Tn.

Coda Automotive Inc., a Santa Monica, Ca. maker of electric cars, got a boost when rental-car company Hertz Inc. agreed to buy Coda's cars for some of its outlets in Southern California. The number of vehicles to be purchased wasn't revealed. Coda,

which has faced delays bringing its cars to market, expects to have the cars available in next year's third quarter.

Cole G.E. Lancaster OH LLC, a Phoenix, Az. real-estate investor, purchased a Giant Eagle supermarket in Lancaster, Pa. from Echo Continental Lancaster Association LLC for about \$15.5 million.

Collective Brands Inc., the Topeka, Ks.-based shoe retailer, reported its third quarter earnings jumped 29%—to \$47.6 million, on a slight increase in sales—to \$882 million. The results beat Wall Street estimates. Collective's operations include the Payless ShoeSource and Stride Rite chains.

Compass Learning, an Austin, Tx. educational software maker, has acquired rival Renzulli Learning for an undisclosed amount.

CoorsTek Inc., a Golden, Co. manufacturer of technical ceramics and specialty material components for the oil-and-gas sector, expanded its business by acquiring Flowguard, a U.K.-based maker of pressure-control products, for an undisclosed amount.

Costco Wholesale Corp., an Issaquah, Wa. operator of warehouse stores, reported that sales in November rose 13%—to \$6.8 billion, with same-store sales up 9% in the month. The sales were better than analysts were expecting.

Creative Extruded Products Inc., an Ohio provider of custom plastic extrusion work, is getting more than \$30,000 in state incentives to help fund a planned \$1.4 million project.

Daimler AG, the German-based automobile manufacturer, announced that its worldwide truck sales surged 44% in the third quarter.

Deere & Co., the Moline, Il. manufacturer of heavy equipment, reported a fourth quarter profit of \$457 million, a turnaround from a \$223 million loss in the year-earlier period. Revenue jumped 35%—to \$7.2 billion. The quarterly results exceeded Wall Street estimates.

Dickey's Barbecue Restaurants, Dallas, Tx., wants to open eighteen new eateries in Texas over the next three years.

Dollar General Corp., a Goodlettsville, Tn.-based discount retailer, reported its third quarter profit soared 69%—to \$128 million, including costs related to repaying debt. Sales for the quarter increased 10%—to \$3.2 billion, including a more than 4% increase in same-store sales. Over the past year Dollar General has managed to lop off 20% of its long-term debt stemming from a \$6.9 billion leveraged buyout three years ago. The buyer, Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co., the New York buyout firm, took Dollar General public a year ago.

DSW Inc., a Columbus, Oh.-based shoe retailer, reported its third quarter earnings surged 33%—to \$35.5 million, on a 10% sales increase—to \$489 million. The company also bumped up its forecast for the full year.

Dunkin' Brands Inc., Canton, Ma., signed an agreement with a franchisee in Wisconsin to open another three dozen stores in the southern part of that state. In the first half of this year, Dunkin' opened nearly 340 locations around the world.

EBay Inc., in an attempt to bring together online and in-store shopping opportunities, acquired Milo.com Inc., a search engine for local shopping, for an undisclosed amount. EBay, the online marketplace, is headquartered in San Francisco, Ca.

Encore Hospitality, a unit of privately-held Encore Enterprises of Dallas, Tx., set up a joint venture with Sage Hospitality to manage premium hotels as Encore looks ahead to making acquisitions. Since starting up eleven years ago, Encore Enterprises has done \$1 billion in acquisition and development deals.

Encore Plastics Corp., an Ohio-based company that makes and distributes plastic products, caulking guns and other products, announced plans to open a 60,000-square-foot facility in Forsyth, Ga., where it will hire about 100 workers.

Endeavour International Corp., Houston, Tx., bought up another 20% stake in the Bacchus development area of the North Sea for about \$9.6 million, plus another \$6.4 million to be paid three months after oil is discovered.

Endo Pharmaceuticals Holdings Inc., Chadds Ford, Pa., wrapped up its deal to acquire Qualitest Pharmaceuticals, a Huntsville, Al. generic-drug maker, for \$1.2 billion.

Esco Corp., a privately-held manufacturer of metal products for the mining industry, expanded its presence in Australia by acquiring Austcast Pty Ltd. for an undisclosed amount. Included in the acquisition is Austcast's Newlcast subsidiary. Esco, headquartered in Portland, Or., is estimated by analysts to have annual revenue of about \$440 million.

ESG Solutions Inc., an Ontario-based provider of microseismic monitoring technology for the energy sector, opened an office in Houston, Tx., which will serve as the headquarters for its U.S. operations. The company has other U.S. offices in Denver, Co. and San Francisco, Ca., along with its Canadian operations and other international offices in China, Dubai and the Netherlands.

F.N.B. Corp., a Hermitage, Pa. banking firm, expanded by adding eight offices to its Regency Finance Co. consumer-finance affiliate. The firm also wants to open two more locations in Kentucky.

FM Industries LLC, a manufacturer of water pumps, is moving from Menomonee Falls, Wi. to a larger facility in Milwaukee.

FMC Technologies Inc., a Houston, Tx. manufacturer of oil-drilling equipment, signed a memorandum of understanding on a deal whereby it will help develop new subsea technology solutions for Petroleo Brasileiro SA, a bit Brazilian energy company.

Ford Motor Co., Dearborn, Mi., reported that sales surged 24% in November from the year-ago month.

Foundation Financial Group, saying that it's positioning itself for growth, will add thirty jobs to its mortgage-sales center in the Charlotte, N.C. area. Foundation also has operations in Raleigh, N.C., Atlanta and Savannah, Ga. and Jacksonville, Fl.

Fountain Powerboat Industries Inc., a privately-owned unit of Liberty Associates LC, is expanding a boat-manufacturing plant in Beaufort County, N.C., where it expects to hire more than 400 workers. Lured by \$150,000 in state financial incentives, Fountain will invest \$5.1 million in the expansion project.

Fred's Inc., a Memphis, Tn. retailer, reported that sales in November increased 6% from the year-earlier period—to \$146 million, with same-store sales rising almost 5%.

Friendly Ice Cream Corp., the Wilbraham, Ma. restaurant operator, announced plans to invest millions of dollars in the Albany, N.Y. area to add about seventeen new locations in that region.

GE Aviation said that it will set up a new \$51 million Electrical Power Integrated Systems Research and Development Center at the University of Dayton in Ohio.

GlaxoSmithKline PLC, the big British drug firm, is boosting its business in the Chinese market with a deal to acquire Nanjing MeiRui Pharma Co. for what's estimated to be about several hundred million dollars.

Google Inc., Mountain View, Ca., presented a new smartphone that it developed in conjunction with South Korea's Samsung Electronics Co. as well as a new Android software version. The Internet company has been trying to challenge the dominance of Apple Inc.'s iPhone products.

Guess Inc., a Los Angeles, Ca. casual apparel company, reported its fourth quarter net income increased 8%—to \$69.1 million, while revenue increased 17%—to \$614 million. Both earnings and revenue beat analysts' expectations.

Harley-Davidson Motor Co., Milwaukee, Wi., is trying to boost its business in Brazil by expanding its dealer network there. HDSP/Grupo Izzo will become Harley's exclusive dealer in that country.

Hewlett-Packard Co., the Palo Alto, Ca.-based maker of computers and printers, reported its fourth quarter net income increased 5%—to \$2.5 billion, on an 8% increase

in revenue—to \$33.3 billion. Adjusted net income exceeded analysts' expectations and the firm's operating profit margin increased a bit. The company also said that earnings for the current quarter are projected to be better than industry analysts had been expecting.

Hill-Rom Holdings Inc., a Batesville, In. manufacturer of hospital beds and other medical equipment, announced that it bought out the minority interest of its Encompass TSS joint venture from Compass Group.

Honda Motor Co. Ltd. of Japan said that its U.S. sales jumped 21% in November from the year-earlier month.

Horizon Wind Energy of Houston, Tx., which has plans on the board to construct a wind farm in Paulding County, Oh., has reportedly signed a twenty-year deal to sell wind power from that facility to American Electric Power Co. Inc.

Hormel Foods Corp., the Austin, Tx. maker of Jennie-O turkey products and other foods, reported fourth quarter net income of \$123 million, up from \$105 million in the year-earlier period and ahead of analysts' expectations. Sales jumped 23%—to \$2.1 billion.

Inergy LP, a Kansas City, Mo. propane company, reported its gross profit in the fourth quarter rose 12%—to \$101 million, on a 33% jump in revenue—to \$181 million.

Inland Real Estate Acquisitions Inc., Oak Brook, Il., expanded its holdings by acquiring two shopping centers in Florida for \$38.4 million.

Interstate Transport Inc., St. Petersburg, Fl., is teaming up with freight company DHL to provide perishable-imports transport services in the Americas.

JetSuite, a Long Beach, Ca.-based private jet charter company, has expanded its services in Texas, with flights added in Austin, Houston, San Antonio and Dallas-Fort Worth.

Jo-Ann Stores Inc., a Hudson, Oh. retailer of fabrics, crafts and notions, reported its first quarter net income increased 21%—to \$29 million, on a 5% revenue increase—to \$535 million. Profits were ahead of analysts' projections.

Jos. A. Bank Clothiers Inc., a Hampstead, Md.-based menswear retailer, reported its third quarter net income increased 8%—to \$12.6 million. Revenue was up 7%—to \$173 million, with same-store sales rising 3%.

Juniper Networks Inc., a Sunnyvale, Ca. network hardware and software firm which had earlier invested in Altor Networks Inc. of Redwood City, Ca., has now bought out the company in a \$95 million cash deal. Altor manufactures security software for virtual data centers.

Kaiser Permanente Colorado is expanding by opening an office in Evergreen, Co., which will be Kaiser's twenty-first location in Colorado.

Kohl's Corp., the Menomonee Falls, Wi. operator of department stores, reported that its sales jumped more than 8% in November—to \$2 billion, including a 6% increase in same-store sales.

Krispy Kreme Doughnuts Inc., the Winston-Salem, N.C. chain of donut shops, reported third quarter net income of \$2.4 million, a turnaround from a \$2.4 million net loss in the year-earlier period. The results easily beat expectations by analysts, who had been anticipating a loss for the recent period. Revenue increase 8%—to \$90.2 million. Results were helped by a decline in expenses.

Kroger Co., the big Cincinnati, Oh.-based operator of supermarkets, reported third quarter earnings of \$202 million, turning around an \$875 million loss in the year-earlier period. Sales were up almost 6%—to \$18.7 billion, with same-store sales rising more than 2%, not including fuel sales.

LaSalle Hotel Properties of Bethesda, Md. announced that it acquired the Chamberlain West Hollywood Hotel in Florida for \$38.5 million.

Macy's Inc., the department-store operator, reported that its sales in November increased 8% from a year ago—to \$2.3 billion, with same-store sales rising more than 6%.

Midmark Corp., a Versailles, Oh. maker of healthcare products, expanded by acquiring Newmed SrL, an Italian manufacturer of tabletop sterilization products for the medical and animal markets, for an undisclosed amount.

Monetate, a Conshohocken, Pa. provider of Web-based marketing testing technology, will add twenty staffers to its payroll, after having raised \$5 million in venture capital. The expansion will bring its employment up to fifty.

Nordex USA won an order to manufacture thirty wind turbines for EverPower Wind Holdings Inc. of New York, although the monetary value of the order wasn't revealed.

OmniVision Technologies Inc., a California-based maker of sensor devices for consumer electronics, reported its second quarter profit more than tripled—to \$28.9 million, on a 31% jump in revenue—to nearly \$240 million.

Partners Healthcare, the biggest healthcare system in Massachusetts, reported that fiscal 2010's income from operations increased to \$195 million, up from \$164 million in the prior year. Operating revenue was up nearly 7%—to \$8.1 billion.

Pep Boys-Manny, Moe & Jack, the Philadelphia, Pa.-based retailer of auto parts,

reported its third quarter earnings more than doubled—to \$5.7 million, on a 5% sales increase—to \$496 million, ahead of analysts' expectations.

Photonics Inc., a manufacturer of high-end semiconductor components, reported its profit in the fourth quarter soared almost sevenfold—to \$8.1 million. Revenue increased 16%—to \$110 million.

Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen, Atlanta, Ga., intends to continue with rapid growth next year. Now with about 1,950 restaurants around the world, the firm is looking to add at least 400 more locations over the next five years.

Ramah Navajo Foods LLC, which is a joint venture between Blue Mountain Meats and Ramah Navajo Chapter in New Mexico, wants to set up a processing and wholesale distribution facility in McKinley County, N.M.

RealNetworks Inc., a Seattle, Wa. seller of media-player software, unveiled its new Unifi online service that will help consumers keep better track of their music and videos so they can access them from any Internet device.

RevoluSun and **Sunetric**, which provide residential voltaic services in Hawaii, teamed up with SunRun, a San Francisco, Ca. financing firm for the voltaic market. SunRun will provide funding for the firms' plans to install photovoltaic systems.

Rue21 Inc., a Warrendale, Pa. apparel retailer, reported its third quarter net income increased nearly 20%—to \$7 million, on a 20% increase in sales—to \$164 million. Same-store sales were up almost 2%.

Rural Sourcing Inc., an Atlanta, Ga. provider of Internet technology services, will start up a development center in Augusta, Ga., where it will create 100 computer and software jobs.

Sanford, Baumeister & Frazier PLLC, a Fort Worth, Tx. accounting firm, expanded its business reach by purchasing Hugly PC of Dallas for an undisclosed amount.

Serenity Healthcare, which is affiliated with Signature of Louisville, Ky., expanded with some acquisitions, saying it bought Highland Manor Nursing & Rehab Center in Portland, Tn. and St. Peter Villa in Memphis for an undisclosed amount.

Simon Property Group Inc., the biggest shopping mall owner in the U.S., is rumored to be cranking up a buyout offer for Britain's Capital Shopping Centres Group PLC. Reportedly Simon has asked that Capital Shopping not proceed with its own planned acquisition of a mall company until Simon has a chance to submit a bid for Capital. Simon Property is apparently looking overseas for acquisitions because of antitrust problems in making large acquisitions in its home U.S. market.

Starbucks Corp., the Seattle, Wa. coffeehouse chain, provided some details regarding

its Chinese expansion plan, saying it hopes to have 1,500 locations in China by 2015. That would more than triple its current number of stores in that market.

Synnex Corp., Fremont, Ca., completed its acquisition of 80% of Marubeni Infotec Corp. of Japan, a distributor of IT equipment and related products. Synnex paid \$8.4 million for the controlling interest and assumed about \$110 million in debt.

Taziki's Mediterranean Café, Birmingham, Al., will expand its operations in the Tuscaloosa market by adding another location, which will be its eighth in Alabama.

Teradyne Inc.'s planned stock buyback perhaps says something about the financial strength of the company, which is weathering the recession relatively well. The North Reading, Ma.-based maker of electronics test equipment got the okay from its board to buy back \$200 million of common shares on the open market or through private means, saying that the stock repurchase provides value to shareholders while also allowing the company to continue growth. In its second quarter, Teradyne's revenue surged nearly 169% from the year-ago quarter—to \$455 million.

Thermo Fisher Scientific Inc., a Waltham, Ma. maker of scientific tools, agreed to acquire Lomb Scientific, an Australian provider of laboratory chemicals and instruments. The price of the acquisition wasn't announced, but Lomb has annual sales of nearly \$33 million.

Thor Industries Inc., the Jackson Center, Oh. RV manufacturer, reported its first quarter earnings increased 1%—to \$23.7 million, on a 21% increase in sales—to \$607 million.

Tiffany & Co., the Manhattan, N.Y. retailer of jewelry and specialty products, reported its third quarter net income increased 27%—to \$55 million. Revenue increased 14%—to \$682 million, and same-store sales increased 7%.

Toll Brothers Inc., the Horsham, Pa. builder of luxury homes, reported a profit of just over \$50 million for its fourth quarter, a turnaround from a \$111 million loss in the year-earlier period when it was hurt by more than \$85 million in writedowns and other costs. Profits in the recent period were also aided by a tax benefit and a gross margin increase of nearly 14%. The recent results marked Toll's second-straight quarter in the black after nearly three years of losses. Revenue was \$403 million, down 17% from a year ago but less of a drop than had been expected.

Ultra Electronics Advanced Tactical Systems Inc., a developer of tactical command and control systems for the military, won a contract to supply technology for U.S. Navy missile systems. The contract is valued at more than \$14 million.

Ultratech Inc., San Jose, Ca., said that it will spend more than \$120 million over the next few years on a new advanced manufacturing facility that it recently opened in Singapore.

Unifi Inc., a Greensboro, N.C. maker of multifilament polyester yarns and related products, opened a 120,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in El Salvador to increase and support its operations in Central America. The plant will hire about 175 workers.

United Parcel Service Inc., Atlanta, Ga., said that its business-mail-services operations opened up a new processing center outside Phoenix, Az.

Valspar Corp., the Minneapolis, Mn. maker of paints and industrial coatings, reported its fourth quarter profit increased 3%—to \$51 million, including extra expenses related to the acquisition of an Australian paint company. Revenue for the quarter jumped 13%—to \$877 million, which beat analysts' expectations.

Wal-Mart Stores Inc., Bentonville, Ar., agreed to purchase a 51% interest in Massmart, a South African retailer, for about \$2 billion, in a move that gives Wal-Mart a foothold in the country. Wal-Mart has apparently backed off earlier plans to buy all of Massmart.

XPEL Technologies Corp., San Antonio, Tx., reported a third quarter profit of more than \$80,000, turning around a \$640,000 loss in the year-earlier period. Revenue increased 17%—to almost \$1.2 million.

Yum Brands Inc., continuing to scout out worldwide growth opportunities, is now looking to Africa for expansion, saying it hopes to double its number of KFC outlets there to as many as 1,200 over the next four years. Yum, the Louisville, Ky. fast-food restaurant company, hopes that it can double its African revenue to about \$2 billion during that time.

Zumiez Inc., the Evertt, Wa.-based youth-apparel retailer, reported its third quarter net income more than doubled—to \$12.3 million. Net sales increased to \$136 million, up from \$113 million in the year-earlier period. The company also projected earnings for the current quarter ahead of analysts' expectations.