

2015 Inaugural Gator100

Congratulations on being selected to the 2015 inaugural Gator100! Below is a fact sheet about the Gator100, as well as some tips to help you spread the word about your company's accomplishment.

About the Gator100

The Gator100, sponsored by the University of Florida, the Warrington College of Business Administration and the Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation (CEI), recognizes and celebrates the achievements of leading UF alumni entrepreneurs around the world. The Gator100 ranks the 100 fastest-growing, Gator-owned or Gator-led businesses each year—regardless of which school or college the alumni graduated from—recognizing the entrepreneurial spirit in all Gator alumni across our campus.

Website: gator100.ufl.edu

Primary Hashtag: #Gator100

How to promote your Gator100 award

Now that your company has been selected as one of the fastest-growing, Gator-owned or Gator-led businesses in the world, it's time to spread the word. You received a sample press release in your toolkit; here are some organizations you should send it to:

Local media organizations: Your company is making an impact in your community. Inform your local newspaper(s) and television station(s). Emphasize your company's growth, job creation and impact. Include some personal information that reporters may find interesting.

Hometown media organizations: Don't forget about where you came from! Your hometown newspaper(s) and television station(s) are always looking for interesting features on homegrown success stories.

Area chamber of commerce: Your local chamber of commerce is always interested in promoting business success in its city. By interacting with your city's chamber of commerce, it could open up doors to help expand and enhance your business.

Professional/civic organizations: At the bottom of your résumé, there's probably a list of civic and professional organizations, and charities you support or are involved in. They'd appreciate hearing about your honor.

When to send?

Your selection to the Gator100 is newsworthy...Now how do you improve the likelihood media members will see it? Here are a few things to keep in mind:

Promote mid-week: Press releases sent on Mondays and Fridays receive little traction. Sending your press release Tuesday through Thursday gives you the best chance of being seen.

Send in the morning: Industry standards are clear about which days to send press releases; what time to send them is unclear. We recommend sending your announcements in the morning when editors and reporters are most likely to be checking their email.

Some style tips

Here are a few recommendations that might make your email/press release stand out from the rest.

Personalize if you can: Editors and reporters give e-mail blasts cursory looks. Try to personalize the email by using a specific reporter's name in the salutation, maybe a business or metro reporter that writes a lot of features.

A bonus tip...If you have time, do a quick search of that reporter's work in the media organization's archives. If you find articles about businesspeople that have been recognized for similar accomplishments, make sure to mention that in your email.

Be careful about attachments: Editors and reporters are hesitant to open attachments from new contacts. Paste your message or press release in the body of the email, as well as attaching a Microsoft Word document or PDF. This way, editors and reporters can get to your message instantly.

Be sure to follow up: If you don't hear back from the media organizations you contacted, place a friendly phone call or send a brief email to confirm if they received your message. Also take that as an opportunity to subtly remind them how sharing your story would resonate with readers and viewers.

Fast facts about the 2015 Gator100

- The top-ranked company was SoloHealth, an Atlanta-based, health and wellness company, which had a CAGR of 274.40 percent. SoloHealth, founded by business alumnus Bart Foster (BSBA '97), provides self-service kiosks in more than 4,000 locations nationwide, including Walmart, Safeway and Sam's Club, among others.

- The Warrington College of Business Administration led all UF colleges with 41 companies represented by their alumni, including seven in the top 10. The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the College of Design, Construction & Planning tied for second with 15 companies represented.

Gator100 By the Numbers

1884: Earliest Founding Date

1961: Oldest Class Year

2013: Most Recent Class Year

15: UF Colleges Represented

13: U.S. States Represented

274.40%: Top Growth Rate

2005: Class With Most Representation

9,500+: Employed by 2015 Gator100 Companies