

# 12 Ways to Boost Profits

PAGE 91

# Inc.

The Magazine for Growing Companies

## MOVE OVER, CHINA!

The future of manufacturing is alive in a five-person shop in Wellington, New Zealand.

**Think cheap, quick, green, and global. And everything's made to order**

BY MAX CHAFKIN



**DAVID TEN HAVE OF PONOKO:**  
Making it easy for anybody to make (and sell) stuff

**HOW I DID IT**  
**WOLFGANG PUCK'S SMARTEST DECISION**

PAGE 86

**CASE STUDY**  
How much is your product really worth?

PAGE 54

**NEW! IMPROVED!**  
**THE HIGH-TECH BODY**

PAGE 76

**WHO'S NEXT**  
Our Annual Under 30 Shortlist

PAGE 70



**IN-HOUSE COMPETITION**  
**GOOD, BAD, OR JUST PLAIN UGLY?**

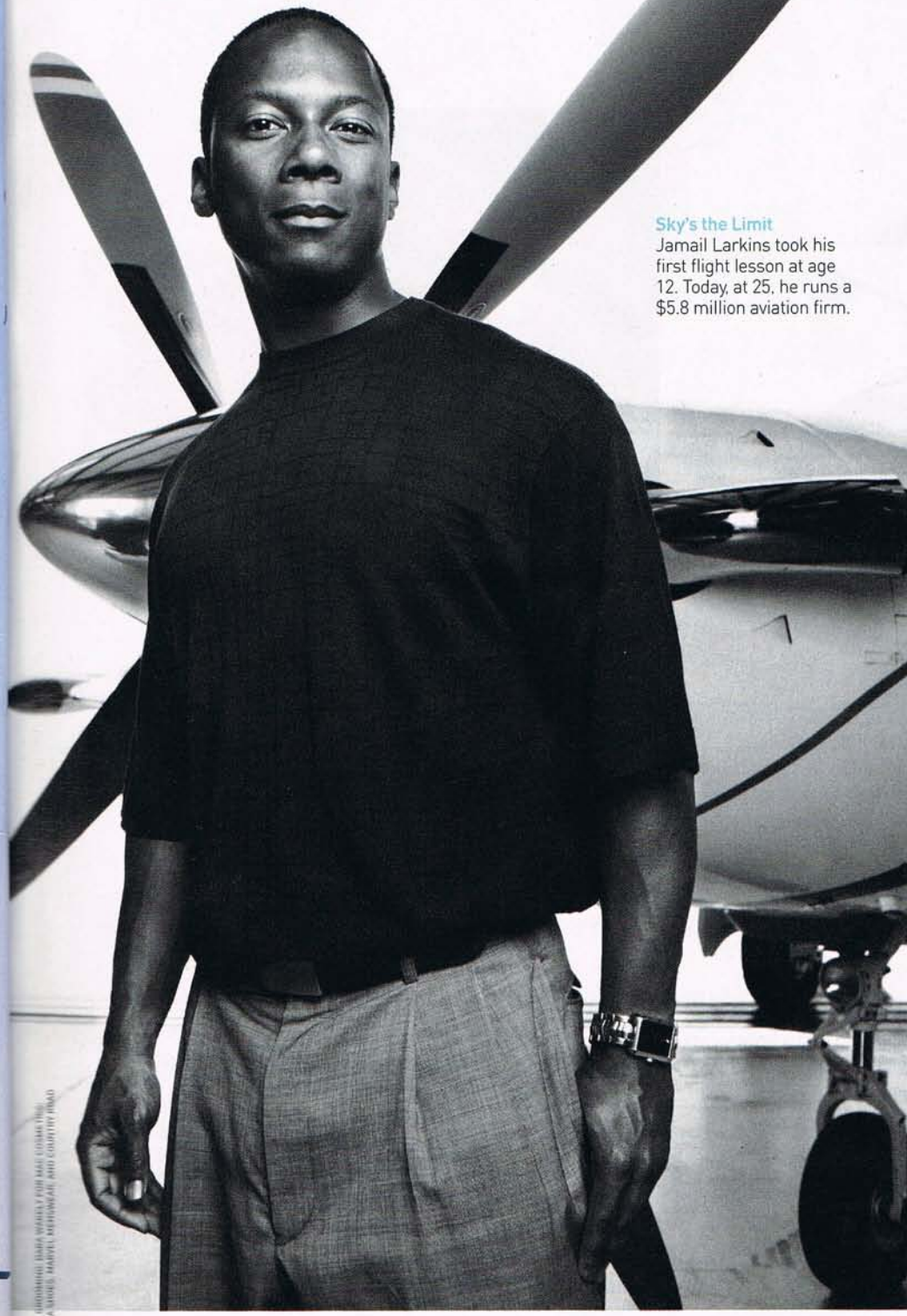
PAGE 99

\$4.99 U.S. \$5.99 Canada



October 2009

www.inc.com



**Sky's the Limit**

Jamail Larkins took his first flight lesson at age 12. Today, at 25, he runs a \$5.8 million aviation firm.

**58  
Let's Get Started**

Ponoko is a tech company that actually makes stuff. Its customers are making things, too: lots of new businesses.

BY MAX CHAFKIN

**70  
Who's Next?**

Want a peek at the future of entrepreneurship? Meet eight wunderkinds—all under 30—who are already turning heads in aviation, fashion, and more.

**76  
The New and Improved You**

Bionic limbs. Hearts that monitor themselves. Perfect hearing. It's the future of the human body. BY ADAM BLUESTEIN

**86  
How I Did It  
Wolfgang Puck**

The restaurant and food merchandising giant has come a long way since his days as a 14-year-old potato peeler in Austria. AS TOLD TO LIZ WELCH

**91  
Special Report  
The Truth  
About Profits**

They are not as thin as you think. Plus, 12 smart ways to boost the bottom line. BY DARREN DAHL



**54  
Case Study  
Giving It Away**

Luke Skurman's quirky college guides were a big hit. The problem was getting readers to pay for them. What if he lowered his price...to free? BY DONNA FENN

**ON THE COVER**

David ten Have, photographed in Wellington, New Zealand, by Williams + Hirakawa

PRINTED IN THE USA. COPYRIGHT ©2009 BY MANSUETO VENTURES LLC. All rights reserved. INC. (ISSN 0162-8968) is published monthly, except for combined January/February and July/August issues, by Mansueto Ventures LLC, 7 World Trade Center, New York, NY 10007-2195. Subscription rate for U.S. and Possessions, \$19 per year. Address all subscription correspondence to Inc. magazine, P.O. Box 3136, Harlan, IA 51593-0202; 800-234-0999; icmcsustserv@cdsfulfillment.com (U.S., Canada, International). Please allow at least six weeks for change of address. Include your old address as well as new, and enclose if possible an address label from a recent issue. Single-copy requests: 800-234-0999. Periodical postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Canada Post International Publications Mail Product (Canadian Distribution) Sales Agreement No. 40063884. Canadian GST registration number is R123245250. Canada Post P.O. Box 867, Markham Station Main, Markham, Ontario L3P 8K8. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Inc. magazine, P.O. Box 3136, Harlan, IA 51593-0202. Material in this publication must not be stored or reproduced in any form without permission. Requests for permission should be directed to permissions@inc.com. Reprint requests should be directed to The YGS Group at 800-290-5460, ext. 128. Inc. is a registered trademark of Mansueto Ventures LLC. OCTOBER 2009 VOL. 31 NO. 8

THIS PAGE: JAMES HARRINGTON; COVER: STEVEN AND CHRISTOPHER DODD; STYLING: JANE WILSON; HAIR: ANDREW; MAKEUP: ANDREW; PHOTOGRAPHY: ANDREW; PHOTOGRAPHY: ANDREW

# Who's Next?

Keep an eye on these eight rising stars. They are transforming the Web, empowering other start-ups, and turning your conference room into one big whiteboard. A sneak preview of the latest generation of ambitious entrepreneurs

## Highflier

JAMAIL LARKINS, 25

Founder of Ascension Aircraft, an aviation sales, leasing, and consulting firm

"I took my first flight lesson when I was 12 and just got hooked. When I was 14, I petitioned the FAA for an exemption to fly solo before my 16th birthday. When they said no, I wrote to over 100 companies to see if they would sponsor a trip to Canada, where the age limit is lower. I had the opportunity to meet some major players, including John and Martha King from King Schools, which makes flight training products. I told them I wanted to start up my own company to help pay my flight costs. They eventually said, 'Well, you could become a distributor for us.'

I started off selling instruction books and videos and grew into avionics and pilot supplies. A couple years later, I started to broker aircraft transactions and then began leasing them. To be honest, I'm not 100 percent sure how I got corporations to buy from me, because most of them knew I was 16 years old."





## Fashion Forward

SUSAN GREGG KOGER, 24

Co-founder of ModCloth, an online emporium featuring new and vintage clothing from more than 300 designers

"I've always loved vintage clothing. I would find stuff that didn't fit me or wasn't quite my style, but I would buy it anyway. Eric, my boyfriend at the time and now my husband, had a background in Web hosting. He said, 'You should sell some of this stuff. I can help you set up a website.' It was the summer before we went to Carnegie Mellon. We launched during winter break and had a sale our very first day. I will never, ever forget that moment—I feel like it was my birth as an entrepreneur."

## Bringing the Web to Life

TRISTAN HARRIS, 25

Co-founder of Apture, an online platform that helps websites add music, photos, and other media

"We had one meeting with Jim Brady, who was then the executive editor of WashingtonPost.com. Just a few days later, we received this long, involved e-mail from their head of business development. It basically said, 'We'd like to start this with our largest property.' It felt really good that a credible industry leader not only liked the technology but was serious about implementing it in a big way. In the beginning, I was concerned about how customers would view our youth. I'm younger looking—

if I completely shave, I look 18, but if I have a little stubble, I can pass for 29."

if I completely shave, I look 18, but if I have a little stubble, I can pass for 29."

18, but if I have a little stubble, I can pass for 29."





## Let's Get Together

ELLIOTT BISNOW, 24

Founder of Summit Series, a conference organizer for entrepreneurs  
"My father and I founded Bisnow Media about two and a half years ago. Summit Series started because as a young company founder, I had a lot of questions, and I wanted to meet and get advice from other young founders. **Now, we have a really loose interpretation of the word entrepreneur. The criteria is that it's someone at the top of his or her field who is doing something amazing, inspires people, and is fun to be around.** Our goal is to create a TED or Davos, but for young people. Instead of buying Ferraris, we're working with nonprofits to leverage our resources."

## Organic Growth

EMILY OLSON, 25

Co-founder of Foodzie, an online marketplace for artisanal food producers and growers

"After college, I took a job as brand manager at a specialty-food store. I learned the process of getting products on the shelves and noticed it was really hard for small food producers. That was when the idea came about. **Being in the food business is not as glamorous as it seems, but everyone we work with is doing it because they are very passionate.** The producers get really excited about how they make their chocolates or their olive oil, and it's inspirational to know we can help them sustain their business, grow it, and continue doing what they love to do."



## Playing Hard

ADAM RICH, 29

Co-founder of Thrillist, an e-mail newsletter for "dudes"

"In college, we were deadly serious about hanging out. My co-founder Ben Lerer and I used to run around Philadelphia to find whatever the city had hiding in it: jazz clubs, open-mike night, whatever.

**No matter where we've launched, there are dudes there, and dudes need to clothe themselves, get themselves drunk, and feed themselves.**

That's universal. I don't care whether you are in L.A. or Atlanta or Boston; those are needs we can be serving.

We approach readers the way you would talk to a college friend: "Yo, check this out." That intimate, friendly, trustworthy tone."

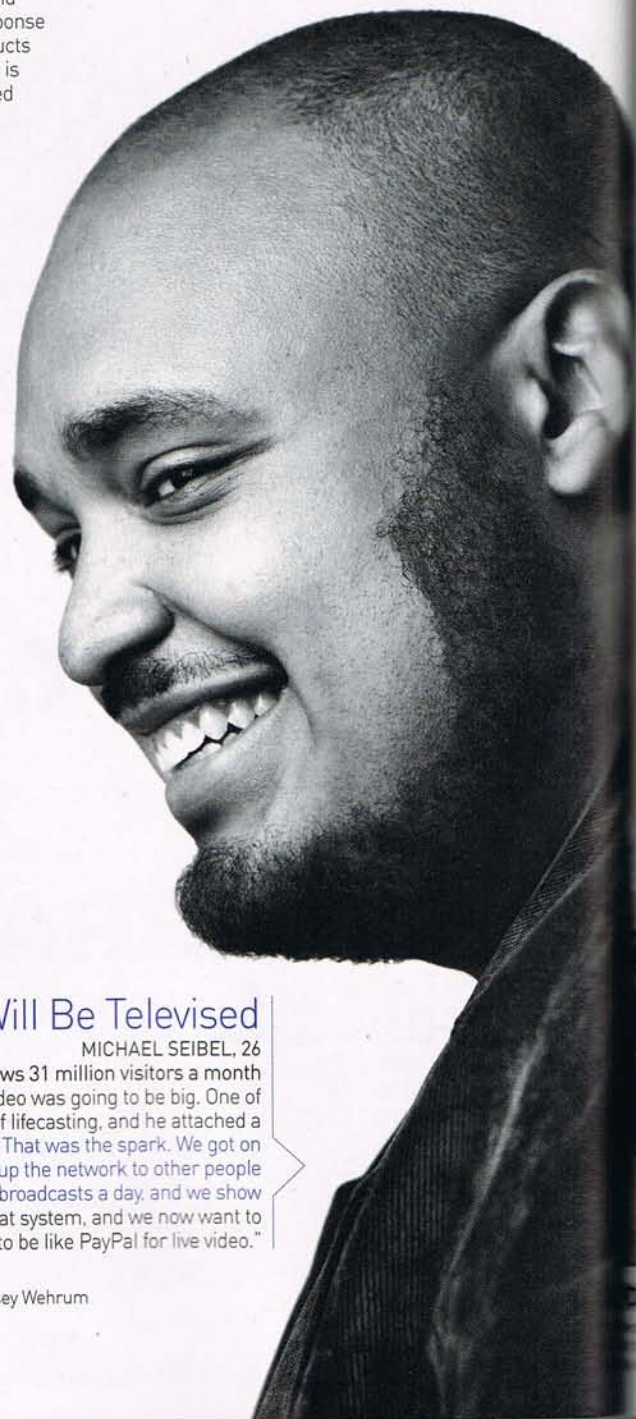


### Stroke of Genius

**JOHN GOSCHA, 25**  
Founder of IdeaPaint, a maker of paint that turns walls into dry-erase boards  
"My freshman year at Babson, I lived in a dorm for student entrepreneurs. My friends and I would hang big sheets of paper on the wall to brainstorm. After a while, I thought, Wouldn't it be great if we could just paint the walls and write right on them? I looked around, and there wasn't a paint like that in existence, so I started developing it. I came up with a very crude prototype and painted my dorm room. The response was great. It's one of those products where people just say, 'Wow, this is really cool.' At that point, I realized this could really be a business."

### See More Online

**inc.com** These entrepreneurs are featured on our 30 Under 30 list. Visit Inc.com for trend stories, in-depth profiles, slide shows, video, and a chance to vote for your favorite. [www.inc.com/30under30](http://www.inc.com/30under30)



### The Revolution Will Be Televised

**MICHAEL SEIBEL, 26**

CEO of Justin.tv, a live video website that draws 31 million visitors a month  
"We were all just out of college, and we knew that live video was going to be big. One of our founders, Justin Kan, came up with this idea of lifecasting, and he attached a camera to his head and started broadcasting his life. That was the spark. We got on the *Today* show in the first month, and then we opened up the network to other people who wanted to show live video. We now have 40,000 broadcasts a day, and we show 50 million hours of video a month. We've built this great system, and we now want to power live video on other people's websites. We want to be like PayPal for live video."

AS TOLD TO Max Chafkin, Jason Del Rey, April Joyner, Tamara Schweitzer, Nitasha Tiku, and Kasey Wehrum

Participating rebates occur...  
Expression® cred...  
a trademark a...  
ment of or a