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Survival of the Fittest

By Fran Daniel | Journal Reporter

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Ginger Hackley and her husband, Ben, opened The Boardroom Salon for Men about the time that the economy was tanking.

People were beginning to cut back on the types of luxuries that the salon offers -- such as massages, paraffin hand dips and haircuts in an upscale environment.

"We just knew that we were going to have to work hard," Ginger Hackley said.

The Boardroom beat the odds, and has seen steady growth since it opened. It's one of several local companies - including Ruff Housing Dog Daycare & Lodging and Women's Wellness & Fitness Center Inc. -- that are doing well.

Blair Abee, the regional director for the Small Business and Technology Development Center in Winston-Salem, said that most businesses have been affected by the downturn in the economy and many of them are struggling.

But, he said, some companies are doing well and building up a steady clientele because they are unique in some way or doing a good job of marketing and serving their customers.

"The key to survival is finding that competitive advantage, that thing that will have people buy from you rather than from somebody else," Abee said.
