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Cover Story

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## ABDI AHMED

**NetServe Systems  
Irvine  
14 years in business**

**Type of company:** Provides IT and software services, high-tech consulting and technical talent

**Starting capital:** "Zero. I had a decent computer and a little rented place. I had the know-how. What I needed to start was what was in my head."

**Annual business:** \$3.8 million

**Most significant challenge, and how you overcame it:** "To build a brand name that can be trusted – that takes time. It's very challenging and time-consuming."

**Most useful resource:** "The relationships I have built with my customers. We have never advertised. All our deals are word of mouth."

**Advice to other minority entrepreneurs:** "Patience, persistence and better planning. You have to be in it for the long haul. Just remember that if you have the better plan, you will succeed."



**One thing you might have done differently:** "If I had to do it all over again, I would have brought in partners, found people with talent. Don't be afraid of partnering with others. Also, I concentrated so much on my ideas, but not so much on the business of running a business. Now I know better."

### 5 Minority Business Owners:

ABDI AHMED | CHUCK 'C.K.' HONG | TINA ALDATZ  
MOHAMMAD 'MO' HONARKAR | RAJ BHATHAL

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