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Editor's Eye on Philadelphia: Something Fierce This Way Comes: It's Rajant

By *Richard Rabicoff*

Citybizlist has gazed upon **Rajant Corp.** a number of times over the past four years, most recently in our April report on the wireless company's partnership with Vislink Services.

But The Eye definitely widened when Malvern, Pa.-based Rajant won recognition this week as one of the winners of the 2011 FierceWireless "Fierce 15" award.

FierceWireless, a daily e-mail newsletter out of Newton, Mass., selected only private companies that are well-funded, founded in the past decade or so and have demonstrated potential to make a market impact. There was evidently a bias toward California, which produced 10 of the 15 celebrants, and there were no selections from technology-rich Boston or New York.

FierceWireless cited Rajant's ability to provide enhancements to networks that suffer from data overload. But the company's real niche has been as a lifesaver in situations where fixed networks are destroyed, inoperative or unfeasible. The mining industry, the military, homeland security, and broadcasters have been among Ranjant's clientele.

The company's co-founder, Chairman and CEO Bob Schena, said Rajant modified its original product after 911, "when the U.S. military requested a quickly deployable, wireless, mobile network with small but powerful nodes that could be dropped along a path or within a specified area 'like breadcrumbs.'" Users can access the network through laptops, GPS units, IP cameras and other wireless resources.

Rajant has received backing from U.S. Department of Defense and from the Princeton-based Battelle Ventures, L.P. fund and its affiliate, Tennessee-based Innovation Valley Partners. Battelle and Innovation Valley put in \$3.25 million in a Series B round in 2006. In 2002, the company raised startup financing of \$2.6 million from angels and \$200,000 from Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Battelle Ventures partners Kef Kasdin and Ralph Taylor-Smith serve on the Rajant board.

Schena, an alum of Temple University and Wharton, is a serial entrepreneur who in 1999 co-founded Airclic, Inc., a wireless application and scanning company acquired by Motorola and Symbol Technologies. In 1992 he founded FutureVision of America (FVA), collaborating with Bell Atlantic to launch the first video dial tone and digital TV via television. Earlier he held a series of senior executive posts at Harron Communications. At the end of last year Governor Corbett named Schena to the Marcellus Shale Transition Team.



Robert J. Schena

Rajant has regional offices in North Carolina, Maryland, Tennessee, Arizona and Colorado.

According to FierceWireless, Rajant is showcasing its testing facility in Arizona for wireless operators.

The Eye will continue to follow Rajant with interest, but we won't get too close. They are so fierce.

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