

# Forbes



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## Grow America Results: Crio, Jigabot, ContactPoint and the REAL Winners: Projecting 5,175 New Jobs

It's been a busy season. Last week capped **Grow America's** Fall Competition in Utah, where we awarded \$250,000 in cash and service awards to 9 lucky companies, from a field of 150 finalists and a base of more than 600 applicants. If you have an idea, start-up or growth company who missed this competition, it isn't too late – we're preparing to launch our national program of competitions and entrepreneurial resources in January, and you can stay abreast of our progress by registering at [www.GrowAm.com](http://www.GrowAm.com). Here's an article that tells a little more about the program that just came out in the **New York Times**.

And here's a quick rundown of the Fall event winners, with links:

### Growth Category:

- 1st Place: [Crio, Inc.](#) – \$100,000
- 2nd Place: [Contact Point](#) – \$50,000
- 3rd Place: [Kisstix](#) – \$20,000
- Crowd Vote: Crio, Inc. – \$10,500

### Start-up Category:

- 1st Place: [Jigabot](#) – \$25,000
- 2nd Place: [Active Alarm](#) – \$15,000
- 3rd Place: [Spider Tie](#) – \$5,000
- Crowd Vote: Jigabot – \$3,500

### Idea Category:

- 1st Place: [Pop Alcorn](#) – \$10,000
- 2nd Place: [Grass Wire](#) – \$7,500
- 3rd Place: [Doctor Board](#) – \$3,500

I've had the chance to visit with several of the companies who prevailed in the Fall Competition through three rounds of judging, video and business plan

submissions, live pitch judging, and for the fortunate 12, an on-stage pitch in front of our celebrity judges **Fraser Bullock**, **Sorenson Capital**; **Amy Rees Anderson** a fellow *Forbes* contributor and angel investor as the founder of **REES Capital**, and **Will West**, Chairman and CSO of **Control4**. Here's what they had to say:

For Grand Prize winner **Crio, Inc.**, makers of the gourmet brewed cocoa called **Crio Bru**, the November event was not their first trip to the Grow America rodeo. Crio entered our Spring competition, but didn't advance to the finalist rounds.

"Before the Spring event, we had a 100-page business plan that we had to distill down to fit in the relatively tiny 150-word fields boxes. We were disappointed not to be called up in the Spring, but we further refined our business plan and improved our company—now the timing is better than ever!" said President and CEO Jon Fotheringham.



Dr. Eric Durtschi and Jon Fotheringham present Crio Bru to celebrity judges

"We're in a phase of high growth. Distribution is growing rapidly—our goal is to be in 2,000 coffee shops and most of the grocery stores in the [United States](#) in 2 years. Our product is already being sold in [Canada](#), [Australia](#) and Korea and we'd like to sign additional international distribution partners. We'll continue to grow and introduce even more healthy and delicious cocoa and chocolate products as well."

Crio Bru sounds like my kind of product—a cup of their patent-pending brewed cocoa has more antioxidants than pomegranate juice or blueberries, Fotheringham says. No fat, no sugar, no cholesterol and only 10 calories per cup. It has no caffeine, but contains a natural stimulant called Theobromine, that provides a healthy, steady extra energy source.



Crio Caramel Macchiato

Then there's **Jigabot**, our Grand Prize Start-Up Company winner. Chairman and CEO **Rick Stout** is an independent filmmaker with some highly impressive technical credentials

who'd developed a robot called "**AIME**" that assists with advanced filming techniques. Together with President **Donna Root** (also a film producer), the two combined with CMO **Kevin Shelley**, an ace in visual engineering and brand experience development, famous for Oscar-winning behind-the-scene special effect teams and technology used in blockbusters like *Titanic* and *Jurassic Park*.

With Kevin's marketing help the team worked to distill all of the many applications for their robot into a single market application for consumers to buy—AIME a **GoPro** device that can track a



Rick Stout and Kevin Shelley present Jigabot to the Grow America audience

tiny target emitter, attached on to a child's sports jersey or armband, tracking the child (or other target) automatically, while freeing up the camera operator to enjoy the event from the sidelines.

"We knew that the coolest device in the world would be for not without a breathtaking way to take our accomplishment to market," said Stout.

Said Shelley: "The competition process, coupled with the chance to get an instant reaction from not only 3 expert judges but also the customer validation of an audience of 1,000 all at once—it's a pretty strong indication of how your product will fare in the market."

If the live pitch event is any indication, Jigabot has "nailed it" in spades, taking home not only the grand prize but the crowd vote winnings as well. (Note—Crio did the same—the crowd vote turned out to agree with the expert judges' opinion.)

Jigabot is preparing for a Kickstarter campaign for AIMe early in 2013 (details to be announced by Jigabot later).

The second place winner in the Growth Category, winning \$50,000 is a software company, **ContactPoint**, makers of **LogMyCalls**--a marketing analytics and automation platform for the phone.

"Marketers have had in-depth analytics for web traffic for years," ContactPoint CEO **Jason Wells** noted. "But when the phone rings, there has been a massive data black hole. We're fixing that problem by literally gathering big data from phone calls and using it to automate marketing and CRM actions."

The Grow America program provides ContactPoint with a springboard for future growth and for a big 2013, he said.

"The other benefit from this competition has been the awareness its generated for investors and clients," Wells continued. "Every potential investor that calls us knows what Grow America is, or has heard about the competition. Competitions like this help put companies on map. It helps the cream to rise to the top."

"I think what Grow America is doing is critical to the success of entrepreneurs," he said. "When you have to endure 5 rounds of rigorous judging you are forced to examine the veracity of your claims and to crystallize your pitch. As we continue to roll out new features for LogMyCalls, that's going to be really important."

Thank you, Crio, Jigabot, ContactPoint – I couldn't have said it better myself. I'm excited to expand the Grow America program as aggressively as possible

and celebrity judges



Jigabot uses a technology called AIMe



ContactPoint is the maker of LogMyCalls, an analytics and automation program for the phone



Jason Wells is the CEO of ContactPoint, maker of LogMyCalls

during 2013 through the U.S. and even the world (**Grow [China](#)** is next).

However, I'd like to close with a note on the biggest winners of our recent Fall competition in Utah. It's the prospective recipients of the new jobs these companies create. We asked the 150 finalists in the Fall event to give us a forecast of the number of jobs they expect to create in the coming three years. If you read my headline, I've given away the number – but it's still a stunning answer that bears repeating: 5,175 new jobs. Answers varied – but an average of 34-35 new positions per company. Congratulations to all of them – and thanks to the revenue and jobs these new ventures create, congratulations to us all.

Do you have any questions or suggestions for Grow America's programs? To reach me directly, you can find me at [@AskAlanEHall](#) or via my personal website, [www.AlanEHall.com](http://www.AlanEHall.com).

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<http://www.forbes.com/sites/alanhall/2012/11/15/grow-america-results-crio-jigabot-contactpoint-and-the-real-winners-recipients-of-a-projected-5175-new-jobs/>