

Ideas



CENTRE FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION
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Safe Innovation: the Truck Access Platform

The "Truck Access Platform (TAP)" is a new product that will revolutionize the way we think of fall protection. Because the smooth rounded surface on top of tank trucks creates a slip and fall hazard, Occupational Health and Safety has mandated the use of fall protection, which at present means wearing a safety harness. Randy Hansen, Shop Supervisor at Wiebe Transport in Grande Prairie understands the hazard but has developed his own innovative solution.

"Why would you catch a person after the fall instead of removing the fall opportunity?" was Hansen's question. His answer: the "Truck Access Platform (TAP)".

The "TAP" is a retractable railing system and platform mounted to a standard scissor lift. The lift already has a 32 inch platform with a safety railing around it and is capable of a 20 foot lift. It is also equipped with self-deploying outriggers and the largest wheels available for greater stability so all Hansen needed to add was his "TAP". Once the lift is within eight inches of the tank and extended to slightly above, the "TAP" can be lowered and its safety rails deployed and secured.

"Now rather than having cables and harnesses, the "TAP" allows the user a much larger safe confinement area," says Hansen.

An added bonus with this design is that it can maneuver into the same sized space as a large tool box so it doesn't incapacitate another work bay. Plus, the machine is still a scissor lift and can continue to be used as such.

Having tested the "TAP" in a real shop environment with excellent results, Hansen is now seeking persons interested in bringing his innovation to the marketplace. For more information on the "Truck Access Platform (TAP)" and how you or your company can become involved, please contact Jim Letersky, Centre for Research & Innovation, at 780-518-8878.



Innovation Insanity

“Invent, improve, copy...or perish,” says Reinier Evers, founder of trendwatching.com, an online source dedicated to trends and new business ideas. In his July/August Trend Briefing, Evers lists 15 trend categories that are inspiring innovation.

1. Status Skills - The need for recognition is at the heart of every consumer trend. Dubbed “Night School,” the Seattle Sorrento Hotel offers a Drinking Lesson series in the hotel's bar on the preparation and history of three distinct cocktails.

2. Generation G - Based on the consumers' disgust with greed and its current dire consequences for the economy, G stands for generosity. Launched in February 2010, Choose Change ATM has developed a brand of ATMs that lets users donate one dollar of each 2 dollar transaction fee to a non-profit organization of their choice.

3. Locality - The majority of consumers continue to live and work in their local area. So, the potential for locally based innovations continues to grow. Oregon-based SoupCycle offers organic soup, made from locally grown produce and delivered each week by bicycle to subscribers.

4. Curated Consumption - The avalanche of choice is driving time-starved consumers into the arms of a new breed of curators, ones who make their choices for them. Panty by Post is a Canadian venture that offers women's underwear by monthly subscription.

5. Daily Lubricants - Consumers will always feel the need for products that make their lives easier. Belgian OrgaSizer offers an online place to check the sizes and preferences of loved ones and friends.

6. Brand Me - Brand Me ranges from customized and personalized goods to obsessing over one's personal online presence. Shortomatic is a California-based company that invites consumers to upload their own art to create customized swim shorts.

7. Infolust - Consumers crave relevant, timely information. Enter the Smartphone App, DailyRoads Voyager, that enables continuous video recording from moving vehicles, sort of like a 'black box' for cars.

8. Crowd Express - 'Crowds' are being utilized to create, influence, fund, predict and decide like Volkswagen's App My Ride contest. Designers, programmers, developers and interested users are invited to help develop applications for future in-car infotainment systems.

9. Eco-Bounty - This refers to the numerous opportunities for brands that participate in the quest for a sustainable society. Ford, for example has developed MyFord Touch, technology that helps “coach” drivers on the road to optimize their miles per gallon.

10. Tryvertising - consumers becoming familiar with new products by trying them out. Clube Amostra Grátis offers consumers in Sao Paulo an assortment of new products to take

home and try before they become available on the shelves.

11. Status Stories - Expect a shift from brands telling a story, to brands helping consumers tell status-yielding stories to other consumers. Executive Tours offers a series of what it calls 'Crack of Noon Tours', designed “for those who don't consider themselves 'morning people'.”

12. Sellsumers - this is a concept where ordinary consumers can make money instead of just spending it. Israel-based Fiver lets anyone sell a service of virtually any type for five dollars (US). Four goes to the seller and one to Fiver.

13. Intent - It's easier than ever for consumers to reveal their purchasing intentions. OfferMeaTrip aims to provide a service in which consumers dictate what they want from a trip and agents bid for their business.

14. On=Off - This refers to online manifestations in the offline world. Kwedit offers a payment service that enables consumers to make cash payments for online purchases at offline retail stores.

15. Kids/Lads/Gays/And so on - serving well established demographics in novel ways is an endless source of innovation. Lucky Duck Toy Box provides a wide assortment of toys for rental aimed at kids aged newborn through five years old.

For the complete briefing and more, please log onto www.trendwatching.com/trends/innovationinsanity.

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What is DI?

Canada's performance on innovation over the past three decades rates a consistent "D". Out of 17 developed countries it is rated as 13th in terms of innovation, according to the Conference Board of Canada's *Report Card on Canada*, released last August.

Roger Garriock believes that the foundation of innovation is creativity and that there needs to be more of an emphasis on creativity and innovation in the K-12 curriculum.

Garriock has worked with adults teaching workshops on innovation since he retired from a senior management position at IBM eight years ago. The fees from these workshops go to fund Destination ImagiNation (DI), a volunteer-based not-for-profit which provides students from K-12 with after-school facilitation to learn life skills they don't learn in school.

The skills the children learn include communication, teamwork, research, thinking 'outside the box,' budgeting, and working with others. Skills also acquired include creative problem solving and time management.

This was an excerpt from *Fostering Creativity with Destination ImagiNation*, an article in *Our Voice* the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils' Magazine.

Garriock will be bringing his workshop and presentation to Grande Prairie on August 24th at the Holiday Inn. This full day event is perfect for businesses that want to raise the creativity quotient of their employees. For more information contact the CRI at 780-539-2054.

Productivity = Prosperity

For many, the mere utterance of the word "productivity" sends them running with their fingers in their ears chanting, "La, la, la"! Those who lived through the '90's experienced first hand the cutting, slashing and whip cracking that fell under the banner of productivity and worst of all, it didn't work. Now we're emerging from another recession, and productivity is again the word on everybody's lips. So why is this old idea new again?

A quick perusal through the 66 pages of the Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity Report on Canada 2010 entitled *Beyond the Recovery*, and you will see a pattern unfolding. Our prosperity is in direct proportion to the size of our workforce and how much each person in that workforce contributes to the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) which is economic speak for the Crown's coffers.

At present, we have an adequately sized workforce but that workforce will decrease as baby boomers retire and are not replaced by equal numbers in subsequent generations. At this point, we will have fewer workers to create prosperity. This smaller percentage of working aged Canadians will reduce the GDP and we will then need creative retirement solutions to address this decline in our prosperity potential.

Now, consider that Canada's employees work fewer hours per year than our US counterparts (less intensity). This lack of intensity is derived mainly from our desire for more leisure time, which is a preference, not a weakness. But another contributing

WORK
SMARTER

...Not Harder!

factor is that our economy does not create adequate opportunities for full-time work.

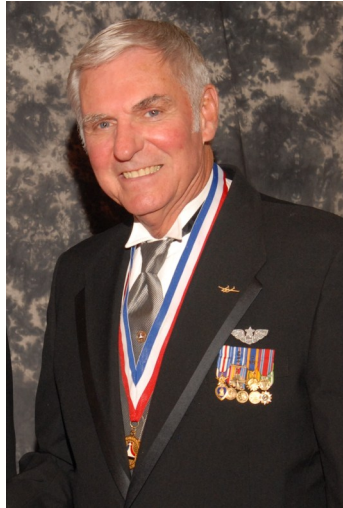
Plus, economists agree that a better educated workforce will be more productive. Many studies show that increased wages accrue to more highly educated individuals. And higher wages are the result of higher productivity.

So let's recap, the number of workers x the hours worked x \$/hour = GDP. So less workers x less hours worked x less education so less \$/hour = less GDP therefore less money for pensions, etc.

The answer is pretty straight forward. Unless we want to spend our retirement years working, we need to learn to do more with less, to work smarter not harder. If we want to maintain our present quality of life we need an educated workforce that implements creative solutions to accomplish more, with less. We need greater productivity!

Dick Rutan to speak at Innovation Day October 27, 2010

Innovation Day is scheduled for October 27th, 2010 and we are very happy to announce that world renowned aviator, Dick Rutan will be our luncheon keynote speaker.



Rutan will thrill us with amazing stories of his career in the Air force, Voyager's flight around the world, a second world flight in a homebuilt, record setting in a rocket powered airplane, being stranded on the North Pole, and many other adventures. But wrapped in, around and through these stories are his views on believing in one's self and one's team, of setting goals and sub-goals and reaching toward the impossible.

This promises to be a day you won't soon forget as Dick Rutan's recall of his many dramatic adventures will prove that, "You are limited only by what you can dream."

Innovation day will kick-off with an Inventor's workshop with speakers who will explain the Innovation Voucher Program, the hows and whys of patents, the various government programs available and what the CRI can do to assist inventors. Dick Rutan at lunch and an Entrepreneur's Forum in the afternoon with guest speakers to be announced.

Upcoming Events

Dicor Workshop and Presentation	August 24th
Innovation Ambassadors Meeting (Falher)	September 1st
Unmanned Vehicle Systems Open House (Fairview)	September 16th
Innovation Day (Grande Prairie)	October 27th
Donald Cooper Workshop	October 28 & 29

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Your comments and feedback are appreciated. Articles on topics relevant to innovation may be submitted for consideration.

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