

## Which Came First: The Product or the Need?

by Deborah Chaddock Brown

For those of us who are small business owners, we started with an idea or maybe we started out of necessity to earn a living but which ever way your business started – over time it has evolved.

Here's the big question: What drives the evolution of your business: your vision, trend chasing or customer need?

I'd recommend periodically asking your customer about their business and what their challenges are. The best businesses are those that truly listen to their customers' needs and find a way to address their challenges.

One of my newest customers, **Production Tool Company** in Twinsburg, Ohio has made a living out of listening to their customers and custom designing tool solutions to save money, time and reduce injury of the work force with safety tool coverings. They started as a tool manufacturer's rep and have developed into a company known for solving problems.

A perfect example of a company who constantly creates new products to make their customers' lives easier is Google; the noun that has become a verb. It seems that in every meeting, class or networking event I've attended recently, I have learned about a new Google tool. Here are just a few FREE tools you may not be aware of:

**Google Trends:** A resource to compare two key words/phrases or companies to see which are searched more frequently.

**iGoogle:** Create a custom home page with feeds you select: blogs, news feeds, weather, sports. You can create multiple pages, one for business, one for hobbies you enjoy, etc.

**Google documents:** Create Word, Power Point and Excel files on line that can be easily shared with others.

**Google Checkout:** An alternative to PayPal to sell items and even invoice your customers allowing them to pay with Visa or MasterCard. Save on transaction fees by advertising on Google Adwords. Spend \$50 a month with Google Adwords and enjoy \$5,000/month of fee-free transactions!

**Google Desktop:** Search your computer easily with this free downloadable software.

**Google Alerts:** Select key word phrases and receive an email each time they are used on the web. I have alerts for my company, industry key words, some of my customers and even my own name. It's simple.

Do your customers think of you as a solution-oriented partner in their quest for success?

Interested in surveying your customers for information? Give me a call, I can help.

**330-414-8792**

## THE TOP 100

Following is a great listing of the first 50 of the top 100 business blogs put together by John Crickett over at Business Opportunities and Ideas.

Starting from the top with Copy Blogger and my man, Seth, you'll recognize 100 great resources on the web. I'm honored to find my blog, Biz Informer, listed at #49.

Copy Blogger  
Seth Godin  
MicroPersuasion  
How To Change The World  
Duct Tape Marketing  
Freelance Switch  
Rough Type  
Successful Blog  
Small Business Canada  
David Allen, Getting Things Done  
Springwise  
Small Biz Trends  
Fast Company  
Instigator Blog  
Occam's Razor  
Smart Wealthy Rich  
eMoms At Home  
Escape from Cubicle Nation  
Marketing Technology Blog  
Business Pundit  
The Engaging Brand  
Influential Marketing Blog  
Drew McLellan - The Marketing Minute  
The Digerati Life  
Success From The Nest  
Business Blog Consulting  
Church Of The Customer  
Todd And  
Net Business Blog  
Don Dodge on The Next Big Thing  
Bootstrapper  
About.com Entrepreneurs  
Blogtrepreneur  
Branding & Marketing  
Simplenomics  
Freelance Folder  
HELLO, My Name Is Blog  
Self Made Minds  
Sox First  
Young Go Getter  
Trust Matters  
Small Biz Survival  
The Personal MBA  
The Entrepreneurial Mind  
Blog Business World  
Working At Home On The Internet

### Biz Informer

EmpowerWomenNow

**VISIT:** [www.businessopportunitiesandideas.co.uk](http://www.businessopportunitiesandideas.co.uk) for the complete list.

118 W. Streetsboro, Suite 144  
Hudson, OH 44236  
330-414-8792  
[www.allwriteink.com](http://www.allwriteink.com)  
Copyright 2007-AllWrite Ink