

There's more than lab-based innovation



Innovation is not necessarily about serious people in white coats puttering about in R&D labs. In an experience economy (which we're still in, like it or not), marketing innovation is equally important, and often trumps technical innovation.

Stop being so damn earnest when it comes to innovation



To run with the above: sometimes consumer wants *can* be frilly, so sometimes innovation can also be less weighty. Really, innovation doesn't have to be so damn serious all the time! Have some fun with it, too.

You have no excuse for not knowing what others are up to



Wherever you live, you have absolutely *no* excuse to be unaware of innovation avalanches originating in Sweden, in the Netherlands, in Brazil, in the US, in Canada, in Australia, in Japan, in South Africa ... It's all out there, reported on 24/7 by sources dedicated to trends and new business ideas. Free of charge. For a list of sites to track, scan and add to your feeds, check out part III of this briefing.

OK, enough preaching, let's look at practising:

II. 41 copy-worthy innovations



All of our [monthly Trend Briefings](#) and [annual Trend Reports](#) come with examples of emerging consumer trends, which are all innovations in their own right. But that sometimes excludes innovations that are interesting purely because they turn an existing concept into something that's better or simpler or more fun, beautiful or exciting. Which is why our sister site, [Springwise New Business Ideas](#), rounds up new business ideas on a daily basis.

So for the following 41 new business ideas, we only needed to browse through Springwise's ever-larger database of postings to get going. You may have already seen some of these (hey, we actually *hope* you have—if all of the below is completely new to you, you've let your business intelligence slide), but we've also added some new trend monikers to spice up the contextual side of things.

It's a lot, and yet it's just the tip of the iceberg, er ... avalanche. Enjoy!

"D(I)ESIGN"

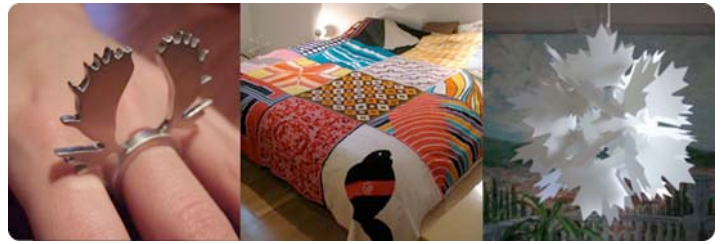
As far as we're concerned, there's no category or product that cannot benefit from bold, brilliant redesign efforts. When done right, those redesigned objects and services will easily be lauded as, wait for it, innovations! In fact, with consumers' desire for the new, combined with their ever-shifting preferences, 'to-die-for design' has the ability to make earlier, status quo design feel more like *diesign*.

Now that designers are on an equal footing with starchitects and business gurus, you can count on someone working on a new design approach to *your* products while you're wasting your time reading this briefing ;-) A few quick examples show how this trend works for everything from fire extinguishers to souvenirs:



1 Swedish [FireInvent's The Safety Box](#) is designed to provide complete fire protection in a single package. But the fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, fire blankets and torch lights included aren't just ordinary versions of those items. Rather, they've been revamped for a modern, attractive look. The Safety Box design, for example, includes a fire extinguisher and Snap Alarm in white or black; a black-and-white fire blanket in a modern, botanical design; plus an extra wall-mountable optical smoke detector. There will always be a need for functional products like fire protection devices, but there's nothing to say they can't be upgraded with a splash of color and design and sold at a similarly upgraded price.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



2 Canada's [Souvenir Shop](#) tackles cheap, tacky souvenirs by offering redesigned, recrafted and upgraded Canadian souvenirs. Created by Toronto's Gladstone Hotel and Motherbrand, a design firm dedicated to preserving Canada's local culture, Souvenir Shop features anything from the Maple Leaves Lamp (created by Ani+Lumigrane and Frédéric Guibrunet) to a Pierre Trudeau doll made of felt.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



3 In the UK, the [HiQ](#) chain (which is part of Goodyear Dunlop) has rebranded itself as a transparent, no-stress fast-fit tire company. As part of its rebranding and [premiumizing](#) effort, the chain's first new-style store in Nottingham virtually screams transparency with a clean, black-and-white color scheme, clearly worded signs and glass walls that let customers see what's happening on the shop floor.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

"HYPERLOCAL"

You've heard it before: in a globalized, connected world, most people cling to the local more fanatically than ever. Whether it's fear of the unknown, or eco-concerns, or just the simple fact that, except for a tiny minority of jet-setting, rootless, high-potentials such as yourselves, millions of consumers find themselves in a very local world 49 weeks of the year. Speaking to their preference for things produced locally, ethically, authentically (**STILL MADE HERE!**) will net you some innovations today. Guaranteed.

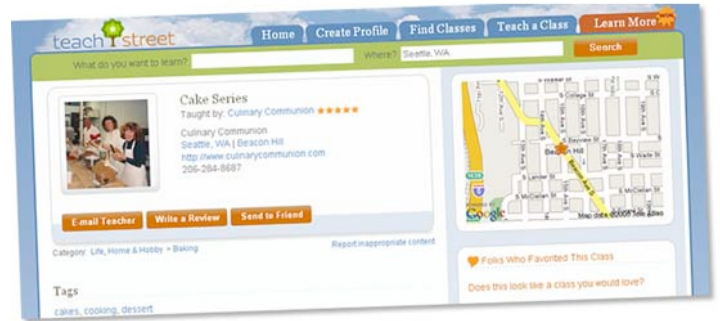
Learn from:



4

Sweatshop-free **Canadian Blank** sells blank, unbranded T-shirts and clothing made entirely in Quebec. Everything from fabric manufacture to dyeing, cutting and sewing is performed in the French-Canadian province, and through Blank's wholesale services retailers can customize items with the colors, fabrics and formats of their choice. The company operates two Montreal stores, both of which also serve as production sites—large windows at the back allow customers to see the clothes being made. Whereas almost 18,000 garment jobs were lost between 2003 and 2004 in Quebec, according to the province's Institut de la Statistique, Blank's sales doubled in 2006, allowing it to open its second store (source: the McGill Daily).

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



5

While the online revolution has enabled virtual worlds and borderless communications, it's also a major force behind HYPERLOCAL, driven by everything from GPS to simplified local search. Witness Seattle-based **TeachStreet**, a new website dedicated to helping Seattle-based teachers and students connect. Students can search for teachers across more than 25,000 courses and filter the results according to location, ratings from other students, teacher availability, promotional pricing and more. The free site can be searched by keyword, or visitors can scroll by subject through TeachStreet's extensive directory of classes. TeachStreet is currently ad-supported, but ultimately plans to roll out premium, fee-based services for teachers as well.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

"THE CROWD EXPRESS"

For years now, we've been fascinated with everything funded, organized, sourced, managed and powered by crowds. And not just by reporting on trends like [CUSTOMER-MADE](#), [CROWD CLOUT](#), and [CROWD MINING](#), but by embracing the concept within our own organization via our [Springspotters Network](#). Here are some recent examples of innovations that continue to grease the wheels of the great CROWD EXPRESS. Hop on now or be left stranded on a very lonely and inward-looking station.

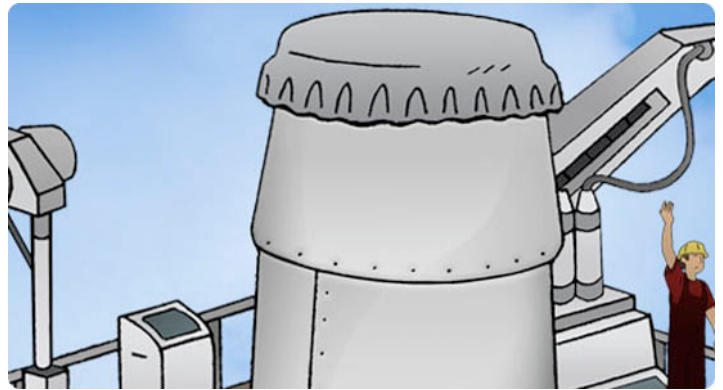


6

A new, San Francisco-based site called [Carrotmob](#) is turning the angrier aspect of [CROWD CLOUT](#) on its head by using their clout to reward the companies that do the most good. Very simply, Carrotmob aims to organize consumers to provide an economic incentive to companies for making positive environmental changes. The group hopes to begin by creating a broad network of consumers and forming partnerships with other larger advocacy groups. Next, it plans to implement campaigns focusing on different industries. Carrotmob will then approach the companies in each industry with suggestions, and invite them to make the changes they have identified.

Competing offers are evaluated by Carrotmob, and its network members will then reward the chosen company with "an unprecedented kind of shopping spree" to boost short-term company profits, as well as by proclaiming that company the most responsible in its industry. Carrotmob's first campaign took place on March 29th, with the Carrotmob physically turning up at San Francisco's K&D Market. All receipts were collected to keep track of the total gross revenue that the mob brought to the store. As agreed on prior to the event, K&D Market took 22% of that amount and spent it on upgrades to make their store more environmentally friendly and energy efficient. At least 300 people turned up, spending USD 9,276.50 (including a Yahoo! donation of USD 1,000).

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



7

British [BeerBankroll](#) is creating a community-managed brewery. The company has only partially fleshed out its site, but aims to start a brewery and pub in which many of the key decisions are made by members. It is currently recruiting a minimum of 50,000 members, each of whom will contribute USD 50 in exchange for voting rights on ideas such as the company name, logo, product design, product mix, marketing plan, advertising and sponsorship. Assuming the concept goes well, profits will be divided three ways: one part to members in the form of reward points redeemable for products from the Beer Bankroll store; one part back to the company; and one part to charity. Meanwhile, beer lovers can also join [OurBrew](#), a startup from New Zealand that has similar ambitions, but will work with existing breweries.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



8


Irish fashion portal [Catwalk Genius](#) has joined the crowdfunded fashion fray with its new Adopt a Designer program, featuring fashion and accessories from independent designers. Through Adopt a Designer, supporters of a participating designer can buy shares (or "elements", as it calls them) in their work for EUR 14—plus a EUR 1 processing fee—in the hope of sharing in future profits. Once 5,000 such elements have been sold, the designer is given the resulting EUR 70,000 to create a new collection within 6 months. In the meantime, supporters receive a limited edition piece created exclusively for them by the designer. So far, the company has signed up 160 users, half of which are designers.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



9 Scottish Tennent's Lager has launched [Tennent's Mutual](#), a new music venture that will ultimately result in a live music festival later this year in which fans select artists, debate locations for gigs and call the shots on ticket prices. To kick off the effort, Tennent's created a start-up fund of GBP 150,000. Fans are given founder member status and the right to vote on the who-what-why-where of all decisions made and how the start-up money is invested. Ticket income, meanwhile, will be ploughed back into the central fund, which will be used to bankroll other live events.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



[Sussman at sea](#)

Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America will get a \$10,000 matching grant to research a cure for Crohn's and colitis if we raise \$10,000

Launched May 27 at 1:57pm

\$4,851

10 [The Point](#) takes the notion of the tipping point—that point at which group action will produce a clear result and inevitable change—and applies it to organizing group efforts. Those who join a campaign pledge to take specific action—to boycott a company, for example, or donate funds toward a cause—but no one actually acts until the campaign reaches its preset tipping point, or number of pledged participants. When that point is reached, however, the action is triggered and participants make their donations, attend an event or boycott as planned.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

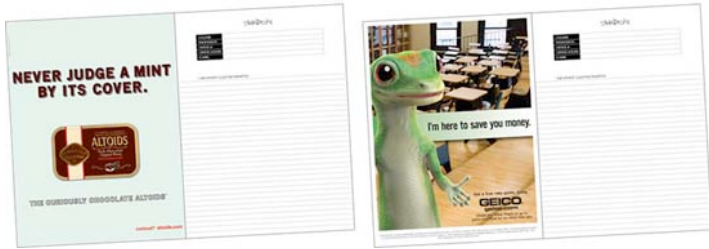


11 Though more 'intention economy' than crowd power, Dutch ING Bank's [WoonWaarUWilt](#) ("LiveWhereYouWant") initiative is too much fun to not include: the service lets clients make an offer on houses that aren't on the market, but that they'd love to own. After potential buyers fill in a form on woonwaaruwilt.nl, including their dream home's address and the initial offer they're willing to make, iBlue contacts them to discuss whether the offer is reasonable, and adjusts it if necessary. A mortgage consultant also determines whether the buyers would be able to finance the purchase. iBlue then sends a preliminary offer to the property's current owners, explaining the situation and enquiring as to whether they'd consider selling.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

"ENDURING FREE LOVE"

Now that the many drivers behind the 'free' trend have been studied and mapped out extensively (from [Chris Anderson's "Free!"](#) to our own modest [FREE LOVE](#) musings), there's little more to do than turn those insights into new, free-for-all ventures. Here are a few updates on FREE LOVE innovations worth emulating, partnering with or outright outdoing:



12

The [Shadow Notebook](#) is a five-subject notebook that is co-branded with participating colleges and universities across the US and distributed by the school at the start of each semester. The university's logo appears on the cover, and pages of school-related maps and information are included within. Thirteen four-color, full-page advertisements, meanwhile, act as subject dividers in each notebook, giving advertisers the means to engage students. Students carry the notebooks with them throughout the day over the course of a semester, which from the advertiser's perspective amounts to 96 impressions over a four-month period, ABS says. So far, about 700,000 notebooks have been distributed to college students at campuses nationwide. Also check out [GPA Media](#), a similar play.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



13

Springwise covered mobile virtual network operator [Blyk](#) both before and just after its launch last year. For those who have been wondering how the company is doing, last week it reported that it had reached 100,000 members in Britain in just six months. Blyk targets 16- to 24-year-olds with its free mobile phone service, which includes 217 texts and 43 minutes every month. In exchange, of course, they get advertising—up to 6 messages sent to their phones each day. Britain's youth don't seem to mind—Blyk reached that 100,000-member target six months ahead of schedule. Blyk will launch in the Netherlands in the second half of 2008, followed by Germany, Spain and Belgium in 2009.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



14

[Parkingspots.com](#) connects those who have parking spots to rent out with those who need them on a monthly basis. Launched earlier this year, the Toronto-based company gives spot holders a way to list their off-street spots, along with the price they want to charge. Those in search of a place to park, meanwhile, can see what's available and choose a spot based on location and price. Exact addresses are kept confidential until a match is made. The service is free for renters and for owners with just one or two spots to rent. Commercial lot owners with more than two spots at a single location must pay a one-time listing fee equivalent to roughly a month's rent. Parkingspots.com currently serves a limited number of cities in North America, but judging by the rapid spread of this concept, expansion can't be far away. One to bring to a concrete jungle near you!

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

"ITGREDIENTS"

'It' girls, 'it' neighborhoods, 'it' designers, 'it' gadgets, 'it' restaurants, 'it' architects; when it comes to innovation, you can't go wrong introducing the next it-ism. And no better industry to learn from than the food & beverage sector, with its endless experiments involving new, obscure, exotic and exclusive ingredients, all catering to consumers' endless lust for experimentation and desperate attempts to consume anything that other people haven't.



15 Founded by the Chios Gum Mastic Growers Association, [Mastihasops](#) carry everything from mastiha-flavoured coffee, biscuits and liqueur, to toothpaste, cosmetics and chewing gum (mastiha is an ancient commodity, made from resin of the mastic tree, which is mainly cultivated on the Greek island of Chios). Now, Mastihasop has made its way to New York, its first retail outpost west of Greece. The shop, located at 145 Orchard Street, sells an extensive range of edible goods and skincare products, from the raw material—'tears' of mastic resin—to mastiha eye cream. Singapore or São Paulo to follow?

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



A healthier alternative to the ongoing coffee craze: espresso made from red tea. South African [red espresso](#) uses Rooibos which is grown wild and hand-harvested from a single farm at the highest altitudes in South Africa's Cedarberg Mountains. A patented cut and method of

preparation give red espresso richer flavor, color and health properties than regular Rooibos, yet it is still naturally caffeine-free and is claimed to contain five times more antioxidants than green tea—a full ten times more than regular Rooibos tea itself. Like coffee-based espresso, it can also be made into lattes and cappuccino-style drinks.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



17 [Edible](#) offers an introduction to delicacies that may shock less adventurous eaters. Giant Toasted Leaf-Cutter Ants, Mopani Worms, Reindeer Paté and Thai Green Crocodile Curry are among Edible's offerings, along with Lizard Wine, Civet Coffee and Monkey-Picked Tea Wash. Edible, which is based in the UK, provides detailed information about the origin of each product, including species and geographic data. Prices are as exclusive as the products themselves—GBP 12 for a tin of green crocodile curry, for example, or GBP 10.95 for a small bag of mopani worms.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

High-end juices are the new wine.

[Monavie](#) is an ultra premium line of alcohol-free juices that could easily be confused with wine. Utah-based MonaVie offers both juices and concentrated gels made from 19 different fruits, all chosen for their healthful properties. First among them is the Brazilian acai berry—widely considered a health-promoting superfood—accompanied by apricot, aroña, acerola, lychee, wolfberry, bilberry and of course grape, to name just a few. Pricing is very high-end, indeed, at about USD 40 per 750 ml bottle of juice. MonaVie is currently sold on a person-to-person basis in the US, Canada, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Japan, with plans to expand further around the globe through its [multi-level marketing business model](#).



[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

"TRYVERTISING"

TRYVERTISING—"In a world of demanding consumers and humble companies, introducing yourself and your products by letting people experience and try them out first in relevant settings, is a very civilized and effective way to show some respect."—is alive and well. Here's yet another spotting we think nails the concept pretty nicely:



19 **WineSide** offers wines packaged in sample-sized tubes. WineSide offers both sweet and classic wines in patented, flat-base glass tubes with screw tops carefully engineered to protect the wine's flavor. The sweet wines—which include Sauternes and Muscat, for example—are available in 6cl tubes, while the Pomerol, Chateau Neuf du Pape and other classic wines can be purchased in 6cl or 10cl sizes.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

"INFINITE TRANSPARENCY"

Screw 'information overload': there is never *enough* information for individuals who crave relevant info. It's the detailed, nitty-gritty 'truthiness' that doesn't make it to shiny brochures and flash-heavy sites that were last updated in 2006. We've spoken about related trends like **INFOLUST** and **TRANSPARENCY TYRANNY** in the past, yet every day brings us innovative new ventures that work at bringing even more intense forms of transparency to demanding consumers. Some recent examples:

Rooms with Views:

Rooms Ending in:

03

Preferred Yerba Buena Gardens, Partial Bay (Floors 9 and Above)
Corner Deluxe Rooms, 1 King Bed

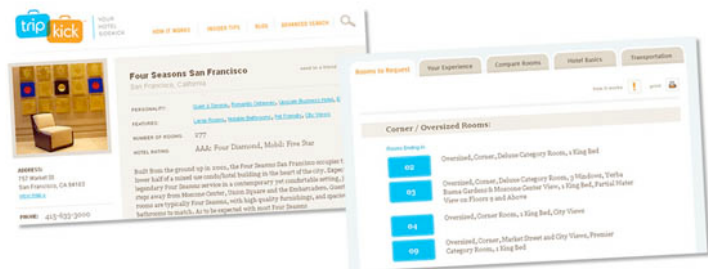
09

Market Street Views, Premier, Oversized, Corner King Room

20

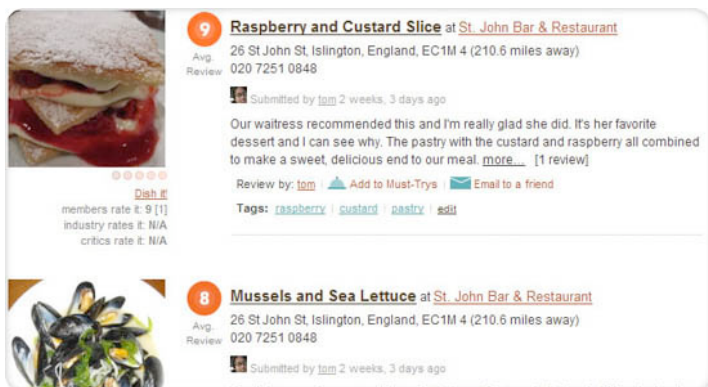
Mapping the best and worst seats in hundreds of airplanes, **SeatGuru** remains one of our favorite examples of TRANSPARENCY TYRANNY. So we like **TripKick**, a similar venture, which tackles an equally important aspect of travel: hotel rooms. The site launched with about 300 hotels in 12 US cities, with more to follow. Coverage of each hotel includes detailed information on which rooms to request—which rooms are oversized (rooms ending in 03 and 04, for example), which have great bathrooms or are quieter than others. TripKick also points out which floors are better, and which to avoid. Guests are encouraged to add their own reviews and upload photos of rooms they've stayed in.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



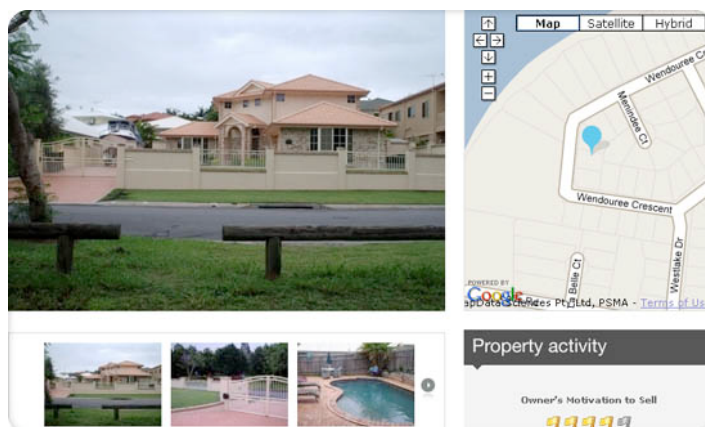
21 Much the way [Farecast](#) predicts whether ticket prices are trending up or down, [Delaycast](#) can now tell travelers the chance of encountering delays on a particular trip. Unlike the historical flight performance statistics found on many travel sites, Delaycast uses predictive modeling technologies that model historical patterns in flight delays and project them into the future. Its Delay Profiles tool provides broad overviews of the best days, times and airlines to choose for a trip, based on selected airports, while its Delay Predictions tool provides information about delays and cancellations for specific airports, airlines, dates and times. Delaycast currently covers only the United States—who will bring this to the rest of the travel-weary world?

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



22 Austin, Texas-based [Dishola](#) is a user-driven website that eschews general restaurant reviews in favor of dish-specific advice and information. Passionate eaters can read smart reviews by Dishola editors, industry professionals and other members, as well as posting reviews and photos of their own favorite dishes. Dishola currently includes reviews of dishes in more than 350 cities around the world—albeit most of them in the United States.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



23 Taking intention-based real estate sites to the next level (also see idea no. 11), Australian [Love That Place](#) is a social network designed to let users search, discuss, rate and register interest in property, whether it's for sale or not. Property owners begin by creating a page and uploading photos of their home—simply to gather feedback and advice, or to test the market and see what other people think. Members of the site can leave comments or send private messages (forums are coming soon), and admirers of a particular property can even send a virtual 'door-knock' to see if an owner would consider selling. If the owner is interested, the two parties can negotiate privately or through an agent.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

"CARING IS THE NEW TAKING"

It's amazing what a little bit of caring can do to get you all inspired and innovative. Caring for what consumers want and don't yet know they want, yes, but specifically, in this era of sustainability concerns and social responsibility, consideration for all things green and blue. If the below doesn't inspire you to dream up something loving and caring, you have no heart, or worse, you're missing out on very pleasant profits, as 'caring' is so much more than just non-profit plays!



Mobile coffee carts have been around for a while, but whereas most such carts are motorized, UK-based **Bikecaffe** has come up with a pedal-powered and eco-friendly alternative. Using heavy-duty cargo tricycles, Bikecaffe travels emission-free as it serves up a range of coffee blends from roasters Segafredo Zanetti and Integrity Fair Trade. Added benefit: Bikecaffe trikes can access pedestrian areas that their motorized competitors can't reach, making them ideal providers for pedestrian malls, historic venues, outdoor events, concerts and parties. The current rollout focuses on franchises in Liverpool, London, and Brighton, with one in Dublin as well as more local sites in and around Warwickshire where Bikecaffe operates its own stores.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



25

Launched last year, **Motorola's Motopower** project has brought 55 solar-powered kiosks to Uganda that offer free mobile phone charging to local consumers. Each kiosk is charged by a 55-watt inverted solar panel and can charge up to 20 phones at a time. The women who run the kiosks, meanwhile, are also equipped to sell handsets and operator SIM cards and to provide repair services. For local people without their own phones, the kiosks effectively function as a local phone boot for making occasional calls as well. Of course, besides helping Ugandans stay connected, the project will likely increase Motorola's share of the local market. It's a win-win-win, and one for other global corporate citizens to emulate as often as they can!

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



26

Keetsa is an eco-bedding company, whose mattresses are built with sustainable components including recycled steel, scrap pieces of memory foam, bamboo fabrics and unbleached natural cotton.

However, going beyond their component materials, they've also developed a way to compress their large mattresses so they fit into convenient wheeled boxes (made from recycled cardboard, of course). Not only does that make them manoeuvrable by one person, but it also reduces transportation expenses and the products' resulting carbon footprint, and gives consumers savings of between 50 and 75 percent, Keetsa says. Once the customer unpacks the mattress at home, it will resume its full, normal shape within one to three days.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



27

FirstLook sells detailed reports to new-energy entrepreneurs and consumers who are serious about generating their own power. Those reports show just how much wind or sunshine an area is likely to receive, based on years' worth of meteorological data, plus

plenty of other important 'have-to-knows'. The company advertises its reports via a free interactive map. Preliminary information from the map helps entrepreneurs determine whether a windmill or solar-panel installation at a chosen location would make good financial sense. For now FirstLook's data appears limited to US locations. But the company has plans to expand to other nations, a move it hopes to help finance with country-based sponsorships.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

28

For GBP 199, London-based **Green Homes Concierge**'s inspectors will come to a customer's home, toting heat-detecting cameras and other devices to help them evaluate energy leaks, wall insulation and appliances. Afterwards, inspectors recommend ways

the home's owner can reduce CO2 emissions, and hopefully save some money in the process. Significantly, GHC's services don't end there. For a full year the firm will act as a helpful concierge. Should customers wish to make the inspection's recommended improvements, GHC will help them locate contractors and suppliers able to do the work or tell them where to buy low-energy light bulbs and other environmentally friendly items. Sure, in the US and elsewhere, energy companies have long encouraged homeowners to reduce utility bills by offering counseling and rebates on fuel-efficient appliances. Also common are government tax breaks. But, sorting through the paperwork to qualify for rebates and tax breaks can be a major chore for homeowners. While start-ups modeled on GHC's services might not benefit from the municipal subsidies available in London, the companies' real income could come from commissions earned through contractor referrals as well as project management fees.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

"MECONOMY"

While caring may be the new taking, don't ever think the "Me, myself and I" trend will diminish in popularity. Hey, all trends come in pairs, and the need for community and belonging and meaning can live in perfect harmony with the need for self and ego. So ... to come up with fun innovations, you can't go wrong if you find a way to tap into the [MECONOMY](#). Use the following to get those self-centered juices flowing:



29 [5starbaby.com](#) offers personalized birth announcements fashioned after movie posters. Each movie poster birth announcement is tailor-made for the new arrival, complete with all the critical stats about the baby's birth and the names of loved ones as "supporting cast." Parents are listed as "producers," the doctor is named as "director" and the hospital is listed as the "filmed in" setting, for example. "Critics' quotes" can also be included, as can "catering" by the mother and options for virtually any other special people or ideas the parents want to include.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



30 From announcements to actual babies: [Japanese Yosimiya](#) is selling bags of rice printed with a newborn's photo, name and date of birth. The bags are shaped to resemble a swaddled baby. But the key feature is that the bags contain the baby's exact weight in rice. Holding the bag will therefore feel like holding the baby. Bags of rice with baby's photos printed on them aren't new in Japan, by Yosimiya is the first to make them to order, creating bags that match the baby's size and weight. The personalized, made-to-order 'dakigokochi' are priced from JPY 3500 (USD 32 / EUR 22) and available in a wide range of colors and designs.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



31 [Celeb-4-A-Day](#) provides star treatment to everyday people in Austin, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Its basic A-List package includes four personal paparazzi to document the arrival of the "star" at the event; a high-gloss print of the subject on the cover of the company's "MyStar" celebrity gossip magazine; and up to 30 minutes of what Celeb-4-A-Day calls the Personal Paparazzi Treatment—including asking questions, vying for coverage, shouting the star's name and other "privileges" real stars must typically endure.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



"THE CONVENIENCE ECONOMY"

More economies: want to come up with some timeless innovations? Then make things a bit faster, a bit more hassle-free, a bit more convenient. With time being the new currency, and no signs whatsoever that mature consumer societies and emerging ones won't vote time as their number one scarcity in the near future, you can't go wrong focusing on innovations that provide convenience. Here are some recent spottings:

32 M&M's has taken its personalization service, which allows customers to pick colors and have texts and logos printed on M&M's, a step further by enabling customers to have their own likeness printed on the candy. [M&M's Faces](#) lets customers upload one or two photos, pick their colors and add up to two different texts to be printed on separate M&M's. Using a simple interface, they can zoom in or out to select which part of a photo they want to use. A 'graphic specialist' then tweaks the photo file, creating a sketch-like rendition that looks good on small pieces of candy.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



33 Gas prices, urban congestion and environmental concerns have brought about a veritable renaissance in bicycle riding. Spawning, among others, urban bike stations. The most recent example we've spotted just opened in New Zealand. Located in the Britomart (a public transport hub) in Auckland, [BikeCentral](#) offers bicycling enthusiasts and commuters a welcoming place to park their bikes and transition into the next part of their day. In addition to safe, secure bicycle parking, BikeCentral members have access to private lockers, showers and changing areas. Coffee, fresh food and free wireless internet are also available, as are rental bicycles and an on-site repair service for minor repairs. All-inclusive rates start at NZD 25 per week. Christchurch and Wellington are next. Also check out Chicago's [McDonald's Cycle Center](#) and, on the West Coast, [Bikestation](#).

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



The stores you know. The stuff you want.

34

Convenience-seeking city dwellers love having access to speedy delivery services for everything from Chinese food to legal documents. [Wakozi](#), a new service that delivers beverages and munchies throughout Manhattan, promises to be different in ways that startup enthusiasts should take note of. The company itself carries no inventory. Instead it works with popular convenience stores and delis throughout Manhattan. Wakozi doesn't hire delivery staff, either—delivery is handled by the stores, usually within an hour. Plus, Wakozi has its own niche: deli food along with wine and spirits. Wakozi's business model greatly minimizes the capital needed to launch, and neatly avoids the high staff and inventory costs that doomed other delivery services, most notably Kozmo (ah, so last century!).

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



36

More innovations from the 'not going to bring about world peace but clever nevertheless' category: US based [colorOn](#) and Australian [Eye Majic](#) have both introduced press-on eyeshadow kits. The kits allow consumers to instantly apply professionally created eyeshadow designs without applicators or mess. Each single-use kit is applied to the eyelid using a pre-prepared strip that contains a variety of matched and blended colors. Pressing the strip to the eyelid transfers the colors onto the eyelid in just the right shades, creating a look much like one a professional make-up artist might have created.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



35

When we said innovation doesn't always have to be so earnest, one of the innovations we had in mind is [Honey Drop](#), a new honey that isn't all liquid and gooey. Canadian Island Abbey Foods has come out with a dried honey drop, equivalent to a teaspoon of the sticky stuff, that you can hold in your hand, drop in your tea or pop in your mouth. Released in January, the drops are made with honey from Prince Edward Island, with no artificial coloring, flavoring or preservatives. The drops have a shelf life of one year and are available in two flavors: pure honey, or honey and lemon. Pricing is CDN 11.99 for a box of 20, which makes for a very premium alternative to sugar cubes.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

"FEEDER BUSINESSES"

As long as you keep it small and beautiful, and don't expect to build the next Wal-Mart or Google in the next 36 months, feeder innovations are for you. To quote from our now-ancient (2003) [FEEDER BUSINESS briefing](#): "What do a drop-off shop for online auctions, a photographer specializing in flattering snaps for dating sites, and tasty sandwiches sold at airport gates have in common? They're all part of an ongoing surge in FEEDER BUSINESSES; small, sometimes tiny, new businesses and services that feed (off) New Economy stars."

And indeed, year after year, with 'big' innovations attracting mass audiences, from hybrid cars to eBay to IKEA, dozens of smaller entities find a niche (read: a consumer need or want) to that enables them to claim a tiny piece of these giants' success. So while FEEDER BUSINESSES are not a consumer trend, they're definitely *based* on them. Our current favorites:



37

For prices beginning at GBP 40, [Lots2](#) will collect and deliver items bought on eBay or other auction platforms from or to anywhere in London, the South East and East Anglia. Large and awkward items that cannot be posted via a conventional courier are the company's specialty, such as sofas, antiques and furniture. Lots2 offers both economy and express delivery, depending on the flexibility of the customer's timeframe.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



38

While [ikeahacker](#) has been around for a few years, offering IKEA fans a platform to share their home-made hacks to the Swedish giant's products, not every consumer wants to go the DIY route. [Parts of Sweden](#) calculated that out of IKEA's millions of customers, more than a few are willing to plunk down some cash to order smart, ready-made additions to their flat-pack furniture. Parts of Sweden currently offers add-ons to six of IKEA's most popular product lines, from various doors for Expedit units to wine racks for Ivar shelving (both shown above). Two years ago, Springwise featured a similar feeder company—[Bemz](#), which sells removable, washable slipcovers for IKEA's sofas and armchairs, and is still going strong.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »



39

San Francisco-based [Luscious Garage](#) has created an upscale, hybrid-focused garage with a thoroughly green approach. Specializing in hybrid vehicle technology, the garage features an open workshop where customers are encouraged to look around while their cars undergo maintenance or repairs; there are books to read, there's art on the walls and children can pass the time in a developmentally appropriate play area. Using San Francisco's Clean and Green Certification as a baseline, Luscious Garage aims to follow a strict sustainability plan based. A model begging to be copied in wealthy, Prius-loving settings around the globe!

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

"ECO-ICONIC"

Enjoyed our most recent Trend Briefing on all things [ECO-ICONIC](#)? Then here's one more spotting that should have been part of the briefing:



40

Sweden's [Husqvarna](#) has introduced the world's first solar/electric hybrid robot lawnmower, which has no exhaust emissions and uses approximately the same amount of energy as a standard light bulb. From an ECO-ICONIC point of view, we obviously love its very visible solar panel, earning owners respect from neighbors, visitors and passers-by.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#) »

"OFF = ON"

When something previously deemed ‘emerging’ starts to invade the mainstream, or even better, is actually mimicked by it, new innovation opportunities abound. Case in point: the near-total triumph of the online revolution, which has the offline world more often than not playing second fiddle in everything from commerce to entertainment to politics. Much more on the OFF = ON phenomenon in our September 2008 Trend Briefing, but here’s one innovative offline venture that beautifully captures the opportunities in an increasingly online-minded world:



41

San Francisco-based **TCHO** has built a factory capable of producing 4,000 metric tons of its own chocolate per year. The employee-owned firm was founded by Wired co-founder Louis Rossetto and chocolatier Timothy Childs, and it's rethinking the

way chocolate is made, mirroring many of the processes and behaviors common in the online world. In its factory, TCHO combines recycled and refurbished legacy chocolate equipment with the latest process control, information and communications systems. The company's dark chocolate is created in limited-run, "beta editions" that are only available online and at its factory store. Continuous flavor development and customer feedback mean that varieties are constantly evolving, with new versions emerging as often as every 36 hours.

[Read the full article on Springwise](#)

Now, how to make money from these ideas?



The above should inspire you to come up with entirely new stuff—based on the trends and using the examples as a brain-boost. For hands-on tips, re-read our [TIPS](#) section, [Tip #5](#) in particular, which deals with how to apply trends and turn them into innovations.

You can also focus on the specific examples in this briefing, and copy them (within legal boundaries of course) if they're (still) without competition (every category needs and has ample space for a number 2, and sometimes even a number 3, 4 or 5, on a global and domestic scale). Franchising, feeding or partnering are good options too, of course.

Warning

Don't forget, **these trends and ideas *do not* apply to all consumers**. Please. Of course not all consumers will want to review restaurants down to individual dishes. And someone living in a cramped, gardenless London flat will not be buying your solar-powered lawn mower.

And you can **count on some of these ideas and innovations failing spectacularly**. Most often not because there is no real need for their offerings, but because the founders may have misinterpreted the size of the market, or are spending too much money, or are just lousy entrepreneurs. But that doesn't mean you couldn't do a better job, or can't introduce something that was inspired by the original.

III. More sources



Just as there's an avalanche of new business ideas, there's also an avalanche of sources *reporting* on those new ideas. In fact, to stick with the avalanche theme, a snowball effect is in the making as more reporting leads to more copying of unique ideas in other countries, or more innovative versions of the original, leading to even more ideas to be reported on.

Add to that the fast-growing segment of innovative consumers working with companies to publicly publish even more ideas-that-could-one-day-become-winning innovations (**Dell!** **Starbucks!**), and you're looking at [creative destruction](#) at its most exciting.

To stay on top of it all, track the following:



First of all (yes, we're biased), make the most of our sister site Springwise, where you can find a wide variety of new business ideas (1,200+ at last count), which are carefully selected from the many contributions we receive from our [Springspotter Network](#). New topics are posted daily and are also searchable by category:

- [Automotive](#)
- [Eco & Sustainability](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Fashion & Beauty](#)
- [Financial Services](#)
- [Food & Beverage](#)
- [Gaming](#)
- [Government](#)
- [Homes & Housing](#)
- [Life Hacks](#)
- [Lifestyle & Leisure](#)
- [Marketing & Advertising](#)
- [Media & Publishing](#)
- [Non-profit, Social cause](#)
- [Retail](#)
- [Style & Design](#)
- [Telecom & Mobile](#)
- [Tourism & Travel](#)
- [Transportation](#)

But enough tooting our own horn: here's a more complete list of new business ideas sources and newsletters. Like Springwise, they're all free, giving you complimentary access to an avalanche of entrepreneurial information—again, there's no excuse for not being well-informed ;-). And they'll provide you with an eclectic mix of trends and ideas from across the board:



- [Agenda Inc](#)
- [The Cool Hunter](#)
- [Cool Business Ideas](#)
- [CScout](#)
- [Influx Insights](#)
- [Trend Central](#)
- [TechCrunch](#)
- [PSFK](#)
- [Springwise](#)
- [Trend Bird](#)
- [Trendhunter](#)
- [trendwatching.com](#)

The above doesn't even include the many more topical blogs that report on new business ideas and innovations: from treehugger to luxist.com. For more on these, see our [EXPECTATION ECONOMY briefing](#).

Oh, and no doubt you have some must-share source for new business ideas you think should be included in the list above: just email [Michell Zappa](#) and we'll add if suitable.

Opportunities



So... dive into INNOVATION AVALANCHE examples and sources and ask yourself: how did these entrepreneurs and marketers translate their insights into the new brands, concepts, services and experiences described in part II? You will find it really comes down to drilling down into trend findings, looking at deeper consumer needs, locating any friction and creating solutions—all with an entrepreneurial mindset.

And for those of you who get inspired but fail to dream up something brilliant: don't worry. Just excel at (creatively) copying, or partnering with, or improving on the Next Big Trend-Inspired Thing.

Bonne chance!

Want to link to INNOVATION AVALANCHE?

www.trendwatching.com/trends/innovationavalanche.htm