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La Dolce Vita Enterprises

Lessons in Business Creativity, Innovation, Sales, & Life

May 2007

Greetings!

Welcome to the monthly newsletter of La Dolce Vita Enterprises - lessons in business creativity, innovation, sales, & life. For previous issues of this monthly newsletter, [click here](#)

Feel free to provide feedback or to share your stories on these topics of interest with us.

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LA DOLCE VITA - Business Creativity Tip of the Month



INNOVATION SECRET - FIND A PARTNER

Often there's tremendous synergy in finding the right partner to help spur your creative powers. Nissan Design International (NDI) has actually made a practice of hiring designers in pairs. Sometimes it's just a matter of the energy created by collaboration. Other times it's a matter of partners that provide complementary skill sets that the other doesn't possess.

Having a partner doesn't necessarily mean someone that shares your thoughts and approaches. Jerry

Hirschberg, founder of NDI, is an advocate of "creative abrasion," using the friction of sometimes opposing ideas to foster creativity.

Orville and Wilbur Wright. Jerry Seinfeld and Larry David. Lennon and McCartney. Woodward and Bernstein. The list goes on.

Even if you're not an inventor or a songwriter, this philosophy can work for you. Bounce your ideas for a new business idea or company marketing campaign off a few colleagues. Turn competitors into partners and present a seminar that gives customers a broader perspective. Conduct a focus group of your top customers to get a handle on product or service improvements.

[Go to the La Dolce Vita Website...](#)

DISPLACED NEW ORLEANS MUSICIANS, NEW ORLEANS MUSIC VIDEOS



DISPLACED NEW ORLEANS MUSICIANS

Thanks to displaced New Orleans musicians Henry Butler, Evan Christopher, and Pete Alba for their reflections on the New Orleans music community. For more reading, [click here](#).

DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUE

Congratulations to my colleague, Ms. Myra Corrello for being named Women in Business Champion category of the Louisiana 2007 Small Business Awards. Myra and I will be collaborating on several projects in the upcoming months. More to come.

NEW ORLEANS MUSIC VIDEOS

For a collection of some of my favorite New Orleans music videos on Youtube.com, [click here](#).

FUZZY WIDGET SALES SOLUTIONS - Sales Tip of the Month

4 THINGS YOU CAN DO TODAY TO HELP SALES

Call a good customer today and tell them that you appreciate their business

How often do we get wrapped up in day to day activities or in the pursuit of new customers that we forget to appreciate our customers (or our friends and family for that matter). Sure you take them to lunch on occasion and invite them to the box suite at the ballgame, but don't let that be a substitute for a simple, "Thanks for your business."

Ask a customer what events and organizations they use as networking vehicles

If you attend an event or the monthly meeting of a trade group on the referral of a respected colleague, it's a though you have a chance to make a roomful of sales calls that are warm leads.

Invest in Sales or Communications Training for you and your employees

There's hardly anything more effective in driving sales in your organization than getting buy-in from every single employee on the importance of sales and of their value to the organization in that regard. Let them know that every time they interact with someone outside the firm is an opportunity to enhance the perception of your firm.

Write an article on your expertise

If you've been on this planet for at least 20 years, you're probably an expert at something - that's the easy part. Having the discipline to reflect on your accomplishments and to document those keys to success in such a way that the information is useful to others and can be published in a periodical, a newspaper, and Op-Ed, or an e-zine such as this - that's more difficult. Yet in the age of the savvy consumer, such exposure is significantly more effective than advertising.

[Go to Craig's Fuzzy Widget Website...](#)

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH LESSONS FROM LITTLE LEAGUE

My son's little league coach employs a practice of moving the boys around in the field so that they are able to learn to play different positions. This technique pays dividends when the playoffs roll around in mid-summer. Opposing teams are unable to adapt when a shortstop or 1st baseman goes on family vacation, while the versatile team takes those changes in stride.

There are a number of business lessons here. Make sure that you create a work environment where employees are willing to share competencies and knowledge so that key absences or employee turnover at the inopportune time doesn't debilitate your business. If you're a sole practitioner, make sure that your business services are somewhat diverse even if you're a specialist, so that sudden regulatory changes or economic downturns in a certain industry or

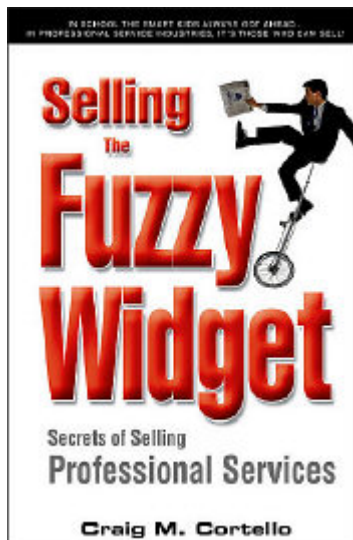
Quick Links...

[Innovation & Creativity \(La Dolce Vita Website\)](#)

[Selling Professional Services \(Fuzzy Widget Sales Solutions\)](#)

[Purchase Craig's book, *Selling the Fuzzy Widget: Secrets of Selling Professional Services*](#)

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market sector won't debilitate your business.

Additional Resources

For more articles on the topics of creativity, [see this page on Craig's website](#). For recommended books on the topic of creativity and business, [click here](#).

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Also, Apple iTunes subscribers can find Craig's Podcasts there. Search Podcasts for Craig Cortello or The Business Musician. See the [iTunes website](#) for subscription info.

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