



Technology Trends

Unleashing the Inner Geek

It's time to knock down cubicle walls. It's time to let ideas breathe and grow in open air and sunlight. It's time for bright minds to collide, resulting in an explosion of new ideas. It's time to set the stage for creative thinking and to support and foster innovation. That's the NEXT BIG THING for technology.

Allowing people to "exercise the possibility of their ideas" means creating an environment where they can really pull away from the run-of-the-mill activities of their routine and "cultivate the notion of thinking about new things," says David Baxter, T4G's Vice President of Innovation.

Why is it important to encourage employees to participate in aerobics for the mind? The bottom line is at stake. Corporations need to be forward-thinking and move beyond what's working today to ensure they're a part of authoring tomorrow. The return on investment for letting employees explore big ideas is "creating the next wave of competitive advantage," explains Baxter.

"Organizations that have growth as part of their business plan need to be thinking beyond what they are today and thinking about 'what is our future?' What will make us outstanding tomorrow."

One example of a real, executable Big Idea is Interaction Designer and Usability Strategist Russell Smith's corporate "greenhouses" plan. He believes one part of solving the innovation puzzle is to eliminate the Dilbert landscape.

"When you're working on projects with people living in this cubicle world we live in, it doesn't encourage people to get the best out of their ideas," he explains. "My idea was to create open spaces, giving people the ability to collaborate. Out of that we'll spark innovation."

Colleague Shawn Peterson, a Senior Developer, has his own BIG idea. He's

envisioning the world beyond the laptop.

"Eventually it's going to come down to more people using mobile devices as opposed to computers ...the growth is unbelievable," says Peterson.

He wants to see companies developing mobile websites for clients in conjunction with the construction of their main corporate websites and targeting the types of phones their customers are using. What got him thinking? Simply being given the opportunity to set his mind free.

Peterson and Smith are about to unleash their concepts in T4G's Geekfest Ideas Competition as part of the company's Leading Thinkers Series on March 10. Ten other employees will also be angling to win backing from the company to

support their ideas, which range from mobile applications for grocery retailers to energy management for hospitals.

"It's a great opportunity to throw out innovative ideas that have value and impact in the market and to compete for investment to run with them," says Peterson.

Geekfest is all about fostering brilliant plans – which is the Next Big Thing on the technology front.

"I see the employees being the plants that require cross pollination for growth," says Smith. "If you give them the right elements to grow...they will."

(Learn more at: <http://geekfest.t4g.com/>)

Article submitted by T4G

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