

Survey: Innovation in Tough Times

Summary

Perhaps nothing is surprising in hindsight. Yet given all of the other belt tightening going on in business, a large majority of firms see innovation as an investable solution to remaining viable and competitive. Two thirds of the companies represented in the survey have increased their reliance on innovation efforts and even more expect to increase it in the coming months. Over the past several months, innovation has become more of a central element of many companies' business strategy, and more organizations are creating and filling formal roles in the innovation process. They're collaborating more and involving more people at all levels of the organization. They're emphasizing a focus on the customer when it comes to innovation, bringing the whole process and structure closer to the edge (or core) of the organization. The enablers to innovation tended to mirror the obstacles. Chief in the list of mirroring factors were funding, leadership and employee involvement/mindset. Outside of these three were some interesting outliers. Demands by customers were seen as significant enablers of innovation, while not having enough courage was presented as a significant obstacle. The last section in the survey concerned tips that practitioners would give each other including the ability to stay focused, to ask lots of questions and do a lot of listening, to be careful to select the best innovation projects and to always look for ways to use resources better. This last suggestion was reflected in another trend in the quantitative data.

While more organizations are pursuing innovation as a strategy for viability and competitive advantage, a somewhat smaller percentage of these companies will also increase innovation funding, so the process of innovation must itself innovate in order to generate more results, faster, with the same or smaller investment. This indicates a potentially valuable niche for innovation practitioners to seek and fill—the ability to continuously innovate the practice of innovation. What we term *meta-innovation* may provide a distinct competitive advantage for many firms in the next few years.

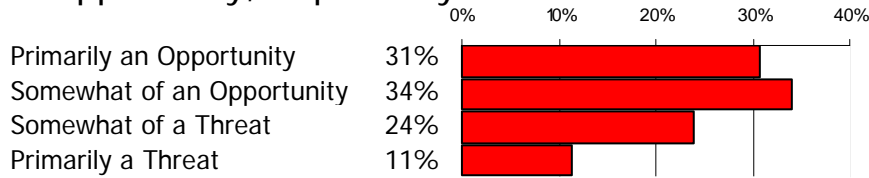
With this idea of meta-innovation in mind, it's useful to observe that the sources for support that we turn to in the innovation process begin with other people—the ones closest to us first—and then moves down the gradient of human relationships before it touches on third party materials like blogs and magazines. The middle of the gradient is occupied by conferences and training courses—the two types of human interaction that are sometimes most lacking in both humanity and interaction. We imagine that some of this gradient is shifting as a result of the restrictions on travel, but there are several interesting ideas to draw.

One is that human relationships are still the most important to us, and probably for several reasons. First, we can feel comfortable discussing the unknown and uncertainty with colleagues and friends and can expect to have an engaging dialog. Second, people who know one another have "decoded" each other's language so that conversations can become more meaningful quicker. Third, there is little lag or latency between asking a question and getting a thoughtful response, or even a more thoughtful question in return. It's a high frequency kind of interaction that better matches the "clock speed" of the brain's processing abilities.

Another idea has to do with those modalities at the bottom of the spectrum: the online training, face-to-face training and conferences. There are great opportunities for the people who provide these tools and for the people who buy them to build more meaning and interaction into their offerings. Despite decades of lip service to the concept of interactive training, much of it remains pretty traditional. Perhaps the design of "training" could be modified to extend up the gradient and take better advantage of the most desirable features found in trusted human interactions, and even in the more personable style of many blogs

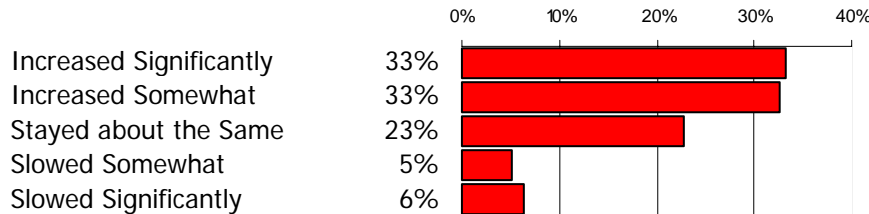
The Quantitative Results

Does your company view the current economic situation as primarily an opportunity, or primarily a threat?



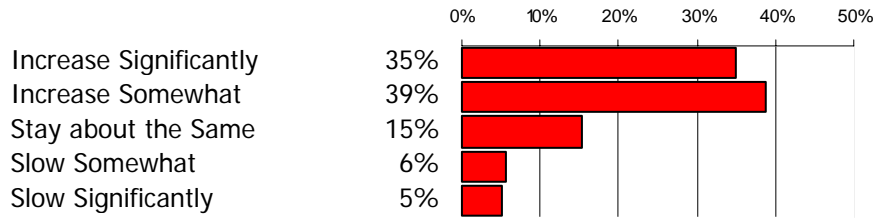
So far we overwhelmingly view the current situation as an opportunity.

Over the last 12 months, your company's innovation efforts have



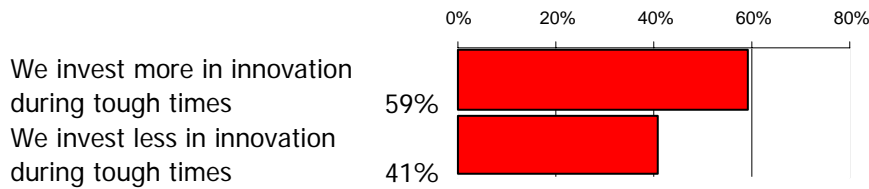
And our innovation efforts have increased as the crisis has worsened.

Over the next 12 months, your company's innovation efforts will:



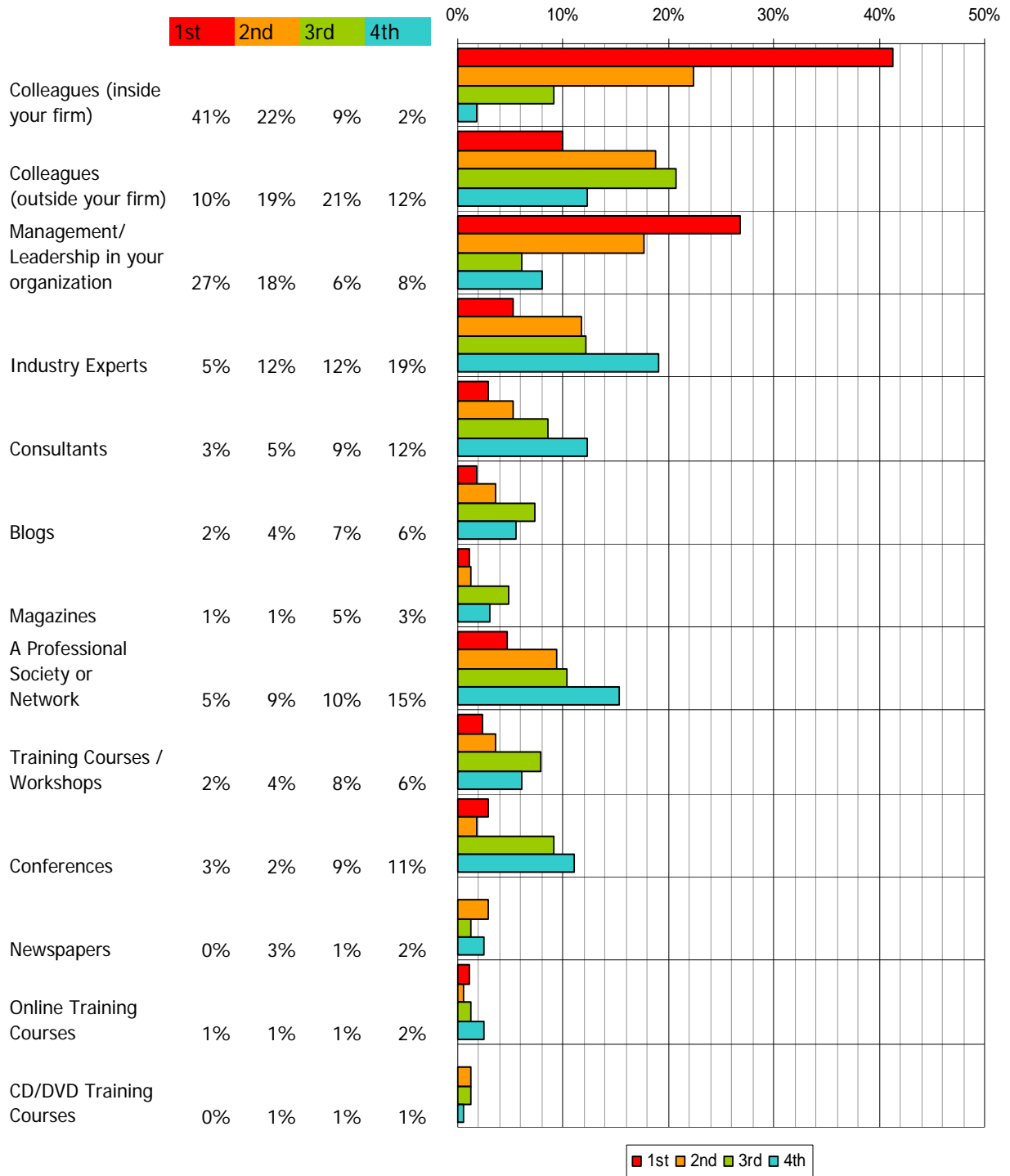
We expect our efforts to increase again. (We should have also checked to see how long people thought the crisis would continue and whether it would get worse or not).

During tough economic times your company invests more or less in innovation?



Even though our innovation efforts have significantly increased, we invest a little less. This may mean that we are trying to do better at innovating with less.

What are the top four resources you rely on for support of your innovation efforts?



What are the top four resources you rely on for support of your innovation efforts?

Here are the top resources for each category in order that scored over 10% in a single resource category.

First Resource	Second Resource	Third Resource	Fourth Resource
Colleagues (inside your firm)	Colleagues (inside your firm)	Colleagues (outside your firm)	Industry Experts
Management/ Leadership in your organization	Colleagues (outside your firm)	Industry Experts	A Professional Society or Network
Colleagues (outside your firm)	Management/ Leadership in your organization	A Professional Society or Network	Colleagues (outside your firm)
	Industry Experts		Consultants
			Conferences

The trend here is that we turn to people we know when we get stuck. We use our network before we use other sources. It's all about human interaction. All the other sources of information and expertise are used but in a marginal way.

Here is the same list with the four priorities summed up and sorted

Category	Total Percentage Points
Colleagues (inside your firm)	74.6
Colleagues (outside your firm)	61.7
Management/ Leadership in your firm	58.5
Industry Experts	48.2
A Professional Society or Network	39.8
Consultants	29.0
Conferences	24.9
Training Courses / Workshops	19.9
Blogs	18.1
Magazines	10.3
Newspapers	6.6
Online Training Courses	5.4
CD/DVD Training Courses	3.0

All of the people are at the top; all of the media are at the bottom with the crossover of conferences and training courses in the middle. It's almost from the most human and trusted relationships to the least human and generic relationships.

The Qualitative Results

What is the most important change your organization has made in its practice of innovation during the last 12 months?

Innovation as the central element of business strategy

Appointment of innovation leaders, experts, etc.

Innovation as a part of business strategy:

- Actually focusing on innovation as the central element of our business strategy.
- business model
- My organization put innovation to business strategy.
- inventing to a more tailored business formula.
- Addition to business line.
- Defined and tried more business models.
- its business model, and organizational work styles

Change in leadership, organization structure, roles and responsibilities:

- Adding an innovation leader to each of our product categories.
- Change in leadership creating a void in strategic thinking.
- Changed Leadership.
- Appointing innovation reps in every division and enforcing bottom-up idea generation
- Hiring a new research scientist, kicking off a number of research projects, looking into Innovest
- Created an organization structure to support innovation. Created an awareness campaign for people to come up with ideas.
- convert the company organization to business units
- Created groups of people from several departments/functions/business and geographies to dedicate time to innovation. Made efforts to take innovation from R&D to the whole company.
- Innovation now has a place on our board and has a leader responsible full time for the same
- Creating a position to explore and support innovation.
- Hiring a new business development resource.
- Established a mobile computing R&D group
- We're an FFRDC, and we've come under new contractual management, which is a step in itself for an organization of our type. Second, we've made a number of strategic hires in the past 2 years. Three, upper management has made some strategic choices that represent more a more innovative vision for our business relationships. Four, we are attempting to revitalize our IR&D enterprise.
- We now have broader networking with other research groups.
- Hiring engineers.
- We have created a separate research and products group.
- Revised organizational chart introduced more treatment models
- The addition of a Chief Operating Officer to the leadership within the organization.
- The creation and development of cross-organizational teams
- The most important change was the decision of transferring the innovation staff to the parent company to found an innovation area with more resources and focused in create global innovations

Collaboration with third party / hiring experts :

- Adding partners
- collaborative conversations with customers and other stakeholders
- cooperative development with other companies
- External Collaborations
- Reaching out to more third-parties for collaboration.
- Has contracted outside sources to help product development
- decided to outsource product and service development
- More collaboration based service development
- Partnering with companies that are focused on innovating execution. 2) Launching a series of accredited courses on the practice, management and implementation of innovation within the organization.

Involvement (of people at all levels):

- Adopting an organization-wide learning resource management platform
- As a part of innovation pioneers, most of us actively lit up the innovation candle all over the world by push qualified questions and innovation projects
- Company is creating weekly challenges to the organization. This in turn extends the challenge to a greater number of folks, and allows for a more diverse way of viewing the problem.
- Concern voice of customer and employee
- Formal idea management starting with monitoring our internal blog
- More staff encouragement and rewards.
- Increased incentives and recognition for internal innovation and for engaging in "innovation education".
- Start brainstorming sessions and a system to identify opportunities
- The process is more collaborative and is company wide.

Business Process improvements:

- Continued process discipline and strong management support.
- cost cutting
- cost efficiency,
- creating a mechanism to track and give visibility to efforts by organizational teams
- Automated storage system, including new bar code system
- Better accountability for short term goals.
- Expanding the value we add for customers
- Implementation of automated tools to manage/track engineering resources, budget, revenue, and operating performance.
- Making innovation more focused across levels of leadership and businesses
- IT improvement, products and procedures improvement
- Gmail & iPhones
- Structure reduction, cost reduction
- Review of internal processes and systems

Customer facing innovation efforts:

- Advancing the art of our products
- customer led interactions
- Developing a front end process
- Development of products is more responsive to targeted customer needs
- Focusing on using innovation to remove barriers between us and our customers, when it comes to deciding whether to buy our product or services.
- Increased integration of technology tools to manage inventory
- Increased technology
- Less time thinking and more focus on execution
- More customer focused
- Reviewed our service offering to our customers - looking to streamline the process, join up the services and reduce handoffs and inefficiency thereby improving the customer experience and outcomes whilst reducing duplication and costs.
- making new customer
- Seeking ways to apply our skills and capabilities in industry sectors beyond our current customer base.
- Tie in closer with customers. Take absolutely build it and they will come type risks
- It has established a technology office chartered with coordinating customer facing innovation efforts

Additional financial resources:

- MORE R&D investment
- Deliberate cash investment in innovative new offerings related to an expanded business model
- We have invested in innovation in areas/technologies we wish to expand.
- Seek more outside funding

Prioritizing innovation needs / efforts:

- Innovation will be suspended while other foundational issues are being addressed.
- Less resource invested on the forward looking technologies.
- More careful, priority to clear win innovations, short time perspective
- Reduced innovation projects that have no immediate payoff, especially those that are company funded.
- Reduction in tools, reduction in education, reduction in new business development
- Reframe the old paradigm to the New Paradigm. Extremely difficult when you're ahead of the curve.
- Increased the number of new initiatives.

Systematic approach towards innovation:

- Systemize innovation
- IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATION CULTURE IN THE ENTERPRISE
- Improving the culture of innovation
- Reorganizing our Innovation structure and process.
- Tighter project planning process to build in innovation more systematically
- We changed our innovation strategy and defined the life cycle of it.
- We improved the structure and support processes for innovation.
- Streamline innovation process
- Rethinking it radically, investing in a more structured, knowledge intensive approach
- Segmentation into short, medium and long term efforts, with ring fencing of resource

- taking tangible action to improve effectiveness of our innovation efforts by assigning someone to look at it and develop recommendations on how to proceed

More / Better focus on innovation:

- innovative developments in the organization
- Increase our focus on innovation.
- to increase personal time to read
- Try to find new ideas
- Try to get more products to get ready for the market when it becomes vibrant again
- More focus around sustainability
- Much better assessment of ideas and better, more targeted marketing of solutions to potential clients
- We have started to work harder on new subjects like new sources of energy.
- Putting it to practice
- We have scaled up our research effort to be prepared when the economy starts growing again
- I have re-organized the creation workflow and created more time for serious thinking and creative experimentation.
- Devoting resources to support knowledge networks
- Moving resources from basic research to more downstream development

Others:

- Challenging the four named management / leadership improvement organizations (Deming, Drucker, Greenleaf, Scanlon) to work together to make mgmnt. and ldrship.
- Key elements of and resources for creativity, innovation, continual improvement and constructive change.
- changing from pursuing high tech clients to pursuing Energy tech clients
- every need is seen as an opportunity to work out an appropriate solution, without any pressure to choose what's available, but to explore the most cost effective solution
- Focus almost exclusively on products that will yield short term revenues
- Having the initiative up and running.
- I am working
- Increasing marketing efforts
- It has been a new "business unit", as I've negotiated to be a representative of an innovation consulting firm for Argentina.
- Killed it
- Look at current market conditions and our competitors in the rear view mirror.
- Looking at renewable alternate energy resources, due to the fact that export of diamonds has gone down and production cost have gone up.
- looking at taking our solutions to other markets
- management
- more relaxed pricing
- Moving internal systems to cloud computing platforms
- new products
- New services
- No Change
- None
- none
- None

- No significant change as this is still ad-hoc with no formalized processes at the Regional level. At the Global level, we have an INNOVATION Centre in our Global offices, but the Regions do not have full visibility nor sufficient participation with what goes on.
- Offer new products
- Placed all projects on increased timelines and some on hold due to increased cost of capital and uncertain economic climate.
- Realizing the challenges with a client company are actually related to their ability to deal with and accept what is for them an innovative concept.
- Recognition that the company's continued success depends upon addressing several long-term practices and long-standing problems from a new frame of reference.
- Reconnecting with previous clients for potential business opportunities.
- reorientation of products and services
- Service Delivery
- There has been very little change in the innovation effort during the last 12 months.
- This is a government organization which has tried lean and six-sigma--still progressing, but not as rapidly as expected.
- To get a bigger view; not only product development can be innovative...
- Understand, that Innovation is a must
- We are changing our culture to share stories about things we are trying even if we don't get the result we wanted. Our hope is that we will move away from the culture of perfection and learning from our mistakes to become more innovative and not afraid.
- We have just launched an e-Events business as part of our product platform.
- We have made our focus about how to make the planet smarter
- We have reinforced the corporative management of innovation and also the corporative budget to explore new business opportunities.

What are the most critical enablers for your company's innovation success in the current tough economy?

Funds for Innovation:

- A modest amount of investment dollars to support rapid prototyping and market testing.
- Ability to handle cash flow.
- Access to capital
- Budget, executive sponsorship, alignment to the top strategic initiatives of the enterprise
- Cash Flow
- Cash flow. My health.
- Extra funding, duplication of innovative efforts, limited exposure to research databases and knowledge management.
- Funding sources to allow staff room to innovate. Ability of leadership to identify areas in which to focus innovation efforts. Ability to communicate need for organization-wide innovation. Ability to foster a culture of innovation.
- Prior investment in innovation.
- Finding creative ways to fund innovation and innovative ideas.
- Government funding and external investment

Top management / leadership:

- good leadership
- leadership
- Leadership - A common commitment to innovation which is being sensitized till workmen level
- leadership and money
- Leadership who recognize and push for innovation within our organization; a new strategic planning cycle that is timely coinciding with a changing landscape that allow us to look at issues critically.
- management commitment to the innovation, preparedness to still risk a little
- Management leadership must keep their head and not scuttle working initiatives out of fear.
- management support and understanding of the issues
- Management willingness to take risks.
- The most critical enabler was the support from some of the top executives.
- Top down support
- Top management has a long term view and typically sees the current economic environment as an opportunity to reorganize, take stock and design the foundations for success.
- Good upper management support

Employees:

- Our people
- people
- people/time
- Good professionals.
- correct mindset in employees
- Dedicated staffs, leverage technology, do more with less.

Customers Demands:

- Our customers
- Prioritization of opportunities. Understanding our customers and end-consumers.

- determining customer needs
- better focus on the "value proposition" our innovations deliver to our customers and clients
- Interaction with our customers
- more customer focus
- provide a way for customers to expand their revenue and they are beating a path to your door

Collaboration with third party / hiring experts :

- Increasing our University/Company "innovation partnerships".
- JV partners
- Our Collaborative Innovation Management Platform (EDEN)
- Outsourcing, partnerships, cooperative agreements, and post bachelors level education.
- partners/ecosystem

Others:

- constant belief that we need to remain innovative to keep our market position
- Being able to show prospects about the advantages of innovating in many vectors: Strategy, Problem solving, New promise development and others; and "helping them to hire us" by adding brilliant value.
- All the eco-system with our partners, providers, employees and research centers
- common goals, understanding of our strategy
- Focused research that can be steered towards products, being flexible enough in market and product to take advantage of new research findings. Competitive threats also act as a spur to innovation
- Employee retention, client participation, quantifiable business value in pursuing innovation.
- execution, execution ,execution
- Executive buy-in and support. The realization that generating a culture of innovation is a primary goal.
- Executive endorsement. An innovation program in place. Internal champions to support its use.
- Executive sponsorship and engagement
- Executive support
- A new product might spark an interest do try your products rather than their typical supplier.
- A strong record of performance for the current clients
- ability to show added value from our effort, even if the real uplift is still out in the future
- Adding a little business smarts to our approach at the division level. The survivors will come through stronger.
- Attracting new clients on saving products
- Because we are consultants, company downsizing may mean a dearth of internal talent -- and therefore the need for more help from the outside.
- Business Development Office
- Challenging mindsets to identify business opportunities that will allow us to sustain and improve service delivery in a difficult economy
- Change in market needs
- Change Management Marketing Efforts
- Clinicians
- Commitment of industry to innovation

- Community building, collaboration, connection.
- Competition pressure to initiate the ideas to reduce product cost, and improve the efficiency.
- Continued high enrollment levels
- control of direct sales
- Creativity; to know "how to choose/ find the eligible idea".
- culture of risk and opportunity
- Economic downturn is a good time for consulting types of work. And, for industries who intend to grow, they will try to develop new products in the meanwhile and to deliver the new products to the market when the economy starts to turn better.
- Efficiencies in internal systems and processes
- Expectations for growth failures on long-standing systems or practices that haven't scaled as the company grew.
- Faster learning
- Faster product development
- Flexibility, patience.
- focus on value
- Found a market in which investments will go on, despite the crisis
- Freedom to create Support for the innovation environment
- Good ideas
- Having a formal CIO, making innovation part of strategic priorities, using technology for idea generation
- Having the attitude and focus to innovate and then 'doing it'
- I don't know yet, maybe the budget. it's the beginning of the year, the strategy is not very clear yet
- Increased need for new business models and new P&S in areas where BAU is failing
- increased sense of urgency
- Increased shipping.
- incremental design
- Information Technology
- Innovation focused on the key issues
- Integration of product with market trends. Offering what people want and having it available when they want it.
- Internal stakeholder and jealousy
- Internally marketing both successful and failed projects
- investing in training and being conservative in spends
- job security
- knowledge base and networking
- Large innovation pipeline and very broad portfolio
- Low development costs and lesser opportunity for servicing work.
- Low investment and quick returns
- More innovative management. Greater empowerment of our workforce (which is heavily laden with research-oriented PhDs who should be constitutionally inclined to innovation.
- More thinking, less wrangle. Get more and more open ideas
- My clients are asking tough questions about improving their own businesses, giving me the chance to learn about different markets and how they can respond to changing conditions
- My own motivation. I am a sole proprietor
- NA
- National recognition that science, technology and engineering partnerships are a cost effective means to create IP that has finally trickled down into regional economic development organizations and corporate planning

- Need to survive the situation
- new creative products
- Not sure
- Opportunity to capture new growth opportunities during a major inflection point in the market.
- our ability to predict what the indicators mean
- Our wish to change the life better.
- Passion and "can do" approach from talented staff; maximizing the capabilities/capacities we already own or have at our disposal; a sense of focus and narrowing what we are involved in.
- Price control; insights in sustainable metrics
- PROCESS OF DISCOVERY BASED ON KNOWLEDGE ADVANTAGE CREATED
- product development and opportunities finding process
- R&D \$\$ to implement #5.
- reading accurately weak market signals
- Resources
- sales decline in many areas
- semantic web and state-of-the-art inference engines
- Speed - Focused on quick win
- Speed, flexibility, adaptability
- staff capabilities
- staff members
- Staff not being discouraged as less \$\$ may be available to test ideas
- survival
- Survival
- Systemize innovation
- taking risk ability
- Technical Differentiation
- technology and social networks
- The ability to prototype ideas quickly, in order to get feedback.
- The adaption of open systems and the acceptance of Apple and Unix as viable competitors to Microsoft
- The dedication of resources and a budget for the purposes of Innovation, as would be the fostering of more collaboration across the Functional groups.
- The innovation trend is prevalent 2) Free educational forums provide an opportunity for education 3) Success stories and lessons from leaders in innovation provide proof of concept
- The willingness of clients, to save cost.
- to go on to professionalize our stuff
- to look for new affordable technologies
- Trying to keep the investments of time and money in innovation even in adversity.
- Understanding what "innovation" is, getting high-level acceptance and understanding that it is important, and then creating the social structures/incentives to encourage it.
- User value and lead generation for our clients.
- When items are either from a single source or prices are totally outrageous.
- Working on attractive subjects.

What are the most significant obstacles to your company's innovation success in the current tough economy?

Lack of funding:

- financial
- financial constraints
- Financial support
- capital
- Cash flow.
- conservatism - money
- Budget, time
- Being careful of expenses and managing time wisely
- budget cuts level of anxiety, people focusing on keeping their job unable to project themselves
- budget constraints to pursue the ideas
- Companies are reluctant to spend.
- Cost-cutting pressure that limit the available resources
- Desire to reduce budgets, lower sales.
- Lack of investment & resources
- 1) Skepticism 2) Lack of funding available to professional development initiatives committed to learning about innovation
- frozen funds at Partners
- funding
- funding
- Funding is tight so Project Teams are competing for a smaller R and D budget.
- Funds
- funds
- How to prioritize the budget. Lot of companies first cut the budget for research activities, it's reasonable since the 1st priority is to survive.
- increased cost
- Money
- not invented here syndrome
- Poor cash flow. This creates stress, pulling focus onto short-term issues, making it harder to think innovatively.
- State budgets
- stingy finance
- The cost of capital. 2. Lack of senior management chutzpah leading to a fear of the unknown.
- Time and money
- Vash flow.
- Liquidity and Fund shortage - Being a economy driven customer segment (commercial vehicles) - the growth is dependant on many variables. This inturn creates bottlenecks for seeing quick results
- Tightened budgets.
- Sometimes access to capital.
- Less money so hard to get equipment for innovating new idea
- We are a nonprofit with little resources. When \$ are tighter than usual it makes it even harder for us to have resources to try new things.
- Too many good ideas and not an operating capital to support executing on all of them - requires a solid selection process.

- Endowment value decrease
- Uncertainty about our clients solvability and their readiness to invest

Mindset of Employees

- Employees who won't change
- Culture - at the end of the day our people need to want to do this and believe in it - if not, it dies.
- CHANGE IN ATTITUDE
- Bureaucracy
- organization's bureaucracy and its-not-the-way-we-do-it-here mindset
- organization culture
- People who think 20th century
- staff members
- limitation in human resources
- low employee morale
- Manpower

Mindset of Top Management

- Current management, which is home grown in an environment that operated with a top-down management approach that did not support succession planning in any way.
- Innovation Culture and commitment by CEO
- Lack of management willingness to take risks and travel money.
- Internal politics (meddling from Head Office) and some residual risk aversity.
- Leadership
- Leadership does not believe innovation is important in our industry.
- The Corporate Culture and management's detraction...in focusing on Cash Conservation / Cash Burn-Rate issues
- Management losing their heads out of fear.
- Management support and understanding of the issues

Mindset of Customers

- Customer demands for non-innovative features, available budget
- Lack of market enthusiasm
- Less client-side budget to test newer approaches.
- Making clients understand, that this is the time to invest in innovation, so as to reap benefits, while they rise.
- Alignment to others, understanding there' pressing' needs to provide solutions
- Clients not seeing technology as an enabler
- Finding customers who 'get it' and have an innate need to switch paradigms.

Economic Downturn

- Companies we market to are definitely affected by the downturn and budgets are smaller or unknown.
- Construction market is down so it is difficult to get customers interested in trying a product.
- Dwindling reserves due to the market; a lack of discipline in "living within our means"; and, the bombardment of staff by media accounts of the economic meltdown going on around the world.

- External market forces and demand
- Industry slowdown
- Marketing declining
- Many customer industries are slowing down, i.e. not buying new stuff.
- resistance to change and global economic downturn
- Slowing down investments, huge lay-offs, decreasing morale.

No time for Innovation:

- Time
- Too busy fighting fires to plan the new forest
- Short time cycles
- not enough time in a day
- My own procrastination or fatigue
- Resource shortage and tight schedule for the deliverables.

Not enough courage / do not want to risk anything:

- Manager's natural tendency is to be risk averse when the economy is in a recession. This potentially slows innovation
- Fear of uncertainty, lingering mindset to be conservative.
- Fear from future
- Fear of other actors in the market, (sellers, industrials, etc.)
- lack of courage
- Risk Aversity
- Risks, because we don't know which is the eligible (not the best) idea. "Eligible" by the consumer is completely different from the "best" idea.
- Short-term thinking and risk aversion.
- Tighter economy makes many potential partners and some internal people want to pull back and not take risks on new paths.
- nobody is taking any risk
- recovery of investments takes longer time
- return of investments

Others:

- A bank is the owner????
- As a consulting firm, we depend on the ability of our clients to buy our services, so we're really dependent on the economic stability of outside parties.
- bridging the gap from idea/concept through to working prototype. I work for a University Technology transfer Company in Australia.
- Changing demographics among donors.
- Commitment of industry to innovation
- Discounters and private label gaining market share
- Disappointments re following up suggestions with real organizational commitment.
- distractions based on 'crisis' language in the media
- Executive engagement
- Experienced and skilled Human resources, enabling environment and the right policies to encourage foreign investment.
- Finding Deployment opportunities for our new tools.
- Finding leaders that see the vision for making #5 happen.
- Gaining additional resources to test pilot projects

- Given our reliance on partners fulfilling some business outcomes for our customers, the danger that the difficult economic climate drives the partners to different ways of working that are incompatible with our business and drive up avoidable contact volumes.
- Global dispersion, competing priorities, limited understanding of how innovation could help at the tactical level
- Government fees.
- Have to focus on accounts receivable plus focus on new customers to replace closed accounts
- Hesitation on the part of our customers to participate with us
- High Debt
- internal heavy processes and lack of innovative vision
- job security
- Keeping a focus on producing customer value.
- Keeping a low level of collection default
- Lack of good ideas
- Lack of resource and the need to demonstrate impact (which is less applicable to risky ideas)
- Manage change in mindsets
- Matrix organization structure, large geographical spread
- NA
- New products launch cash flow.
- no significant obstacles
- none
- Not an obstacle but a deferral of income to 2010. But it is an opportunity for keeping having dialogue with prospects.
- Not being focused on it!
- Not sure economy has a significant impact on our innovation
- Politics
- Pricing strategies and product bundles to offer our clients additional value so that we can retain their marketing dollars.
- qualified personnel
- Quick return on investment.
- Reluctance of investors and government sponsors to begin new programs due their perception of forthcoming changes in Obama's administration investment goals and which emerging industries will receive major government sponsorship.
- Staff's ability to focus in the face of uncertainty. Potential collaborators' stability & ability to invest/contribute.
- stress on the organization tends to make people more resistant to change as they hunker down and focus on generating cash now
- sufficient human resources that can be devoted to learning resource development
- Systemize innovation
- The general perception of "crisis" and the lack of enthusiasm of some people
- the high risk involved in many innovation ventures
- The mind of People that think this like threat
- The most significant obstacles are the costing cuts and unpredictable economy.
- to be satisfied; our success
- Trying to do more with existing staff.
- Uninformed Policy decisions
- We don't know the correct instruments of innovation success in this crisis period.
- We work as subcontractors and we are not used to develop products to the final consumer

What specific tip would you give your fellow innovators to improve their innovation efforts during tough economic times?

Stay focused / patience and persistence:

- Innovation is persistent and permanent.
- Be hopeful in any situation.
- Don't stop.
- Focus and patience.
- Hang in there and keep pushing forward, because it's innovation that will turn this economy around.
- Keep faith!
- never give up and get some successful reference projects
- Stick with it - see the short term opportunities but don't forget to work on the future!
- To remain optimistic and see this as an opportunity for creating something new and disruptive.
- Be open, be critical and never stop trying.
- Keep the long view. This is the time to focus on re-invention. Difficulty is the greatest teacher.
- Keep talking about it and doing it and weather the storm.
- Difficult times create opportunity. Try to focus on where things are going, not where they are
- FOCUS ON ALL THREE TYPES OF INNOVATIONS - PRODUCT, PROCESS AND MANAGEMENT.... THEN ASSIGN PRIORITY TO INNOVATIONS BASED ON EXPECTED TACTICAL AND STRATEGIC RESULTS
- Focus on core business
- Focus on delivering
- Focus on high leverage innovations but internally market the incremental successes to Focus on the core business, innovate where it counts and cut dead wood
- Focus on the cost reduction and efficiency improvement which will be the priority in the company sponsor list.
- focus on what the customer can use
- focused on consumer value
- Keep focused on the consumer. Innovate more not less
- Focus on solutions instead of problems and find out what kind of things, services or support people and companies still need (perhaps even more) in a downturn

Ask and listen with open minds:

- Ask a lot of questions
- Ask your People. They know.
- Continue to seek new ideas and be prepared to justify why funding should go to your project rather than another.
- Innovate - you don't need a big budget for good ideas. Open your mind - ideas are like truffles: it doesn't matter who finds them Have courage and fun to realize new ideas!
- Investing on professionals, knowledge's do not pass through tough times. They are profitable.
- Listen and be open to ideas
- Listen carefully, adapt the language and propose value.
- Listen to your customers! Listen to your employees! ask open ended questions - "what if" rather than "should we" don't accept status quo address strategic pain points NOW before they are critical barriers

- Listen to your customers, understand their needs from your business and deliver what they want - this will drive improved service, increased efficiency and reduce costs.
- Get out and talk with customers and noncustomers to find opportunities to innovate. Start outside in.

Pick the right project / idea:

- Break things up into manageable pieces with lower investment and quicker potential returns.
- Build something that will help your clients save or make money.
- Do field work to determine where an opportunity for a product exists.
- Do your upfront homework correctly
- Ensure in these times that your project selection criteria is FIRMLY mapped to your strategy. If so, funding innovation in tough times is akin to buying high quality stocks at a discount. When the market rebounds and you're invested, you stand to gain.
- Improve the "Search Opportunities" phase
- It's about Return On Investment. If you write a strong business case, like your were going after venture capital money, senior management will come up with a way to fund your project.
- Wait; let me use this to offer you a comment: your list for Q8 didn't mention customers/clients/sponsors, as the case may be. If you wish to leverage your internal dollars, you want to get buy-in from downstream consumers in some way, or at least get a sense of where your market needs will be. Cool stuff that won't sell eventually makes cool doorstops. Think of it as "making a market," and if you can't make any headway at the front end, you may have a helluva time selling it on the back end.
- Is missing web research. We do tons of it, Checked Industry Experts as the proxy for it. Blogs aren't enough. Guru papers/presentations matter, often result of conferences they present at but we don't attend. [9] Aim High. Invent a New Paradigm. Anything me-too is simply obsolete and raises the cost of creating mindshare in a very noisy market. A New Paradigm greatly simplifies the story, by dismissing an entire category of hundreds of companies in 1 bullet. The only way to do a powerful pitch in 5 minutes, which is about all mind-share, gives you. This requires tenacity, very patient capital, valid use cases, and deep research.
- Prioritize; one step at a time; and, less is more.
- Look at innovation as little steps it doesn't necessary have to be huge things. Taking little steps can get you to innovation.
- Pick your battles and select your innovations so that they are solving the problems created by the economic situation. At the same time use innovation to prepare for the economic upswing.
- Produce something that makes money quickly, even if it is not perfect.
- Use simple, fast and medium cost innovation idea
-

Better utilization of resources

- care for ROI
- Consider increasing revenue, avoiding costs and improving service in everything you do!
- Cut non-innovation expenses to the bone and invest in gaining market share during the recession.
- Doing more with less focuses the mind in a different way
- Find efficiencies first - redeploy resources for future growth second - cut costs third
- Find ways to leverage your internal resources better, most organizations over look the diverse perspective that lies within their own organization. You don't need to go out

- Learn to use all of the free cloud technologies like Google Apps and Zoho
- Less money doesn't mean less innovation. In the hard time, maybe it is a good time to learn how to use everything efficiently while making innovation.
- Synergy with all innovative institutions, sharing of resources to reduce costs and joint venturing.
- Leverage collective intelligence from your internal sources first
- Look for ways to show conservation rather than consumption. Connect to "Get up, dust yourself off and get going..." theme.
- Look, where the bottom-line is! Start thinking lean, and value, from those bottom pointers. And move up.

Others:

- be flexible
- bring answers to current confusion / uncertainties
- Build a circle of support that will help to keep innovation on the agenda. Partner with business to show how it can be used to address key challenges. Be ready to adapt things quickly as leadership momentum can make you or break you.
- Collaborate or die
- Create a detailed business plan; build a communication plan to educate clients and internal business leaders
- creative design
- Dare
- deepen the benefits of your core offering to your current customers
- Do not quit your day job - treat innovation as an internally supported entrepreneurial activity.
- Don't cut back but adopt a "fail early...fail fast" approach to sift out the ones with the best chances of succeeding very early on.
- don't just focus on efficiency gains - make sure that quality also improves
- Don't know
- Embrace this opportunity, as within uncertainty the environment to innovate is supported and fostered as a result of no other options. Thanks.
- Encourage people to think in terms of "In order for us to do that we would need to..." instead of "We can't do that because...." Just that change in language changes the dynamic from blocking to enabling.
- Ensure that any innovation team has a wide portfolio of innovations of all sorts, a clear value proposition and can sell themselves at any level in the organization.
- Failure seems even worse during tough economic times, but it is still a sine qua non characteristic of innovation, keep moving forward
- File patents
- side.
- keep people on-board.
- Formalize your Integrated Innovation Knowledge Supply Chain.
- Give yourself time to be creative
- Go against the stream; invest when others want to sell. Make sure growth is done organic and avoid heavy debts
- I donk know
- Improve the culture of organization consistently throughout the organization
- It is now when we need to boost all our imagination to solve the tough challenges. Every dollar in innovation has a big return
- iteration - take baby steps, deliver value, internally sell that value, take the next step
- It's time to make changes.

- Just do it! Imagine that
- Just start! Show the direct quick wins
- Just let your people have the time to be innovative and prepare the infrastructure for them to do so
- let me think
- Look at different approaches like TRIZ
- Look at long term benefits and your end customer's needs
- Look at other industries, and focus on removing barriers between you and your current customers - or new ones.
- Look at the efficiency and effectiveness of your management and leadership models and qualities, principles and practices. Work to improve these, even as you struggle to deliver enough products and services to "stay the course."
- Look for second and third level changes, define a niche, keep researching until you find one that fits your organization and your product/service can be executed quickly.
- Look toward catering to human need.
- Maintain confidence, increase team work
- Make innovation an internal culture (habit) throughout their organization
- Make sure that your innovation efforts are focused by having an ongoing conversation with the business leaders to prioritize what you choose to look at and work on.
- Make sure your company can survive first. Worry about growth last, this downturn is about survival. Make sure you survive first.
- More important now than ever
- motivating them to make our company the best
- narrow your focus and go for it
- Network! Seek and exchange ideas out those who value innovation (not necessarily likeminded individuals, but creative thinkers and doers.)
- Now is the time' is the phrase I use when encouraging innovation. In a meltdown situation the readiness level of staff to implement internal innovations is high.
- Offer clear benefits for consumers
- Partner to share the risk and improve ideas and networks to get it done. Don't think look for quick "training course", think real education.
- pragmatism
- Products and services without efforts. Efforts should be near null, void, zero to the consumer.
- Recognize that specific challenges that require new technology deployment may be opportunities for innovation in disguise.
- recognize that you have to keep the doors open, so innovation efforts have to be tempered with maintaining a steady cash flow to bridge the path to the future
- Reread the book of G.Ford once again.
- Review the innovation strategies - Improve the organization innovation culture
- Rifle shoot. Develop a process or technology that is 100% usable rather than something that "blends" or augments your existing systems
- Set about firstly understanding ALL the aspects of innovation and then set about building an innovation engine that is robust and sustaining.
- Set aside a specific time each week for brainstorming, after training your team on "How" to brainstorm effectively
- Start with your staff's expertise and familiarity with your sector. Then work on feeding innovation into existing projects rather than seeking new projects.
- Stay focused and soldier on because you believe that your innovation will benefit customers.
- Stay loose. Surround yourself with positive thinkers.
- Stay the course, and adversity brings the best out of us.

- Stay with your initial business plans and technology targets. Continuously reinventing your company or self to meet current economic needs does not build brand or provide stable objectives for your employees to work toward. Scale back, do not change direction, and place assets in place for your chosen future growth.
- Staying ahead of competition is even more important in tough economic times.
- Strategize how to get the best leverage out of your business model via new or modified products
- Substantial improvements rather than marginal innovation, which give benefits faster and with shorter investment return durations are more appropriate in these times.
- Switch innovation focus toward quick turn business development.
- Systemize innovation
- Take time to think. Don't let the daily pressure consume you. Breathe and let your creativity help you develop innovations.
- The first thing is know to where the global and local economy is going because every innovation to be consolidated needs an economic value and applicability in the market. It's necessary to define priorities and negotiate budgets to your innovators projects. Knowing it, try to define some market gaps. What your consumers needs? What differentiate you from your competitors? And what differentiate your competitors from you? Try to observe external markets. What are they doing? These questions can help you define innovation strategies efficiently.
- The more you see and you listen, the more you think, then the more you get.
- Think long-term, innovation now provides the platform for future growth.
- Think outside the box
- This is a good time to establish a "culture of innovation"!
- This is the best time to innovate for good times. The tough economic times have a good part that cost of research decreases significantly. In high times investment on research and innovation is a costly choice.
- To have a vision and Be focused on it
- Try to see opportunities in adversity. Keep the heads up and don't stop working.
- Understand the motivations of your organization's business leadership.
- Use the Obama strategy: get everyone to dig deep.
- Very trite, but "think outside the box". Look for disruptive advantages. And when possible leverage the Web.
- W/o innovation efforts, bad days are closer... Though times are the most specific period of opportunity since market and customers are much more eager (and fragile, sensitive) to get better value from the goods and services.
- When the world is changing, change it!
- Without innovation to keep your organization at the forefront in your client's minds you have no business when economic times improve.
- working with today's constrains requires a higher level of innovation and risk taking than when the market is growing