

Health Promotion Practitioner

Practical solutions for health enhancement programming

Think Inside the Box

Once or twice a year we'll get a customer or colleague request to help brainstorm a new health promotion service or product. It's flattering to be thought of as a creative wellness provider and we relish the opportunity. But on most occasions, the request is difficult (if not impossible) to satisfy because the individual is looking for something "completely new and different." The problem is there really isn't such a thing — in wellness or any other industry.

If you look at some of the hottest businesses today, none started with something completely new or different; they all were take-offs of existing technology/services or combinations of existing products/services. Consider:

- *Apple.* The ubiquitous iPod wasn't the first MP3 player on the market, but it was a radically improved version that, when combined with iTunes (also not the first online music store), caused the digital music market to explode.
- *Google.* A relatively late entry into web search, the founders didn't even set out to develop a search engine, but discovered what they had built for a graduate school project was a better tool for web search than anything that existed to that point. And Google really didn't take off until they applied an existing advertising model (pay per click) to their search algorithms to produce highly targeted advertising.
- *NetFlix.* NetFlix took 2 relatively old concepts — movie rental and mail order — then combined them

with exceptional customer service and a superior website to dominate their niche market.

- *Starbucks.* Howard Schultz didn't invent coffee or community, but Starbucks transformed the delivery of caffeine to the bloodstream by combining these to dramatically boost coffee consumption worldwide.

The lesson in each example is that great business concepts — and similarly great wellness ideas — aren't necessarily new and different. In fact, they are far more likely to be combinations of or enhancements to existing, even ordinary ideas. With that in mind, the following outlines a few resources we're working on for you at Health Enhancement Systems.

- *1-Minute Wellness.* This web-based service grew out of the need to simplify wellness and address participants' excuse: "I don't have time to (fill in the blank)..." The whole premise is what you can learn or do in 60 seconds that can have a positive impact on your health. It combines the idea of drive thru with health education — get what you need, and go. Learn more at www.1minutewellness.com.
- *Great American Fitness Adventure.* This online and paper-based program is a combination of several ideas, including travel to interesting places, love of the great outdoors, and motivation to "go somewhere" with fitness endeavors. We didn't invent any of these, but we're pulling them together into a fun, informative 100-day experience that includes individual and team options. Learn more at www.GreatAmericanFitnessAdventure.com.

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•*Green Planet Wellness*. Whether you believe the planet is in peril or global warming is a natural phenomenon, there's no denying today's tremendous interest in all things green. This program gives individuals simple, everyday examples of ways to live greener and healthier, without picking sides in the debate or being preachy.

Again, we didn't create the green movement, or the personal steps, but we're wrapping them in a fun, educational 1-month wellness program any organization can implement. Go to www.GreenPlanetWellness.com for more details. 🌱



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