

# Foundations—a Pedestal Group Publication

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FOUNDATIONS

## The Pedestal Group

### Answering the Tough Question

#### Special points of interest:

- *The Next generation of browsers*
- *Leapfish*
- *What are you really saying?*
- *Top 10 Lists*
- *AND MORE!*

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You are sitting at your desk and the telephone rings. Your biggest potential client—the company with \$200,000 in business in the next 6 months that would be right in your sweet spot—finally returns your call. The CEO says he asks all vendors one question and if they get it right, they become the only vendor in their category. Here it is:

What is the biggest challenge companies like ours are facing?

What do you say? What is your \$200,000 answer? Are you going to say something generic like, “they are having trouble finding the best qualified people for their positions” or are you really going to be able to hit what kept that CEO up last night?

The best way to help clients relate to you is to pick a specialty. And not just “Information Technology” or “Construction” but really narrow down your niche so it is specific. Telling that CEO you work with hospitals and orthopedic centers hiring supply-chain gurus from the manufacturing world to help manage their costs and inventories

more effectively is going to jump your credibility up 100% before you even address the question. Telling him something about generic healthcare companies isn’t going to cut it. So get specific in your niche—somewhere in your files (under **MARKETING PLAN** hint hint) should be a definition of what that means. Size of companies, types of companies, management structures, etc.

Next, you should have at the ready three tough issues that the companies in your niche are facing. Not just “tough economy”, but how is the tough economy really hitting them. You find this out by calling and listening. Ask people what they are dealing with—people who will take your calls. In recruiting, these can be placed candidates as they have a great feeling about your firm. These may be long time clients who haven’t been able to give you work lately. You can call and tell them you aren’t looking for a sale but want to hear what they are facing. If you work face-to-face, meet a previous client for coffee or lunch and spend the majority of time listening.



What is the biggest challenge companies like ours are facing?

If your answer to the CEO is “my clients tell me their biggest challenge is...” you have already gone up in credibility because you **LISTEN**. And you listen well enough to be able to quote them.

Finally, your answer should be as specific as possible. Being able to say, “I work with small construction companies that focus on building franchised fast food restaurants. What they are feeling is not only a tough time with getting new projects from the franchisors because no one is buying franchises, but also on remodels of existing franchises because even though HQ comes out with new standards and practices, the franchises don’t have

## The Next Generation of Browsers?

There has been a lot of hype lately about everyone's new website. Microsoft released BING this week, Google is demoing Wave, WolframAlpha came out last month, Leapfish is in beta and getting press, etc. But what can all these tools do for you?



**WolframAlpha** is a very scientific-oriented site as it was developed by Wolfram software, a leader in the mathematical and science-

related software market ([www.wolframalpha.com](http://www.wolframalpha.com)). The thought behind WA is when you search for information you want to know about that thing, but you are probably going to do something with the information. So the WA site tries to give you those results as well. **REVIEW:** TPG likes this tool because it gives very interesting data but it is more complicated to get the results you like. If you want to compare two things, it is AMAZING however we have NOT had any luck finding peo-

ple with it.

### Microsoft BING

([www.bing.com](http://www.bing.com)) Billed as a “decision engine”, Bing is intended to also take information and provide you with the next step in using it. The demos are definitely geared toward the consumer market as they describe looking for restaurants, movies, etc. **REVIEW:** It has been easy to use, doesn't have as many limitations as Live did, and seems to give good results. Will it replace Google? Doubtful.

## Tough Questions... (Con't)

### WHAT IS YOUR \$200,000 ANSWER?

the business volume to pay for them.” Wow. You are someone who is really in touch with the customer base. Even if that CEO isn't directly in your

space, he will want to work with someone who is that much a part of the team.

Now, the reality is that call isn't going to happen to everyone today. But, this kind of approach can help in your day to day calls as well. Wouldn't it be more interesting to get a call from someone who starts with, “my clients are finding the new FDA regulations are really hard to implement with their current equipment—are you finding the same?” rather than a pitch for business? The client gets to talk about herself and you are there listening. Most people will then talk about you—how's business or what chal-

lenges do you see, etc. Now is the time to explain what you do and why and maybe even how. This is where it is your turn. And because you listened, your pitch will be tailored, thoughtful and on the money.

At the end of the day, listeners are remembered while talkers are the subject of amazement. Around the conference table or water cooler, wouldn't you rather be the one who listened?

## Leapfish—This One Is Cool

TPG is not a fan of meta search engines where you are promised results from multiple search engines but really only get the most popular results. But, Leapfish is different.

To really be good at sourcing, you need to check multiple search engines. Don't ever forget that each search engine keeps their own database of results and when you search for some-

thing, there are many parts of the web you are missing if you only use one search engine. But, let's be honest—how often do you remember to check more than one? It is just nice to get the research done, right?

With Leapfish, you enter your search string, and then select Google, MSN or Yahoo to search (as this tool is in beta, I would assume we will see more

added). The same string runs through each search engine and you get all the results. No remembering, no going to multiple sites. Just done!

Give [www.leapfish.com](http://www.leapfish.com) a try the next time you are sourcing candidates. And if you need help with source strings, contact The Pedestal Group at 330-952-1121.

## Next Gen Browsers (con't)

### Digg, Yelp & StumbleUpon

While these sites aren't new, they have certainly gotten more press recently. The idea of these sites is to have subscribers tell about themselves, and then rate stores, products or sites. Then when new subscribers come on line, they get recommendations that match other people's reviews. REVIEW: It is easy to get lost for hours in StumbleUpon but unfortunately we have yet to find anything professionally relevant. Recently, CNN teamed up with Digg to create interviews with

politicians and the questions asked are all the top-rated from the Digg site. But again, nothing that directly impacts small business owners.

### Bingle

has hit the scene as well. Searching both Google and Bing, this is a great way to check both! When you enter your string, the results come back side by side from each search engine. REVIEW: Great results and a definite cool factor!

### Google Squared

To combat Wolfram Alpha, Google

released Google Squared, [www.google.com/squared](http://www.google.com/squared) which allows you to enter keywords and build a table of relevant information. REVIEW: TPG couldn't get this to work very well. Looking for something related to Social Media gave great results but trying to find candidate sources was awful.

If you would like more info on a tool or know of one that isn't mentioned here, just drop us a note: [kathy@thepedestalgroup.com](mailto:kathy@thepedestalgroup.com)

## What Are You Really Saying?

There is a tool out there that creates amazing word pictures that are just fun to use—it is called Wordle. And while the pictures are very cool, there is a very serious application for this tool.

So often we write documents, articles, job descriptions, etc. and it is full of words that don't really convey our meaning. How do you know what point you are really getting across? Enter Wordle.

Wordle is the brain-child of IBM programmer Jonathan Feinberg who claims his son asked him to create a piece of software that would make Star Wars characters out of words. He had the code written for various other applications and IBM allowed him to use it to create Wordle.

Wordle is completely free and the images created belong to the person who creates them as long as you site where you created it (<http://www.wordle.net>) so you can use the images in any way you like. There is also the option to save an image to the Wordle gallery which is fun to browse if you have a few moments.

But the power of Wordle comes when

the writing was based on the words alone.

Job descriptions are a great thing to run through Wordle. Want to know what your company

**A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS BUT THE RIGHT WORDS MAKE THE BEST PICTURE!**



Image created using <http://www.wordle.net>

you copy the text of a document, presentation, article or email and create an image. Wordle looks at the word counts for different words leaving out connectors like "a", "the", "but" etc. Then, it creates the word picture showing exactly where the focus of

is emphasizing? Run a job description through Wordle! You may be surprised that the focus isn't on skills or culture but on compliance with

rules. The same can be done with contracts, presentations or anything else that should be focused and may not.

A picture is worth a thousand words, but the right words, make the best picture!

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## A Different Approach To Marketing Emails—Top 10 Lists

Thank goodness for David Letterman—he made the Top 10 list a household item (personal favorite—Barry White saying words that sound cool because well, he’s Barry White!). And if you think about it, when you receive a Top 10 List, you read the list, right? So how about sending your customers a top 10 list?



**What about the Top 10 Funny Things Candidates Have Said?**

Think about something that is relevant or even funny. How about the Top 10 Signs the Recession is Ending? Every recruiter I know has a list of

things candidates have said that just cracked them up. What about the Top 10 Funny Things Candidates Have Said?

If you just send the list, number the points and have a short message at the end—”thought you might enjoy this” or “we all need to laugh” or something more personal than “call me if you have a search”. If you choose to send a list with explanations, make sure the subjects are bold. For instance, if you wanted to do “Top 10 Ways To Use LinkedIn”, you would want to bold the item and then have the explanation:

1. **Build a LinkedIn Profile—**

Profiles are important on LinkedIn so that...

And don’t fall into the trap of thinking everyone knows what you know. It is a good bet that many people don’t know what you do so telling them is a benefit. And if people did know it, that hardly reflects badly on you—they get to confirm they knew something which may give them an ego boost.

Top 10 lists can help communicate new information in a fun, personal way and make a connection with a prospect or client. If you need help with ideas or writing a Top 10 list, call TPG at 330.952.1121.