

# Foundations—a Pedestal Group Publication

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FOUNDATIONS

## The Pedestal Group

### Time To Plan

#### Special points of interest:

- *LinkedIn*
- *Newsletters*
- *Backups*
- *Google Voice*
- *iPhones*
- *Tech News*
- *AND MORE!*

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I have yet to talk to someone who doesn't look forward to 2010. 2009 will definitely be one of those events referenced for years to come. It will be the benchmark for when things were tough.

But, that doesn't mean as people look forward to next year, they are planning what will happen. With hiring levels predicted to reach 2007 levels anywhere between next month to 2012, consumer spending up and down and clients not returning calls, some have thrown up their hands and said planning isn't an option. But it should always be an option!

Many planners start with doomsday scenarios worried about what could happen. But after 2009 with its cuts and changes, we recommend looking at best case scenarios as well. What if your business comes back bigger than 2007? Will you be in a position to manage growth that quickly or do you have resources lined up to meet any challenges? As we anticipate the return of the market, knowing who those partners are in the next quarter could save you some money-losing hassles later.

Did you cut staff in 2009? Make sure you have partners in line that you know and trust if business comes back quickly. That may mean administrative help, research, recruiting, marketing, etc.

Speaking of marketing, right now for many people it is all they are doing. But what happens when business comes back? Are you prepared to keep the marketing engine going while working on the orders that come in? That is only compounded if you have trimmed staff. Working today to make sure that machine will keep moving even when you aren't available is key. This is where many of the Inbound Marketing techniques come in.

If you are participating in LinkedIn Groups, effectively managing contacts with clients via newsletters or relevant articles, and updating your website routinely, those things can keep happening once you are working on new business. While the phone calls may slow down (but NEVER stop!), the engine keeps chugging to keep the pipeline full.

Another thing many people



How will YOU keep your marketing engine on track when business comes back?

have learned is what they can do without, and what they truly miss. Identify those things now and make a list by priority to bring them back. Not only will it keep you organized and on top of what you want to accomplish, but you will also be able to use that list as your goals for the year. Now, there is something to work toward as you want to bring those things back into your business.

Smart planning should include both bad scenarios and good ones. Focusing on those good potentials can help plan for a great 2010, keep things in focus, and even help your attitude for the rest of 2009.

## LinkedIn—Still An Amazing Source

The Boolean BlackBelt, Glen Cathey, is definitely one of my favorite trainers in the search world. He recently did some searching on LinkedIn and here are his results. VERY interesting as you are looking for people to con-



Over 200,000 CEOs in the United States have profiles in LinkedIn

tact!

As of August 10, 2009, there were 21,688,563 profiles for people in the US.

VP or Vice President—1,037,629 total, 854,173 in the US.

CEO or “chief executive officer” - 383,643 total, 230,706 in US.

HR or Human Resources—208,719 total and 213,905 in US.

Engineers—1,575,828 total, 829,201 in US.

Many of these people have one—five connections so they will not appear in your “in-network” searches. You have to find them through other means. Using search techniques in Google you can access any of these people. And the people are clearly there. While I still don’t pay for LinkedIn and prefer to find contact information the old fashion way, a paid account would allow you to email these individuals through the system.

LinkedIn—Still an incredible tool!

## My Favorite Newsletter Idea

**READING  
INDUSTRY NEWS  
IS A NO-BRAINER  
FOR MOST SMALL  
BUSINESS  
OWNERS—  
LEVERAGE THAT  
TIME YOU ARE  
SPENDING!**

So you want to send a newsletter out but don’t have the time or the inclination to write a newsletter full of content once a month or so. No problem!

summary of important content in your industry. Most recently the one I received was a PowerPoint presentation that had a topic at the top of the slide, and then links to the best articles addressing that topic. It was so handy because I was able to check out the information without reading stuff I didn’t care about and the company that sent it got all the credit—they brought it to my attention.

where you stand. So saving those links that are useful in a PowerPoint is an easy thing to do. Write up a short (and I mean SHORT) description or why you are including the link and presto! Instant monthly communication.

My favorite way to create a quick newsletter that gets you all the bang without all the work is to send out a

For most small business owners, reading industry news is a no-brainer. You have to be on top of things to know

Clients appreciate working with someone who is plugged in and helpful. No one has enough time in a day so having your resources combined into what is important is extremely helpful. As a marketing tool, it positions you as THE expert. Everyone wins!

## What Are You Backing Up?

If you are like most people, the answer is “nothing— but I meant to start!”. Backups are an annoyance until the day you need them and then they become a life saver. Some critical questions to answer are:

1. If the whole building was teleported to Mars, what data couldn’t you live without? That data must be backed up and taken or

stored off site.

2. For the remaining data –how many hours would it take to rebuild? Do your cost/benefit analysis and determine how much time you could afford to lose.

My recommendation is to back up your entire Documents and Settings folder because that gets you’re My Documents, Favorites, Outlook,

Desktop and other user-specific areas of data. That can be copied to an external drive and taken off site, or it can be done through a variety of software packages.

Regardless of what you decide to back up, be sure you are backing up regularly. There is nothing worse than a computer crash that can’t be recovered!

## Google Voice—Right For Your Business?

Google recently announced a new product called Google Voice. This service provides the exciting features of Voice Over IP while using your existing land and cell lines for the quality you need. Many small business experts have called it the greatest thing since sliced bread.

Google voice assigns you a phone number and then you choose where to answer that number. It could be an office line, a cell phone, a home phone number, a hotel room, etc. Wherever you are, your phone will act as if you are sitting in the office. In addition you get full voice mail features, call screening, caller blocking, free long distance anywhere in the US, and call forwarding. You also get conference calling, call recording and a web site allowing you to manage your phone.

Some of the cooler features include the ability to choose which callers get routed to which phone so if you are waiting for an important client call but are in a meeting, you can forward only that number to your cell phone. No more checking your phone during the meeting when it isn't important!

Text messaging is part of the service

as well. Any text message sent to your Google Voice number is stored in your web interface as well as received on your cell phone. Since all the various communications files are stored in one place, you have the option to mix media as well. You could answer a voice mail with a text message, for instance.

Voice mails are automatically transcribed so you can choose to get voice mail as a standard voice mail or as a text message (NOTE: Google does point out the transcription is 100% automated so it may not be perfect and several users have complained it isn't even 60% accurate.)

Calls can be recorded at the touch of a button which many users of VOIP systems find invaluable.

Have you ever gotten a voice mail that you needed to keep or send to someone else that wasn't on your phone system? With Google Voice, you can send the voice mails as an email attachment or website or save as a file on your computer.

Some of the downsides to Google Voice include having to dial an access code to use the free calling fea-

tures (but many users have programmed it as a speed dial), not all text messages appear to be sent, and some users claim their number of calls in went down (although that could be due to their communication of a new number).

Personally, I am torn over using Google Voice. First, I don't like getting a new phone number. My marketing materials have been done with my number and I hate to lose that traction. Also, while Google is great, if they go down, I have no phone as it would be my primary number. That is too scary for my business at this point. However, the free aspects are very appealing, taking my cell phone call plan down to bare bones would be nice and many users are saying they love it. For the Pedestal Group, I think we will take a "wait and see" attitude for now and if it proves to be stable, hop, once again, on the Google bandwagon.



**Free phone calls, but are they reliable?**

## Love My iPhone

The iPhone is an incredible tool and has so many features and options it is hard to keep track of them all. Here are just some of the ones we find most useful.

Need to send an email to someone with a .edu, .net or other ending on their email address? Hold the .com button down to see a list of ones you won't have to type.

Ever wish you could reboot your iPhone? Do so by holding the sleep button at the top and the circle that gets you to the menus down at the same time. The phone will shut off and has been reset.

If you receive a call you can't take at that time, press your sleep button to shut off the ringer. Pressing it twice will send the call directly to voice mail.

My favorite app right now is Barnes and Noble. Once you have the app, you can take a photo of a book through the application and it will locate it for you. You can check pricing, email it to someone, or just store it. That includes taking pictures off the web!

**TONS of features available!**

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Putting our clients where they belong.

People are still working through what Twitter can do for their business. Twitter is a great source for information and can help you stay on top of trends. If you have taken the plunge, let me know! I will compile a list and put out who is on Twitter so you can follow those people as well. To follow me, go to [www.twitter.com/K\\_Breitenbucher](http://www.twitter.com/K_Breitenbucher).

## Tech News

TPG has learned that Virtual Software, a backoffice provider for staffing companies, has partnered with MaxHire and expect to go live with a new interface in the next two months.



**Cheap printers cost more in supplies! Don't waste your money!**

While the interface is designed to help staffing companies manage timecards, payroll and other management issues, it should also include an option to export billing information from MaxHire to Quickbooks.

At this time it isn't clear if MaxHire will bill for this interface but they are receiving it from Virtual Software as part of the package.

Interesting stats from PC World on printers. According to their article posted July 29, 2009 called, "Is Your Printer Stealing From You? Here's How to Tell", the average cost per page of printers breaks down like this:

**Inkjet printers:**

Plain black text: 4 - 5 cents per page  
Simple four-color page: 12 - 14 cents per page

**Monochrome laser/LED printers:**

Plain black text: 1 - 2.5 cents per page

**Color laser/LED printers:**

Plain black text: 2 - 3 cents per page  
Simple four-color page: 12 -15 cents per page

An easy way to tell if you are spending too much is to run a report on the printer when you install a new toner cartridge and again when you need to replace it. If you aren't seeing these same prices, your printer is costing you too much money! Some of the models that tested well were:  
HP Officejet Pro 8500  
Dell 3130CN  
Konica Minolta Magicolor  
Dell 3115CN