

ISA | Innovation & Idea Management Center

Wanted: A Few Good Ideas!

By Bill Shockley, ISA Senior Partner & Consultant
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I recently attended the '5th Annual Front End of Innovation Conference' in Boston, where Ingenuity Software LLC demonstrated Ingenuity Bank, its new 3rd generation Idea Management product. During the three day conference, nearly a hundred companies stopped by its exhibit booth to talk innovation and Idea Management, and kick the tires. There was a common thread to many of the conversations:

“We have plenty of ideas; what we need are better ideas!”

I agree, and there is a solution.

When Idea Management was introduced in the late 1990's, the goal was to attract a massive number of ideas and winnow through them to find just enough to keep the innovation pipeline filled.

It was a 'needle in the haystack' approach, and time has shown that it was not the right solution, because nobody has the time or interest in looking at all those ideas. At best, only a few seconds get allotted to each, in a process known as Mass Review. Never mind that this method can easily let terrible ideas continue and stop good ideas much too soon!

What if the ideas were perhaps fewer, but better? Would that help the process?

I think so. In fact, I'm sure of it. Ingenuity Bank was created for just that purpose and attracted a great deal of notice at the conference.

Ingenuity Bank is different from conventional Idea Management in three significant ways:

- It encourages individuals to *build their ideas using our ingenuity e-tools before submitting them.*
- *The ideas continue to get built using our blog approach*, during which the submitters can continue to edit their ideas based on peer comments.
- *Ingenuity Bank accepts idea drafts by text message* from any cell phone, anywhere. Later, the ideas can be further built with our standard process.

That latter feature solves another of the key problems of Idea Management, the fact that most good ideas do not occur in the office. With text messaging, there are no more napkins or backs of envelopes to lose. And no more great ideas to forget!

Ingenuity Bank puts the responsibility for good ideas where it belongs – on the idea submitter. And then makes them better by using a virtual community. Only then do ideas get formally reviewed.

Ingenuity Bank is the most effective and efficient Idea Management software yet developed. I know that as a consultant, I should be unbiased, but in this case Ingenuity Bank is so far ahead of the other Idea Management systems, that it makes no sense to pretend otherwise.

