



LOUISIANA TECHNOLOGY PARK

Home to Louisiana Entrepreneurs

## Tech Park News

April 2009

### In This Issue

[Mark Your Calendars!](#)

[Understanding Customer Needs](#)

[Technology Industry Growing in Louisiana](#)

[AmeriVault and NTG Join Forces](#)

[New Business Got You Down?](#)

## Upcoming Events You Don't Want to Miss:

### [Red Stick International Animation Festival](#)

**April 22-25, 2009, downtown Baton Rouge**

The Red Stick International Animation Festival is an exciting community event that converges the worlds of technology, art, entertainment and exploration. The festival has its roots firmly planted in the creative side of the animation business and acts to provide animators directors, students, artists, designers, writers and educators with a forum in which they can present share their knowledge and skills and promote the art of animation. For more information click on the link above; to register for passes, click [here](#).

### [LSU Executive Education: Breakfast to Business](#)

**April 21, 2009, 7:30-8:30 a.m., Cafe' Americain, 7521 Jefferson Hwy.**

In a talk titled, *The National Stimulus Plan: An Economists Best Guess*, LSU Department of Economics Chair, Robert "Bob" Newman will answer questions, such as:

- What effect will the stimulus plan have on our national, regional, and local economies?
- What can you expect in the coming months?
- How can your business prepare and adapt?
- How can LSU Executive Education help your managerial executives succeed?

The cost for the event is \$25. You can register at [executive.lsu.edu](http://executive.lsu.edu). Onsite registration begins at 7:00 a.m.

### [Starting and Managing Your Own Business Seminar](#)

**April 25, 2009, Bon Carre' Executive Suites, 7173 Florida Blvd.**

This all day seminar will cover topics on business plans, business financing, legal and tax issues, business insurance, marketing, sales and advertising. Past seminar participants have said that the information presented in this seminar was invaluable in preparing them to open and effectively run a business. During the seminar there is also ample time for you to ask the faculty and the attending SCORE business counselors specific questions you may have about running a small business. To register, please call the SCORE Baton Rouge office at 225.215.0080. There is an \$85.00 advance registration fee which includes all course materials and lunch (a second person from the same organization can register for \$60.00). To register, click [here](#).



## Understanding Customer Needs - Important in Good Times, Critical in Bad: Value Chains

By: H.R. Penton, President, [Innovation Insights, LLC](#)



Microsoft, Federal Express, CNN, and in our own backyard here in Baton Rouge, Amedisys. Four companies in very different fields, but that have four things in common: (1) Today, they are each leaders in their respective business areas with multi-billion dollar revenues; (2) they were all started in an economic recession; (3) they were all founded by visionary leaders that (4) understood, developed and

delivered a product or service meeting unarticulated customer needs. In this article, and in several that will follow in subsequent newsletters, we will discuss

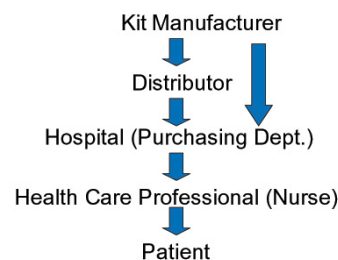
methodologies that can help any company or organization in any business field understand and address customer needs, particularly unarticulated and unmet customer needs. For indeed, it is meeting unarticulated customer needs that truly differentiates a company from the competition. And in a recessionary period, identifying and meeting unarticulated customer needs may determine how well a company weathers the economic storm.



The first step in understanding customer needs is to have a thorough understanding of your Value Chain. Our definition of a Value Chain is "each company/entity/person that is involved in a buying/selling/using or influencing transaction between your company and the end-user." As an example, consider a company in the healthcare business that supplies Dressing Change Kits to hospitals. A Dressing Change Kit is used by nurses to carry out dressing changes on patients' IVs, surgical drains and incisions. They contain all the components necessary for a nurse to change a dressing, and are single use, sterile and disposable. The Value Chain for this company would look like the following: The kit manufacturer would sell the product directly to hospitals or to medical supply distributors which would then sell the kit to hospitals. A nurse then uses the kit on the ultimate end user, the patient.

Why is it important to know your complete Value Chain? Because it will help you identify the Most Important Customer (your MIC) in the Value Chain. Many companies focus their marketing attention on their immediate, or direct, customer which in this case would be the health care product distributors and hospitals. In many cases, however, your MIC may not be your direct customer. One way to identify the MIC in your Value Chain is to consider which company, entity or person in the Value Chain is the most likely to recognize the value your product or service provides. In this case, the MIC turns out to be the health care professional, the nurse. So while this company's competitors are all getting beat-up on price by hospital purchasing agents, the company that has identified the nurse as the MIC is spending time understanding the unmet needs of the nurse to define how the product or service can be improved and gain a competitive advantage over other "kit" providers.

### Dressing Change Kit Value Chain

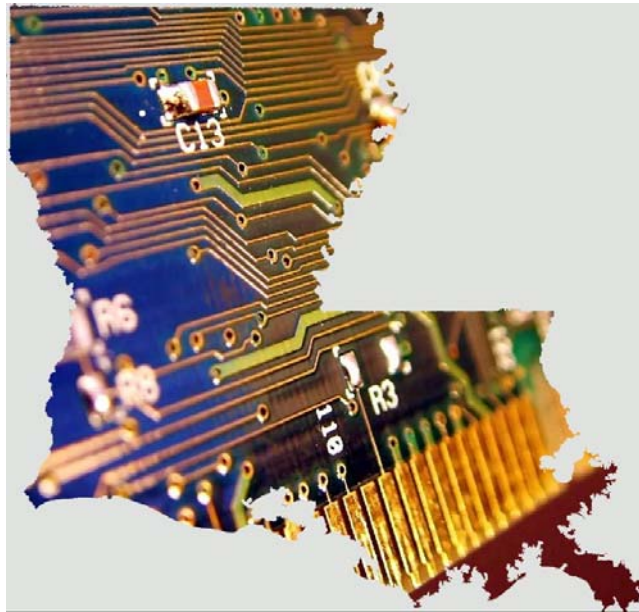


Keep in mind that there are Value Chains where the MIC is the direct customer. This will depend on the product or service offered, and your industry and business field. But whether your MIC is your direct customer or further down the Value Chain, there are several techniques to uncover their unarticulated and latent needs. We will explore some of these in next month's newsletter.

## Louisiana Tech Industry Among 10 Fastest Growing States

A new study has found Louisiana now ranks among the 10 fastest-growing states for high-tech employment. *Tech America's* 12th annual *Cyberstates* report shows Louisiana gained 4,349 high-tech jobs between 2002 and 2007, up 11.3%. The state ranks 10th in the nation for numeric gains and seventh for percent change. That's at a time when the country as a whole lost 71,863 high-tech jobs, down 1.2%. Most of the growth was in engineering and research and development laboratories.

Even so, Louisiana still ranks 47th when it comes to per capita high-tech workers. As of 2007, the most recent year for which data is available, Louisiana had 42,873 high-tech workers. Also, between 2006 and 2007, Louisiana was just one of six states to lose high-tech establishments -- 18 of them to be exact -- a loss of 0.5%. In 2007, the state had 3,492 high-tech establishments. By comparison, the country as a whole gained 10,136 high-tech businesses, up 2.9%. One problem may be wages. High-tech workers here are paid an average of \$58,409 a year, and can earn higher salaries in 40 other states. The state's average high-tech wages climbed \$3,738 annually, or about 6.8%, between 2002 and 2007. Nationally, high-tech wages during that same period were up \$7,076, or 9.3%. One high note: Louisiana's high-tech workers earn \$20,000 than others in private industry in the state. Overall, Louisiana's annual high-tech payroll was \$2.5 billion in 2007, compared to Florida -- the highest-ranking Gulf Coast state -- which boasted nearly \$19 billion.



## AmeriVault and NTG Announce New "Venyu" for Data Protection

Data backup and recovery leaders join to deliver customizable, end-to-end solutions for data protection, recovery and availability.

LTP Strategic Partner, Network Technology Group ([NTG](#)), a hosting services and data protection veteran, and AmeriVault, a leading online backup provider announced the launch of "Venyu"-a newly combined company created to deliver commercial-grade, customizable solutions for data protection, availability and recovery. NTG has been supplying LTP and its incubator members with Tier IV data center services and support since the Tech Park's inception in 2001. Bolstered by the financial strength and stability of parent company PHNS, Venyu gives small-to-medium sized businesses more reliable data protection and recovery alternatives and eliminates the need for courier services, back-up tape and on-premise hardware.

**VENYU**

**NetworkTechnology**  
GROUP

As data volumes and privacy concerns increase, IT resources are being stretched thinner. Companies need progressive ways to run critical applications and ensure they can recover from any outage in a timely manner. They need secure, reliable and scalable solutions that require minimal maintenance so they can focus on their core business.

"The data backup market is crowded with solutions that do little to help companies manage their data resources in a fast, reliable and efficient manner across the enterprise," said Scott Thompson, president and CEO of Venyu. "By providing an automated, comprehensive solution, Venyu gives companies consistency, peace of mind and assurance that their data will be available how they want it, where they want it, when they want it."

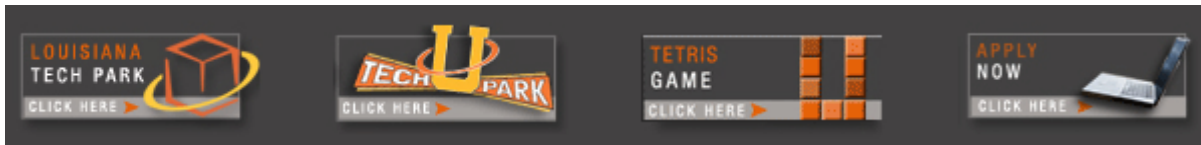
## Feeling Overwhelmed Trying to Start Your Tech Business?

Starting a new business, especially in the technology sector can be a risky, frustrating and time-consuming venture. At Louisiana Technology Park, we can give you the guidance you need to start your own business. Whether it's a question about marketing, HR, or finance, our staff of experienced professionals can help. We also try to decrease your stress level by worrying about things like utilities, tech support, office furniture and answering phones so you can focus on growing your company to the next level. Visit [www.latechpark.com](http://www.latechpark.com) or contact [Jesse Hoggard](mailto:Jesse.Hoggard) for information on applying to the incubator.



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