

## Onward and Upward



Wayne Gretzky said you had to skate to where the puck will be, not where it is. We are not typically dealing with a puck, but when we think about new technology and product development, it is so easy to get trapped in the mental mindset of what we make and efforts to "improve" it. Whoever we are selling to is really not interested in our welfare. What is wanted is a FUNCTION. And if that function can be obtained without buying or using a separate device, that's what will happen over time.

At the recent annual American Institute of Chemical Engineers meeting, I was interviewed as one of AIChE's Board of Directors. One "reporter", with a camera and attached recorder and light did everything. No separate lighting, no "camera man", he was all of it. Just one person, not 3, and no auxiliary equipment to set up and take down. No special editor afterward.

The Wall Street Journal (August 27) devoted an entire special section to "The Best Way to Do Almost Anything on Your Mobile Device". When was the last time you used a paper map? How'd you like to be in the paper map business? The magazine business? (Newsweek has just discontinued its normal magazine in favor of only a web based version). The special coated paper business for magazines?

Take a look at this web site and see how Goodyear has integrated a self inflating mechanism into a new tire:  
<http://www.gizmag.com/goodyear-air-maintenance-technology-tires/24229/>

Also recall the Michelin "Tweel" which has NO tire.

Take a look at:

<http://www.targus.com/us/productdetail.aspx?sku=AMP05US>

Two devices in one with much less metal used (sorry about that you stainless steel suppliers, you've been "trimmed")

These are ALL the same inventive principle--UPWARD SYSTEM INTEGRATION. You must be asking all the time:

1. How could the function my product or service provides be integrated into my customers' products and services. If so, what is the impact on my business? Is there a way I could help them do this? (It's going to happen with or without you!)
2. How could you eliminate the need to buy components or services you presently buy by incorporating their function within your product or service?

Priceline has just made an interesting acquisition by purchasing Kayak, the web site that searches all the other travel web site. They purchased the company which had integrated their service! This is an excellent business example of someone recognizing this trend and dealing with it.

You'll see hundreds of examples of this going on all around you. Just look. Then think about what YOU are going to do about this inevitable trend.

I hope some of you have had the chance to purchase and read my book on basic TRIZ principles:

<http://www.springer.com/chemistry/book/978-1-4614-3706-2>