

JAN NORMAN ON SMALL BUSINESS



News and practical tips for Orange County small business owners

5 local 'gee-whiz' companies to watch

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Orange County has some young companies developing truly cool technologies and products to solve every day problems.

That's what struck me walking around the innovation showcase at VC in the OC, Orange County's primary event for investors and entrepreneurs May 18, put on by Orange County Venture Group and OCTANE, which recently merged. Such creativity and movement despite a lackluster economy are encouraging signs for O.C.'s future.



Transaction Wireless gift card via cell phone

Here are just five of the several dozen entrepreneurs and young companies that were showing off their gee-whiz technologies to about 500 people at the event. All of the showcasing companies were on hand seeking investors to develop their technologies and grow their companies. Here are five worth watching.

1. **Transaction Wireless** in San Diego has technology to turn any cell phone into a point-of-sale credit card terminal. An entrepreneur could be anywhere from the swap meet to the beach and accept credit card purchases. But Transaction Wireless' potentially bigger product delivers gift cards to any mobile phone, which the recipient can redeem just like regular gift cards without the plastic. [Watch a flash demo here.](#)

2. If you have a cell phone, you have spots where you can't get a connection. **Cellynx Group Inc.** in Mission Viejo has created 5Barz Road Warrior that will connect any mobile phone within 2 feet of the device. By the third quarter, Cellynx will market 5Barz Home that will work throughout the house, office or hotel. At its showcase display, Cellynx was connecting as many as 21 different devices at one time.

3. This one is literally cool. **ThermaQuatic** in Laguna Niguel makes system that can cool to 45 degrees or heat to 125 degrees. President Ted Patience mentioned first the

treatment for multiple sclerosis patients because his mom had MS. But any number of ailments can be treated with heat or cold. Think sports injuries and post-surgery therapy.

The company is still in the prototype stage (the website is still under construction) but plans big pads and specific body-shaped wraps.

4. **CryoMedix** in San Diego is another literally cool company. It has patented technology to deliver cryoablation – extreme cold – precisely to a tumor to treat breast cancer or to the renal artery to treat hypertension. And those are just two of the potential markets. Its website is also under construction and is seeking federal approval for its devices.

5. As the U.S. workforce climbs toward 23% of the workers being independent contractors, freelancers and sole practitioners, **Mavenlink** in Irvine has developed a cloud platform to manage everything from marketing to invoicing for these folks. Lead generation is a big component.

Mavenlink launched its first product at the end of 2009 and has 4,200 customers. These and all the other companies exhibiting at the innovation showcase are looking for investors and strategic alliances.