

Media Release
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Capturing ideas is the path to sustainability

In this, the Year of the Idea, the Australian Institute for Commercialisation (AIC) is encouraging businesses to spend time harvesting and assessing ideas to ensure sustainability.

Dr Rowan Gilmore, Chief Executive Officer of the AIC said encouraging ideas from within an organisation is an excellent way for businesses to ensure stability.

“Many organisations are yet to realise that ideas can come from any part of the organisation, not just the boardroom. Ideas from the whole team can help solve all-manner of operational or market problems,” Dr Gilmore said.

“It’s imperative for organisations to harvest internal ideas, as they can lead to the development of new systems and processes, which then impact on the overall profitability and success of a business,” he said.

A number of Australian businesses who have already embraced the innovation revolution have developed their own methods to gather, evaluate and implement ideas from the wider team.

For instance Redarc Electronics of South Australia, a privately owned company with over 25 years experience in research, design, development and manufacture of a range of electronic voltage converters and associated products, have created an office that stimulates ideas.

Anthony Kittel, CEO of Redarc believes that the key to encouraging great ideas from the team is creating a great environment.

“We have spent a year constructing a new facility that brings the outside in. It’s filled with natural light, glass and quiet areas. We believe that it’s a great place to inspire people and capture ideas,” Mr Kittel said.

“Our team is already suggesting ideas that include ways to improve a product, new features, blue sky ideas, new opportunities right through to the obligatory coffee machine,” he said.

“We evaluate each idea by putting it into a category then we assign a project manager to the idea who can take it to the next level.”

“We have twelve staff, of 48, working in innovation. We think this is the right balance to ensure we maximise the outcomes of our ideas.”

Brisbane based GroundProbe also believe in idea harnessing to encourage growth within their organisation.

Lorraine Elsemore, GroundProbe’s Global Marketing Manager, said they are about to launch a new innovation framework that has an in-built reward system.

“We are in the process of releasing an innovation framework that provides rewards, to recognise the benefits individuals or groups provide to the organisation,” Ms Elsemore said.

“The ideas we receive currently are focussed on breakthrough and product innovation, however there are some ideas about process innovation, which allow the organisation to locate greater performance and output,” she said.

“To date, we have probably implemented 50% of the ideas, but we are creating a tracking system to enable calculating how many of these ideas are actually utilised.”

“We also have a Manager of Global innovation who is part of our senior management team and is responsible for the development and implementation of a global innovations program.”

Dr Gilmore said businesses that embrace in-house ideas are not only able to build a more competitive edge through idea adoption by are more able to create a team culture.

“The current marketplace requires a greater competitive edge. This edge can be achieved through importing new technologies, R&D and simply harvesting ideas that have been generated from the team,” Dr Gilmore said.

“Putting forward ideas and having them actioned in some way is highly rewarding and can really help to build a strong team environment, which can only lead to greater ideas!” he said.

Ends.

About the AIC

The Australian Institute for Commercialisation (AIC) is a leading service organisation helping innovators achieve commercial success. Around Australia, the AIC helps business, research organisations and governments convert their ideas into successful outcomes.

Using our networks and experience, we deliver services that facilitate collaboration, enhance innovation and accelerate the commercialisation of know-how and technology that our clients have created.

The AIC seeks to enhance Australia’s future economic prosperity, environment and lifestyle by improving our national ability to take innovative ideas to market.

About Year of the Idea

On Australia Day this year, the AIC called on Australians to adopt 2007 as the Year of the Idea to help the nation grow and remain globally competitive. This call has been heard by governments and industry who are supporting the initiative. For more information www.yearoftheidea.com