

# 44 Free Business Ideas

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# hello.

Good ideas are about the people who bring them to life.

Every day we interview and celebrate people with ideas. We always ask them about one business idea that they're willing to give away.

Here are some good ones.

**Mario**  
**IdeaMensch Founder**

A Psychiatry Clinic on Facebook. A place where people can receive professional care in an anonymous environment.

**Almar Holtz**  
**Founder, 2theloo**

I'm not sure if this exists but I'd love to have an app that tells me who's who in a room and recommends the people I should go and talk to based on my business idea. Let's face it, networking for business at conferences and trade shows is inefficient. You have to speak to 20 people before you find the 1 that you should really be speaking to. If we could 'cut some fat' out of networking, doing new business would be more productive.

**Ale Lariu**  
**CEO, Shout**

Develop a platform for mobile advertising. For example, when someone calls underneath their caller ID, place an ad (only cool ads of course!). Users would be incentivized by getting a monthly check or discount off their phone bill. I think mobile marketing is in the imminent future.

**Matt McKinney**  
**Full Time Student and Entrepreneur**

It's called "Always a Fan." The idea is a community of sporting enthusiasts that can meet up with fellow fans of certain teams in foreign countries. For instance, say you are a fan of the Chicago Bulls and you are in Madrid for a weekend and want to catch their game. You're sure there must be Bulls fans in this city but you don't know where they are watching the game.

Always a Fan would allow you to "check in" to a city and see where other Bulls fans in the city are watching the game (bar? house?) and you can reach out to them or just join them at a bar.

This would work tremendously for the international soccer crowd.

**Bassam Tarazi**  
**Co-Founder, Colipera**

The publisher-commenter format of blogging needs an evolution. Some of the greatest content created by man is actually conversations between two or more people.

Business idea: create a blogging platform that easily publishes email/IM/video conversations between people in a structured format.

Anyone could invite anyone else to a public discussion/debate. Call it Diablogs.

**Yaron Samid**

**CEO and Founder, BillGuard**

In my book I talk about an online version of Sportscenter. I still think someone should do this and it would crush!

**Gary Vaynerchuk**  
**Bestselling Author**

I still don't think anybody has gotten social search/discovery right. Given all the content that gets generated every day on sites like Twitter, it ought to be easier for me to teach a search service what content I'm interested in. Twitter search comes close but I think there is some low-hanging fruit for improving on it.

**Mike Dirolf**  
**Founder, Fiesta.cc**

Open a store where you could come in and complete projects with the equipment at that store and pay by the hour. You could come in and use the drill press, the table saw or maybe work on your car. Payment would be either by the hour for either the entire workshop or each individual tool. The one thing that would probably hurt this model is liability insurance. I wouldn't really want to be the owner of a business where some guy could come in and slice his hand off on the table saw.

**Charles Marr**

**Daytime Lawyer and Weekend Entrepreneur**

Since most of my professional life consists of a delicate balance between computers and a healthy lifestyle, I would love for someone to create customized at-home desks with built-in cycling machines and potentially an easily accessible Bowflex style weight system. Make it look sexy and potentially create an entire brand of athletic corporate-style clothing as well for CEOs/ corporate people that care about professionalism and comfort.

**Ardon Lukasiwicz**  
**Co-Founder, Ticketometer**

I want to see an intuitive application that helps people build simple applications. Most people with great ideas don't have development skills, so an easy-to-use application that could create workflows and offer pre-defined events could allow people to build a proof-of-concept with their friends when an idea pops into their heads. It wouldn't be an easy task, but it could help a lot of ideas get traction and get more young people interested in development.

**Jim Schraepfer**  
**Co-Founder, TripHuddle**

Movie theaters should have in-house babysitting and dining so you can have a date with your wife more regularly and not spend a fortune.

**Jeff Pedowitz**  
**Founder, The Pedowitz Group**

I'd like to see a banking product that rations you money on a daily basis based on your pre-determined budget. Hence, when your paychecks are deposited, they'd be held in a quasi-escrow account that immediately sets aside money for fixed monthly expenses and releases funds for discretionary spending on a daily basis. This would solve many consumer debt problems.

**Andres Moran**  
**Co-Founder, Earndit.com**

I really need a bank to create an accounting solution that reflects the real-time cash flow of an organization. It must be built for startups and incorporate some HR support issues. This would not only make running the business easier, but it would alleviate a huge and extremely costly pain point for almost every startup. Ultimately we'd see a volume increase in more intelligent and successful business launched.

**Marc Nager**  
**CEO, Startup Weekend**

Organizing my photos, backing them up and sharing them is such a pain. One idea I'd love for someone to build is a camera app that automatically uploads my pictures to dropbox, lets me name them with voice recognition and categorize them by date, time and location.

**Eli Portnoy**  
**Founder and CEO, ThinkNear**

Foursquare for pick-up basketball players. As an avid hoops player, I try and play pick-up hoops whenever I can. Finding the right court at the right time in the right city is a challenge.

**Lawrence Coburn**  
**Founder and CEO, DoubleDutch**

I've always felt that web services from the west (e.g., Google Apps, Get Satisfaction, Mailchimp, etc.) should price differently for Asia and Africa than they do to the rest of the world. Something like 10 USD/month which would appear as standard pricing. Wouldn't it be better to have pricing that is geo-aware?

**Dayson Pais**  
**Founder and Janitor, Textme**

If I weren't focused on JOOR, then I'd be building a marketplace solely focused on pre-owned luxury goods.

**Mona Bijoor**  
**Founder and CEO, JOOR**

I'd really like to see the microfinance industry take off. Companies like Kiva have done an incredible job at getting small amounts of money to small entrepreneurs. It would be great if there was some type of support system that helped these entrepreneurs execute their plan after they receive financing.

**Thom Holland**  
**Co-Founder and CEO, Beckon**

Set up an effective social media platform where friends share each other's wishes and offer each other favors. People like to help each other by nature and only need some stimulation. We believe that social media creates a huge opportunity to trade with other means than money.

**Sem Schuurkes and  
Pieter van Tilburg**  
**Co-Founders, CityHub Hotels**

After spending countless hours researching preschools, I think a website needs to be created to rank and rate preschools. I also think there needs to be more bilingual or immersion language preschools.

**Kacy Andrews**  
**Chief Executive Officer, Bigfoot Entertainment**

It's a social media idea for a restaurant. It's pretty simple, you have iPads at every table and you create short video clips of every dish and how it was prepared (Food Network style). That way people can watch little clips of the preparation as they decide what to order. And they can share via Facebook and Twitter with their friends at home. I blogged about this idea a year ago, but I'm not sure if anyone has picked it up yet.

**Al Pittampalli**  
**Architect of the Modern Meeting Standard**

Accounting. Yes, really, I'm talking about one of the most boring elements of running a business — keeping track of and recording finances. The systems we use for doing this are so archaic. I started using QuickBooks in 1996 when I started my first company. Today, it looks and works almost the same. I would love to see someone do a radically different take on this space. The companies that dominate this space haven't really innovated much. Things have changed a lot but we still do accounting the same way. I'd love to chat with anyone who wants to take on this challenge--and it's a big challenge because going up against the incumbents in this space is not easy.

**Manu Kumar**  
**Founder and Chief Firestarter, K9 Ventures**

A marketplace for short-term  
employee-swaps between non-  
competitive companies.

**Geoff Lewis**  
**Co-Founder and CEO, Topquest**

On-site recycling technology. Picture this: McDonald's needs a lot of help with its brand due to their ungodly environmental record. Invent a technology that would allow McDonald's cups to be recycled on-site through a washing chamber that is designed to wash plastic cups without emitting any BPOs or other harmful chemicals. McDonald's and other fast food chains could pay to use this technology, would save money on supplies and improve their environmental record by becoming a leader in an efficient reusing/recycling process.

**Alexander Levine**  
**Founder, OldVersion.com**

Augmented reality of Wikipedia.  
How cool would that be if I could  
open my mobile phone anywhere,  
and it would tell me some history  
about where I am, the building  
surrounding me or the historical  
consequences that made this  
place where I stand right now.  
Please tell me someone is working  
on that.

**Patrick Riley**  
**Founder and CEO, Ark.com**

I'll pay for this right now: FaceTime for connecting with customers. I want online business to have the same interaction as brick-and-mortar stores. When a visitor comes in, he/she can see and talk to a human where they can get all questions answered. And the business will increase its sales.

**Stephen Ou**  
**Up and Coming Entrepreneur**

I love dogs. Finding a good dog sitter requires lots of time. (We interviewed three before finding the right person.) We've also used "dog hotels," but they get very expensive when you board more than one. A national chain of full-service (training, vet care, transportation, exercise, nutrition) dog hotels would be able to offer reliable, high quality care at better prices.

Woof.

**Michael Gelb**  
**Creativity and Innovation Author**

Someone needs to develop the “Starbucks” of business startups. When you start a business there isn’t a single player in the market that you think of as the “go-to” or “must-see” company.

Someone needs to create a place to go to when you want to start a business. The place would have everything you need to do: step by step instructions, licenses, bank accounts, everything.

I would go there, and I now have a pretty good idea of what I’m doing when starting a new venture. However, the time I’d save by going to one place would be well worth the cost involved.

**David Gass**  
**Expert Website Buyer and Seller**

Offer websites a very powerful poll solution to paste in their sites. The trick is the results page could be monetized with ads. Fully customizable, API driven, etc., etc. The publisher decides how “greedy” he wants to be in terms of numbers of ads being displayed. You can also provide websites looking to further monetize their site, with the actual polls themselves. The idea goes on and on, but that’s the basic of it.

**Gonzo Arzuaga**  
**Founder, Startups.com**

Start a digital magazine about the community you live in. Tell the stories of the people and the area. Grow the readership and then go to local businesses and get them on board as advertisers. Give the magazine away for free.

**Srinivas Rao**  
**Host and Co-Founder, BlogcastFM**

Set up an Outward Bounds company in Kosovo or Macedonia. Both are stunning countries with incredible scenery, and people are incredibly hospitable. Great for hiking, climbing, biking and undiscovered – huge local market to tap into as well.

**Nicholas Wood**  
**Founder, Political Tours**

I would love for someone to create a personalized travel service that took into account the type of experiences that an individual could grow from. For example, let's say someone was really wealthy, yet feeling unfulfilled by his or her material possessions. The travel consultant would outline travel options that would help that person find a fulfilling experience such as funding and building a school in India. Or if a person just wanted to explore their ancestral culture, the consultant could hand-select specific cities to visit that best encapsulate the essence of their people. There are a lot of adventure-based travel companies, but I'd love to see one centered around personal growth, and making travel more accessible to the masses.

**Emily Scherberth**  
**Founder, Symphony PR**

It would be cool to see a crowdsourcing platform where you would do little tasks in exchange for virtual currency on the mobile phone. You could create a huge labor platform for a very cheap amount.

**Chris McCann**  
**Co-Founder, StartupDigest**

I'm realizing that people are starting to see a lot of value in curation online and I think people would appreciate curation when applied to unusual categories. While the number of options we have available to us online are fantastic, when faced with so many options, people often become paralyzed by the number of choices and this paralysis leads people not to buy. This is described well in one of my favorite books, *The Paradox of Choice*. I believe there would be a good business idea to curate specific things such as music, movies, dating, local restaurants, what to do in town, etc. Google seems to be working on this problem as they recently purchased Sparkbuy, which was seeking to do this for the laptop market.

**Naysawn Naderi**  
**Founder, Art Sumo**

I'd like to see someone create an offering that makes it easier for people to manage their own savings through investment. Investing and managing assets doesn't have to be as complicated for anyone to do as it is now. It'd be nice to have a service that makes it easy for anyone to invest in ideas and companies they really believe in.

**Justin Graves**  
**Founder and CEO, Infegy**

Furniture tourism. People go to Bali to find furniture makers in little villages, buy the furniture directly from the maker for incredibly cheap and have it shipped back to their home. Right now everyone is doing it ad-hoc, but a company could manage the whole process, advertising to new homeowners that they can take a week's vacation in Bali to furnish their new home and come out saving money. Once it runs well in Bali, it can be repeated in Africa, South America, Southeast Asia, etc.

**Derek Sivers**  
**Founder, CD Baby**

You know, I'd have to say it's to create income streams outside of your core business. I remember, very vaguely, a conversation I had with a friend 4 years ago. He said, "why can't you take your business online?" At the time, I was stubborn and said proudly, "we're a client service business. You can't take what we do and put it online." Even as stubborn as I am, I let that idea germinate and I thought about it really carefully, but from a "how do we create income streams outside of billable hours?" perspective. Think about that. My friend Troy Claus says you should have 7 income streams. Not necessarily 7 businesses, but 7 different ways you make money.

**Gini Dietrich**  
**Founder and CEO, Spin Sucks Pro**

This is not necessarily a new idea, but there is an opportunity for a savvy entrepreneur (with no aversion to bureaucracy) to connect with local, state and federal authorities to set up SMS disaster alerts. I live in a coastal area of Los Angeles that is prone to yearly disaster and the city has no effective way to communicate with its residents. If a band can send out a mass text when they have a local concert, it's certainly easy enough for a city to alert its residents if there natural disaster. Someone take that and run with it!

**Scott Dudelson**  
**Co-Founder and COO, Swagbucks.com**

Our first web idea ever: MindSwap. A community where people can share ideas they think are decent but that they know they'll never use. Kind of like what we're doing right here. For instance, we come up with funny scenes for movies all the time. All gone to waste.

Why not have a place where ideas can be offered democratically to a community, who then builds upon them. Questions can be asked of the community – by individuals or by brands — and the community can freely offer answers. Credit is the currency. It's an interesting idea that's existed in a few different guises, though it's yet to be well executed. We'll probably never do it, but we'll contribute if someone else does.

**Brian Schechter and  
Aaron Schildkrout**  
**Co-Founders, HowAboutWe**

A volume control for your television that adjusts the volume based on decibel levels so that it will automatically keep the volume within a desired range. I'm pretty big on action movies, I just hate always adjusting the volume between the explosions and the whispering scenes.

**Betsy Huigens**  
**Founder, Bluelight iPhone App**

I love businesses that create recurring revenue streams. Everyone is focused on technology, but there are so many low-technology businesses that are overlooked. I think coin laundries are a great example. The Internet can't wash clothes.

**Jeff Unger**  
**Founder, eMinutes**

Ebay for local communities and a full fledged marketing firm for startups.

**Jessica Mah**  
**Founder, inDinero.com**

A food stand or food truck that only sells toast. Different varieties of toast: Toast with jelly, cinnamon toast, toast with almond butter, etc.

**Jameson Morris**  
**Founder of Organic Soul and  
Conscious Box**

In connected global world there is need for simple and elegant solution for time zone management. It is nightmare to deal with different time zone names, Daylight savings and geographic exceptions. Create one simple and nice solution.

**Ernests**  
**Co-Founder of Reach.ly**

# one more thing

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