

Springwise newsletter | 16 December 2009

Spotted for you this week: a commercial kitchen for rent by the hour, a gadget for tracking employee health, small-scale recycling programs, and more. Our next edition is due on 21 December 2009. In the meantime, check out our daily postings on www.springwise.com, send us your [tips](#), and please don't forget to [tell your friends](#) and colleagues about us. Much appreciated!



New marketing tool: glow-in-the-dark bacteria

[Last time we featured CURB](#) (the natural media agency) they were promoting the London Aquarium by stenciling its logo on city surfaces using seawater. Now, just in time for Christmas, CURB has launched its latest low-impact innovation. [GlowFungi](#), also known as DiscoFungi, is a marketing tool that uses glow-in-the-dark bacteria. The harmless bacteria's glow is a natural reaction, requiring no chemicals, and can last up to a week. To create a glowing piece of work, CURB adds bioluminescent bacteria to petri-dishes, a bed of mushrooms, or a writeable gel that can be applied directly to any surface, indoors or out.

CURB has sent petri-dish holiday greetings to twenty clients and agencies across the UK. Which brand will be the first to create a glowing nocturnal campaign using DiscoFungi? We'll keep you updated ;-). (Related: [Media agency focuses on low-impact advertising](#) — [More low-impact branding from Curb: snow tagging](#) — [Latest eco-friendly branding tool: sea tagging](#).)

Website: www.curbmedia.com/what-we-do-glowfungi.asp

Contact: showmethefungi@curbmedia.com



Commercial kitchen for rent by the hour

With consumers' purse strings tightened by the recession, we've seen the emergence of a variety of alternatives to the full-service restaurant. [Cooking classes](#), [semi-cooking options](#), [home-cooked meals for hire](#) and [a roaming "anti-restaurant"](#) are among the offerings we've spotted, and now—enabling all such initiatives and more—comes the commercial kitchen for hire.

[Philly Kitchen Share](#) is a shared-use commercial kitchen available for hourly rental by caterers, personal chefs, bakers and other food professionals in the Philadelphia area. Created by the founders of [PhillyCarShare](#), the 800-square-foot cooking space actually features two adjoining kitchens, for rent separately or together: one focused on traditional cooking or catering and the other on baking. Together, they're equipped with stainless steel work tables, convection and standard ovens, commercial ranges and a variety of other tools. Rental prices are USD 39 per hour for one kitchen during off-peak hours, or USD 44 per hour during peak times. Since its launch last winter, business at Philly Kitchen Share has been steady, [Philly.com reported](#), with renters including cooking classes, a vegan baker, a mobile cupcake vendor and a personal chef and caterer.

Indeed, it's not hard to imagine that the availability of a shared kitchen could indirectly launch a multitude of small-scale food business startups, offering as it does a commercial facility on an as-needed basis with no overhead. Time to foster some new cooking innovation among the would-be chefs and food [minipreneurs](#) in your neck of the global kitchen...? (Related: [Open restaurant night showcases aspiring chefs.](#))

Website: www.phillykitchenshare.com

Contact: phillykitchenshare@gmail.com

Spotted by: Jim Stewart



Marketplace fosters small-scale recycling programs

Recycling may be the right thing to do for the planet, but for those without free curbside pickup service, it doesn't always happen. [Ecyler](#) is a new site that aims to make it easier to recycle by connecting those in need of service with those who are willing to do the recycling.

Now in beta, Illinois-based Ecyler allows consumers with recyclables to dispose of to find recycling entrepreneurs in their community. Anyone with an internet connection can register on the site as a collector to create their own recycling program. Ecyler provides a customizable URL, downloadable personalized business cards and posters for publicity. Consumers with newspapers, cans and bottles to get rid of simply choose a collector on [Ecyler.com](#), arrange a pickup and leave their sorted recyclables outside. The collector then picks up the recyclables, brings them to a recycling facility and collects the resulting cash. Ecyler encourages people to discard their recyclables for free, but discarders can request up to 40 percent of the proceeds from the collector. Discarders can also track their carbon credits on the site by listing how many recyclables they've given away. A rating tool on Ecyler, meanwhile, allows collectors and discarders to rate each other. Currently, Ecyler is free for both discarders and collectors, but after its beta it may begin charging a small fee per match in competitive recycling markets.

By enabling more recycling while providing extra income opportunities for enterprising minipreneurs, Ecyler has the potential to create a win-win for all involved—including the planet. Currently, however, it serves only the US. One to partner with or emulate in other parts of the world...? (Related: [Incentive-based recycling](#) — [Reverse vending](#).)

Website: www.ecycler.com

Contact: www.ecycler.com/contact.php

Spotted by: Cecilia Biemann



Gap Canada protects shoppers against future price drops

Murphy's Law for shoppers states that as soon as one purchases a particular item, it inevitably goes on sale. Hoping to give customers some insurance against such eventualities, Gap Canada has launched a program that automatically refunds the difference when that happens.

To take part in Gap's free [Sprize](#) program, which is now available in 10 Gap stores in and around Vancouver, B.C., customers simply sign up with their name, email address and phone number. Then, any time they make a purchase at a participating Gap store, they're protected against sales that take place in the near future. Specifically, if the prices on any items purchased have dropped within 45 days of the transaction, Gap will automatically credit the difference to the customer's Sprize account. The resulting SprizeMoney can then be used toward future purchases in participating stores.

Of course, beyond offering consumers peace of mind, increased transparency and a compelling reason to register with the company, the Sprize program also surely gives Gap new insight into its best customers and their shopping habits—and a way to keep them coming back. How long before this one becomes standard practice? (Related: [Helping travellers reclaim taxes on flights not taken.](#))

Website: www.mysprize.com

Contact: custserv@mysprize.com

Spotted by: Diego Bravo



Platform lets novices create & sell computer games

Enterprising consumers can already sell [the photos they take](#), [the vegetables they grow](#) and [the meals they cook](#) as a way to earn a little extra cash. So why not the computer games they create for fun? UK-based [YoYo Games](#) lets them do just that, even if they don't already have programming experience.

Users of YoYo's site begin by downloading its Game Maker software for free. That lets them create professional-looking games without having to write a single line of code. Rather, using simple drag-and-drop actions, they can create games with backgrounds, sprites, animated graphics, music and sound effects; 3D capabilities are even available. For USD 25, those who get really interested can upgrade to the software's Pro Edition—which includes additional features and is free of logos and pop-up messages—but it's not required. Once they have a game they're satisfied with, users can post it on the YoYo Games site for sharing with others—there are currently more than 25,000 such games available for the playing. They can also burn their game onto a CD for sale to others. In fact, [rumours suggest](#) YoYo may also be working on a way to allow sales for iPhone and other mobile platforms.

Whether it's [renting out unused space](#) or [selling their creative output](#), [sellsumers](#) today are finding—and demanding—more and more ways to capitalize on their assets. Earning is the new spending, one might say, thanks in large part to the global recession. How is *your* brand helping its customers turn a profit...?

Website: www.yoyogames.com

Contact: www.yoyogames.com/feedback

Spotted by: Sayu Sinha

ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Aardvarck	Dear Tom	Cult Copy
In Flagranti	Erector Set	Electric Fling
Le Le	Disco Monster (Marco Solo Remix)	Disco Monster; the Remixes
Legowelt	Day Sailer	The Liechtenstein Account
Floating Points	Truly	Vacuum EP
DJ T.	Shine on (Motor City Drum Ensemble	Shine on
Melocoton	Porneta	Porneta
Tom Trago	Over & Edit	-
Motor City Drum Ensemble	Get It	Fresh Noodles

TECHNO BY TOM TRAGO
Tom Trago rocked crowds from New York and London to Berlin and Barcelona. His productions

Music site offers updated playlists in 22 genres

Most dedicated music fans have their favourite genres and playlists, but finding new music can be a challenge. Aiming to keep aficionados up on the latest tracks and trends comes [22tracks](http://22tracks.nl), a Dutch site that offers constantly updated playlists in 22 different genres.

22tracks is essentially a jukebox consisting of 22 playlists in as many different genres, each filled with 22 tracks specially selected by DJs from Amsterdam. Upon selecting a genre, users can listen to the current 22 tracks on the site; those they like they can purchase via iTunes or promote via Twitter. Each week those tracks are updated with roughly five new ones, however, giving fans a constantly updated selection. People can also create their own, personal lists of favourites, and a 22tracks iPhone app is slated for release in January/February 2010.

By packaging music in bite-size nuggets for week-long munching whenever the desire strikes—and of course offering instant gratification for those motivated to buy—22tracks provides a lovely example of the "see-hear-buy" model that's part of what our sister site would call today's [snack culture](#). Keep it short, sweet, simple and fleeting—but make it easy for consumers to make it their own—and you'll have them hooked in no time! ;-) (Related: [An online music store of one's own](#).)

Website: www.22tracks.nl

Contact: info@22tracks.com

Spotted by: Stephan Hoberg



To improve employee health, gadget tracks every move

Does exercise have to mean jogging, sweat and tears? Not according to Philips, whose [DirectLife](#) personal fitness programme aims to help people adopt a more active lifestyle by monitoring and motivating them in their daily activities. Like [Fitbit](#) which we covered in October, DirectLife is based around a wearable device that uses a 3D digital accelerometer to track a person's movements. The data is uploaded via USB to a personal web-page, where it's matched against daily targets, long-term goals, and (optionally) other users.

Where DirectLife differs from Fitbit is in the provision of a personal coach, on a subscription basis. Interacting with users through the online portal, personal coaches are real people with expertise in sports science, personal training and behavioural psychology, who use their knowledge to provide users with feedback, encouragement and advice on small lifestyle changes. DirectLife is available for USD 99 plus shipping, including the Activity Monitor and first four months of membership—thereafter, membership costs USD 12.50 per month.

The other big difference is that Philips is mainly targeting employers, claiming the system reduce absenteeism and health costs, while improving employee morale and productivity. Having companies track an employee's every move, obviously isn't free of ethical and privacy concerns. On the other hand, the societal need is also clear: according to the [World Health Organization](#), more than 60 percent of the global population fail to reach the minimum levels of moderate daily physical activity to deliver health benefits. That's a big market to move into. (Related: [Fitness focused cell phone](#).)

Website: www.directlife.philips.com

Contact: www.directlife.philips.com/contact/



Crowdsourced marketing ideas, 10 for \$99

Small companies can already tap the power of the crowds for help with their [graphic design](#), [advertising](#) and [other business challenges](#). Whereas most such services reward the creator of just a single winning solution, however, [FreshlyBranded](#) pays its marketing creatives for the top 10 ideas.

Buyers begin by signing up with Kansas-based FreshlyBranded and posting a description of their project, along with how much they'd like to pay. Typical projects include logo design, slogans and product names; the minimum award for the winning entry is USD 50, with a secondary award minimum—split among the other top nine—of USD 5. FreshlyBranded, meanwhile, takes a flat USD 39 fee plus 10 percent of the primary awarded amount, bringing the total minimum price for 10 submissions to USD 99. Once set, the award funds are transferred into an escrow account, and the project is opened up for submissions from marketing creatives around the world. After two weeks or so, the buyer selects a winning idea, and FreshlyBranded transfers the files and all rights to the winning project. Award funds, meanwhile, are distributed accordingly among the primary and secondary submitters.

Crowdsourced approaches have been criticized for potentially devaluing the work of contributors, since many creatives typically spend time on a solution but only one gets paid. With its mechanism for secondary awards, however, FreshlyBranded's model could reduce such concerns. A concept to apply to your own crowdsourced venture...?

Website: www.freshlybranded.com

Contact: questions@freshlybranded.com

Spotted by: Troy Tessalone



Mini web-to-print photo albums

Much the way [HotPrints](#) lets Facebook and Bebo users capture their social network photos in real-life books, so [Memolio](#) lets anyone on the web turn online images into a compact print album.

Users of Dutch Memolio, which is now in beta, begin by uploading 24 images from their computer or from a Flickr Pro or Picasa album. They then edit the photos and arrangement of their album and personalize its colour, title and description. Next, they preview and save their album. Each Memolio is given a unique album URL that can be shared or posted publicly. For EUR 14.99 (taxes and shipping included), users can also order a print copy, which measures 103mm by 62mm by 5mm—about the same size as an iPod Classic—and is printed on durable, bright white polyester, making it resistant to water and crumpling. Available for delivery anywhere in the world, Memolios can be used for both personal and business use as tiny portfolios, photo albums, promotional brochures, teaching aids, manuals and guides. Coming soon is a promotion platform that will let Memolio users promote their ideas and portfolios using an embedded Memolio album.

First the world rushed to bring offline materials online; now it's rushing to bring online materials back again. How can *your* brand help forge some [OFF=ON](#) connections...? (Related: [Email a photo to send prints to friends & family](#) — [Online portal gathers wedding photos from guests.](#))

Website: www.memolio.com

Contact: www.memolio.com/contact



Tryvertising store expands in Spain

Given the popularity of tryvertising labs in Asia, it was only a matter of time before they popped up in other parts of the globe. We spotted [one in San Diego](#) earlier this year—not long after Tokyo-based Sample Lab [kicked off its own global expansion](#)—and recently we learned of Barcelona-based [Esloúltimo](#), which is already planning to open a second shop in Madrid.

Spanish consumers interested in testing out the latest products need only pay EUR 5 every six months for the right to try five new products at Esloúltimo every two weeks. There is no other charge for the samples, and there's also no lengthy questionnaire to fill out. Instead, consumers are simply asked to indicate why they chose the particular samples they did. Available for the taking at Esloúltimo are a variety of food, cosmetic and household goods as well as technological innovations for in-store testing. Long lines and waits of four hours greeted the Esloúltimo store's Barcelona opening in October, causing it to begin requiring that consumers make reservations in advance.

Esloúltimo is the brain child of Barcelona market researcher [Guia de Tendencias](#), which is planning to open its Madrid store in February, according to the [Compradiccion](#) blog. Who will be first to serve the masses of eager [trysumers](#) in *your* neck of the sampling woods...?

Website: www.esloulultimo.com

Contact: info@esloulultimo.com

Spotted by: Tais Reis