

# Thought Leader Resource Networks

*A model for tapping into external knowledge, inspiration and strategic relationships*

Internally-focused organizations sometimes feel they lack the spark of fresh, insightful perspectives that drive their business to greater heights. Companies often struggle to see beyond their own world view, in which established capabilities, mindsets and orthodoxies limit their ability to envision and pursue new possibilities.

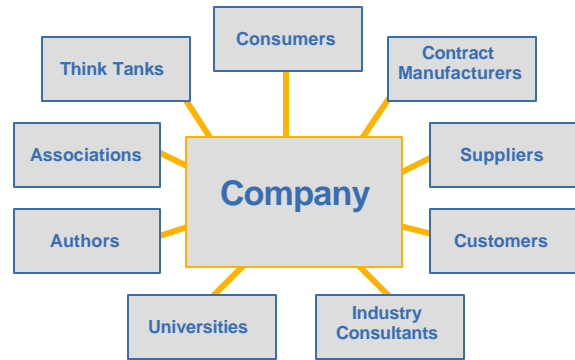
Identifying strategically interesting “sandboxes” or specific “blind spots” is a first step in deciding what types of gaps exist, including specific technologies, consumer insights, supplier or channel insights, competitive intelligence, potential strategic partners, and other critical knowledge. From there, the enterprise can then envision a variety of ways to reach out beyond its internal capabilities by adopting an “open innovation” mindset. One approach is to build a Thought Leader Resource Network.

## External perspectives & connections help identify and pursue new opportunities

A Thought Leader Resource Network is an external network of expert practitioners and thinkers that can be tapped at any time. Thought Leaders within the network come from companies, universities, consulting firms, research institutions, contract manufacturers, think tanks, and other organizations. Often under a non-disclosure agreement or as-needed consulting contract, at a moment's notice they provide specific knowledge, foresight or recommendations to specific issues, challenges and opportunities. Because they are all connected to their own knowledge networks, they can also become the doorway to additional strategic resources and relationships.

Formal or informal in nature, this kind of network can be created either by systematically reaching out over time, or coming out of a *Thought Leader Innovation Panel*<sup>1</sup>, which serves as the impetus for establishing the network.

<sup>1</sup> InnovationPoint's non-traditional *Thought Leader Innovation Panel* is a one-day client-sponsored event that “stretches” a team's



InnovationPoint can help you identify strategically interesting “sandboxes”, pinpoint your most critical knowledge gaps relative to these opportunity areas, and then identify and reach out to dozens of experts and potential partners from various industries and disciplines to become part of your proprietary network.

## About InnovationPoint

InnovationPoint is a non-traditional consulting firm that helps its Fortune 1000 clients take a strategic approach to innovation. InnovationPoint blends traditional and unconventional methodologies to identify breakthrough opportunities, develop growth strategies and consumer-inspired new products, and to align organizational strategy and design in a way that supports sustainable innovation. InnovationPoint's clients include Hewlett-Packard, Kimberly-Clark, PepsiCo, Frito-Lay, Philips, Dial Corporation, Charles Schwab, Microsoft, Yahoo!, SRI, Alegant Health, Genentech, SK Telecom (South Korea) and Nestlé.

---

thinking around a particular issue or potential opportunity, by introducing the fresh perspectives of external practitioners, visionaries and provocateurs. By juxtaposing non-adjacent worlds – and by exploring emerging trends it is possible to envision entirely new possibilities and opportunities for growth.