

Building Value and Making Money When the Economy is not Cooperative.

The last two years have been some of the most difficult for most companies. Certainly with the terrorist attacks in New York every business and every citizen has been affected. How it ultimately works out remains to be seen but one thing for sure is it's not the same.

Three years ago we had venture capital funds pushing money at anything with the dot com name. All of us were enthralled with the Internet and its potential. It was a great time because some of the most innovative ideas were spawned during this time. Unfortunately some really bad ideas also got funded and burned investors almost universally. The meltdowns of Enron and Andersen have put fear into investors.

Three things are keeping the economy going; military/government spending; low interest for housing; and 0 percent automobile loans. The President, the Federal Government and Congress have all done a good job of keeping the economy afloat

Well, that addresses the global and national economy but what about your company? How is it doing in these times? Downsizing, laying off, reducing rents, working longer hours, cutting out overtime and postponing capital purchases are all activities we hear about daily. Those who are lucky have kept their jobs but many have taken pay cuts. So what's next and how does any enterprise stay afloat and grow when the capital is not available? Here are some thoughts to consider.

It's time to take stock of your non-cash currencies. Non-cash currencies have never been worth more than they are right now. Why? Because hard cash is hard to find and investors are not ready to gamble. Banks are tighter than ever for most commercial loans. Even commercial mortgages are tight because the vacancy rates are up. What are non-cash currencies? A non-cash currency is anything that you already have that can save someone else cash. Things like unsold advertising time. This can be traded to companies who lack cash but can generate cash with advertising. How about vacant real estate? It can be traded for goods or services. Excess fleet capacity can be leased to a company that does not have the ability to borrow or pay cash. With leasing it can be retrieved at any time so the risk is low. One client gathered up the underutilized resources of three companies and packaged them for sale to the public. All parties benefited. The message is your non-cash currencies have never had a higher value than they do today. When the market comes back and investors are once again confident, the value of your non-cash currencies goes down. So the time to move is now!

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