



OUTSIDE VOICES: SMALL BUSINESS

# 7 New Rules for Small-Business Growth

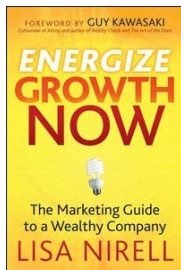
By **TIM BERRY**  
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Tim Berry

The hardest growth in small [business](#) is the second bump, like a second wind—what we call emerging companies. It comes when you conquer the first long uphill climb, and then you pause. And, if you're not careful, you have trouble coming out of pause. Maybe we can call it malaise.

I had a good talk about this the other day with Lisa Nirell, founder of *EnergizeGrowth*® and author of *Energize Growth NOW*, whom I've known since she and her husband moved up to Oregon from California three years ago. I'm sympathetic to that path, because I took it about 17 years ago, when I moved up to Oregon from Palo Alto.



In Lisa's case, her consulting firm focuses on finding that second wind for companies that made it to the top of the first hill and want to get the energy back. When we talked, she said her favorite readers are

"Leaders running growth companies who want to maintain a certain level of growth while also making a difference in the world. A holistic way of growing their business instead of growing at any cost."

When Lisa says "holistic," she's not talking about so-called touchy-feely business counseling. Her [book](#) is totally grounded in the real world. It's not a matter of magic formulas or complex frameworks.

It's a lot of reviewing what's important, keeping what [works](#), and eliminating what doesn't work. Lisa's got 26 years experience helping real companies grow. In fact, even after moving from the San Diego area to Sunriver, an idyllic, mostly vacation spot in the shadow of the central Oregon Cascades, she has reported her best year ever during this recession. She knows her stuff.

Just as an example, I like this formula for what she calls "the new rules for creating a wealthy company:"

1. You consistently and confidently express and demonstrate your value to the market.
2. You are paid handsomely for the value you deliver.
3. You continuously innovate.
4. You focus on business endeavors that educate and inspire other people.
5. Your business endeavors honor and respect the natural environment.
6. You have enough of the right clients—you know who they are; you can explain your ideal client to others very clearly; and you market to them in an authentic, consistent, and systematic way.
7. You provide your stakeholders, investors, and employees enough time for family, friends, and personal growth.



From my experience, having built a company from zero to 45 employees, Lisa has a solid understanding of what makes things work on the long term. I think you can see that in those seven "new rules."

*Tim Berry is president and founder of Palo Alto Software, founder of [bplans.com](#), and a cofounder of Borland International. He teaches starting a business at the University of Oregon. He is author of books and software including *Business Plan Pro*, published by Palo Alto Software, and *The Plan-As-You-Go Business Plan*, published by Entrepreneur Press. He has a Stanford M.B.A. and degrees with honors from the University of Oregon and the University of Notre Dame. He blogs at [Planning Startup Stories](#) and [Up and Running](#).*

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