



Alibaba.com and *Inc.* Announce the Newpreneur of the Year

Camp BizSmart Students Honored at the Finale Event

Proving that the recession can create opportunities to grow or start a small business, Alibaba.com, the world's largest B2B online marketplace, and *Inc.* hosted the finale of the [Newpreneur of the Year](#) initiative in San Francisco on November 18. At the event more than 300 people attended to listen to Tom Peters, one of the most influential and distinctive voices in the business world and the author of numerous books including *In Search of Excellence*, speak and to watch 13 newpreneurs compete for their share of \$140,000 in business grants.

Among the audience of entrepreneurs and business leaders were five young 'tweenpreneurs' from Camp BizSmart, the entrepreneurial academy that inspires young entrepreneurs age 11-15 to solve problems such as teen literacy; healthy and tasty drinks and nutritious school lunches; and efficient and smart energy use. Alibaba.com invited Hara 2, the winning team from Camp BizSmart's 2009 business plan competition to attend the event as VIP's.

"After meeting the members of the winning Camp BizSmart team this summer I was energized by their entrepreneurial spirit and passion for learning," said Kelly Sang, director of Alibaba.com Americas. "I invited them to attend the Alibaba.com Newpreneur finale to give them the opportunity to continue to grow and learn from entrepreneurs just like them and to see firsthand how supporting small business can impact the economy."

During the competition portion of the evening, the 13 finalists had 90 seconds to pitch their business idea or product to a panel of distinguished judges including; David Wei, CEO of Alibaba.com; Kelly Sang, director of Alibaba.com Americas, David Louie, anchor on ABC San Francisco; Tom Searcy, CEO of Hunt Big Sales; and Jane Berentson, editor of *Inc.* Magazine.

As the judges deliberated, Bob LaPointe, president of *Inc.*, told the story about Camp BizSmart and the remarkable students who earned 1st place for their business solution in the Camp BizSmart 2009 business plan competition. LaPointe introduced each student from the winning team, Michaela Kastelman, Karthik Bala, Michael Cheng, Fernanda Gutierrez, and Sachin Vadodaria. Team member, Samir Kishore was unable to attend the event.

After the tough deliberation Joel Smith of Forward Mobility was named 'Newpreneur of the Year.' Based in Seattle, [Forward Mobility](#) designs and distributes breakthrough medical mobility products to help users maintain their independence. The company is dedicated to creating high quality jobs for people that are disadvantaged or disabled providing sustainability for the individual and their community. Joel plans to use his winnings of \$50,000 to bring his latest invention, the [Freedom Leg](#), to injured athletes, military personnel and anyone who wants to go beyond crutches and free their mobility.

The complete list of winners includes:

- Grand Prize: Joel Smith, [Forward Mobility](#), Seattle – \$50,000
- Second Place: Drew Jones, [DJones Tailored Collection](#), Dallas – \$25,000
- Third Place: Jonathan Ross Shriftman, [Sole Bicycles](#), Miami – \$15,000
- Fourth Place: Imran Karim, [TrophySkin](#), Dallas – \$5,000
- Fifth Place: Katie Shea & Susie Levitt, [FUNK-tional Enterprises](#), New York – \$5,000

The other eight finalists each received a \$5,000 business grant from Alibaba.com to recognize their commitment to entrepreneurship and building businesses in the down economy.

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