

West Side Informer

Volume 7, Issue 7

Summer 2011

Smart Cooling

This summer, Texas has been hit with roasting temperatures and tight public budgets. These two realities have spurred some energy corporations to focus on the business opportunities presented in these tough and hot times. Innovative companies have begun to offer “smart” climate control systems, and these systems have a history of paying off. Of course, climate control is nothing new. But they are becoming more and more efficient – and thus, saving customers more and more money. For example, energy management solutions provider Schneider Electric is now saving the Corpus Christi School District over one million dollars a year in its energy costs by providing creative, energy-saving methods. The “Schneider system” not only controls when the AC goes on and off, but it also “...allow[s] district buildings to ‘adapt’ to changing conditions, including humidity levels” in order to most efficiently control the climate of buildings.

In face of an uncertain future, we can be certain that it’s still going to be hot in Texas, and we will still need to cool our buildings. As long as those two things are true, there is going to be a market for entrepreneurs and businesses to cut costs while still keeping us cool!

Grayson, J. (2011, March). Smart and Smarter. *T.H.E. Journal*, 38(3), 12-13. Retrieved from the Business Source Complete database.



Getting Social with: Skype

Need a (free) way to talk to your friends during the summer? Skype is an online resource where you can communicate by voice, text, and even by video. It is used by many for business meetings, but it is also used so friends and family can catch up with each other.

On July 6th, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced that Facebook is “integrating Skype video chat into its social network,” which is similar to what Google+ will be doing with its new service. The big difference is that Google+ offers the ability to video chat in groups.

To keep up on the latest with this new business relationship and other current business news, check out the Factiva database.

Raice, S. & Sherr, I. (2011, July). Facebook Dials Up Skype; Social Network Adds Video Chats on Heels of Google’s Launch of Rival Services. *The Wall Street Journal Online*. Retrieved from the Factiva database.

Keep Cool with Ice Cream

In addition to air conditioning, another great way to cool off from the Texas heat is by eating ice cream. The International Dairy Foods Association has proclaimed July National Ice Cream Month.

Who’s tops in the ice cream world? In 2008, Ben & Jerry’s was the worldwide leader in market share among ice cream shops at 18.5% (\$240 billion in sales) with TCBY next at 14.2%.

Mintel Group Ltd. (2009, December). *Ice Cream Shops – U.S.* Retrieved from the Mintel Reports database.



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