

# *From 'Inside-Out' to 'Outside-In'*

**T**he omnipresent grind for small business owners to compete with the big boys just received a crucial new tool.

Forged across six years of research, planning, development and deployment, B2B platform One Source Direct (onesourcedirect.net) has been unveiled with a distinct aim at both centralizing and streamlining small business connections.

Balancing his career day job with the birth of the new platform, Scott Le Beau, CEO of Milwaukee, Wisc.-based One Source, has long considered himself something of an opining outlier in both the big bank and small



hour weeks, with a stated mission to help businesses Connect, Create and Grow.

Examplifying the day-to-day time-crunch of, say, social media outreach, Le Beau points to his own delve into Twitter.

## *One Source Direct unveils innovative B2B platform that centralizes and streamlines small business connections.*

business world, based on his drive to ask questions that are unpopular, but necessary.

"Over time, I noticed what I call 'Inside-Out' engineering, which is banks designing products that make sense for them," he says. "But when you go out into the marketplace, I recognized the opposite need, for 'Outside-In' engineering, which is discovering what the small businesses need. And I believe that One Source Direct supports that."

The B2B platform, unveiled at the onset of 2021, is geared toward subscriber usability and simplicity, coupled with a base mantra of: What Does My Business Do and What is Somebody Looking For. The platform's easy aesthetic is geared toward efficiency for small business owners, aimed to help save the currencies of time and cost for folks working 60-

"I read a book on social media, then tried to figure how about often to post, which was every few hours. And the book advised to keep changing content to keep the posts new and relevant," he laughs. "Eventually, I just started thinking, 'How many business owners have time for all this?'"

Championing the little guy, Le Beau knows first-hand that small business owners are often seeking a supporting hand. "There's a need for support and resources," he says of the platform's impetus. "Most small businesses don't have all these back-end departments, and are always looking for resources, are looking for a place to turn to."

Created alongside a handful colleagues across multiple sectors of business, One Source was initially aimed at helping community banks,

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before Le Beau's purview expanded to helping all manner of small businesses.

"It became about having access to more concise information," he continues. "When you perform an online search, it can be like that old phrase, 'Drinking from a firehose.' There's just so much information. And when these smaller organizations have limited revenue, it can be tough to compete with the larger groups. So, we created this to try and level the playing field, to help the small businesses compete."

**B**y creating centralized connections under the platform's headings of Needs, Leads, Offer and Articles, the One Source search portal presents a simple and straightforward ease-of-use, while also offering very modest introductory price-point for leads.

Whether the objective is as simple as looking for office supplies and be notified of sales and promotions, or sending out a company newsletter to One Source connections that would otherwise just sit on a website waiting to be found, the platform has potential to trim all manner of Internet fat.

And as a differentiator, One Source wisely presents the option of subscriber anonymity and confidentiality, a further time-saver to cut out the deluge of spam, viruses, social media invites, unwanted solicitations and phone calls that come as a result of so many online connection tools.

"The difference between our platform and

others is that we're using real intelligence, not artificial intelligence," Le Beau says. "Who knows more about running your business, you or a computer algorithm? It's about making a simple, concise connection, and it's only there when you want it to be there. If you don't care for somebody, you just block them."

Across the days of pandemic, Le Beau grants that, yes, the 2021 unveil of One Source would appear timely amid the global pivot to remote and online work for businesses of all size. But after six years of research and refine, Le Beau sees the future possibilities of One Source through a long lens.

"What we've built is not going to change when COVID ends; people can and will still use us when the pandemic is over," he says. "This isn't a short-term fix; it's a long-term solution."

And as his One Source Direct vision comes to a time of fruition, takes its own shape and recognizes its potential upon being released to small business owners across the country, Le Beau holds close the advice of a longtime friend and colleague.

"Expect this to go somewhere where you don't expect this to go," he says. "Our users will be our Board of Directors and help in shaping the site to match their ongoing needs." — By Judd Spicer, California Business Journal

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