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wouldn't it be prudent to explore that other location yourself?

"His supreme agony was the disappearance of certainty, and he felt himself uprooted... Oh! What a frightful thing! The man projectile, no longer knowing his road and recoiling!"

*VICTOR HUGO, LES MISERABLES*

## S.W.O.T. and what not!

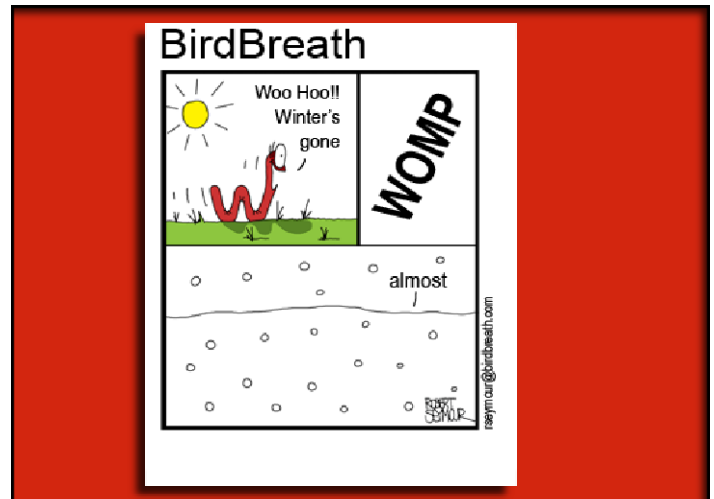
I was speaking a few weeks ago with a friend who owns a lumberyard in the middle of a small town. We were cussing and discussing the state of the economy. Somewhere in that conversation he lamented that if someone built a new hardware store or lumberyard out on the highway that circumscribes his town, that his business would suffer greatly and quite possibly would not even survive. It was a casual and personal conversation so I didn't put my consultant hat on and I didn't open my consultant mouth, but rather listened and nodded sympathetically.

"Funny thing about the consulting business," I had another consultant tell me one time, "You get paid to tell people what they already know." Well, I don't know about that, as a consultant I pride myself in bringing *new* information to my customers, but as I listened to my friend visualize the steps it would take to dominate the lumber/hardware business in his community, I must admit I was thinking—"you already know the answer so what are you waiting on?"

I'm not naive, I know there are financial considerations to such decisions. But still, after evaluating your own business and recognizing such vulnerability it makes sense to try to shore up those weaknesses, try to become proactive. If another store by virtue of a better location would render your store irrelevant, then

My friend is probably a lot like me in the sense that he would like to have all things revealed before he even undertakes such a journey. Well, here's one thing I've learned from my Discovery-Based Retail adventure...it doesn't work that way. You formulate your best strategy and then you plunge ahead! You plunge ahead knowing full well that plans will change. You plunge ahead relying on your abilities to react and morph to the things that you hadn't predicted, or had predicted wrong. You do your "due diligence" and then you plunge ahead.

Evaluate your business. S.W.O.T is an acronym that was popularized a few years ago. The letters S.W.O.T. stand for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. When one performs a S.W.O.T. evaluation, he



views his business through those four prisms. Perhaps without even knowing it my friend had performed at least part of the S.W.O.T. evaluation process...he had recognized a Weakness and a Threat. I guess he just didn't realize he had simultaneously pinpointed an Opportunity.

Let's talk about your opportunities! My phone number is (888) 292-6531.

*Phil Mitchell*

**If you could have another salesman for only a few \$\$ per month, would you? You can! Stay tuned for details!**

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