

Sunday

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Business & TECHNOLOGY

Small companies get visibility with Daily Grommet

A grommet is a ring of metal, plastic or rubber that's used to reinforce a hole or protect the sharp edges of one. You'll recognize it as the eyelet on a shoe or the metal ring at the top of a shower curtain.

There's a different kind of grommet, one that's helping to redefine online shopping.

The Daily Grommet is an online marketplace, one that presents quality small businesses, innovative products and creative ideas to consumers. Each day this online retailer sends a video profiling one product you might not have heard of before.

"The pace of innovation around new companies (and) new ideas is accelerated," said Jules Peri, Daily Grommet's co-founder and CEO. "Yet the retail opportunities for these products

to get discovered is shrinking."

And they depend on independent retail.

"Doing Daily Grommet and social media help level the playing field, giving (these products) access to the community that will rapidly embrace them," Peri said.

Peri and Joanne Domeniconi launched Grommet in 2008 to introduce consumers to little-known products while telling the story behind the products and the companies.

"Our job at the Daily Grommet is to give you the information (so) you'll know what these companies are about," Peri said.

The daily videos she and her partner produce "are the vehicle for letting you connect with the people and the companies and understand their passion and what they're trying to

change," Peri said.

I've been receiving the daily videos for a few months now. They're fascinating, fun and they're informative about some really neat products — some I've heard of and many I haven't.

When it comes to green, Peri says it's an "uber" category.

A lot of green ideas are a way of improving the way something works, she said. But they can languish in retail.

Daily Grommet brings them forward, showing them to consumers who want to move to a greener lifestyle but who may find it confusing.

The Grommet features what it calls Citizen Commerce — a way for customers to interact with both the company and the products and retailers it features.



DEBRA ATLAS

DISTINCTLY GREEN

The videos are a great way to understand how the site works, said Jeanne Connan, Grommet's CMO.

Each time the company features a product, it invites the founder and/or the owner to explain the product and answer questions on the site.

The videos let you make a personal connection, said Peri. Viewers are invited to ask questions, and the companies return to answer.

These conversations extend the relationship with customers, Peri said.

"This is the only forum

that the founders / creators of the products can stand right next to them and answer your questions," Connan said.

It's a great way to create trust on a national basis, said Peri.

And that's the bottom line for Daily Grommet. Its aim is to reinvent marketing by being "the world's most trusted platform for product discovery," Peri said.

"It can be quite a force in our economy," she said.

To find out more about the Daily Grommet and its diverse range of useful and affordable quality products, go to www.DailyGrommet.com.

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