

# Springwise newsletter | 7 May 2008

Smart new businesses featured this week: stylish souvenirs from Canada, innovative notepaper from Sweden, a greener publishing imprint from the UK, and more. Our next edition is due on 14 May 2008. In the meantime, check out our daily postings on [www.springwise.com](http://www.springwise.com), send us your [tips](#), and please don't forget to [tell your friends and colleagues](#) about us. Much appreciated!



## White lines make paper stand out

People have used dark-lined writing paper since medieval times and over the years, a lot of bleach has been used to provide a contrasting white background. Swedish [Whitelines](#), on the other hand, makes carbon-neutral writing paper that uses white lines against a light grey background.

Traditional dark-lined paper not only depends on the use of bleach for a contrasting background, it also can conflict with lines and letters drawn or written on its surface. Dark lines show up on photocopies too, often making for muddy, difficult-to-view copies. Stockholm designer Olof Hansson came up with the idea of Whitelines as a way to eliminate those problems. With a focus on the environmental consequences of its operations, the company tracks and labels its own carbon footprint in collaboration with NEWA, the North Environment & Weather Agency. Through a partnership with paper producer Stora Enso forged just last month, meanwhile, it uses a carbon dioxide-neutral paper as a base for its products. Whitelines now offers pads of its patented paper with a variety of bindings, including spiral, glue and saddle stitch, through select retailers in Canada, Germany, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

Whitelines was named Innovator of the Year by ALMI Stockholm last year, and in January it was nominated in the New Product Innovation and Emerging Vendor categories at the European Office Products Awards in Frankfurt. With its paradigm-busting appearance, Whitelines' [eco-iconic](#) qualities are sure to appeal to the rapidly growing eco-minded masses. Remember: it's not enough to be green; you have to help consumers show the world that they are, too. Think green, think different, think iconic!

Website: [www.whitelines.se](http://www.whitelines.se)

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Spotted by: Johan Lofmark



## Mastic fantastic *Update*

Back in 2006, we [covered](#) an ancient commodity that was being marketed in a fresh way—mastiha, made from resin of the mastic tree, which is mainly cultivated on the Greek island of Chios. As we pointed out, mastiha (or mastic) is used in a wide variety of products, and Mastihashops—founded by the Chios Gum Mastic Growers Association—carry everything from mastiha-flavoured coffee, biscuits and liqueur, to toothpaste, cosmetics and chewing gum. All well-branded and sleekly packaged.

So we were pleased to hear that [Mastihashop](#) has made it to New York, its first retail outpost west of Greece. The shop, located at 145 Orchard Street, was opened by two sisters, Artemis and Kalliopi Kohas, who spent many childhood summers on Chios. The New York store sells an extensive range of edible goods and skincare products, from the raw material—'tears' of mastic resin—to mastiha eye cream. Naturally, there's still plenty of room for mastiha expansion. Sao Paulo or Singapore, anyone?

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# Festival tents with an eco twist

Summer music festivals tend to create recurring, short-term demand for accommodations, as we noted last year when we wrote about [Boutique Camping](#). Now a new, student-invented contender also in the UK offers two-person festival tents made from recyclable materials.

Camping at festivals can be a soggy and uncomfortable affair, and tents often get dumped at the festival's end, sending them to landfills. [myhab](#), on the other hand, offers waterproof accommodations that can be entirely recycled. Made from ultra-tough recycled plastic and waterproof cardboard, each myhab tent features a raised base and access from both ends. Also included are a double mattress and lockable box, along with extra space for muddy boots and other festival equipment. Festival-goers begin by reserving their myhab tents for the festival they plan to attend; pricing is GBP 240 per myhab, or GBP 120 per person. They can even personalize it with exterior graphics to make it their own, selecting a funky character online, that the myhab staff will print out and affix to the outside of their tent. Next, all they do is show up at the festival and check into the myvillage, where they receive a myhab wrist band that gains them continuing access. Tents are set up ahead of time by the myhab team, which staffs the myvillage round the clock and also maintains showers and bathrooms on-site. Once the festival is over, myhab breaks down and recycles its tents for next time.

myhab plans to be present at all the big UK music festivals this summer, with up to 250 myhab tents in each myvillage. Brand sponsorships and corporate events are also available. With additional possibilities for weddings and a multitude of other summer events, there are plenty of opportunities for a service like this around the world!

Website: [www.myhab.com](http://www.myhab.com)

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Spotted by: Jack Morrell

# More paparazzi for the masses



No sooner did we write about [Methodlazz](#)'s personal paparazzi service back in March than another one popped up in other parts of the US. Austin, Texas-based [Celeb-4-A-Day](#) now provides star treatment to everyday people in Austin, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Launched in November, Celeb-4-A-Day offers three packages to make consumers feel like celebrities at the event of their choice. Its basic "A-List" package, for example, includes four personal paparazzi to document the arrival of the "star" at the event; a high-gloss print of the subject on the cover of the company's "MyStar" celebrity gossip magazine; and up to 30 minutes of what Celeb-4-A-Day calls "the Personal Paparazzi Treatment"—including asking questions, vying for coverage, shouting the star's name and other "privileges" real stars must typically endure. At the other end of the spectrum, meanwhile, the "Megastar" package includes all that plus two additional paparazzi, limo service to and from the event, a CD containing 10 high-resolution photos of the experience and up to two hours of personal paparazzi treatment, along with a personal publicist and a personal bodyguard. Birthday parties, special date nights, weddings, office parties and even surprise parties are just some of the events Celeb-4-A-Day will cater to. Pricing varies by location, ranging from USD 249.99 for an A-List package in Austin to USD 2,499.99 for the Megastar package in LA or San Francisco.

As status-hungry consumers increasingly seek to chronicle their lives, the prospects for this kind of service look positively starry around the globe. Vanity, thy name is every consumer!

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Spotted by: Bill McMahan



# Publisher's new imprint is greener, inside and out

UK book publisher Dorling Kindersley has created an imprint that aims to 'green' an industry whose dependence on dead trees doesn't necessarily make it an eco frontrunner. So far, four titles have been released under the company's [Made With Care](#) brand. All deal with eco-aware topics such as, including green baby care and organic gardening.

In keeping with their subject matter, Made With Care books are published in a strictly eco-friendly manner. The paper comes from forests certified to be managed in a sustainable fashion. The paper mill recycles 91 percent of the water it uses, and the books are printed—using non-petroleum-based inks—at a plant that has cut its carbon emissions by more than half and produces its own electricity. Combined, the efforts contribute to the books' perceived value. Other companies tout their own efforts to become carbon neutral or describe the greening of their supply chains in detail. But DK personifies that message by making it an integral part of this product line.

And therein lies a lesson for entrepreneurs: make sure that your environmental strategy isn't just fodder for press releases, but is embodied and projected by the products you sell. For in-depth coverage of three leading trends for taking an even greener approach to business, check out [trendwatching.com's](#) free briefing on [eco-iconic, eco-embedded & eco-boosters](#).

Website: [www.dorlingkindersley-uk.co.uk/static/html/features/madewithcare](http://www.dorlingkindersley-uk.co.uk/static/html/features/madewithcare)

Contact: [www.dorlingkindersley-uk.co.uk/static/cs/uk/11/about/contact.html](http://www.dorlingkindersley-uk.co.uk/static/cs/uk/11/about/contact.html)

Spotted by: Flemming Birch



# Projected pedestrians are traffic stoppers

South-Korean product designer Hanyoung Lee has come up with a safety device that could make traffic lights obsolete, or at least improve their effectiveness. His so-called [Virtual Wall](#) is designed for busy city streets. Instead of showing a red light when it's time for pedestrians to cross the street, Lee's Wall projects a curtain-like, two-dimensional image of giant people crossing the street. The real pedestrians walk behind their virtual counterparts.

Lee's design—which hasn't made it off the drawing board yet—works thanks to a stack of laser projectors installed in poles on opposite sides of the street. Digital renderings of the Wall can be found on [Yanko Design](#), and while there's no word on an actual prototype, the device would likely cost more than traditional traffic lights. Thus, any city thinking of commissioning a Virtual Wall might consider flashing advertising messages over the heads of the virtual pedestrians in order to help offset the system's cost. Another potential issue might be how to activate the Wall so as not to startle motorists approaching an intersection.

We generally don't feature concepts that haven't yet made it to market, but this one seems to present a host of business opportunities, as well as great PR potential for the first cities that implement it. Besides halting traffic at intersections, the projected images could be used to direct crowds at large events or form temporary virtual fences to warn motorists that road construction crews are working nearby. And how about smart deer crossing walls, that can both detect and project oncoming deer?

Website: [www.yankodesign.com/index.php/2008/04/21/cant-cross-a-virtual-wall](http://www.yankodesign.com/index.php/2008/04/21/cant-cross-a-virtual-wall)

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Spotted by: Harry van Praag



# Marketplace for long-term parking

We've written on several occasions already about [online exchanges for parking spots](#) on both sides of the Atlantic. But while most of those have focused primarily on short-term parking needs, a new one serving Canada and the US serves as a virtual marketplace for long-term parking.

[Parkingspots.com](#) connects those who have parking spots to rent out with those who need them on a monthly basis. Launched earlier this year, the Toronto-based company gives spot holders a way to list their off-street spots, along with the price they want to charge. Powered by Google Maps, spot seekers, meanwhile, can see what's available and choose one based on location and price. Exact addresses are kept confidential until a match is made. Once that happens, renters and owners negotiate directly to set a final price and arrange for payment; commercial transactions are handled through PayPal. The service is free for both renters and owners with just one or two spots to rent; commercial lot owners with more than two spots at a single location must pay a one-time listing fee equivalent to roughly a month's rent.

Parkingspots.com currently serves a limited number of cities in North America, but judging by the rapid spread of this concept already, expansion can't be far away. One to bring to a concrete jungle near you!

Website: [www.parkingspots.com](http://www.parkingspots.com)

Contact: [info@parkingspots.com](mailto:info@parkingspots.com)

Spotted by: Richard Lane



## More free love: notebooks for students

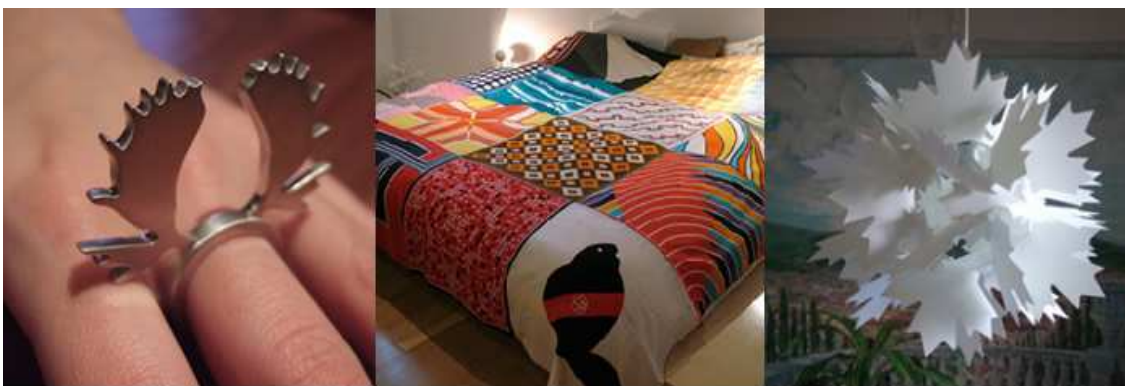
Last summer we wrote about [FreeHand Advertising](#) and its initiative to give free, ad-supported notepaper to college students, and now ABS Notebooks is going a step further and handing out whole notebooks instead.

The [Shadow Notebook](#) is a five-subject notebook that gets cobranded with participating colleges and universities across the US and distributed by the school at the start of each semester. The university's logo appears on the cover, and pages of school-related maps and information get included within. Thirteen four-colour, full-page advertisements, meanwhile, act as subject dividers in each notebook, giving advertisers the means to engage students while they are a captive audience in the learning environment. Students, naturally, carry the notebooks with them throughout the day over the course of the semester, which from the advertiser's perspective amounts to 96 impressions over a four-month period, ABS says. So far, about 700,000 notebooks have been distributed to college students at campuses nationwide.

College students spend some USD 198 billion per year, according to Harris Interactive, so it's no wonder advertisers are going to new lengths to reach them. We've now seen free [photocopies](#), free [printing](#), free [notepaper](#), free [phone calls](#) and now free notebooks—it all goes to show, there's no such thing as too much [free love](#)!

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# Souvenirs meet style

Who hasn't returned from a trip laden with cheap, tacky souvenirs? In the hopes of keeping more such items out of the dustbin—where they inevitably end up—Canada's [Souvenir Shop](#) offers redesigned, recrafted and upgraded Canadian souvenirs.

Created by Toronto's Gladstone Hotel and Motherbrand, a design firm dedicated to preserving Canada's local culture, Souvenir Shop features a range of specialty and limited-edition items crafted by Canadian designers. The site's Maple Leaves Lamp, for example, was created by Ani+Lumigrane and Frédéric Guibrunet of cut paper; pricing is CDN 250. Ouno Designs' Fur Lifejacket, meanwhile, is a conversation piece made from reclaimed Hudson Bay Company Furs' mink and priced at CDN 500. Then there's the Pierre Trudeau doll, crafted of felt and available in a variety of outfits, priced at CDN 100. Jewellery, books, housewares and clothes are also available for shipping both domestically and internationally.

Is there anything under the sun that can't be upgraded? We think not! How about bringing this approach to the souvenirs from a region near you?

Website: [www.thesouvenirshop.ca](http://www.thesouvenirshop.ca)

Contact: [souvenirshop@motherbrand.com](mailto:souvenirshop@motherbrand.com)

Spotted by: Sheri Allain



# Reverse fractional jet ownership

There are plenty of fractional jet ownership plans out there in which participants buy a certain amount of usage time, much like a real-estate time share. Through a new program from [JetSuite](#), however, customers buy the whole plane and get paid for the time they aren't using it.

JetSuite's ownership program is designed to let customers enjoy the luxury and convenience of owning a private jet without the prohibitive costs, liability, regulatory risks and operational hassles. With a down payment and an asset-secured note, each customer takes ownership of a brand-new USD 3.4 million Embraer Phenom 100—a very light jet with a range of up to 1,200 statute miles and a cruising altitude of 41,000 feet. With that price comes a set number of hours of use each year for free; additional hours can be purchased at a discount. JetSuite, meanwhile, takes care of all the regulatory requirements, aircraft maintenance, hangar facilities, and even hiring and training of pilots. The most interesting part, however, is that when the owner isn't using their plane, JetSuite charts it to someone who does, and the revenue from that—JetSuite guarantees at least USD 25,000 per month—goes back to the owner.

Las Vegas-based JetSuite was launched last week by Alex Wilcox, who was also a founding member of both JetBlue and Kingfisher Airlines. He explains: "We're taking the hassle, expense and surprises out of private jet ownership. What's more, with the Phenom, you get all the comfort with less than half the fuel burn of the most popular charter aircraft."

JetSuite expects to begin operations next April, focusing at first on the southwestern and western US and later rolling out nationwide. It is interested in partnership possibilities; one to work with in the skies near you? Or consider applying the concept to other categories. (Related: [Fractional supercar ownership](#).)

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Spotted by: Peter Yu