

Innovation

Examples of Innovation I have helped pioneer across a range of industries.

Curbside Recycling



Challenge:
The old paradigm – throwing everything in the garbage can – out of sight, out of mind.

Problem: Landfills were filling up, becoming toxic Superfund sites and new ones were incredibly expensive to build and operate. And we were wasting tons of materials that still had value.



Innovation: My first company conducted market research to launch one of the largest curbside recycling programs in the nation and advised policy makers on how to garner large-scale consumer adoption. We went on to expand and develop the recycling infrastructure for clear plastic bottles (PET) – from collection to brokering post-consumer material working with manufactures to incorporate discarded bottles in their products.

Energy Efficiency

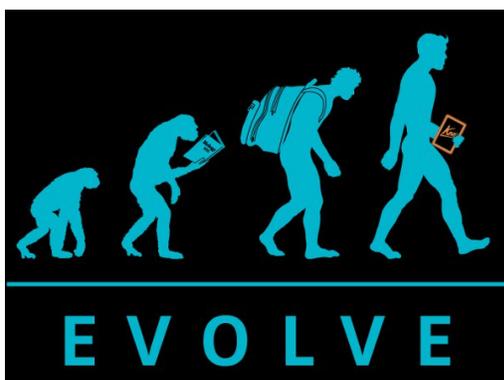
Challenge: New large central station power plants would produce electricity up to 30 times higher than the average price of electricity – threatening businesses' ability to continue their operations and draining families' disposable income.



Innovation: We looked at the customer side of the meter for opportunities to 'produce' the equivalent amount of electricity at a fraction of the cost for the utility, for the business and the consumer. But who should pay for those upgrades, would the savings be persistent, how would utilities earn rate of return on this new business model and what measures, if any should be mandated? The company I founded designed, marketed or evaluated efficiency programs for over 110 electric utilities and many state governments. Advised policymakers on rate recovery, industry restructuring, building codes and labeling.

E-Reader

Challenge: College textbooks are expensive, heavy and don't take advantage of technology that can help students learn better.



Innovation: A classmate from grad school and a real innovator, Bryce Johnsons had an awesome idea to produce the most customer-centric e-textbook reader and a platform to buy and download books. I joined him in growing a company where students could read their course materials on electronic devices, take notes, highlight key sentences, share notes with classmates and produce summaries from which to study. All the content was Wikipedia and search-enabled – without ever leaving the e-textbook. The company was sold in 2008 to the largest textbook distributor in the U.S., three years after its inception. Café Scribe, now Brytewave, continues to be a market leader.

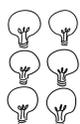
Global Development

STAGE 1



seed financing

STAGE 2



start-up & testing

STAGE 3



transitioning to scale

Challenge:

Almost 135 billion dollars is spent annually on official development

assistance to eradicate extreme poverty, improve health and food security and promote freedom in fragile and emerging countries. Few innovators have access to those funds and there is a lack of mechanisms set in place to test all of the promising ideas -- quickly scaling those that show evidence of being proactive and successful.

Innovation: Create an easy way for anyone to bring new ideas forward, which could potentially produce results faster, cheaper and more sustainable for millions of people. Scraping together official development assistance money to test out the idea. Michael



Kremer and I created the [Development Innovation Venture Fund](#) at USAID. It was adopted and expanded by the world's leading government and the most prominent foundations – [The Global Innovation Fund](#).