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JAN NORMAN ON SMALL BUSINESS
 news and practical tips for orange county small business owners

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October 29th, 2009, 12:21 pm · [Post a Comment](#) · posted by [Jan Norman](#), small-business columnist

Three Orange County companies are in the final 13 contestants for the \$100,000 best new business venture contest — Newpreneur



of the Year — co-sponsored by [Alibaba.com](#) and [Inc.](#)

All three entries from this region are all from O.C. :

- **The Day of Games**, Rancho Santa Margarita, sells leisure sports apparel and products and puts on leisure sports events, founder Brent Wagner
- **Way Basics**, Irvine, makes furniture from recycled paper that requires no tools or hardware to assemble, founder Jimmy Chiang
- **Eat Cleaner**, Laguna Beach, makes a line of products that remove pesticides, wax and surface contaminants from food, founder Mareya Ibrahim

The other five regions have only two semifinalists each.



Brent Wagner making his presentation to Newpreneur judges in L.A.

Online voters have until Nov. 6 to choose the 5 finalists whose owners will pitch their businesses at the finale Nov. 18 in San Francisco. Each individual can vote for up to five contestants per day. [Click here](#) to vote.

"It's basically the one with the most Facebook friends at this point," laughs Brent Wagner of DOG (Day of Games).

The winner will receive \$50,000 and the four runners up will split another \$50,000.

"This is an important event for the Los Angeles area, which was hit very hard by the financial collapse last year," says Kelly Sang, general manager of Alibaba.com Americas. "Alibaba.com established the Newpreneur of the Year contest to help the people with big ideas and deep passion but not necessarily deep (financial) pockets."

Alibaba is an online global marketplace for importers, exporters and suppliers. The parent company is based in China.

Click [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) to read previous stories about the contest and entrants.

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