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‘Shoplet’ developer is Minnesota Cup champ

by [Scott Carlson](#) Staff Writer

Alvenda, a Minneapolis-based commerce-enabled advertising network and application developer, is the grand champion of the 2009 Minnesota Cup entrepreneurs’ competition, contest organizers said Thursday night.

In reaping honors as “Minnesota’s top breakthrough business idea” this year, Alvenda has won \$40,000 in seed money to help advance its company. That includes \$20,000 as the Cup’s high-tech division winner and \$20,000 as the contest’s overall champion.

The statewide Cup contest, which began with more than 1,000 applicants this year competing over six divisions, is designed to seek out, support, celebrate and promote Minnesota’s newest and most innovative business ideas.

“It’s an honor to be awarded the Minnesota Cup and recognized as having both an innovative idea and a solid business plan,” Wade Gerten, co-founder and CEO of Alvenda, said in a statement. He noted the company plans to use its prize winnings “to bring our organization to the next level.”

The Cup’s announcement came at a gathering of Minnesota business leaders at the University of Minnesota’s McNamara Alumni Center.

Founded in 2008, Alvenda operates an innovative sales network for merchants consisting of premium publishers, bloggers, subject matter experts, and even customers themselves, Cup officials said. “Alvenda helps merchants generate profitable revenue by targeting, advertising and connecting with customers across millions of locations on the Web.”

Alvenda’s “Shoplets” are brand-consistent rich media e-commerce stores that are published across many of the Internet’s most visited websites in the form of banner ads, Cup officials said.

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