

» BUSINESS FORUM



Jim
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A Ventura County family is marketing a creative educational game called Wonder Number. It's designed to help and motivate students in grades K-8 who are having problems with math concepts.

The game was invented by a local schoolteacher, Melbourne T. Brown, in the early 1970s. He felt his students needed a fun and non-intimidating way to learn basic math. The game created positive interest in educational circles until Brown's unexpected passing in 1992.

Since then, little was done to make the game available to students and schools until a year ago, when Brown's family decided the game was just too good and effective to let it lie dormant. They decided to streamline and package it as a comprehensive Wonder Number Learning System, complete with a CD and teaching guide.

The game product is now being produced and offered by several Brown family members — Mel, living in Camarillo, and his brother, Matthew, and mother, Deanna, both of whom live in Simi Valley.

The game received a U.S. patent in 1976. As part of the updating process, it is now easier to play and more

effective in teaching and reinforcing math concepts from basic counting to calculating fractions, Brown said.

The design of the board allows for adaptability. It includes four basic games that can teach 16 lessons.

The primary target market for the product is home-schoolers. The game lends itself ideally to this situation, Brown noted. However, it's also effective in conventional K-8 classrooms and for individual families who want to help their child in developing math skills.

The price of the complete system is \$130.

It's promoted on a new Web site launched last month, in ads carried in home-school-related magazines, and in seminars presented for interested groups. The product is also distributed by Educational Products Distributors.

For more information about Wonder Number Learning System, visit <http://www.wondernumber.com>, or phone 526-7335.

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