

Inventors COUNCIL

OF MID-MICHIGAN

PO Box 232, Lennon Michigan 48449

Web Site: INVENTORSCOUNCIL.ORG

The Inventors Council is an independent, non-profit 501 C-3 corporation formed to help inventors pursue their dreams of bringing new and innovative products to market. Our goal is to help fellow inventors succeed in the most efficient and least costly manner possible by providing education and business networking.

Founded by Robert (Bob) Ross in 1995

We meet monthly at Walli's Restaurant, 1341 South Center Road Burton, Michigan. Just Two blocks south of I-69, Exit 139

VOLUME FOURTEEN

NEXT MEETING THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2009, 7:00PM

NUMBER TEN

Mayville Inventor Speaks

"Grab-A-Cane" inventor, Donald Beyette, age 59 will be the Featured speaker at tonight's meeting. Don has an Inspirational story to tell which was featured in the Lapeer County Press September 30 issue. Don lives in Mayville which is in Lapeer County.

Don has been handicapped since birth with a rare disease called Holt-Dram syndrome which affects the heart and limbs.

In spite of his limitations he went on to establish a successful auto repair business for many years. A work related accident where a truck ran over him and left him broken and in the hospital. Don lost everything while he was recuperating and had to start again.

Don invented his Grab-A-Cane while recuperating after being unable to use the cane he was issued to do the tasks he needed.

Don's attitude is not can you do something, but are you willing to work hard enough to do something.

Don sells his product on Ebay and has a Facebook promotional site. Don is still trying to raise the funds to go into full production. He wants to employ the handicapped and send kids with Hold-Pram syndrome to college someday.

Is should be a lively presentation so come and enjoy the evening.

The meeting will begin at 7:00pm in the upper level of Walli's Resturant on Center Road in Burton.

October Meeting Recap

The who can you trust session went well and made a lot of us think about our inventions in a new way.

With Orders in Hand, You are Sure to Stand Reprinted from IdeaBuyer Newsletter

"If you want a recipe for a startup that's going to die, here it is: a couple of founders who have some great idea they know everyone is going to love, and that's what they're going to build, no matter what." - Paul Graham
As an inventor, it is all too tempting to fall into the "trap of the idea." What we mean by this is that inventors and businessmen alike often end up with a kind of tunnel vision, such that they ruthlessly pursue their exact idea regardless of what their market has to say about it. The passion most inventors have about their project is so strong that their invention soon becomes an extension of themselves, and criticism of the project is often taken personally. The old "If you build it, they will come" attitude soon pervades the mindset of inventors, until they truly believe that if they could just get the project perfectly right, down to every minute detail and exact feature, the market would finally be held in awe of what they have created, and everyone and their mother would be calling in orders. Sometimes this is the case, but it is a lot less common than you might imagine. The Segway Scooter, invented by Dean Kamen, is an example of this phenomenon. Discovering a breakthrough technology that allows gyroscopes to monitor the rider's center of gravity about 100 times a second, Kamen decided he would use it to build a revolutionary transportation device, and that's exactly what he did. Thanks to an absolute ton of media hype and mystery surrounding the project, and also thanks to the futuristic look and feel of the device during a time (2001) when the world was hungry for such space-age devices, the project was a moderate success. An inspiring story to be sure, but not a scenario every inventor should hang their hat on. What is most important to remember is that a business lives, thrives and dies by one thing and one thing only: Demand. With orders in hand, you're sure to stand, when orders slow to a crawl, you're sure to fall. With that in mind, let's examine a few of the errors that can cause orders to slow to a crawl, and how to avoid them.

Neglecting to identify your target market is a common mistake among new inventors. We see very unique and creative ideas from very smart people all the time and one of the biggest predictors in early success is whether or not they know whom they will be selling to. When asked, "What specific group of people will use this, and why," we are often met with a blank stare quickly followed by a rehash of how awesome and revolutionary the product is. If you cannot identify the exact kind of person who will pay money for what you are creating, do yourself a favor and dedicate some time to figuring it out.

Perhaps the most valuable lesson an enterprising inventor can learn is to be flexible and open minded about your invention. You might have a very helpful invention on paper that will make it easier for business executives to keep track of sales, but if you show it to several executives and they all recommend similar changes to your original design, chances are you should consider them. Since you will be selling to these people, their suggestions reflect what your market is looking for. Failure to adapt to these suggestions and indignantly building exactly what you think is best is little more than exercise in narcissism that is sure to cost you valuable sales. If you are truly committed to meeting the demands of your market, you might consider developing a kind of feedback loop with your customers such that they can make new suggestions to you. These suggestions



MARKETING

Hints from the Fog

by Mike Ball, President



With Orders in Hand You are Sure to Stand by The Idea Buyer Newsletter (cont.)

will inevitably help you to identify how you can rake in more orders and expand your business to new heights, rather than hit a glass ceiling due to neglecting the requests of your customers.

Another common reason why sales do not pour in is a failure to secure widespread reach. "Reach" is your ability to spread the word about your invention and to ensure that your message reaches your target market. Many new companies fail to give this problem proper consideration, and go full speed ahead into production without any idea how they will generate publicity once they have products to sell. Many inventors brush this concern off as a secondary issue, assuming that reach will work itself out naturally once they have their amazing invention created. This is a mistake, as reach is actually of prime importance to any new inventor, and routes to exposure should be carefully thought out and planned before you get too far into production. If there isn't a clear way for potential customers to discover your product, they have no chance to place their order.

The biggest take away from all of this is that demand for your product is the only factor that will keep you afloat in the long run. It is therefore your noblest duty as an inventor and owner (or soon to be owner) of a nascent company, to make sure that those orders pour in. By identifying your market, adapting to your customers demands, and through ensuring that new customers can learn about your product, you will be establishing your company on a solid, stable foundation with a much greater potential to succeed.

Elections are Coming!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

We are seeking candidates to run for election to the Inventors Council Board of Directors. We have made many improvements this year and they all happen because the members elected to the board work to make the changes.

We need new blood from our new members to continue to improve the services the club provides to the community and our members. Don't just be an observer, but a helper.

Many of the tasks we need to perform are small and the time per month only amounts to a couple of hours extra a month. We also need different points of view from all our members in order to improve the club.

We are now the largest Inventors club in Michigan and we provide a service to the inventors and "would be" inventors that they can not find anywhere else in the state. We are only as strong as our members and the services we provide.

Become part of the solution and join me and the others on the board in implementing new and better ideas for 2010.

This election you must post to be on the ballot. Every member can request to be on the ballot for the January election, you must sign up with Marty Sovis to be put on the ballot. We do not want anyone placed on the ballot that does not want to be on the ballot.

Details will follow in December to sign up and make this a great election for us all.

Thanks, Mike

Club Photos !!!!!!

We need to take photos of the rest of our members and put them on the web. Go to our web site inventorscouncil.org and make sure your photo and name are on the site.

If you are, not please see Roger Stolpin or Marty Sovis to have your photo taken and put on the web site.

Invention Review Panel

For objective evaluation and priceless feedback, share your invention ideas with an educated group of inventors, business owners, engineers and authors!

Our Panel will sign a non-disclosure agreement to guarantee your ideas are kept secret while we provide you with the input needed to make decisions, no matter what stage of the invention process you're at!

There is currently no cost for this service. ThePanel meets at 6:15pm before each meeting. Call Panel Chairman Mike Wiley at 810-691-4451 for an appointment.

Review Panel Members

Mike Wiley

Jim White Mike Ball

Bob Ross 1919 - 2004 Inventors Education Column

Inventors Event Notices

For Entrepreneur news/events go to:
<http://www.gleg.org/>.

This is the Michigan entrepreneur group based in Ann Arbor

Barcodes Online

Need a UPC or EAN barcode number?
Try online at: www.barcodestalk.com

Preparing for Attracting Capital in Renewable Energy Sector

Nov 18th 7:30 to 10:30am

MSU Management Educ. Center

811 W. Square Lake, Troy

Call (586) 843-2633 for reservations

Officers And Directors

Mike Ball

President

810-245-5599

michaelball@

turbousa.com

Bill Thomas

Vice-President

810-664-1500

wthomas@

gfn.org

Marty Sovis
Secretary/Treasurer
810-659-6741
msovis@
comcast.net

Mike Wiley
Evaluation
810-691-4451
mwiley1111@
aol.com

Alex Kiwior
Evaluation
248-652-3258
akiwior@
flash.net

Ron Kilponen
Legal
248-344-7132
kilponen@
bignet.net

Fred Elvin
Information
248-652-6945
felvin@
sbeglobal.net

Don Wildfong
Marketing/Historian
810-645-0891
dwildfong@
earthlink.net

Jim Harris
Membership
810-621-3468
harris03@
charter.net

Bill Brabenec
At Large
810-724-2722
brab@
tir.com

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Corporation

