

INVENTORS COUNCIL OF MID-MICHIGAN

P. O. Box 311, Flushing, Michigan 48433

www.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 by providing education and business networking.

Founded by Robert (Bob) Ross in 1995

We meet on the second Thursday of every month at:
Walli's Restaurant, 1341 S. Center Rd Burton, Michigan
Two blocks south of I-69 at Exit 139

As a non-profit, Our Meetings are Open to the Public
We appreciate a donation of \$5.00 at the Door

Volume 2018

Next Meeting Thursday, October 11, 2018 - 7:00 pm

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October Agenda:

- Quarterly e-team Report
- Steps to apply for a trademark
- Discussion on "field trip" to 100K ideas at the Ferris Building in Flint for November meeting
- Panel Review participants
- Thumb Region Small Business Competition – 1st & 2nd place awards. – move unto Regional Competition
- VetBiz Central Open House on November 8th – MCC Regional Technology Center
- Podcast presentation
- Networking

Upcoming Events:

- Advanced Communication and Sales Strategies Featuring Michael Jeffreys. Free Event, Dinner included: Thursday 10/11/18 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM at Flint Elks Lodge, 7177 E. Maple Ave, Grand Blanc. RSVP by Oct 9th at wwwchamberevent@yesmidwest.com
- SBDC Business Workshops: www.sbdcmichigan.org
- MiQuest October Calendar of Events: www.MiQuest.org
- Flint New Tech Meeting is open to public at Factory Two on Tuesday 10/9/18. Contact Dan Kurin, Coordinator at 989-225-8754
- I-69 Thumb Region Catapult Small Business Competition – Entry Deadline is November 1st, for details www.i-69thumbregion.org
- How to Buy or Sell a Business: Washtenaw Community College, October 11th Greater Washtenaw SBDC. \$50 pre-Registration required <http://bit.ly/BuySellOctober2018>

September Minutes:

- Wrap up and Discussion from attending the MIC Expo in East Lansing
- Discussion of interest in field trip to FerrisWheel 100K
- Interested members to sit on our Panel Review
- Various training sessions available in Genesee County
- Speaker: Podcast presentation
- Networking

Inventor Resources

Michigan Inventor Clubs

- Grand Rapids Inventors Network
www.grinventorsnetwork.org
- Inventors Council of Mid-Michigan
www.inventorscouncil.org
- Jackson Inventors Network
www.jacksoninventors.org
- MidMichigan Innovation Center
www.mmic.us
- Muskegon Inventors Network
www.muskegoninventorsnetwork.org
- Inventors Association of Metro Detroit
www.inventoriamd.org
- Lansing Inventors Network
www.facebook.com/LansingInventorsNetwork

National Affiliations

- Inventor Group of America
www.inventleader.org
- National Inventors Association of America
www.uiausa.org

ICMM Officers & Directors

President: Marty Sovis 810-659-6741

msovis@comcast.net

Vice-Pres: Ken Yee 586-596-4137

gmadesign@comcast.net

Secretary: Mary Kordyban 313-481-1391

mkordyban1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Marty Sovis 810-659-6741

msovis@comcast.net

Director: Rick Mason 810-449-3643

xyzmason@aol.com

Director: Mike Wiley 810-687-1900

mwiley1111@aol.com

Director: Dwayne Towns

dbl.towns@gmail.com

Director: James White 517-381-1960

jimsicmm@inventorhome.com

Invention Review Panel

For an objective evaluation and priceless feedback, present your invention ideas to 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 input you need to make decisions during the stages of getting your product to market.

We ask for a \$25.00 donation for non-members. The Panel meets at 6:00 pm prior to each meeting. You must e-mail our Panel Chairman Marty Sovis to request a Pre-evaluation form and schedule a time.

msovis@comcast.net

President's Note:

Before I get started, I want to remind those of you who have your products ready for customers to take advantage of the upcoming holiday season. Get your products on Amazon, e-bay, and other web sales media early so shoppers can see them before they buy other items. On that note, remember to look at your competition and see what advertising "gimmicks" they will be using this holiday season. And to those who say, "hey, it isn't even Thanksgiving yet!", must I remind you that Home Depot already has all their Christmas decorations on display; and they were out last week.

I also want to remind you of the various training sessions and webinars that are available in our area for those who would like information on developing your business. Genesee and Oakland Counties have so much to offer in free seminars and training sessions. I supply contact information for you in the "Upcoming Events" section of our Newsletter each month and also send out e-mails to members as new sessions are sent to me.

Now let's cover a little about Intellectual Property. We have always suggested that an inventor should be more concerned about getting a product designed and made than getting a patent. If you don't have a product what good is a patent? Then when you have a viable product, if you need to get help to move it along, we suggest submitting a provisional patent application which will give you 12 months to develop your product and the opportunity to show it to others while you are looking for manufacturers, licensors, or buyers; plus you can use "patent pending" on your packaging. It also could save you a lot of cash if you license your idea to a company and they cover the cost of the utility patent based on your provisional application.

We also suggested that you may consider getting a trademark and putting your product in the marketplace first, so customers will associate your item as the first or original item on the market.

After reading an article by Don Debelak recently, I thought another option is also available depending on what your product is. That is a design patent. It used to be that design patents were the patent you got if it didn't work out to get a utility patent and you wanted some kind of protection for your item. But in the last few years, recent cases strengthened design patents and redefined how design patent infringement is determined. The short of it is this: Previously, when deciding design infringement, the court required verbal descriptions of the design. These descriptions were easy to pick apart because often attention was focused on a part of the design rather than the design as a whole. Now the court allows the pictures in the patent to stand for themselves and puts the design as a whole, not just certain aspects of it in the center of the case. Pictures are much harder to pick apart. So, one more thing to consider as you walk your way toward getting that product to market and trying to save some cash.

Remember, have fun with your invention!