

Inventors' Network

Volume 7

of the Capital Area [INCA]

Issue 5

May 17 Meeting to be on 3rd Monday at NIH, Bldg 31C 6C10 5:30 - 8:30. INCA meetings are on **3rd Mondays** for the rest of the year.

Confirm to the last moment by looking at <http://inca.interspeed.net>.

When referring to our website, it is often useful to remind a new user about the absence of "www".

INCA / USPTO SATURDAY SEMINAR June 12 1999 09:00 - 15:00+

Patent Academy, CS4 1745 Jefferson Davis Highway

Costs: Pre-registration \$20 with priority seat # till 2 June Late registration \$25 till full.

[Academy seating is limited to 80 persons.*]

Lectures and Laboratory Experience : "Structuring Claims"

Interchange w Examiners : "Electronic Searching"

Look to <http://inca.interspeed.net> for a registration form. Then beat the crowd.

BLUE RIDGE INVENTORS CLUB (BRIC) MESSAGE

Mac Woodward, President of BRIC, (mac@luckycat.com) shared his comments about things our local inventors need to know. Our title for his talk was "Bringing Independent Inventors into Main-stream Visibility".

Mac distributed copies of product descriptions for properties developed by BRIC members. These hard-copy offerings, with objectives similar to our internet offerings, seemed to provide additional thought about bringing closure between property owners and development-oriented investors. Mac's remarks emphasized the basic need of inventor groups: Find Markets. Identical copies of his club's current offerings had been distributed at Georgetown University's enterprise panel on April 13.

Mac's red page said: "The inventors (cited) have agreed and signed our presentation contract to offer these concepts and inventions to license, sell, negotiate the technology and do business with interested parties."

Mac also floated an initial "think paper" of ways to encourage independent and "stand alone" inventor / entrepreneurs.

A Foundation or Institute would combine resources from inventors in much the same way that agricultural coops have long prospered. The institute would offer professional-level marketing, development and independent oversight for high-merit intellectual properties. Property owners would commit to agreements similar to those offered by far-sighted Universities that share commitment, resources and royalties throughout the life of selected patents and trademarks. Grants from charitable institutions would help fuel a start up.

The foundation might consider sponsoring economic research within the USPTO to justify a schedule of patent fees more suitable for 1-10 person firms currently defined as "small entities, along with bigger firms up to 499 persons.

Note 8th page of chapter 5 in Merrick's Stand Alone Inventor recommends the Patent office should set lower fees --- perhaps only 10 to 25% of the fees for a company like IBM or H-P.

A handout cited 8 possible contributions by such an Institution.

Other questions about WIN-WIN on Page 6 are intended to trigger your critique toward enhancing the role and productivity of independent inventors.

As Mac held the role of teacher, he displayed two books of current interest:

Cristensen, The Innovator's Dilemma of Harvard Business Press 1998 describes why the simple, lower-cost innovation is usually a threat to the entire staff of on-going enterprises. He reveals strategies by which "disruptive technologies" have entered flourished in the marketplace.

Merrick, Robert G. Stand Alone Inventor! Lee Publishing Co. Box 2277 Sunnyvale, Ca 94087 \$19.95 + Postage. Ray got his copy by logging onto www.amazon.com and searching for "inventor".

Merrick's book has a foreword by Don Kelly, now head of the *Office of Independent Inventor Programs*.

Merrick describes how four of his simple products each have yielded more than \$1 million in sales. His rule of "Stand-Alone Inventor" is: If I keep my invention simple enough, I can finance and promote it myself and I can get it produced and distributed at a profit, all by myself. His internal rules are:

1. Go with what you already know.
2. Think up products for BIG MARKETS.
3. Invent Patentable products.
4. Keep products small.
5. Design "User-friendly" products.
6. Develop products that offer repeat sales.
7. Devise products with low manufacturing cost.
8. Keep initial cash investment small.
9. Have others do your manufacturing.
10. Price your product to yield a good profit.

One of our members said to Ray, "We should do that too." -for hard-copy hand-outs of offerings.

LICENSING SUCCESS

Larry Martin and his wife brought their carpenter-tool prototype that saves up to 1-hour a day for carpenters that are building stairways. He related how he had developed, refined, patented and found potential producer / distributors for his property. He illustrated how it worked and answered someone's question "What was your toughest issue?"

His answer was "shrinkage". His experience in prototyping included plastic casting as well as other plastic fabrication methods. While the cast products offered very low tooling costs, the thermoset chemistry included unplanned shrinkage so that the cast item was smaller than the pattern. Our prior president, Phill Shaw, renewed a theme that *INCA members may have reason to pay special attention to form characteristics as well as unit costs and typical tooling costs for plastic materials in a prototype mode.*

Applause was instant when Larry announced that his product is now under contract with the best producer of carpenter equipment.

MORE APPLAUSE

Ray announced that INCA finances are now based on 54 fully paid-up memberships. This represents almost 1/3 of our newsletter distribution. [Applause followed] (Another 47 newsletters are gratuities to other clubs, organizations and prior speakers). Remaining candidates for payment are 31 for which we have name & address, another 18 for which we have phone numbers and another 16 having E-mail. We plan to start

reminders with e-mail. Other strategies are expected to pare the remaining 49 by our July mailing. This paring would reduce printing and mailing costs by \$33/month.

SPEAKER-PROGRAM

Our May 17 meeting is being organized by **Dennis Van Dusen**, [vandusen@cais.com]. Our INCA meeting will pilot-test a “Concepts / Invention Workshop”. Dennis outlined this series of Capital-area workshops at the start of our March meeting. At that time he distributed forms for a “Concept Paper”. The content of a **Concept form is page 7** of this issue. Individuals are invited to send this form with their concept to Dennis. Last minute presenter-forms may be offered during the before-program networking also.

The workshop will also obtain volunteers for group moderators. The forms for presenters and moderators will be reviewed by Dennis’ team while he presents a short education block to cover:

- * **Lessons learned in other workshop environments**
- * **How “value” is generated**
- * **Process for Innovation and Commercialization**
- * **An environment for conceptualization**
- * **Investment process for projects of substance**
- * **Protecting concepts**
- * **What inventors tend to want**
- * **Utilization of resources**

The rules and practices for the workshop sessions will be described and the audience divided.

Mentoring sessions of approximately 15 minutes per presented concept to include mentor and audience response:

- A concept is expressed and refined with concept explanation and value additions.**
- Commercialization and directive-focus follow.**
- Protection strategies for intellectual property considered**
- Business formation (with a balance of talent) is discussed**
- Marketing with definition and segmentation outlined**
- Financing converts aforementioned considerations into economic terms and marshals:**
 - Deal Structure evaluation**
 - Likely Investor demands**
 - Program requirements and recommended posture.**

A growing, evolving concept is summarized. Moderator / Mentor(s) suggest direction & offer advice. Audience reaction is noted. “Beta test” records reactions. Division of the audience into groups of fewer than 30 offers a close relationship to presenters, moderators, mentors and recorders.

Multiple presenters and focused moderators permit multiple concepts within a workshop. **Refinement of workshop topics draws upon an inherent business drama to engage angels, venture capitalists and other investment resources into direct interaction with inventors, managers, attorneys and other entrepreneurs.** Visibility of program segments offers a “what might be possible” character for one or more of the multiple chapters for well-considered business plans.

FUTURE INCA PROGRAMS

On June 21 **Frampton Ellis** [fellis@anatomicresearch.com] will be sharing marketing experience and new avenues from his role of an international licensed inventor. As many of you know, this past summer Raoul took photographs of the front of a Scandinavian street car on which Frampton’s licensed shoe was advertised. Frampton’s patent is 5,544,429. The more electronically-adventurous may want to find this number on <http://www.uspto.gov> to experience the free search and complete printing of patents right on your own computer. See Denny Lennon’s abstract of instruction on page 5.

Beginning again in June, the program chairman invites members to reduce their status-reports into 2-5 minute presentations, with pictures, sketches, and prototype hardware. We can probably handle up to 4 reports per meeting. Call Ray (703) 971 9216 to get your time-slot.

July 19 **Fontelle Gilbert** [fontelleg@aol.com] is currently scheduled to coach us about enhancing the strengths that we know within ourselves and within our networks. INCA members may want to bring their “significant other” as guest and co-learner.

August 16 includes some short-term planning for a Sept family picnic. August is Inventor’s month. This month is a good time to open your favorite browser for topics about inventor and invention. Volunteers may want to report to our meeting about their most interesting research findings.

HOSPITALITY

We have reason to believe that the number of INCA guests might equal or exceed the INCA members for our May meeting. This means that all INCA members will be “administratively delegated” to be special hosts. Delegated hosts will be better prepared for their roles if they come earlier than usual, wear their green name badges and initiate actions to make our guests welcome.

Our guests have been invited from the MIT graduate roster of the Capital area, and will be screened for a manageable number by Dennis.

Guests, like us, need to be queried as to their personal strengths and their interest in invention as a career or hobby. Some of our standard inquiries are expected to work just fine:

Do you have an inventive project that you want to talk about?

What aspect of inventive do you like most, and what parts do feel you need greatest assistance?

Does your special expertise seem to relate to my project?

Who else, or what kind of expertise would you like to perform informational networking?

During our April meeting, Denny Lennon reported on downloading patents and their graphics from <http://www.uspto.gov>

Here is a followup— for “homework preparation” that might optimize the USPTO & INCA 12 June “Saturday Seminar” for the super-prepared participant.

Denny: I have been able to use the new imaging available from <http://www.uspto.gov>.

These are the steps that seem to work. I am using Windows 98 with Internet Explorer 4.0. I don't know about using Netscape or other Browsers.

1. You need to download a TIFF reader from somewhere into a file folder. A free TIFF reader can be downloaded from Medical Informatics 'Engineering, it is called AlternaTIFF. To find this TIFF, follow this route:

A. Either shortcut to the web site of step E or

bring up site <http://www.uspto.gov/patft/index.html>

B. Under "Full-Text Database", click on "How to access full-page images!"

- C. In the first paragraph click on "Medical Informatics Engineering's "AlternaTIFF""
- D. On the next page click on "AlternaTIFF (TIFF image browser plug-in)"
- E. This takes you to <http://www.mieweb.com/alternatiff/>
Click on AlternaTIFFv1.18(download site 1)

I downloaded this TIFF into a folder under "My Documents". Instructions for downloading the TIFF reader and using it can be found under the AlternaTIFF ReadMe button.
<http://www.mieweb.com/alternatiff/alternatiff.html>

- 2. Next you need to click on the downloaded TIFF file and it will self execute. My computer prompted me to put it into C:\{rpgra_1\INTERN_1\Plugins, which I accepted. It was necessary to check the little box marked Fix Registry for IE, otherwise it will not work.
- 3. Shut down the computer and restart it.
- 4. Bring up a patent on the PTO site. <http://www.uppto.gov/patfi/index.html>
- 5. Click on the Image button in the center, near the top of the page.
- 6. This will bring up an image of the first page of the patent. There are buttons there for paginating through the patent.
- 7. Use the print function of the TIFF reader rather than the print function of the Browser.

Note: Denny also provided a much more comprehensive instruction. I will try to attach the bigger report if you ask raybik@aol.com.

Good Luck Denny Lennon

Webmaster, Raoul, has been to Australia. However your editor gets reports that friends of INCA are looking at <http://inca.interspeed.net>

Peter Drucker's 1985 book, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, lists the sources of opportunity through Innovation in "Internal" and "External" categories:

Internally-Driven

- 1. Unexpected success — why did it occur?
- 2. Incongruity between: what happened! vs - what was supposed to happen?
- 3. Inadequacies in an underlying process --- that is taken for granted
- 4. Changes in ---market structure that catch almost everyone by surprise

Externally-Driven

- 5. Demographic changes, brought about by
War
Medical Improvements, or even
Superstition (closely-held errors in belief systems)
- 6. Economy-driven changes in perception, mood and fashion
- 7. Awareness, caused by new knowledge

Can “Helping” include “WIN-WIN” as well as “good will”?

Our INCA motto continues to be “Inventors helping inventors”. The informal networking prior to and after our monthly meetings illustrates how such personal interchange become valuable.

One set of my intellectual properties is pictured briefly on our website. <http://inca.interspeed.net>. It is a sketch of interacting parts for a bicycle shifter. I am glad to have it there. However, I have not come to expect that some bicycle manufacturer will find the website, then find me, then plead with me to let him license a still untested device. In this case, issues of market reality have greater than 99% chance of overcoming a passive dream.

[Many of us get a series of letters and brochures, soon after issuance of our patents, encouragingly offering their expert services in finding manufacturers who want to produce products like ours. Their offer would leaves us with a proportion of the anticipated royalties, and yet require considerable expenses for the inventor to pay for starting their process.] The Federal Trade Commission conducted a series of sting operations on originators of this kind of offers. Most did not execute their promises in good faith.

Dr Benson, in February, reported that development of inventions has been greatly accelerated when the inventor was assured of some royalty out of commercially successful products, and the developer/investor acquired a license on which to base an exclusive, limited-time market for the fruits of his risk and expertise.

- H1. How would a win-win system be possible within the independent inventor community?
- H2. What common-base agreements are prudent and necessary to enhance the spirit of “helping”?
- H3. In what ways can “win-win” relationships bring benefit mutually to the helped and the helpers?
- H4. What criteria will prevent either party from feeling like victim or rescuer?

If these or similar questions bring about a natural, productive response, please share your thoughts by way of raybik@aol.com or call (703) 971 9216.

----For possible inventor participation in the May 17 workshop---- **Application for Presenting at Concepts / Inventions Workshops.**

Presenters will have an interested audience of 5-30 people; a responding panel of 1-3 people.
Send following information to Mr Dennis Van Dusen vandusen@cais.com or fax 301 907 9393.

- 1. Name** _____
- 2. Position** _____
- 3. Company** _____
- 4. Phone`** _____
- 5. E-mail** _____

6. Company Involvement if any:

7. Do you have a written concept statement for your invention? () Yes () No () Attached

8. Please provide a 2-sentence conceptual explanation of your invention:

9. What area are you most concerned about regarding your invention? Please rank:

- Marketability of the invention**
- Filling out the invention concept.**
- Forming a business to promote the invention**
- Protecting your rights**
- Conducting tests**
- Finding ways to produce the invention economically.**

10. Is there anything else we should know about your invention, its progress or your firm?

11. Please attach an executive summary of your business plan if you have one.

TRIZ - ANALYTICAL INVENTING

While processes for enhancing the art of invention openly supported within the US, we now read reports that innovation was severely frowned upon in the Soviet Union, particularly while Stalin was in power.

Many of the US teachings about creative problem- solving dealt with opening a person's mind to intuitive possibilities and formed special links between psychology and science.

In contrast, a creative young man in the prior USSR, Mr Genrich Altshuller, invented in the 9th & 10th grades and obtained serious patents when he was 20. He invented and had a drive to help others who wanted to invent. Yet he could not find a written methodology for inventing, so he developed one, now called TRIZ.

Altshuller's TRIZ approach was "removal of a technical contradiction with the help of certain [40] principles." An TRIZ-using inventor needs to know these principles and the algorithms in which they fit. Altshuller based TRIZ on his analysis of 200,000 patents. He concluded that about 1500 "technical contradictions" [problems] would yield quickly to application of his fundamentals.

Source: Altshuller, 40 Principles, Technical Innovation Center Worcester Ma 1997

June:

New member, Kevin Downey, had intended to share a 2 - 5 minute synopsis of his project at our April meeting. His block in May is dependent on time being available around the concept workshops or on being selected as a concept to work on.

INVENTOR QUESTIONS AND THOUGHTS

-about broad, independent claims:

Convention in writing and in examining claims is to expect the first claim to be the most broad.

It will have the fewest number of elements.

It will use the most-broad terms for each element.

Whereby the claim will not be within the prior art, and yet will cover possible approaches of others that, on seeing this property, might propose a near look-alike to achieve the same result.

(Mastery of claim-breath writing within a technical fields implies that the master will retain

insights that can add high value for both present and future.)

-about narrow, dependent claims:

Convention in claim negotiation is to support broad, independent claims with more narrow dependent claims.

Note: Should the examiner discover prior art that covers the most broad claim, a substitute claim can be combined from described elements within the dependent claims that are supportedly disclosed within drawings, specifications and other claims.

A format for claims will include a name for the claim, a list of elements such as items, methods, or steps, and how these elements cooperatively interact with one another to provide a working whole.

Reality in writing and examining claims is that almost anything can be awarded a patent as its definition is narrowed in depth to include greater and greater depth of unique features--- Of course an extremely narrow patent may be easy to “design around” with an equivalently narrow patent revealing different means to do a common task.

Conclusion: Claims for a breakthrough technology or a new use for a known product can be very broad, with few dependent claims. Licensees may be the ones who add their proprietary style to their products through multiple dependent claims.

Conversely, a claim set for mature technology tends to be narrow, with many dependent claims.

[A viable broad claim is usually much more valuable than a lot of narrow ones.]

Words of Claims: The writer gets to select the words within his claim, but

A same word must mean the same thing in any claim, specification or drawing.

In a second and subsequent use of a word, it may be described as “the” or “said” word.

There are more examples in Pressman’s “write it yourself”. However, skill comes in the doing. However, an initial set of claims is vital to be assured that drawings and specifications are sufficient for anyone to do a viable set of claims.