



**Inventors' Digest® Celebrates
National Inventors' Month® by
Helping Novice Inventors Achieve
Invention Success**

*"Best Of" Edition Available Free of Charge
through August; Providing 21 years of Ad-
vice on What TO Do and What NOT To Do*

In honor of National Inventors' Month® – August, Inventors' Digest® magazine will unveil a compilation of its best and brightest articles from the past two decades, providing the first downloadable volume free of charge throughout August, to help novice inventors move from idea to product development success.

"Knowing what NOT to do is probably more important than knowing what to do," says Joanne Hayes-Rines, publisher of Inventors' Digest®. "I've met thousands of people who had what could have been a great idea, but they did everything wrong, burning through money and time. Their idea was doomed before it ever had a chance. We've brought together our best tips and advice from the last two decades to help inventors avoid these pitfalls."

"Inventing 101: What Every First Time Inventor MUST Know," is the first of a 20 volume series of the Best of Inventors' Digest®, and it is available at no charge during August.

In addition to serving as a resource to first-time inventors, the "Best of" publication will also be of interest to policy-makers and advocates who work on intellectual property issues.

The first volume outlines how inventors can find trustworthy companies and individuals to help guide them from invention to market, how to determine if an idea has market potential, and how to spot a scam company. "We know that a lot of people have, unfortu-

nately, lost money with fraudulent invention marketing companies," says Hayes-Rines. "So we are offering a bonus article that explains what they can do to get their money back."

Volume I of The Best of Inventors' Digest® can be downloaded free at www.inventorsdigest.com during National Inventors' Month® – August.

***LAST HARD COPY ISSUE
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Calling all Inventors: Six ways to make money on your big idea

By Ben Stark, Vice President,
Marketing/Advertising, for Faultless Starch /
Bon Ami Company

Learn how to turn your dream into a true money-making invention. Use these six tips to build a foundation for success in today's competitive mass retail market.

1. **Protect yourself.** The first step to success is making the investment to protect yourself. It can cost anywhere from \$500 or even \$10,000 to patent your idea, but it's worth it. This is an area you don't want to skimp on, even if it means you have less to spend elsewhere. Without a strong patent, you're more vulnerable to dishonest marketers and get-rich quick schemes and less attractive to the reputable marketers. Ensure the patent is in your name only; don't assign your patent to any other entities.
2. **Do your market research.** Market research doesn't have to cost big bucks. In fact, it can be as simple as mailing or e-mailing a quick survey to your friends and family. Ask questions that will help you determine whether there is a need for your product, if it's appealing and if it solves a problem. Ask for honest answers and evaluations. You may find you need to change a few things about your product, but this initial step can save you valuable time and money later on.
3. **Develop a real prototype.** Marketers are looking for real products, not just ideas. Take the time to purchase your own materials and design a prototype by hand, or investigate other options. Enlist the services of an industrial design company to build a good prototype. Or try your local college or university. Many have industrial design departments that provide this service. However, avoid the urge to mass produce your product at this stage in the process. You want to get some sales experience and develop a marketing strategy before investing the money in mass production.
4. **Get some sales experience.** Most marketers want to see a little sales success before agreeing to represent a new product. It can be as simple as visiting your local hardware store and pitching your new product to the owner. This is a great way to get some feedback. Retailers know what sells and why, so they can lend valuable insight. Plus, if you are able to find a few stores that are willing to sell your product, and you

can demonstrate a sales history, it's more likely a marketer will agree to represent your product.

5. **Create a video demo.** To entice a marketer to choose your product, it's important to include a demo that shows your product in action. This doesn't have to be anything more than a home video, but a video is the best approach. Drawings just don't do a good job of demonstrating how a new product works. Real people using the real product is always best. Be sure to record close-up views of the product, along with several action shots. Talk about the product, what problem it solves and highlight any bells and whistles that make it unique.
6. **Find a reputable backer.** Once you've patented your idea, conducted market research, developed a prototype, created a video demo and have some sales experience, it's time to find a marketer to help you sell and promote your product in the mass retail market. It's important to spend time researching companies. Generally, it's best to avoid all-in-one shops. The more work you do yourself, the better. Look for a marketing company that is credible and that has established relationships with mass retailers. Experience is of the essence here. Beware of those who seem dishonest or appear to take advantage of inventors and/or manufacturers by charging high fees. If possible, ask to talk to other inventors or manufacturers the company represents.

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Source: Ben Stark, Vice President, Marketing/Advertising, for Faultless Starch / Bon Ami Company. <http://www.faultless.com>

Ben offers skills from a background in journalism, advertising, product management, business administration, art direction and direct marketing. He has worked for major institutions and companies such as:

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- The Museum of Modern Art
- THE NEW YORK TIMES



Report on the June 15, 2006 Meeting of the Subcommittee on Courts, the Internet, and Intellectual Property:

"Patent Trolls: Fact or Fiction?"

By John Melius, Inventors Network of the Capital Area

On July 15th, the Subcommittee on Courts, the Internet, and Intellectual Property had their seventh meeting on Patent reform legislation. The meeting was supposed to deal with "Patent Trolls" and the chairman summarized a Patent Troll as someone who creates or owns patents or intellectual property of suspect legal integrity. This property is then used to extract unjust royalties from large corporations as is purported by many of these corporations in asking for patent reform.

There were three witnesses representing the interests of large corporations such as Amazon.com and Time/Warner and there was a fourth witness that was a blessing for inventors. This witness was Dean Kamen. The entire meeting can be seen on webcast through this link, Oversight Hearing on "Patent Trolls: Fact or Fiction?" , or through this link, <http://judiciary.house.gov/oversight.aspx?ID=245>. If you are interested in the future of patents, you may want to visit the site and click on the "video webcast" button. During the meeting, it was generally concluded that no one could really define a "Patent Troll", but there was a consensus among the larger firms being represented that something should still be done about them.

In Kamen's opening statement he noted that some people might call him a "Patent Troll" since he now limits his activities to developing product ideas with the sole purpose of licensing them, but doesn't try to manufacture or market them. He believes that large companies are much better suited to manufacture and market products than to develop new products. He is better suited for developing these new products than manufacturing or marketing them. He made a very strong point that the larger companies had most of the resources in his business dealings and didn't really need patent protection. On the other hand, his patent for his intellectual property was the only thing that he had on his side of the table. He concluded his opening remarks by saying, ". . .the patent system was intended to help everybody to be able to participate in innovation."

During the meeting, it was noted that everyone else in the discussion was a lawyer except for Kamen. He played this card very well. When others were talking about re-balancing the patent system, Kamen made sure that the balance included the owner of patent property. When there was a move to decrease the rights of the patent owner, he argued that property of any sort in this country had little value if the owner did not have "exclusive" rights to the property. This subject was picked up by Congressman Issa who read the part of the US Constitution applying to patents and quoted the word "exclusive" from that text when applying to patents.

It was interesting to see the dynamics of the meeting change because of Kamen's testimony and skill at making the concepts of the subject personal and yet broadly stated within the normal bounds of common law. Anyone who is inventing and hopes to license his invention owes thanks to Dean for his efforts on the behalf of inventors.

Dean Kamen did his part to help to abate the wave of change that large corporations are trying to bring to the patent system. Please consider doing your part to help keep America strong with a strong patent system. The non-innovative types have a campaign to try to remove any real protection offered by patents and we must be diligent in our efforts to keep this from happening.



The 2006 Henkel Innovation Trophy

Be on the look out for more information about the 2006 Henkel Innovation Trophy.

The Henkel Innovation Trophy will be an opportunity for inventors to submit product inventions to the Henkel Corporation for review. **Cash awards will be paid for the winning submissions.** The inventions need to be covered by an issued patent or a patented application that has been published by the US Patent Office. **The submission period will start in October and run through December 2006.** Categories of interest include Laundry Care, Personal Care, Household Cleaning, Air Care, Insect Control, and Adhesives, Sealants and Surface Treatments. Some of Henkel's North American brands include The Dial Corporation's: Dial, Purex, Renuzit and Combat brands, Schwarzkopf's brands: L.A. LOOKS and Dep, and Consumer Adhesive's brands: Duck tape and Loctite.

More information will be sent to UIA members in September 2006.



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Orange Co. Convention Ctr., Orlando, FL
www.tgifcon.com

September 8-9, 2006
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Inventors Conference**
PTO Campus, Alexandria, VA
Cathie.Kirik@USPTO.GOV

October 14, 2006
*****3rd Annual InventorFest**
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County, Cincinnati, OH
Call (513)665-3359

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*****Yankee Invention Expo**
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www.yankeeinventionexpo.org

November 8-10, 2006
*****Paperworld USA Trade Fair**
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