

# Inventors COUNCIL

OF MID-MICHIGAN

PO Box 232, Lennon Michigan 48449

Web Site: [INVENTORSCOUNCIL.ORG](http://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 FIFTEEN

NEXT MEETING THURSDAY, September 8, 2011, 7:00PM

NUMBER NINE

## Thursday September 8, 2011 Meeting

Our guest speaker tonight will be Aaron Haman of of The Town Office of Flushing an entrepreneurs incubator for inventors and small business.

Aaron is a member of ICMM and he also runs a successful e-Commerce site.

Aaron has a passion to help support Michigan start-ups and has lots of contacts in the investor community.

Join our inventors are in for a great night of learning and networking.

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

## Thursday August 11, 2011 Meeting

We want to thank Bill McHenry, President of Entrepreneur Sales and Marketing for a great presentation and teaching about marketing. One of the things he stressed was don't limit your marketing to only your primary target audience. Think of others that could use your invention also. Thanks Bill and keep in touch.

### Some truisms in life

"The best helping hand you can have is right on the end of your own arm"

"I can't is a coward to lazy to try"

"A workman is worth his hire, if you won't work for free, don't expect others to do it either"

## "ICMM Invention 2011" (continues Part 7)

Tonight we will be continuing the development of the "Cubicle Cop". We are now in the sourcing and manufacturing phase and are now ready to make the tools and get ready for production.

All these steps take time and effort. We have done everything ourselves, not just to save money, but to provide hands on training to our inventors of real world tasks that you actually would have to do to create your product. We now have a show ready scaled model (Prototype) and a complete CAD file for manufacturing to use and give us an estimate of costs and timing.

We will now shift to packaging, displays, pricing, and sales and marketing. We need more members to help us with these tasks. It is a great opportunity to learn real world inventing steps. You don't have to be an expert at anything, just come help the "Cubicle Cop" team and learn and have fun as you go.

Don't miss any meeting and get involved in the most valuable training opportunities a new inventor will ever have. See you at the September 8 meeting.

## Most Important Inventing Questions

The three most important questions an inventor can ask – and the three questions EVERY inventor should ask before launching down that path of pain and expense to commercialization are....

### WILL IT WORK?

That's right, not every great idea will actually work. Many inventors have their bar napkin at the ready just set to solve the world's problems with nothing more than imagination. The reality is that imagination can't be monetized. We know that in the case of innovation (an unproven theory) this is the standard. However even innovators have an obligation to "imagine" their designs in a well thought out, practical, and producible way.

If you are an inventor (a proven theory) on the other hand, you have likely taken the time to prototype the theory and proven the end result can be accomplished.

Either way - Will It Work? Is always the first question the business side of the equation will be asking.

ICMM  
Home of the Happy Inventors



## MARKETING

Hints from the Fog  
by Mike Ball, President



### Most Important Inventing Questions (cont.)

#### WILL ANYONE CARE?

So it works, but will anyone really care that it works? Another way of asking this question is to ask - How large a problem is it solving? Innovating and inventing are both the process of solving problems. So it would stand to reason that success in commercialization is tied in some way to the size of the problem the solution addresses.

I have a dresser in my master bedroom that blocks the light switch. It's very difficult for me to reach the switch when I enter the room. So I break out the bar napkin and sketch up what I think is a great new device for reaching over the dresser to flip the switch – I have innovated a solution. I then head to the basement and build the device based largely on the bar napkin design. I have invented the device and I can test it. It works great! I have a new product for turning on and off the light switch when your dresser is blocking it.

But who cares? Well I do, but I already have the device - bringing us to the last and most important question of commercialization.

#### WILL ENOUGH OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO CARE BE WILLING TO GIVE YOU MONEY TO SUPPORT A REAL MARKET?

In the case of the new light switch flipping tool we can surmise the answer to that question is likely "No". The fact is unless you have something blocking the light switch you have no need for that product – and we all know that unless you have a need (because you also have the problem) you are very unlikely to take out your wallet and pay for the solution.

Great product ideas die at lots of stages along the journey, but more product ideas die at question number three than any other place. Because this is the question that demands you address the dollars. It's the question that when answered honestly will tell an inventor if he/she has something worth investing in.

So start every project with these three little questions, and be honest with yourself, because I promise once you get past your family and friends others will have no problem telling you like it is.

A reprint from Mark Reyland a professional inventor and product developer. The information contained in this blog is based on years of taking products to market

**We are Inventors Helping Inventors  
Using the Product Development Process**

The Events on the following page(s) are listed to try to help inventors and friends of ICMM club to network and learn from other organizations and resources.

### 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's a \$25.00 Donation for a Review. The Panel meets at 6:15pm before each meeting. Call Panel Chairman Marty Sovis at 810-659-6741 for an appointment.

Review Panel Members  
Marty Sovis Rick Mason  
Jim White

**Bob Ross 1919 - 2004**  
*Inventors Education Column*

### *Inventors Resources*

**Michigan Inventors Clubs**  
Inventors Council of Mid-Michigan  
[Inventorscouncil.org](http://Inventorscouncil.org)

**Muskegon Inventors Network**  
[Muskegoninventorsnetwork.org](http://Muskegoninventorsnetwork.org)

**Grand Rapids Inventors Network**  
[GRinventorsnetwork.org](http://GRinventorsnetwork.org)

**Jackson Inventors Network**  
[Jacksoninventors.org](http://Jacksoninventors.org)

**MidMichigan Innovation Center**  
[www.mmic.us](http://www.mmic.us)

#### Officers and Directors

Mike Ball <i>President</i> 810-245-5599 michaelball@ turbousa.com	Rick Mason <i>Vice-President</i> 810-659-7935 xyzmason @aol.com
Marty Sovis <i>Secretary- Treasurer</i>	Mike Wiley <i>Director</i> 810-691-4451 mwiley1111@ aol.com
Roger Stolpin <i>Director</i> 248-634-2129 Finite-007.att.net	
Ron Kilponen <i>Legal</i> 248-344-7132 kilponen@ bignet.net	Mary Kordyban <i>Director</i> mkordyban1@gmail.com
Jim Harris <i>Member- ship</i> 810-621-	Bill Brabene <i>Director</i> 810-724-2722 brab@ tir.com

A 501-C-3  
All-Volunteer  
Corporation

## Links for ICMM Inventors to Review to find networking opportunities

### Upcoming August Highlights & Deadlines

**Thought Leaders in Entrepreneurship.***Business Review* is soliciting nominations for leaders in West Michigan that have advanced the field of entrepreneurship, gone above and beyond in advancing entrepreneurship, or broken new ground in this field. West Michigan's Thought Leaders in Entrepreneurship will be recognized in a special section of the publication on September 15 and honored on October 13 at the Grand Rapids Art Museum. Nominations are due Friday, August 19, at <http://www.mlive.com/businessreview/thoughtleaders>.

**Ann Arbor SPARK Boot Camp.** Coming up September 29-30, this is one of Michigan's best learning opportunities for tech and life science ventures. To be selected to attend, apply at <http://www.annarborUSA.org/bootcamp>. During this intense two-day program, you'll perfect your elevator pitch, executive summary and executive overview presentation – and meet one-on-one with mentors that will support and encourage your success. Registration deadline is Thursday, **September 1**.

