

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 FIFTEEN

NEXT MEETING THURSDAY, November 10, 2011, 7:00PM

NUMBER

Thursday November 10, 2011 Meeting

Our speaker tonight will come to us via Skype on the Web from Columbus, Ohio. This is new to ICMM, but we have all the equipment for video and sound.

Our guest speaker tonight will be

Chris Hawker, a professional inventor and the owner of Trident Design, LLC (www.trident-design.com). He is also a Board Member of the United

Inventors Association

(uiausa.org). Trident is a

well established invention development and industrial design firm

based in Columbus, Ohio. He and his team have successfully brought over 40 products to market. The various products have collectively sold millions of units.

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

Thursday October 13, 2011 Meeting

We want to thank Dave Allen of WOW PRODUCTS USA for his presentation on the inventing process from idea to market. It was a lively presentation with a lot of interface with our inventors.

Thanks Dave for speaking to the ICMM inventors. You are welcome anytime.

ICMM
Home of the Happy Inventors

"ICMM Invention 2011" (continues Part 9)

Tonight we will be continuing the development of the "Cubicle Cop". We are now in the sourcing and manufacturing phase. We discovered some concerns about our design by members so we voted to solve some of these issues before we proceed.

This is a safe method for an individual inventor to proceed. Slowly but surely and reduce the risk of failure as much as we can. If you get in a hurry and don't solve all your concerns before you go to production you could risk not being able to sell them and cost yourself a lot of money.

Some issues are: no pull stops on the signs, still need to determine the words on the signs, the color of the "Cubicle Cop", a stop on the signs to keep them from pushing out too far, and a method to keep the signs from pushing through the other end of the sign, as well as a test marketing review. We will make sure these issues are addressed before we commit to tooling and production. That is where our costs will get serious and we do not want to lose money.

Our inventors voted to go slow until we solve these issues before we spend the dollars to tool, produce, and package the "Cubicle Cop". This is a prudent way to do any invention and the "Cubicle Cop" is a real and marketable product, and the correct way to protect our investment dollars. The real world education our inventors are getting, is unbelievable and can be applied to any invention.

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 have come a long way.

This is where the costs of the invention gets serious. Our research, sketches, mock-ups, prototype, and CAD designs cost almost no money, just time. This is the same for all of you. There is no reason for an inventor not to get this far. You are all on the board of directors. This is our product, it is up to the members how to proceed.

You don't have to be an expert at anything, just come help the "Cubicle Cop" team with packaging, marketing, design changes, etc. 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 November 10 meeting.



MARKETING

Hints from the Fog

by Mike Ball, President



What? Two Types of Sell Sheet? (Reprint from a Mark Reyland article)

That is a Sell Sheet? Well that's simple, it's a sheet that lists the benefits and logistical information about a product, while giving the reader a graphic representation of what the product looks like.

But we can't stop there – in fact there are two types of “buyers” in the product industry, and that means there should be two types of sell sheets – and there are.

The first sell sheet we'll talk about is one for a license product. That is, the sheet is designed to show a basic product concept and function. These sell sheets are very basic and normally contain a few core things.

1. A rendered graphic image of the product
2. The problem/solution statement
3. A short list of basic consumer benefits
4. The status of any intellectual protection on the product (without dates)
5. The innovator/inventor's contact information

Because the formula of a product licensing sell sheet is so basic, and it's not designed to confer a lot of specific information, most inventors do them themselves, or have them done by a graphics person. Either way, it's important that you don't go overboard and that you depict the problem, the product and the benefits accurately

The second type of product sell sheet is a lot more complex. Because this sell sheet is designed for a retail buyer and that means you already have the product made and ready for distribution.

When you are contacting a retailer trying to get an order they need very specific information. In fact, the sell sheet is really a secondary conversation between you and that person, taking place after you have hung up the phone or left the building.

A good buyer's sell sheet takes all the variables off the table by presenting the information they need for decision making; in a way you want it presented to look best for that product. It reaffirms what you told them, documents what you told them, and passes on what you told them to others down the line who may have read the sell sheet but did not get the chance to talk with you directly.

Unlike a licensing sell sheet that can be any configuration, a Retail Sell Sheet has a formula – It's always a double sided glossy standard size sheet, and the information is presented in a specific way.

The front side of the sell sheet is pretty basic. It contains what we call a “glamour shot” (a central image of the product) a short paragraph about the problem/solution statement. “The _____ is designed to help the consumer overcome a problem doing this” -And then in bullet form, the top 5 uses for the product.

The back side on the other hand is a little more complicated. It contains what we sometimes call the “retail shot”. This image is of your product on a store shelf presented in a way that plants the image in the buyers mind to help them visualize your product in their stores.

Then it's down to business – the back side of a buyers sell sheet is about presenting them the information that they will need to understand how they can fit the product into their lineup. It should include images of the different package and display options along with this list of information important to the buyer.

1. Order lead time and fulfillment information
2. Piece size, colors, packaging and weight
3. The MSRP (Based on research not a guess)
4. Product availability date
5. Display options
6. Basic freight information
7. Minimum order information
8. Number of units in a Sub Pack, a Master Pack, and Pallet
9. Contact information including any web site you have set up for the product, your name, address, phone number, and alternate number

It should NOT however, contain any information about wholesale pricing.

As you can see there are some major differences in the terms inventor soften use to describe “Sell Sheets”. In fact, the wrong type of sell sheet to the wrong company can make you look not only unprofessional, but greatly decrease your chances of getting any kind of deal.

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

Muskegon Inventors Network
Muskegoninventorsnetwork.org

Grand Rapids Inventors Network
GRinventorsnetwork.org

Jackson Inventors Network
Jacksoninventors.org

MidMichigan Innovation Center
www.mmic.us

Officers and Directors

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Jim Harris <i>Membership</i> 810-621-	Mary Kordyban <i>Director</i> mkordyban1@gmail.com
Bill Brabene <i>Director</i> 810-724-2722 brab@tir.com	A 501-C-3 All-Volunteer Corporation

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.

Links for ICMM Inventors to Review to find networking opportunities

Upcoming November Highlights & Deadlines

Michigan Celebrates Small Business Awards Nominations Deadline - November 10. Nominations are being accepted for the prestigious Michigan Celebrates Small Business awards and 50 Companies to Watch. Nominations are due November 10. On April 26, 2012, the Michigan Celebrates Small Business awards will put the spotlight on Michigan's Rising Stars. This is Michigan's top opportunity for recognition of innovation, achievement and success. Learn more and make nominations at the <http://www.michigancelebrates.biz>

Michigan Emerging. GLEQ is supporting this day-long conference for movers, shakers, entrepreneurs and those that love Michigan and want to shape its future. Learn from Michigan's leaders how we can grow businesses across the state. Keynote presentations by Governor Rick Snyder; Tim Bryan, CEO, Galaxysystems; Miche Suboski, GLEQ Ambassador and Champion of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, LEAP, Inc.; and panel moderated by Ken Rogers, CEO, Automation Alley; plus five educational break-out sessions; resource exhibits and information, and more. Details: Monday, **November 14**, 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., COBO Conference Center, Detroit - www.MichiganEmerging.com

Accelerate Michigan Innovation Competition – Event and Gala Awards – November 15-17 – Eagle Crest Conference Center; Henry Ford Museum. 53 company semi-finalists pitch their business to compete for a Grand Prize of \$500,000 or one of another 11 in prizes. Registration is open now - [Click here](#). Exhibit opportunities are available - [Click here](#) More than 35 venture capital investors are confirmed to participate onsite. Confirmed speakers include President Coleman, U-M; Dave Egner, Executive Director, NEI, Michael Finney, CEO, MEDC, President Gilmour, WSU, Doug Rothwell, CEO, BLM, and President Simon, MSU. First link - (<http://www.eventbrite.com/event/2100537765>) Second Link - (<http://www.acceleratemichigan.org/exhibitsjob-fair-2/>)

New Enterprise Forum: Deal Killers. Join NEF at the monthly forum as it travels to Ypsilanti to host the meeting at the Accelerate Michigan Innovation Competition event location. Learn the issues that become deal killers for investors. Visit the NEF exhibitor table. Network with the participants, entrepreneurs and investors at the AMIC-hosted networking reception prior to the meeting. Details: Wednesday, **November 16**, 5-8 p.m., Eagle Crest Resort, 1275 Huron Street, Ypsilanti - www.newenterpriseforum.org

November 13-19 is Global Entrepreneurship Week - Here's a preview of events:

Michigan Emerging. A day-long conference for movers, shakers, entrepreneurs and those that love Michigan and want to shape its future. Learn from Michigan's leaders how we can grow businesses across the state. Keynote presentations by Governor Rick Snyder; Tim Bryan, CEO, Galaxysystems; Miche Suboski, GLEQ Ambassador and Champion of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, LEAP, Inc.; and panel moderated by Ken Rogers, CEO, Automation Alley; plus five educational break-out sessions; resource exhibits and information, and more. Details: Monday, **November 14**, 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., COBO Conference Center, Detroit - www.MichiganEmerging.com

Knowledge Economy Roundtable Forum. Join *Business Review West Michigan* for its annual roundtable forum. The topic this year is Michigan's transition to a knowledge economy. Keynote by Hal B. Jenson, MD, Dean of the Western Michigan University School of Medicine. Details: Tuesday, **November 15**, 8 a.m.-11 a.m., Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids - <http://www.regonline.com/knowledgeeconomy2011>

Speednetwork the Globe. Unleash energy, share ideas, and make connections - fast! Join Michigan Association for Female Entrepreneurs for speed networking in a fun and upbeat environment. Speed-network the Globe is a fast and easy way to build your contacts, share ideas, and discover new partnerships and possibilities. This event is free and open to business owners, budding entrepreneurs, established entrepreneurs, business professionals, and anyone else interested in professional networking. MAFE is a proud partner of Global Entrepreneurship Week - the world's largest entrepreneurial movement. Details: Tuesday, **November 15**, 6-8 p.m., Redford Township District Library, 2nd Floor Conference Center, Redford - <http://www.mafedetroit.org/Events.html>

Ann Arbor New Tech Meetup. Five presenters this month take the stage for ten minutes each, five minutes to demo and five minutes to answer questions, followed by open announcements and community networking. E-mail organizers at a2newtech.org if you'd like to present! Details: Tuesday, **November 15**, 6:30-8 p.m., Ann Arbor - <http://www.a2newtech.org/>

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Salute to Entrepreneurs. *Crain's Detroit Business* and *Entrepreneurs' Organization* honor the winners of *Crain's* eighth annual Sale to Entrepreneurs. Jim Hiller, CEO, Hiller's Markets, will share his story, and winners will join a panel to talk about their experiences. Details: Thursday, **November 17**, 7:30-10 a.m., Greektown Casino-Hotel, Detroit - www.crainsdetroit.com/events

Entrepreneurship Hour with Ashraf Dahod. Meet the senior vice president and general manager of the Mobility Internet Technology group for Cisco Systems. He is co-founder of Starent (acquired by Cisco in 2010), which designs and develops mobile infrastructure equipment for wireless networks. Details: Friday, **November 18**, 2-3 p.m., Stamps Auditorium in Walgreen Drama Center, 1226 Murfin, Ann Arbor. Arrive early to get a seat.

5x5 Night. **New on-line voting.** One night, 5 ideas, 5 minutes each, 5 slides each, 5 judges, \$5,000 prize. This is 5x5 Night, a program started earlier this year by West Michigan businessman and ArtPrize founder, Rick DeVos, to support entrepreneurs and new business ideas. 5x5 has announced a new, public voting approach to determine the five ideas that will have a chance to be presented at future 5x5 Night events. Vote or submit your application via the website at www.5x5night.com. Details: Tuesday, **November 29**, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Grand Rapids Art Museum, 101 Monroe Center, Grand Rapids - www.5x5night.com