

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

Volume 2016

Next Meeting Thursday, July 14, 2016 - 7:00 pm

#7

Inventor Resources

Officers & Directors

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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

Upcoming Events:

- MiQuest July Calendar of Events: www.MiQuest.org
- Targeting Google Page 1: This workshop covers great marketing and the right website techniques to get your business website "found" on the internet by search engines. Presented by Eclectic Sales & Creative Marketing, LLC and is available at no cost. Advance registration is required at: <http://tinyurl.com/h3eons6>

Agenda - July 14th Meeting:

- E-team report by Rick Mason
- Cover current month correspondences
- Update on Michigan Inventors Coalition Expo by Mary Kordyban
- Guest Speaker: Harry Blecker from the Michigan Small Business Development Center. The MSBDC offers expert assistance at no cost to entrepreneurs looking to start or grow a business. Harry will cover all the opportunities they have to offer. Any inventor starting or growing their business based on their invention should attend this meeting.
- Networking

Our June Meeting minutes:

- Past month correspondences were reviewed
- Report on Michigan Inventors Coalition Expo by Mary Kordyban
- No e-team meeting
- Our Guest Speaker was Ms. Melanie Duquesnel, President & CEO of the Better Business Bureau of Eastern Michigan. She spoke on Fraud and Scam Awareness and the deceitful tactics that are used. She gave our members many suggestions on what to do when confronted with scam artists.
- Networking

ICMM

Home of the Happy Inventors

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 Rick Mason to request a Pre-evaluation form and schedule a time. xyzmason@aol.com

President's Note

During our occasional training sessions we cover the need to research any product your invention may infringe on. If you have been before our Panel Review you already know that we suggest the options you have to research the item yourself, and why it is a critical step at the very beginning of your inventing adventure. Before the advent of the internet and various search engine options, it was fairly difficult to look for competitive products. You would need to go to department stores, search catalogs, read magazines and newspapers, and do a lot of leg work to look for items already on the market. Then you would need to spend a lot of time at a patent library looking for a product already patented. You needed to know, and still do, whether there was a product already patented or even patented over twenty years ago. The former could prevent you from selling your product, the latter could allow anyone to manufacture and sell a product just like yours and compete in the marketplace. This process was difficult and time consuming and often was left to patent attorneys or patent search firms.

But now we move to the Star Wars era and save our shoe leather. You still need to cover the same areas as mentioned above, but you can be far more thorough with the internet. I suggest making an outline of the subjects you are going to examine and list the specifics you are going to research. Here are a few examples:

- Use every search tool available such as Google, yahoo, bing, etc.
- Look at the websites of retailers that handle the type of product you are inventing
- Expand your search to other families of products that you may initially think are not within your product's competition. An example I use is, if you have an idea for a new type of "funnel" for the kitchen, expand your search into other arenas such as the automotive, medical, and science fields.
- For a patent search use www.google.com/patents . Google has teamed with the U.S. Patent office and covers the patents that are listed in the patent website but it is far more user friendly to navigate. Particularly convenient is that, as you investigate each patent, that number turns from black to red, so you don't have to open it and realize that you already have seen it.
- Still look at catalogs, but do that on line so you can use keywords to find products you are searching for; and now it is a lot easier to look for "funnels" in absolutely every arena out there.

If you don't have the time or ability to do this research, then obviously you hire it done. That means a patent attorney or search firm that will charge a small chunk of money, but at least you will have an exhausted search performed. Even if you decide to hire this done, I urge you to at least conduct a quick search yourself. If you are not computer savvy, consider a friend or family member to assist you. If you find a direct item like yours just doing a Google search, at least you won't feel foolish after you get the results from your legal firm.

Remember to have fun with your invention!