

# INVENTORS COUNCIL OF MID-MICHIGAN

P. O. Box 311, Flushing, Michigan 48433

[www.inventorscouncil.org](http://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, August 11, 2016 - 7:00 pm

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## *Inventor Resources*

### Officers & Directors

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### Michigan Inventor Clubs

Grand Rapids Inventors Network  
[www.grinventorsnetwork.org](http://www.grinventorsnetwork.org)

Inventors Council of Mid-Michigan  
[www.inventorscouncil.org](http://www.inventorscouncil.org)

Jackson Inventors Network  
[www.jacksoninventors.org](http://www.jacksoninventors.org)

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

Muskegon Inventors Network  
[www.muskegoninventorsnetwork.org](http://www.muskegoninventorsnetwork.org)

Inventors Association of Metro Detroit  
[www.inventoriamd.org](http://www.inventoriamd.org)

Lansing Inventors Network  
[www.facebook.com/LansingInventorsNetwork](http://www.facebook.com/LansingInventorsNetwork)

### Upcoming Events:

- MiQuest August Calendar of Events: [www.MiQuest.org](http://www.MiQuest.org)
- My Cool Inventions: reminder for members to explain your invention on radio and show on youtube. <http://mycoolinventionsradio.com>
- SBDC workshops available: <https://clients.sbdcmichigan.org/events.aspx>
- Wayne Law Patent Clinic now accepting Client applications for low income inventors and innovators by providing a range of pro bono legal services. More information about the clinic is available at <http://law.wayne.edu/clinics/patent.php>

### Agenda - August 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting:

- E-team report by Rick Mason
- Cover current month correspondences
- Update on Michigan Inventors Coalition Expo on Wednesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> - by Mary Kordyban
- Guest Speaker: A video training session by Adrian Pelkus, San Diego Inventors Forum founder: 17 Mistakes Inventors make
- Networking

### Our July Meeting minutes:

- Past month correspondences were reviewed
- Report on Michigan Inventors Coalition Expo by Mary Kordyban
- e-team report by Rick Mason
- Our Guest Speaker was 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 covered the opportunities they have to offer and answered many questions from members.
- 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](mailto:xyzmason@aol.com)

## **President's Note**

We continually stress that an inventor should just make his/her product and sell it to someone other than their mother. The following article gives a good list of options on getting that done. The article is by Don Debelak from his website [www.onestopinventionshop.net](http://www.onestopinventionshop.net). Jim White had forwarded this site to me for information we can use from time to time as we go through the process of getting your product to market.

### **Inventors Quickest Sales**

When you introduce your product, you want to generate quick sales because building a history of sales, even just in one or two outlets, helps you convince other sales outlets to carry your product. But once you start selling, you need to commit yourself to continually growing your sales. Stores, catalogs, reps and distributors look for hot, up-and-coming products, and if your sales are always growing, you will have a much easier time expanding your sales network. If your sales stagnate, people will think your product has reached its peak.

#### **Look for Small or Specialized Outlets**

Small specialized stores can be a great way to get sales going, but it can be hard to find these stores. Specialized stores often have a loyal clientele who are willing to try new products and pay a higher price.

#### **Sell Local**

Selling local is the most common way to generate quick sales. You can personally contact store owners who may take your product on because it is a local product. You yourself can do in-store appearances, demonstrations or trials to get people to buy your product. And local news sources like to carry stories about local inventors so you can easily generate publicity. Selling locally can help you cheaply generate interest in your product and build a history of sales to launch your product regionally.

#### **Using Catalogs**

Catalogs are one of the most inventor friendly sales outlets in that they don't mind one-product companies, marketing expenses are very low and it puts your product on an equal playing field with all other products in the catalog. Also most target customer groups have their own catalogs, which allow you to reach a national audience with minimal expense.

#### **Partner with Reps**

Once you build your initial sales success, say in local stores, start expanding your sales by partnering with sales representatives. They will cover sales in other areas, while you can continue serving your local stores. You can even continue to build your sales rep network to sell nationally.

#### **Keep Marketing Expenses Below 10% of Sales**

Marketing can be very expensive, but it doesn't have to be and inventors, especially when they are just starting out, need to be careful of how they spend the limited dollars they have allotted to marketing.

#### **Low Cost, Even Free Marketing Tactics**

Publicity, like I mentioned above, can be a free way of exposing your product, but there are many more low cost tactics. In store demonstrations allow you to build sales by investing only your time. You can also see if bloggers or websites will review your product and post their review online if you send them a sample.

#### **Networking with Others**

Today's social media world makes it very easy to network with your potential customers. There are probably Facebook pages for your customer group and by getting involved you can create exposure for yourself and your product to a large group of people. Social media also has a large potential for creating word-of-mouth advertising as people share things they like.

#### **Select Small Markets with Easy Communication**

By choosing smaller markets, your marketing expenses will be much lower. Smaller markets have fewer publications and websites, so you will need to place fewer ads and the ads are also inexpensive. Ideally, you want a market with publications and websites that have good readership, so you can be sure that your ads are reaching potential customers. Also, you can offer to write articles for these media outlets and list your web address and that you invented such and such a product in your bio info.

**Remember to have fun with your invention!**