

LAUNCH

Break-out
your invention
from home

Leonard L. Hierath



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Launch ~ Break-out Your Invention from Home ~

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To:

James, Ann, Mary, Thomas, Karin, Kimberly O'Neill, Kevin O'Neill
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During many hours of writing, my companion was 'Spider', a 23-year old cat, who treated me as a member of his staff. The lap warmth was nice though, on some days.



Introduction

What will make you happy?

Many inventors are totally pleased to have been granted a patent. They have a right to be proud. Some will frame their patent for wall hanging while others just like to have an issued patent in their file cabinet. They are done. They are finished.

Please go beyond that. A goal of this eBook is to share experiences to help you and provide some guidelines and motivation toward successful commercialization of your invention. Suggestions are included for effective patent searches and the easiest markets to pursue.

Throughout this eBook references are made for books to read plus links are included to valuable websites. With so much good material available, no attempt is made here to publish an all inclusive inventor's guide. The goal here is to provide some additional insight on the inventing, product development and commercialization process with some emphasis on what you can do and should do from your home. Ideas are shared for how to set up a home-factory to keep your startup costs down.

Many entrepreneurial skills should be honed in preparing to invent, develop and market a product. Start at your local library or bookstore. You may choose to *bond-with* a book or two, making notes on what to remember.

The inventor stories re-told here are true, unenhanced, stories.

This free to download eBook is for the inventive you plus it is meant to be shared with your inventive friends.

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Chapter 1. Your Focus and Learning Process

Words of advice from T. A. Edison: “Never invent anything unless there is a market for it.” This is sound advice before you totally commit to large expenditures.

Add to this the idea that you should invent a solution to every pesky problem that you experience around your home. These can be fun but effective items which you can enjoy without ever planning to take them to the market place. There is no better way to learn what it takes to successfully design, build and test your ideas. It becomes a valuable inventing and product development experience.

[Learn by Inventing for Your Home]

An example of what inventive fun you can have at home is shown in the photos. The goal was to have a paper towel holder mounted off the kitchen counter near the sink to allow single hand tear-off of towels.

It is simply a strong spatula, screwed to the side of a kitchen cabinet. It proved to be quite effective! This is **not a patentable invention**. It is only an example of thinking outside the box.



Do you want to be known as an *inventor* or *inventive*? This comes with some risk of being identified by the inventor stereotype image. Some examples follow.

At a conference of the Rocky Mountain Inventors and Entrepreneurs Congress,* one of the founders, Donald W. Margolis, welcomed all the inventors and described the learning opportunities available at the conference. He closed his remarks with this request: “Now introduce yourself to the crackpot next to you.”

Inventors, who customarily think outside the box, are considered to be nutty, eccentric (crackpots). However, they can *learn to play with others* and even learn to communicate ideas and passion about their inventions.

An inventor who had just totally impressed a prospective customer with a three minute demonstration of his product was asked “What does it take to create such a product?” The inventor’s answer was “It helps to be a little loco.” The prospective customer, in Spain, loved the play on the languages. He clearly understood the implication.

*the current name is Rocky Mountain Inventors Association

This inventor stereotype is so broadly known that the advice from one author is to use the title of *product developer* rather than *inventor*, to give yourself better credibility when you are seeking financial support.

For the best chance of being financially successful as an inventor, you must think well beyond the immediate invention and become a product developer and an entrepreneur.

Once serious inventors commit to pursuing an invention, it is necessary to be totally focused. They must become zealots focusing on learning the best steps to take toward designing, developing, testing and marketing the product.

Experienced inventors and product developers can provide the best advice for new inventors. How can you meet them? Consider joining an inventor organization to help with your learning process. See more about this in Chapter 3.

A suggested reading list and links to valuable websites are presented in Appendix A.



Chapter 2. **Do I Have an Invention or See a Need for One?**

Innovative persons of any age can identify problems to be solved. The axiom goes: “Necessity is the mother of invention.” When you are frustrated by how something works or doesn’t work, you may be ready to invent a solution to the problem.

[Identifying Inventions Needed]

Have you ever been frustrated with an unstable restaurant table? Then, you have seen that there is a need for an effective table leveler. You have identified a need for an invention but that is not yet an invention. You can take it further and brainstorm and test different concepts for leveling tables. Then, you are truly attempting to invent a solution.

Restaurant tables often need to be moved to setup for different groups. The floors may be uneven rustic tiles. The wait persons are rushed to complete the setup. There is no time to get down and adjust leveling screws. A simple self-leveling table would be ideal for restaurants.

This restaurant table market needs a much more sophisticated solution than simple leveling screws which are fine for home or office use. Other considerations are: What price will be acceptable? What configuration will adapt to the variety of tables? Can existing tables be fitted with the new self-leveling design? Will table manufacturers be open to using the design? Can I get a patent protection for the design? This becomes a rather demanding specification for an invention which is truly needed.

Now, consider something that may be simpler. Is your pet dog able to open house doors or the fence gate? Possibly you see a need for an improved pet-proof latch. Inventing such a device may be less demanding than a table leveler. The same process should be used. Write a detailed specification for what the end user needs. What are the design goals for this invention? How will it be installed? What will it cost to make and market? What will the customer be willing to pay?

An example of another invention needed is an effective insert for soap dishes to keep a bar of soap from remaining wet and getting too soft. Some devices are available; however, can you come up with a better one?

[Invent by One-Person Brainstorming]

The advice here is to “put on a different hat” and put yourself into a creative frame of mind. Attack the problem to be solved in a variety of ways. Let your mind spin free, thinking outside the box. One-person brainstorming can be effective. Jot down your stream of consciousness ideas. Let it rest, then, review it later.

“Forget Brainstorming” is a heading from “Creativity in America” by Po Bronson and Ashley Merryman in the June 10, 2010, issue of Newsweek magazine. The authors point out that research, since 1958, shows that problem solving (alone) can be more effective than group brainstorming, which became popular in 1953.

There are many opportunities to introduce new inventions. Look for problems to be solved, mindful that inventions which are elegant in design simplicity will have the best chance of succeeding.

When you get serious about inventing a solution to a problem, first put down your thoughts on what the end-user needs. Essentially, you will be writing a detailed specification for the invention needed.

*[What can and cannot be Patented?]**

What can and cannot be patented?

What can be patented – utility patents are provided for a new, nonobvious and useful:

- Process
- Machine
- Article of manufacture
- Composition of matter
- Improvement of any of the above

Note: In addition to utility patents, encompassing one of the categories above, patent protection is available for (1) ornamental design of an article of manufacture or (2) asexually reproduced plant varieties by design and plant patents.

What cannot be patented:

- Laws of nature
- Physical phenomena
- Abstract ideas
- Literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works (these can be Copyright protected). Go to the [Copyright Office](#) .
- Inventions which are:
 - Not useful (such as perpetual motion machines); or
 - Offensive to public morality

Inventions must also be:

- Novel
- Nonobvious
- Adequately described or enabled (for one of ordinary skill in the art to make and use the invention)
- Claimed by the inventor in clear and definite terms

***This page was duplicated from the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) website: <http://www.uspto.gov/inventors/patents.jsp>**



Chapter 3. Is My Invention New or Better?

After you have identified a need for an invention, before pursuing your idea in detail, conduct a search to see what is already out there.

Warning: *Do not, DO NOT, hire an invention development firm. They will accept your money and do little or nothing of value. Some have served prison time for fraudulent practices. The Federal Trade Commission site www.ftc.gov has information on such firms.*

Google, Yahoo and other search engines can be helpful to locate competing products which are already on the market. Also, search on www.Google.com/Patents for what has already been patented.

[Get Info Quickly with a Patent Search]

Here is a true story about a flagpole invention. The inventor met a short, wrinkled, *witty* gray haired lady in the local library. She was asking the librarian about how to mount an American flag on a pole, at an angle, at her home. This caught his attention since he had just invented an improved flagpole for such use. He offered to help. The lady did not understand his description of the flagpole so he suggested that she see it at his home. She said "That's a line I have never heard. You invited me to your home to see your flagpole! Do you use that line often?" He promised that his wife would be there, too. The lady never did risk a visit.

When he first invented this flagpole, he was excited about the possibility of commercializing the invention. That lasted for just over an hour! A quick search on www.Google.com/Patents showed that his flagpole invention had been patented in 1993; however, he can still use his own without patent infringement.

Novice inventors are often surprised to see large numbers of patented items which attempt to solve the problem their invention addresses. Many of these patents define extremely complex and impractical inventions which have little or no chance of ever being successfully marketed. **Remember that over 97% of patented inventions never make it to the market place.** Actually, this can be encouraging for new inventors who see that no one has really addressed and solved the problem in a practical but innovative way.

If you conduct many searches you will begin to see which inventions are most likely to be successfully marketed. Your search goal should be to attempt to answer two questions: Is my invention already patented? Will my invention infringe on other patent claims? Besides searching on www.Google.com/Patents, use <http://patft.uspto.gov>. This latter site allows you to search both on issued patents and published patent applications.

Also use <http://www.wipo.int/pctdb/en/>. This is the World Intellectual Property Organization site. It allows you to search over 1.75 million international patent applications.

During your search, note the patents which are referenced in each issued patent, to see the classifications of these patents? Often, you can learn more about where to search by viewing these patents. When you have completed your own patent search, you should consider paying a patent attorney to conduct a more detailed search. Also, ask for a patentability opinion.

At meetings of the Rocky Mountain Inventors Association it is frequently stated that only 2% to 3% of the patented inventions make it to the market and only one-half of those earn enough money to pay for the patent. Is it bleak? Yes.

Membership in such a group can be worthwhile. The result for members is a much higher level of success in bringing products to market. Members of this organization are proud that nearly 30% of their patented inventions have made it to the market place.

Search on-line for inventor organizations in your state on this site www.inventnet.com/invorg.html. Plan to attend at least a meeting or two to learn about the focus of the group and its educational programs. Try to meet experienced inventors who usually will freely mentor you, sharing their experiences.

[Seek the Best Programs and Mentors]

The best meeting programs are presentations by successful inventors, product developers and entrepreneurs who share their experiences from startup to their current state of the business. These presentations are educational case studies which highlight steps to take and errors to avoid.

Most inventor groups have members who are service providers: patent attorneys, engineers, designers, model builders, plastic molders, machine shops and marketing firms. These providers can help guide your next steps.

A word of caution is needed. These organizations can stagnate at the top. When the leadership's main focus is self-promotion, you may not want to join. Again, keep your eye out for an experienced, successful product developer and seek her or his help as a non-paid mentor. Patent attorneys who attend may be willing to refer you to a possible inventor mentor.

[Is my Invention a Dead Horse?]

On completion of your patent and product searches, take a cold hard look at your invention's advantages and disadvantages. Remember, it is extremely difficult for inventors to be analytical about *their baby*, their invention and its potential. This cold hard look will help you make a better informed decision on your next step.

It can be sad; however, many ideas should be abandoned early before your funds are wasted. A senior design group manager coached his designers to "recognize a dead horse early and bury it with the least possible ceremony."



Chapter 4. **Idea Protection ~ Patents and More**

When you have selected an invention to pursue, start protecting your idea. As you begin to investigate ways to design (configure) and build (manufacture) your product, keep the details confidential, even at home.

[What's New at the Patent Office?]

Visit the United State Patent and Trademark Office site

www.uspto.gov/inventors/patents.jsp. This site now has surprisingly complete information available for independent inventors. It is worth a few hours time to get acquainted with all the information that the site offers on patents and on trademarks. The schedule of costs is posted for patent filing fees, the additional fee on patent issue and the fees for maintenance of the patent.

Forget the urban myth that you can establish a date for your invention by mailing a description of it to yourself. The unopened envelope and postmark would become your date of invention. That is not useful.

Also, for a few years you could register the invention date by a Document Disclosure form sent to the USPTO for a \$10 fee. That program was discontinued on February 1, 2007.

Also, begin using a Disclosure Agreement so that you can discuss your idea with potential suppliers and friends. A sample form is in Appendix B. If you disclose the invention to others without a confidentiality agreement, you risk not being able to secure a patent. This is also the case, if you offer the product for sale

The best way to prove your date of invention is by keeping a detailed record (in ink) of your invention(s) in a bound notebook. Have a witness date and sign each page stating that they understand the invention. Such books are available in bookstores and on the Internet. Some books include detailed instructions on how to keep your records. See links to the notebook suppliers in Appendix A. (Make certain your witness has signed a Disclosure Agreement.)

If your idea is mature enough (you have built and tested a model) consider filing a Provisional Patent Application (PPA) with the USPTO. This PPA program has been available since 1995. The cost is currently \$110. You can file this PPA yourself without a patent attorney. Visit the USPTO website:

<http://www.uspto.gov/inventors/patents.jsp> to print the latest PPA form: SB-16.

Appendix C. includes a copy of this form.

The USPTO does not require you to build and test a model to file a PPA. However, this is a key step which adds to your knowledge and certainty that your invention is a valid solution to the problem. Experienced inventors counsel that without this vital step, you really have not learned much about your invention. Some say that if your model *works perfectly on the first try*, you still have not learned much. You might want to buy a lottery ticket, lucky! There will be more about this in Chapter 6.

[The Provisional Patent Revisited]

There are pros and cons about filing a PPA. The main advantage is that you can immediately begin using a **Patent Pending** notation on your invention. This will help put possible competitors on guard. It also allows you nearly a year to test the market before committing funds (\$6000 to \$12000) for filing for a utility patent. Before the end of the 12 month period, you must file for a utility patent, abandon the invention or pursue it without patent protection.

The PPA establishes an official date for your invention at the USPTO. No actual patent rights are granted with this filing. Patent rights only come after your invention is covered by an issued design, utility or “living” plant patent.

The USPTO awards patents to the “first to invent”. However, if the invention date is challenged by another inventor, the “first to file” gains an advantage.*

The main negative of filing a PPA is that if you continue to develop your invention, the details will change so much so that you need to file another PPA. When you file a second PPA, it gives you a new official date at the USPTO; however, if others are designing a competing product, you may lose your “first to invent” date.

Filing in foreign countries is complicated and much more expensive than filing only in the USA. Unless you feel that you have an international “world beating” invention, just focus on the sizable US market.

* For a detailed discussion of Provisional Patents read [Patent Pending in 24 Hours](#) by Richard Stim & David Pressman, 5th Edition NOLO, 2009.



Chapter 5. Keeping Startup Costs Low

Experienced inventors give this standard advice to first time inventors: “Keep your day job.” You can add to this; keep your startup costs to a minimum.

One way is to work in your home. A home based business centered on your invention can be financially rewarding. If you dedicate a significant space in your home, a percentage of all your home expenses can be deducted on your income tax return. Your tax professional can advise you on what will be deductible. Find out if your homeowner’s insurance policy includes small business liability coverage.

Look into forming an LLC (Limited Liability Corporation) to help protect your personal assets from business liability exposure. LLC’s are relatively easy to start and maintain. Check your state’s requirements.

[Choose Your Product & Process Wisely]

The product which you choose to pursue and the manufacturing process which you select will determine much of the startup cost. A few examples below show the relative part costs and tooling costs.

Primary Material	Process	Mfg Qty.	Part Cost	Tooling Cost/ An example of a Product
Aluminum	Extrusion	Med.-Hi	Low	Minimal cost extrusion dies / picture frames
Aluminum	Machine parts	Low-Hi	Med	Low cost / solid metal toy tops
Brass/Steel	Machine parts	Low-Hi	Med	Low cost / stirring rods; bottle stoppers
Al./ Br./ Stl.	Stamped parts	Med-Hi	Low	Med to High / clip-board clips & coins
Alum./Steel	Die or Sand-cast	Med-Hi	Med	Med to High molds/ equipment housings
Concrete	Mixing & Pouring	Lo-Med.	Low	Low cost / parking barriers & plant pots
Fabric	Sewing	Low-Hi	Low	Minimal cost: patterns / clothing & handbags
Food	Baking & Cooking	Low-Hi	Low	Low cost / packaged edibles
Glass	Blow Molding	Med.-Hi	Low	High cost / bottles
Paper	Die-cut sheets	Med.-Hi	Low	Minimal cost: steel rule dies / formed boxes, Etc.
Plastic	Die-cut sheets	Low-Hi	Low	Minimal cost: steel rule dies / formed boxes, Etc.
Plastic	Injection molded	Med.-Hi	Low	High cost molds / plastic flatware & shapes
Plastic	Vacuum formed	Lo-Med.	Med	Low to medium cost / equipment cover panels
Plastic	Rotational molded	Med.-Hi	Med	High cost molds / trash cans & toys
Wire	Forming	Low-Hi	Low	Low cost / wide range of wire forms
Wood	Saw; Mill; Carve	Low-Hi	Low	Low cost / craft work & whirly gigs, Etc.

You may have decisions to make on a final finish for your products. Will parts need to be brushed, buffed, electro-polished, painted, plated, powder-coat painted or can you let the material naturally anodize, like bare aluminum?

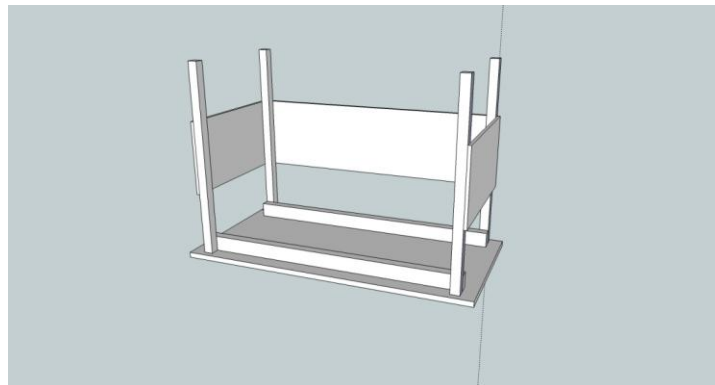
If you are considering setting up for light manufacturing at your home, check on your local zoning laws to see if it is allowed.

[Assemble, Package & Ship from Home]

Possibly, you can sub-out all of the piece-part manufacturing and keep only the product assembly, packaging and shipping activity at your home. These activities require less technology and equipment. They also can be easily staffed by members of your family and your friends.

Simple fixtures can be created for clamping, bending, forming parts and aiding the assembly process in a home-factory. Test your ingenuity. You may be happily surprised.

To conserve space, consider building simple work benches for your home-factory, 2 ft x 4 ft x 31.5" high, like the one shown here. These sturdy low-cost workbenches provide a solid work surface with plenty of storage space beneath each bench.



These drawings were created from **free** Google software, called SketchUp. It is easy to use and quite powerful. Search on Google for SketchUp to download. You can save any 3-D image which you create, to a 2-D image. Then, it can be displayed and printed as a .jpg file. You may be able to draw your invention for use in filing a PPA or even for getting quotations from suppliers.



Chapter 6. Concept-Test Model & Prototype Development

Attorneys speak of “reducing your invention to practice.” This means to build, test and refine a model of your idea to prove that it works.

Early in the creative process, think of the simplest possible way to confirm the validity of your idea, especially if the next step is expensive. Think of it as a Concept-Test Model. In the center of this picture you can see a small white **Concept-Test Model** made from a business card, two toothpicks and some tape. The thin arched shape with a rigid pivot pin made the shape quite strong.



The relative strength of this simple concept-test model gave the inventor the confidence that he needed to proceed with the green thin-walled injection molded clamshell. The end product uses opposed clamshells to allow pickup of leaves and yard waste.

In this case, the inventor added one more step. He had a 3-D printed rapid prototype model made to prove out the design

shape before investing in the injection mold. The injection mold cost was \$16,500, made from aluminum. Steel molds were quoted at \$54,000. This leaf bagger invention is on the market. Visit www.LeavesinBags.net to see a video demonstration.

If you have a shop and are skilled with your hands, you may be able to make your own prototype. If you are short on skills to build your prototype, consider taking a shop practices class at a vocational school. Possibly a family member has the required skills. If not, a prototype builder can be found in the phonebook or on-line. Before employing a builder, be certain to have them sign a Disclosure Agreement and a Work-for-Hire Agreement. See Appendices A. & B.

If the builder makes an improvement in the design which you later cover in the patent application, the builder will likely become a co-inventor with his or her name added to the patent application. The patent rights will remain yours, if the Work-for-Hire Agreement is signed. Remember it is fraudulent to omit the name of the co-inventor(s) plus it also invalidates any patent which is issued.

It is often necessary to build and test several prototypes before settling on the configuration for your invention. With each prototype which you test you will learn valuable information allowing you to improve the design. When testing your product, ask yourself “How will others use it? Will people use it (hold it) the way that I do or will they use it differently?”

When you are in the product design phase, consider in detail how it will be packaged for display and/or for shipping. Learn the UPS and FedEx limiting dimensions and weights. Also, design the packaging to be “green,” using materials which can be recycled.

[Test, Test & Make a Pre-Production Quantity]

When you are ready to manufacture the final design, start with only a limited production run, a lot of say 10, 20, 50, 100 or 200 depending on the cost. You will need to prove out the final design and the production process before you make a large production run. The last problem that you need is a large quantity of defective products which need to be replaced or re-worked.



Chapter 7. Trademarks are Important

Establishing a trademark (identity) for your invention can be valuable. The good news is that you can establish one yourself without paying upfront fees.

Trademarks can be established in many forms. According to the USPTO, they “are words, names, symbols, devices and/or images which are applied to products or used in connection with goods or services to identify their source.”

If only descriptive words are used, the spelling must be changed. An example is **Score Post** changed to **Scor-Post™***.

To be certain that your trademark is unique, conduct a search on the USPTO website and also on your state government website.

When you have assured yourself that your trademark is unique, begin using it by adding the TM to your trademark. You establish it by using it; record the date when you first began using your trademark. There is no need to immediately have a trademark registered. However, when you have some positive cash flow from your invention, you should register your trademark with the USPTO. You can do it yourself or hire a patent attorney.

In the event that your patent is denied, a good trademark could become your most valuable asset.

*Scor-Post® is now a registered trademark of Gamma Sports, Inc.



Chapter 8. Markets for Your Invention

What product or market should I pursue? You will have the best chance of succeeding if you invent a product for a market that you truly understand.

A word on market differences is warranted. The easiest markets to sell into are niche markets. These smaller markets are appealing because you can focus your attention directly at your potential customers, with a limited advertising budget.

[Invent a Product for a Niche Market]

Identify areas of your life which excite you. This may allow you to pick an area for invention which matches your passion. Are you a gourmet cook? Possibly you should focus on inventing a kitchen gadget. Are you a tennis player? You could invent tennis court equipment or a tennis racquet accessory. Consider markets such as crafts, hobbies and sports. They might include: knitting, sewing, needle point, quilting, model trains, trap shooting, bow hunting, archery, fencing, lacrosse, tennis, soccer, fly fishing and many others. Sporting goods usually can command a higher price. In niche markets it may be possible to get some free press releases. Also, targeted magazine advertising, chat room discussions and social networks can give you some exposure for your product. Be cautious. If your attempts to promote your product are too overt, some social network sites may kick you off.

Compare the task of addressing a niche market versus the difficulty of pursuing a broad consumer market, say for a new mailbox invention or a new lawn mower. How could you possibly gain much attention for your product with a small advertising budget?

[Are you Ready for Retail?]

Oh yes, the big box stores could sell your consumer product. Will they? Seldom will they pursue a new product. They are not pioneers. They need to be dragged into the market by having thousands of requests for your product.

In retail stores, shelf space is critical. Your product will have to compete with other (often different) products. Mail order catalogs also guard their catalog space, saving it for the most profitable products.

Barcode Ready is another term used by retail store buyers. Some printed and on-line catalog firms that ship from their own warehouse inventory will also want the products to be barcode ready. Other firms that just ask you to drop-ship to their customers may not need barcodes. You can sign up for a barcode(s) for your product(s) at <http://www.gs1us.org/>. Authorized U.P.C. barcodes from GS1 US are \$760 for 1 to 100 barcodes. If you need more than 100 barcodes, you may be eligible for a volume discount. The purchase includes software so that you can print your own barcode labels. Laser printing is better than inkjet so that the printed labels are water resistant. If you have only an inkjet printer, clear shipping tape can be used to protect the barcode labels.

Is your product a match for on-line stores or mail order catalogs? An advantage of selling to these markets is that your product packaging can be inexpensive. A plain brown box is adequate. There is no need for packaging 'bling' to assure that your product jumps off a retail shelf.

Once you select your product and market to pursue, consider attending a tradeshow where similar products are shown. Do not pay to have a display table or booth. Treat your first show as a learning experience. Take some business cards to work the show. Read Mr. Docie's advice in Inventor's Bible. He developed this to a fine art.

Will anyone buy your product at the price you need to charge? Can you sell directly to the customers? Do you need to have distributors or sell to dealers? What combination will work?

[Can I License Manufacturing to Others?]

First, if you are considering licensing your invention to others study the referenced books: Inventing for Dummies and the Inventor's Bible for their advice. Second, if you get an opportunity to license your invention, do not get greedy. Asking for a large upfront payment will kill most possible deals. Manufacturers would like you to show belief in your product by participating in the risk. It helps them keep their startup costs down.

The Author

Leonard L. Hierath is a mechanical engineer who founded his own company after working 15 years in product design and development at three major corporations. Several of his patented products are in use internationally in a variety of industries. His focus is successfully commercializing his inventions and coaching other inventors. He is a Registered Professional Engineer in Colorado. He lives in Denver with his wife, Caroline O'Neill-Hierath.

~ A Request ~

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Appendix A.

Suggested Reading

Inventing for Dummies by Pamela Riddle Bird, PhD. (Wiley) 2004

This is a surprisingly good book which will take you well beyond the dummies label! The author shares her broad knowledge from many years of product development experience. The book includes a good Work-for-Hire Agreement.

Patent Pending in 24 Hours by Richard Stim & David Pressman, 5th Edition (NOLO) 2009

Many patent attorneys have steered clear of Provisional Patent Applications. These gentlemen face it head on and explain the many advantages.

The Inventor's Bible by Ronald Louis Docie, Sr., (Ten Speed Press) 2001

Mr. Docie shares his scar-tissue and successful efforts in working with his automotive blind-spot mirror invention. Novice inventors can learn rapidly from this type of presentation. Follow his example; he is a master at working tradeshow.

How to Start a Home-Based Craft Business, by Kenn Oberrecht, 5th Edition (Globe Pequot Press) 2007

Even if the business that you wish to start is not craft, this book covers the basics that you need to know.

Website Links

<http://www.uspto.gov/inventors/patents.jsp>

<http://www.uspto.gov/forms/ProvisionalSB.pdf>

www.docie.com (R.L. Docie's inventor help site)

www.dimwit.com (R.L. Docie's inventor help site)

www.independentinventor.com (Pamela Riddle Bird's inventor help site)

www.eurekalabbook.com (Eureka Lab. Book, Inc.)

www.snco.com (Scientific Notebook Company)

www.inventorsdigest.com (Inventors' Digest Magazine)

www.rminventor.org (Rocky Mountain Inventors Association)

www.inventorsroundtable.com (The Inventors' Roundtable™)

Appendix B.

DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

Beginning _____ (date), _____
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Appendix C.

PTO/SB/16 (12-08)

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U.S. Patent and Trademark Office; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT COVER SHEET – Page 1 of 2

This is a request for filing a PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT under 37 CFR 1.53(c).

Express Mail Label No. _____

INVENTOR(S)		
Given Name (first and middle (if any))	Family Name or Surname	Residence (City and either State or Foreign Country)
Additional inventors are being named on the _____ separately numbered sheets attached hereto.		
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Direct all correspondence to: CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS		
<input type="checkbox"/> The address corresponding to Customer Number. 		
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ENCLOSED APPLICATION PARTS (check all that apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Data Sheet. See 37 CFR 1.76		
<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing(s) Number of Sheets _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Specification (e.g. description of the invention) Number of Pages _____		
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<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____		
Fees Due: Filing Fee of \$220 (\$110 for small entity). If the specification and drawings exceed 100 sheets of paper, an application size fee is also due, which is \$270 (\$135 for small entity) for each additional 50 sheets or fraction thereof. See 35 U.S.C. 41(a)(1)(G) and 37 CFR 1.16(s).		
METHOD OF PAYMENT OF THE FILING FEE AND APPLICATION SIZE FEE FOR THIS PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT		
<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27.		
<input type="checkbox"/> A check or money order made payable to the Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office is enclosed to cover the filing fee and application size fee (if applicable).		<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 80px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> TOTAL FEE AMOUNT (\$)
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<input type="checkbox"/> The Director is hereby authorized to charge the filing fee and application size fee (if applicable) or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account Number: _____		

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This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.51. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.11 and 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 8 hours to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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TELEPHONE _____ Docket Number: _____

Appendix D.

Fun Inventing for Your use Only



Tennis-Ball Tool Holder
 (The ½ ball shapes grip a range of tool sizes)



Flatware Tray Anchor
 (The anchor is shown in the front corner of the drawer. It keeps tray from sliding around the drawer.)



Anchor Block
 (The anchor is an aluminum rod in an oak block that is attached to the drawer with a screw. Lift other end of tray, to free tray from anchor.)

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