

## **From concept to market, the art of invention and product development (Part three)**

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In part two of this series we covered the Feasibility. This section will address **Part three addresses “Invention Submission” or “Invention Marketing” services.**

**Seems like every profession has its share of bottom feeders and crooks and the invention to market business is no exception.**

### **The Invention Submission Racket**

#### ***Warning...***

Do not, ever, without exception, take your idea or invention finished or not, patented or not, to any invention submission company, period. Most all of these firms are boiler-room operations that churn out thousands of mass mailings, spam emails and phone solicitations to snare potential victims.

I used the term "most all..." only because there just might be an honest invention submission firm out there somewhere but like pure capitalism, Bigfoot and the Loch Ness Monster they have never been scientifically corroborated or objectively proven to exist.

All humor aside there might be a valid firm out there and if you know of one please contact us so we can let others know !

As a product development firm catering to clients from inventors to fortune 50 global conglomerates Vorelco used to take on any viable product development project that came along. When we were approached by IP&R in San Francisco in 2006 to help them on some projects for them we happy to oblige and for a couple to few months they appeared to be a legitimate operation and there was no reason to suspect that anything untoward was going on. We created a few promotional videos for them to air on QVC and helped them overcome some design problems on a few products.

We were well aware of invention submission scams like Davison and ISC but IP&R seemed like an exception to the rule. The company president was supposedly an inventor and an author of a book on the invention to market process.

After completing a few projects we were asked to help with a couple problem accounts directly with two clients.

One had patented a magnetic shaver and corresponding gel that was impregnated with ferric oxide and the other was a paint ball gun cleaning technology.

Once I personally reviewed both product ideas it was very apparent why these projects were in trouble and was what caused us to stop accepting work from IP&R.

Both of these projects shared one very obvious flaw. Neither were technically sound.

The Shaving product although patented was completely unfeasible. Anyone of sound mind should have known that the shaver idea was a non-starter yet it was accepted at IP&R.

The product was supposed to be able to improve shaving for men by use of a gel containing iron oxide particulate.

The theory is that if the iron particulate were able to surround the hair shaft the magnet laden razor would cause the iron oxide in front of the hair to bend the hair to a more upright position causing the razor to cut closer to the hair shaft!

When I asked the inventor why would the iron oxide would stay behind the facial hair shaft and not just take the path of least resistance which would be to simply migrate around the shaft, he just went silent.

The paintball product consisted of a foam ball the size of a conventional paintball that was to be soaked with a solvent and fired through a paintball gun to remove paint expelled from a leaky paintball. There was no consideration given to ballistics or the inherent danger of firing a ball soaked with a flammable solvent through the barrel of a paintball gun! Also the ball was a solid sphere and not vented or scalloped to reduce

drag and to permit debris to be collected and removed while in flight through the barrel.

Neither of these products were viable patent to market candidates which reveals the likely reason why so many invention to market or invention submission companies fall into trouble with clients and eventually State Attorney General's offices.

It became rather obvious that IP&R was knowingly or unknowingly accepting any inventor that had a pulse, a body temperature somewhere in the 90's and ten to twenty grand or more to spend.

Perhaps this is the problem with the entire invention submission industry. They take on every client that applies and there is no consideration at all of commercial viability.

This could further explain why nearly all of these firms have a less than 1% project success rate.

To accept every project regardless of merit is just wrong and dishonest.

There are any number of reasons why the invention submission marketplace regardless of original intent, often wind up on the case logs of State's Attorney Generals offices but all center around the broken promise of delivering a service of value.

Most Invention Submission Firms regardless of original intent become more motivated by profits than the actualization or fulfillment of their services.

Often there is little if any regard for defining the scope of work and related costs as it pertains to fulfilling the development and marketing of the client's product or introduction to industry process.

The priority shifts to the acquisition of as many new clients and cash as possible while losing focus of existing and maturing accounts. Most invention submission firms will provide their clients with impressive and some not so impressive printed materials and very simplistic web pages as little hooks that require little effort but at least look impressive to the average person.

As these tactics run out and enough time has passed the client base begins to smell a rat and the complaints and lawsuits start ramping up. Here is where the invention firm's troubles begin to grow exponentially.

They prefer to use the telephone to make their pitch and close the deal so they don't have to put everything in writing. They will try to appeal to your ego and downplay any risk in using their services.

These are well trained high pressure salespeople that you can find in any boiler room sales operation. They often understand less about the invention to market process than you do.

They often know little about wholesale or retail marketing but they do know how to rent mailing lists of industry-specific buyers that are more often than not completely unrelated to you're your product type.

They are however experts in "closing" sales using rudimentary but effective psychological tools to get you so excited about the certain wealth that awaits you that you will take a second mortgage out on your home to pay for their services.

The business model is rather predictable. They will often ask for large upfront fees and promise to put you and your product in front of industry specific buyers interested in new product ideas.

The huge upfront fees are secured to prevent you from leaving the program when you finally discover their scam. Even after the moment of truth many victims will stay in these programs and some will even continue to buy more "necessary" add-ons.

The usual resultant works will consist of a useless mass email broadcast to disinterested "buyers" and weighty boilerplate or template report that merely automatically places your name and your product's name into strategically located "auto insert" locations throughout the report.

To the uninformed, the report appears to be legitimate and gives the false impression of considerable effort on the invention submission company's part.

They may also create a basic CAD drawing and some collateral material like a quick brochure and minimalist web page showing the product or a

rendition. Much of this material can be outsourced to India, China and the Balkans where labor rates are a fraction of U.S. rates.

Those who fall victim to these firms can expect to pay from \$5,000.00 to \$20,000.00 for little more than a couple hundred dollars worth of materials and an ego massage.

The fact is that authentic buyers of goods for commerce do not have time to wade through electronically transmitted or printed content with half baked illustrations of products without professional representation. This form of promotion is no more effective than spam or junk mail.

There's no excuse for allowing yourself to become a victim in the era of the Internet. No one can hide from their evil deeds in cyberspace.

With invaluable sites like the rip off report and several other fraud reporting sites you can see if your deal sounds too good to be true before you fork over your hard earned dollars.

Don't assume that just because the company looks and sounds too convincing to be fraudulent that it isn't. Most of these firms hop from state to state knowing how busy the State's Attorney Generals offices are and how much time they have before the warrants are served.

They also know that many if not most victims will not go through the trouble or humiliation of legal action or reporting the crime. Unfortunately too many well intentioned people just expect to get cheated and when it happens to them it is like a self fulfilling prophecy.

This concludes part three of

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**Part four addresses the filing of a Provisional or non-provisional patent and what you can do to protect yourself when having to disclose your idea to others before and after the filing of a patent.**

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