



OUR UPCOMING MEETING IS:

May 8, 7pm-9pm
(2nd Thursday of Each Month)
See www.sdinventors.org
for exact meeting location.

Food and Refreshments.
\$5 Suggested Donation at the Door, Thank You!

"I'm excited for your success."
==Dr. Ed Balian, President, SDIF

Highlights at this Meeting Include:

- **NOMINATIONS** for SDIF President and Vice-President for the 2008-2009 year. The election will take place at the JUNE 12 meeting. **You must be present to vote.**
- **JENNIFER RIVKIND**, Marketing Manager, IDP Corporation. Learn about manufacturing in China. Question-answer session to follow.
DON'T MISS THIS!
- **ADRIAN PELKUS**, President, A-Squared Technologies. The "17 Mistakes" Inventors Make and How to Avoid Them. Question-answer session to follow.
- **Eric Zapf**, Inventor. See Eric present his invention, The Curly Clip. Question-answer session to follow.

"What I Need NOW!" Session

Tell us what you're looking for and we will match you up with the suppliers you need.

Announcements
Adjournment



Our website :
www.sdinventors.org

Useful Links

www.EdwardBalian.com

www.a-squaredtec.com

www.excoveries.com

http://www.legalmarketing.org/images/article_files/Patrick%20Henry.pdf

<http://www.mindsetresearch.com/resources.html>

<http://www.venturechoice.com/glossary>

www.google.com/patents

www.uspto.gov

www.uiausa.org

www.chernowconsulting.com

SDIF MONTHLY NEWSLETTER COLUMNS:

If you would like to contribute a column for any upcoming SDIF Newsletter(s), please email Ed at esbalian@gmail.com

**Standing Out in a Crowded Field:
Your Distinctive Competence
By Judy Balian
President, www.Excoveries.com**

Unless you're in a very unusual business or remote geographic area, you have competition for your services and/or products. How do you stand out in a crowded--and sometimes overcrowded field?

Do what successful large companies do--discover your "distinctive competence" and convey that to your potential clients. Your *distinctive competence* is that set of strengths, characteristics and qualities that set you apart from your competitors. It's those things that make you uniquely qualified to do what you do for your particular target market. Information and ideas below will help you get started in determining what makes you special.

Getting Started

It's always good idea to study the way other people in your field are positioning themselves. Imagine you are a prospective client or customer for your service or product. What makes some people stand out while other people seem to blend into the background?

Factors to Consider

There are a number of categories you can use to set yourself apart from the crowd. Here are the major ones.



Unique Features of your Service or

Product

Perhaps you're a massage therapist who offers sound healing as a part of your sessions, a psychotherapist who uses sand trays to help her clients gain self-knowledge or a yoga teacher who focuses on yoga for people with injuries. This category could include any special skills you have in addition to your primary area of expertise.

Your Background or Experience

If you're a coach who spent 10 years in the business world, you're more qualified to coach people with corporate jobs than another coach who's never worked for a company. A former nurse who got her certification in healing touch could tout her medical background. A former teacher would want to let people know about her background when she promotes her workshops on ayurveda because her teaching experience would give her additional credibility as a workshop facilitator. A travel consultant who was an army brat and lived all over the world could capitalize on her background. What experience do you have that helps make you unique?

Your Education or Training

Perhaps you've received training from someone who is a recognized authority in the field or at a place that is well-respected and well-known. Be sure to include that information in your marketing materials where appropriate.

Special Honors

If you've been recognized for your work (even as a volunteer) and it's related to the services or products you are trying to market, it's appropriate--and smart--to let your potential clients and customers know.

Personal Qualities

What special qualities do you have that make you stand out? You can certainly talk about those traits in your marketing materials-or even better, let your clients speak for you in quotes and testimonials.

A word about quotes and testimonials: Don't be afraid to ask for quotes, and don't be hesitant to tell your clients/customers what you'd like included (perhaps attributes they've mentioned they admire about you). Remember though, that many people are self-conscious about their writing. If this seems to be the case, ask them to just jot something down and tell them you'll edit it if necessary. You can always email it back for final approval before you publish it. And be sure to give people a date when you need the quote-don't leave this open-ended.

Ask Your Clients, Friends and Family

Ask your clients what made them choose you rather than one of your competitors. Also ask your friends and family for their input. Their answers may surprise you and give you more to add to your definition of your distinctive competence.

Final Thoughts

Once you've determined what makes up your distinctive competence, create well-written wording to describe it that you can use in your marketing materials, on your website and perhaps on the back of your business card. You'll also want to include some of this information in your [elevator speech](#). It's well worth the time and effort it takes to set yourself apart from the crowd!

LEGAL MENTOR

A LOW RISK STEP BY STEP APPROACH

by George Levy
May 2008

You have invented a wonderful new gadget that can advance human civilization and in the process make you rich. You want to go ahead with its development while at the same time minimize your financial risk. What do you do next? The best strategy involves following a series of steps, each step including a test: proceed if your invention passes the test, or stop and re-evaluate. These are the suggested steps:

Preliminary Commercial Evaluation: Before you spend any money you should conduct a preliminary analysis that includes the following:

- A search on Google and on the US Patent Office database to make sure that your invention is new.
- A manufacturing analysis to determine if it can be made cheaply and reliably enough to sell.
- A market analysis to confirm or deny that your invention has the potential for making money.

If you find that your idea already exists or cannot be made or sold, stop right here. Otherwise go to the next step.

Professional Patent Search: the preliminary search has indicated that no one else thought of the invention before. However be careful: if you make, sell or use someone else's invention, you could be sued for royalties. If you try to patent an already patented idea, your application will be rejected. As an insurance policy against future waste of time and money, a professional patent search should be conducted that may uncover prior art that you have missed. This search will help define how broadly your invention can be claimed. If the claims are too broad your application will be rejected. If they are too narrow you will be denied potential royalties. Stop right here if the professional finds invalidating prior art. Otherwise go to the next step.

Provisional Patent Application: The search by a professional has found no invalidating prior art. The next step is to protect your idea as quickly as possible by filing a provisional application. You should write a description in your own words without marketing data or legalese, with each individual part enumerated in an organized and sequential manner. Providing your patent practitioner with such a description will facilitate his task and possibly reduce his fee.

Provisional patent applications are less expensive to file than non-provisional applications because they are not examined by the Patent Office. They are kept on the shelf during a period of one year at the end of which *they are discarded unless a conventional non-provisional patent is filed within the year.* Advantages of provisional patent include:

- Less expensive upfront
- Increase the patent's life from 20 to up to 21 years
- Modifications and improvements can be rolled into the non-provisional application when it is filed.
- Allows the inventor to claim "patent pending" and to secure a priority filing date.

Disadvantages include:

- Slightly more expensive to file a provisional followed by a non-provisional than to file a single non-provisional application.
- Increases the prosecution time by up to a year
- Not examined by the patent office and therefore offers no guarantee that a patent will be issued.

Your invention is protected as of the filing date of your provisional application. You can now manufacture it, and market it. Before a year elapses from the filing date of the provisional patent, you must decide if you want to continue.

Non-provisional Patent Application: Should you decide to file the non-provisional application, you can include in it new ideas and improvements to your invention. These additions, of course, will not benefit from the early priority date of the provisional application. A non-provisional patent provides a 20 year protection from its filing date during which you are entitled by law to exclude anyone from making, importing, selling or using your invention without your authorization.

For more information and a free consultation please contact
[George Levy](#)

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Email: glevy@patentsandventures.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Presented by the San Diego Tech Coast Angels

THE DATE:

May 15, 2008 | Thursday

THE TIME:

7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

THE PLACE:

**Fish & Richardson P.C.
12390 El Camino Real
San Diego, CA 92130**

Program overview:

This full-day seminar provides an overview of the angel investing process, including the details of finding, evaluating, and structuring deals and developing angel-entrepreneur relationships that lead to success. The highly interactive program provides attendees with practical information on best practices in angel investing through a balance of expert presentations, panel discussions and small group case studies. A faculty of experienced angel investors, serial entrepreneurs and expert service providers deliver the seminar. Plenty of time is available for meeting other attendees and faculty throughout the day and in an evening cocktail reception.

Who should attend:

» All Individuals who are interested in learning

- about the specifics of angel investing.
- » Successful entrepreneurs who have exited their businesses and have interest in staying involved in early stage companies.
 - » High net-worth individuals with senior business/entrepreneur experience and an interest in investing in early stage companies.
 - » Entrepreneurial support professionals, university faculty and policy makers who are preparing their client entrepreneurs for the angel investing process.

Subjects covered in the curriculum:

- » How angel funding fits in
- » Is angel investing right for you?
- » Angel portfolio strategy
- » Due diligence
- » Structuring the deal
- » Valuation
- » The post investment relationship

About the presenters:

This seminar features local experts in high growth ventures and early stage investing opportunities, including seasoned angel investors with diverse investment experience, tax and legal experts, and angel-financed entrepreneurs.

Bill Payne, Senior Program Consultant at the Kauffman Foundation and Angel Capital Education Foundation, will lead the seminar. Bill is an active angel investor, board member, and advisor to entrepreneurs. He is an involved member of the Frontier Angel Fund, San Diego Tech Coast Angels, Vegas Valley Angels and Aztec Venture Network. For over three decades, Bill has successfully founded or invested in 37 start-up companies. For over ten years with the Kauffman Foundation, he has worked on educational programs for entrepreneurs and their investors, including www.eVenturing.com and the Power of Angel Investing seminar series. He has also been actively engaged in the formation and startup of the Angel Capital Education Foundation and the Angel Capital Association.

The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation of Kansas City is a private, nonpartisan foundation that works with partners to advance entrepreneurship in America and improve the education of children and youth. The Kauffman Foundation was established in the mid-1960s by the

late entrepreneur and philanthropist Ewing Marion Kauffman. Information about the Kauffman Foundation is available at www.kauffman.org.

With the generous help of the **United Inventors Association**, I'm collaborating with researchers at **Syracuse University** on an ambitious project to determine how inventors who succeeded in obtaining patents or launching entrepreneurial ventures were themselves motivated, influenced, supported and educated through the innovation process. This is the **Innovative Thinking Research Study**.

Our questions for Patentees and Venture Entrepreneurs: How and Why Did You Do It? What influenced you to step apart from the crowd? What skills, resources and technologies supported you along your journey through the innovation process?

The ultimate objective of this research project is to create educational delivery models and support systems for tomorrow's innovators. Toward that goal we have carefully crafted an objective survey. In an initial pilot, we are seeking 100 patent holders and/or venturing entrepreneurs to join this worthwhile project by taking the survey linked below. The reflective experience might well prove helpful in your current innovation stage, and certainly will contribute to this groundbreaking initiative.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=MH5iB3J4LRZOsn9wdZI_2fPQ_3d_3d

If you have questions or need more information about the survey, please feel free to contact me through www.PatentAgentPlus.com

Thank you so very much and please keep inventing.

Don Kelly

Intellectual Asset Management Associates

About the Survey:

Researchers from Syracuse University's Center for Digital Literacy invite you to participate in this research study that explores the factors that contribute to, or support, the innovative process.

Funded by a grant from Enitiative/Kauffman Foundation, the purpose of this research is to identify the skills, resources and technologies that innovators need to be successful and the motivational factors that influence the innovative process.

About United Inventors Association

The UIA is a tax exempt, not-for-profit corporation formed in 1990 solely for educational purposes. The mission of the UIA is to provide leadership, support and services to inventor support groups and independent inventors. Membership is extended to these as well as to others who provide reputable service and support to the inventor community.

From the April 13 (UNION-TRIBUNE):

An inventive approach: What will they come up with next?: The third gathering of **Women Inventors Network (WIN)** opens with a chuckle as club co-creator Thalia Poulos notes that the group's organizational meeting in late February ended in the tasting room of a winery. Contact WIN via the Internet.

MEETING TIMES and PARKING

SDIF monthly meetings will be now starting at 7:00PM, *SHARP.* Over the last three months, we have been losing, on average, not just 5 or 10 minutes, *but 1/3 of an hour* before we officially begin our meetings—then we run late, over-staying our time in the conference room. The check-in takes up time, too, of course---we could use some additional volunteer help there too, by the way (just email Carol Dodson doalotcom@hotmail.com or me esbalian@gmail.com). I know traffic can be nasty, but we must vacate our room by 9PM. We just need all the meeting time together we can get.

As you enter the meeting room in the future, PLEASE take front seats first. This will allow late guests to seat themselves in the rear rows of the room without disturbing the on-going meeting.

Also, please remember to park on the NORTH side of the building—thanks!

GUEST SPEAKERS

We are always looking for great Guest Speakers. Please suggest future speakers (with their contact information) to me via email. The recent survey tells us that SDIF members are most interested in topics of Manufacturing,

Marketing, Market Research, Legal, and Business Plan topics, but other areas will be considered as well.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS, SPEAKERS, PRESENTERS, SUGGESTIONS, COMMENTS

Do you want to present your invention to the SDIF and get valuable feedback?

Do you have a suggestion (and email address) for a guest speaker?

Do you have a suggestion for SDIF meetings or activities?

Please email me anytime from the website: www.EdwardBalian.com or at esbalian@gmail.com

INVENTION PRESENTATIONS at SDIF Monthly Meeting

We are *ALWAYS LOOKING* for quality Invention Presentations from our membership. I'm always being asked about how to go about it, so the following FAQ's have been assembled for your convenience. (These FAQ's will also soon be posted permanently on our website.)

FAQs for SDIF Invention Presentations:

CAN ANYONE PRESENT THEIR INVENTION TO THE SDIF?

Yes, EVERYONE IS ENCOURAGED TO PRESENT, but please follow our very simple rules below. Please note that we have over 250 members with up to 60 or so in attendance at any one meeting. In fairness to all and to best utilize our short time together at monthly meetings, we have assembled the below guidelines. Thanks for your cooperation.

BUT, I'M KIND OF QUIET AND SHY. I'M A LITTLE AFRAID TO GET UP IN FRONT OF THE SDIF.

We understand this emotion. There is no better way to work through your ideas and future product development than to present it in our relaxed atmosphere and hear constructive feedback from fellow inventors and suppliers. Sooner or later, as an inventor, you will need to present your invention to someone—*there is no better place to start than at SDIF.*

WHAT IF MY INVENTION IDEA GETS STOLEN AFTER I PRESENT IT?

If you have no form of legal protection (e.g., patent/copyright/trademark) *or are in any way uncomfortable* with your intellectual property rights in presenting to SDIF, you should hold off until you feel more comfortable with your situation and submit a proposal at a later date.

OK—I WANT TO PRESENT MY INVENTION AT AN SDIF MEETING—NOW WHAT?

First, submit an informal "Invention Presentation Proposal" via email to the SDIF President. YOU CAN BE AT ANY STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT with your invention.

In this email, please include: your basic idea/invention, your stage of development, a description of media (e.g., PowerPoint, etc.) to be used (if any, but it is not required!), and a brief statement of your current supplier needs on the project.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT, AFTER I SUBMIT MY PRESENTATION PROPOSAL BY EMAIL?

You will usually hear back quickly. In most cases, your presentation will be slated for a meeting one to three months in advance. It's OK if

your invention or idea naturally evolves between now and your presentation date.

HOW MUCH TIME DO I GET TO PRESENT MY INVENTION?

Due to the large membership of SDIF and a full array of meeting activities each month, invention presentations are limited to approximately 20 minutes with 10-20 minutes of additional time allotted for SDIF group feedback.

The concise 20 minute time frame to present is a great exercise in itself—you need to have an “Elevator Speech” and this is a great way to develop and practice it! Following your presentation, the feedback and q/a session has shown to be extremely valuable to everyone who has ever presented to SDIF.

Your invention presentation will really help move you forward—I guarantee it! There will be **LIMITED TIME SLOTS** in the months ahead, so please submit your Invention Presentation Proposal ASAP to esbalian@gmail.com

See you at the meeting!
Bring a friend!
==Dr. Ed Balian
President, SDIF
www.EdwardBalian.com