

# Inventique®

The newsletter of Wessex Round Table of Inventors

April 2008

8 +13 May **EMBEDDED MASTERCLASS** [www.embedded-masterclass.com](http://www.embedded-masterclass.com)

## Energy saviour

TANYA HELPS CONSUMERS SEE THE LIGHT

**S**COTTISH housewife Tanya Ewing has won the top Inventor of the Year 2008 prize at the British Female Inventors and Innovators Awards with her Ewgeco™ energy monitoring device.

With no previous product development experience, Tanya conceived her product after observing how difficult utility meters were to reach and how poorly the information on them was presented for a sufferer of Lyme disease such as herself.

Ewgeco displays real-time changes in the consumption of gas, water and electricity at a glance, using a simple green/amber/red 'traffic light' system.

"People do not realise that savings of just 1p an hour can total over £87 per year," she said. "A small change can make a big difference – and we've taken utility meters out of their cupboards!"

According to the Carbon Trust Better Business Guide 2007, a 20% cut in energy costs represents the same bottom line as a 5% increase in sales for many businesses.

With a global patent pending, Ewgeco's installation schedule begins in Scotland next month. The project received support from Perth Business Gateway, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and NESTA. ■

● [www.ewgeco.com](http://www.ewgeco.com) ● [www.bfiin.com](http://www.bfiin.com)



**METER MAID:** Tanya Ewing from Perth, Scotland, became BFIIN Inventor of the Year at the British Female Inventors and Innovators Awards in Cardiff last month. Her Ewgeco™ energy monitoring device uses 'traffic light' colours to display real-time levels of electricity, water and gas consumption.

### Next WRTI meeting

**WEDNESDAY 9 APRIL**

Guest speaker Tony Davies from TCL Products in Brighton will give an illustrated lecture on the development of Trevor Baylis Brand's new Eco Media Player, followed by an Inventors Clinic and a brief talk by Mike Wright on 'speaking in public'.

Room HC 017, Herbert Collins Building, Southampton Institute, commencing at 6.30pm.

● Non-members wishing to attend should e-mail: [secretary@wrti.co.uk](mailto:secretary@wrti.co.uk) or tel: 01420 562 378  
[www.wrti.org.uk/events](http://www.wrti.org.uk/events)  
Map: [www.streetmap.co.uk](http://www.streetmap.co.uk) (SO14 0RP)

### Capital Inventions exhibition

THE FIRST Capital Inventions Show is to be held on 2–3 May at the Whitby Pavilion, North Yorkshire.

This inaugural event offers inventors, innovators, clubs, schools and universities the opportunity of exhibiting their creations.

Spaces are limited, so potential exhibitors, advertisers and sponsors should contact:

● Capital Inventions, 11 York Way Court  
Copenhagen Street, London N1 OXP  
Tel/fax: 020 7713 0212  
[enquiries@capital-inventions.com](mailto:enquiries@capital-inventions.com)  
[www.capital-inventions.com](http://www.capital-inventions.com)

### BFIIN Awards

#### ROLL OF HONOUR

Other category award winners from the 40 innovative women finalists included:

**INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR** Gaynor Morgan  
– Incostress stress incontinence control.

**EXCEPTIONALLY CREATIVE PRODUCT** Adrea Linzer  
– Fine Porcelain Products ceramics.

**BEST BUSINESS IDEA** Tanya Ewing  
– EWGECO energy monitoring device.

**BEST PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT** Natalie Ellis  
– Road Refresher non-spill pets' drinking bowl.

**BEST PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT** Gaynor Morgan  
– Incostress stress incontinence control.

**CAPACITY-BUILDING** Anne Bowen  
– Ardclinis Outdoor Adventure team-building.

**BOOTS HEALTH & BEAUTY AWARD** Dee Wright  
– Hairforce Lice Assassins.

● [www.gwiin.com](http://www.gwiin.com) ● [www.bfiin.com](http://www.bfiin.com)

Wessex Round Table of Inventors meet at 6.30pm on the second Wednesday of each month at Southampton Solent University SO14 0RP

## VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

THIS MONTH'S TOP TIP is about landing your first orders, and features the Flo Control anti-spill push-button fuel can as a case study.

Its inventors – WRTI members Dawn and Paul Bone from the Isle of Wight – now have volume stocks in place and need to sell them in order to grow their business.

The first job is to analyse whether the sales strategy is aimed at trade (wholesale) buyers or the consumer (retail) sector, or both? Different markets require different approaches.

Selling – or to put it more accurately, repeatedly gaining trade buyers' interest and closing deals – is the most difficult job in the world, and is best done face-to-face.

Advertising – on the internet or other media – would get Flo Control noticed but is expensive and doesn't guarantee sales. Properly-prepared press releases can secure invaluable editorial coverage and is far more cost-effective, but again does not guarantee success by itself.

'Viral marketing' can work wonders as early retail customers recommend their purchase to friends. Contacting them could also reveal some great stories which would form new press releases (always make hi-res digital photos available) and website testimonials

Bundle all the press releases into a newsletter and email it to contacts. Add them to the website, and push them into the hands of friends and colleagues.

As the momentum grows, seek out premium volume buyers in different sectors: Flo Control's pitch might suggest bespoke cans branded with customers' logos as a promotional merchandising opportunity at a premium price.

And as word reaches the wider world, Flo Control could seek out agents and distributors in key countries who sell to their markets, with agreements to sell confirmed quantities in the early months if they are to maintain exclusive agency.

Sincerely, Peter

**PETER HEBARD, WRTI Chairman**

**INVENTORATOR** Marilyn Huckerby

# Innovation and the entrepreneur

TWO CRUCIAL, BUT DIFFERENT, BUSINESS SKILL SETS

Continued from last month.

**A**NOTHER assumption that needs rectifying is: 'innovation is just about new technology'.

Some of the most innovative businesses around today are in the creative and service sectors: filling an existing need in a new way, or taking advantage of changing circumstances to develop a new service, can require more profound and continual innovation than inventing a new gadget.

Examples would be Amazon and Ebay, which have paved the way for Internet retailing. They *do* both use clever technology – but the underlying ideas are really about innovative new ways of retailing.

Pure technology businesses can sometimes be one-trick ponies, where there is a danger of a successful invention pigeon-holing a company and actually deterring further innovation.

## Innovate, or stagnate

What is certain is that businesses of any size stagnate if they stop innovating: there is no middle ground where past laurels can be comfortably rested upon. But equally there is no company, of whatever size and age, that can't revive and renew its potential to grow through developing a capacity to innovate.

This is why SEEDA set up the Innovation Advisory Service – to help existing, established SMEs become more innovative and grow as a result. And that involves developing the capacity of the business to both innovate and be entrepreneurial, side-by-side.

The entrepreneurs in a business need to be innovative to think their way around the challenges of getting the ideas to market, but

they may not have the experience or technical skill to come up with the new ideas in the first place.

Being an innovator involves vision, risk-taking and a degree of flair, but that does not mean that everyone with a good idea has the entrepreneurial skill to make it work as a business proposition.

Experienced entrepreneurs know that successful companies use the skills of many people and look for other innovative people to strengthen their team, because there will be many challenges to overcome – including finding money, developing the product or service, adapting the internal business processes, finding customers – all of the many and different challenges that growing businesses face.

The conclusions to draw are that successful growth businesses promote and develop innovation and entrepreneurial skills and thinking in their companies – and that there is more to innovation than new technology! ■

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*This article first appeared in the Autumn 2007 issue of HUB, the magazine published by SEEDA's Enterprise Hub Network.*

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www.enterprisehubnetwork.co.uk

# Going with the flow...

**T**EESSIDE entrepreneur Fran Cleeton got so annoyed about flooded property that she invented the Aqua-Sac™ SOS Bag, an invention she describes as “a hi-tech sandbag – without the sand”.

The compact, easy-to-carry bags, which are intended as a first line of defence in controlling the ingress of rainwater and non-tidal rivers, contain a material that expands when wet, absorbing up to 13 litres of liquid.

“I developed the Aqua-Sac because I am an advocate of people helping themselves,” said Fran, who is managing director of Analox Environmental Technology.



**CONTAIN YOURSELF** Fran Cleeton says that being offered free exhibition space at her regional innovation show led to major investment in her idea.

“We shouldn’t need to wait for the emergency services and soldiers with soggy sandbags. It is my hope that this invention will save time, money and much more.”

Ardur District Council in Sussex has already given the bag the thumbs-up after subjecting it to rigorous testing. The product was

also a hit with investors at Venturefest, a regional innovation showcase which led to investment in her product. The government estimates that nearly half a million properties in England and Wales are at risk of flooding. ■

Source: [ts9.gazettelive.co.uk/Mike Overy](http://ts9.gazettelive.co.uk/Mike_Overy)

● [www.aqua-sac.com](http://www.aqua-sac.com)

# Nokia's nano mobile morphology

**N**OKIA AND the University of Cambridge launched Nokia's Morph Open Mode – a stretchable mobile phone/flexible keyboard that can be worn as jewellery – at the opening of the Design and the Elastic Mind exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (until 12 May).

A nanotechnology concept device, Morph demonstrates the functionality that nanotechnology might be capable of delivering in the future: stretchable and flexible materials, transparent electronics, extreme microprocessor miniaturisation, self-cleaning surfaces and the ability to harvest energy.

“Developing the Morph concept with Nokia has provided us with a focus that is artistically inspirational but, more importantly, sets the technology agenda for our joint nanoscience research,” commented Professor Mark Welland, head of the Department of Engineering's Nanoscience Group at Cambridge. The partnership between Nokia and the University of Cambridge was announced in March 2007.

Elements of Morph could be available to integrate into hand-held devices within the next five years. ■

● [www.nokia.com](http://www.nokia.com)



● **PHILIP'S ALL PUMPED UP** ENTREPRENEURIAL inventor Philip Robinson came up with a winning idea when studying for his BSc in product design at Bournemouth University.

His Biologic™ ZorinPump is an ingenious combination of bicycle seat-post and powerful floor-pump: using the saddle as a handle, bikers can say good-bye to kneeling in the dirt. Different sizes are available to

suit different bicycles and are compatible with different valves.

Since developing his Zorin Pump with the help of a DTI SMART Award, Philip's idea has become such a commercial success that it is now being produced under licence by industry giant Dahon – and Philip himself is now an adviser to a new influx of students at Bournemouth University.

● [www.zorinpump.com](http://www.zorinpump.com)

© NOKIA CORPORATION



# The other NHS

**T**HE 63rd National Hardware Show® takes place at the the Las Vegas Convention Center between 6-8 May.

Incorporating Lawn & Garden World® and the Homewares Show®, the National Hardware Show is the biggest event in the home improvement industry's calendar.

Nearly 30,000 industry professionals will be looking for the best and most innovative new products in hardware, housewares, homewares, lawn and garden products, paint and home decor, while major players like The Home Depot, Ace Hardware, Sears, K-Mart and many others will join thousands of retailers, wholesalers, distributors, manufacturers and the press to discover new products.

NHS and the United Inventor's Association continue to give unique access to entrepreneurs who have

invented DIY and other home improvement products (exhibitors are limited to displaying two products only).

And if your product has not yet gained distribution but is patent pending or patent approved, it can be showcased in the show's two expanded Inventor's Spotlight areas – your chance as an inventor to interact with leading manufacturers, retailers and media, who can write about or even fund your innovation.

Both Inventor Spotlights will be located near New Product World®, one of the show's most-visited areas.

Award-winning WRTI Member Mick Gordon returned from last year's show with glowing reports about the organiser's support for exhibitors and the straightforward access to high-level trade and retail company buyers. ■

● [www.nationalhardwareshow.com](http://www.nationalhardwareshow.com)

## ● SHELL SPRINGBOARD'S 2008 UK WINNER

**CARBON8 SYSTEMS** are the winners of Shell Springboard's award to small businesses which demonstrate creative thinking in challenging climate change. Their innovative Accelerated Carbonation process can turn waste material into bricks. Carbon8 Systems were selected from the winners of ten regional heats.

● [www.shellspringboard.org](http://www.shellspringboard.org)



Carbon8 Systems Limited,  
Medway Enterprise Hub  
Chatham Maritime, Kent ME4 4TB  
Tel: 0208 331 9848  
info@c8s.co.uk [www.c8s.co.uk](http://www.c8s.co.uk)



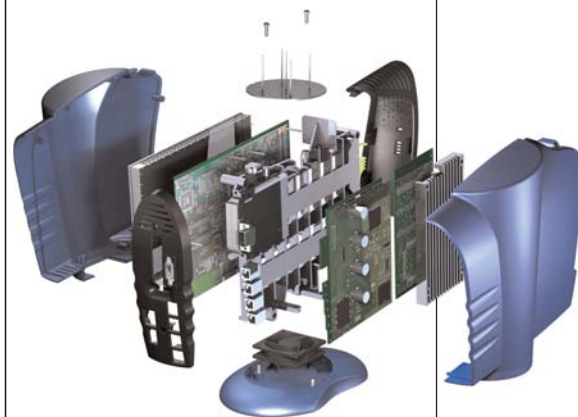
## Embedded Systems event

● NOW IN its 6th year, Embedded Masterclass, the electronics design and engineering show, will take place at two different locations next month: Thames Innovation Centre on 8 May and the Gables Hotel, Falfield, near Bristol on 13 May.

This year's events are free to embedded systems engineers and managers working with embedded technology (over 800 engineers having registered so far).

With its focus on leading-edge embedded technology and tools, and including technical presentations from key industry leaders, Embedded Masterclass has become an important event in the UK's Embedded Systems calendar.

● To register for either event, contact: [info@embedded-masterclass.com](mailto:info@embedded-masterclass.com)  
[www.embedded-masterclass.com](http://www.embedded-masterclass.com)



## Innova ovation

● 3D CAD EXPERTS Innova Systems are exhibiting their market-leading SolidWorks solutions at Embedded Masterclass 2008.

Innova Systems are a leader in the provision of CAD and modelling systems to the technology sector. Based near Cambridge, they have worked closely with many of the UK's leading electronics development and manufacturing companies, enabling the modelling and rapid prototyping of plastic enclosures (above), precision components and mechanical systems.

● Innova Systems, Innovation House  
Pioneer Court, Chivers Way  
Histon, Cambridge CB4 9PT  
Tel: +44 (0)1223 200 690  
[info@innova-systems.co.uk](mailto:info@innova-systems.co.uk)  
[www.innova-systems.co.uk](http://www.innova-systems.co.uk)

## International TRIZ conference

The largest international TRIZ Conference in the world, TRIZCON attracts international TRIZ experts and end-users and includes tutorials, presentations, keynote speakers and case studies. TRIZCON2008 at Kent State University, Ohio on 13-15 April will mark the event's 10th anniversary. ● [www.triz-journal.com](http://www.triz-journal.com)

## The Altshuller Institute for TRIZ studies

The only TRIZ organisation in the west officially authorised by Genrich Altshuller, the primary goals of the Altshuller Institute include promoting TRIZ worldwide, distributing R&D publications and developing TRIZ materials for children.

● The Altshuller Institute for TRIZ studies  
100 Barber Avenue, Worcester, MA 01606, USA  
Tel: +1 508-799-6601 [ai@triz.org](mailto:ai@triz.org) [www.aitriz.org](http://www.aitriz.org)



TRIZ (pronounced 'trees'), is an acronym from the Russian 'Teoriya Resheniya Izobretatelskikh Zadatchi' and stands for the Theory of Inventive Problem Solving – a theory developed by Russian patent officer Genrich Altshuller (above), who noticed similarities in invented solutions from different fields. In analysing over 200,000 patents, Altshuller discovered that most patented ideas use a number of objective principles and are based on a finite number of physical, chemical and geometric effects. He developed 40 TRIZ Principles as being common to many inventions, using one or more of which can help solve any inventive problem.

## SPECIAL OFFER



**£5 discounts to readers who order the first 100 FLO CONTROL press-button fuel cans!**

### FLO CONTROL press-button non-spill fuel cans

To mark the launch of the award-winning Flo Control™ Fuel Can, 100 are being offered at a discount. Simply order online from [www.flocontrol.co.uk](http://www.flocontrol.co.uk) and quote 'Inventique'.

The first 100 orders received will obtain 5-litre Flo Control Fuel Cans for just **£19.99 each\*** – a discount of £5 on the normal £24.99 retail price. Choose from the green (unleaded), black (diesel) or red (leaded or 2-stroke) 'easy-grip'-handled models – one for the boot, one for the boat and one for the lawnmower!

With its elegant press-button design, unique 'non-spill' features and flexible extension hose, the Flo Control is fuelling a demand.

**ORDER NOW WHILE STOCKS LAST!**

\*plus £6.85 p&p.

Trade enquiries: Tel 01983 822 588 [sales@flocontrol.co.uk](mailto:sales@flocontrol.co.uk) [www.flocontrol.co.uk](http://www.flocontrol.co.uk)

#### ● RAPID PROTOTYPING

**LECTURE** RUPERT SOAR of the University of Loughborough will present an IMechE talk on the latest developments in large scale rapid prototyping and rapid manufacture at the Nuffield Theatre, University of Southampton at 7pm on Thursday 17 April. It is now possible to use RP/RM techniques to produce elements of buildings and Dr Soar is one of this fast-developing area's leading experts. ■

● **Lecture Theatre A, Nuffield Theatre University of Southampton, SO17 1TR**

● **HOT TOPICS SEMINAR** THIS MONTH's Hot Topic Seminar at the University of Portsmouth's Centre for Enterprise Research and Innovation is 'Trust between

organisations', presented by Sue Couchman and Beth Rogers in the Richmond Building on Wednesday 23 April at 6pm. Admission is free on registration.

The benefits of working closely with other organisations to deliver products or services are keenly sought, but the majority of 'partnerships' break down. This talk draws on research and experiences from commercial and public sector partnering to provide some criteria for achieving progress. It will also introduce the audience to some of the symptoms of problems and suggest solutions.

● **To register for this event, contact: Allyson Hunt Tel: 023 9284 4046 [ceri@port.ac.uk](mailto:ceri@port.ac.uk) [www.port.ac.uk/research/ceri/events](http://www.port.ac.uk/research/ceri/events)**

#### ● 'IMAGE' WORKSHOP

CHILWORTH BUSINESS CLUB is hosting a lunchtime workshop on 'Image: what is it and why does it matter?' on Thursday 24 April by guest speaker Diana Blakeman, a trainer in personal communication and image.

Subjects covered will include first impressions, modern professional dress codes, and authority and credibility.

Admission is free upon registration and includes a light lunch.

● **To register for this event, contact: Karen Morgan Tel: 023 8076 3795 [info@southamptonhub.com](mailto:info@southamptonhub.com) Chilworth Business Incubator 2 Venture Road, Southampton Science Park, SO16 7NP**

## ALL-NEW BUSINESS PLAN PRO

**P**ALO ALTO SOFTWARE has launched a feature-packed new version of its business-planning software, Business Plan Pro – which the company claims is the fastest and easiest way for startups and small-to-medium sized businesses to write a business plan.

Changes to the latest version include new customisable colour charts, easier and quicker financial forecasts and a streamlined interface that will help finish plans faster, in addition to containing more than 500 sample business plans and step-by-step guidance.

Fully Windows-compatible, Bplans™ includes helpful tools and know-how for managing your business, and has won several awards as a valuable 'plain talking' resource.

Palo Alto Software's Windows products also include Marketing Plan Pro for creating professional, complete, and accurate marketing plans. ■

● **Palo Alto Software Ltd, 72 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8TH Tel: 0845 351 9924 [www.bplans.co.uk](http://www.bplans.co.uk) [www.paloalto.co.uk](http://www.paloalto.co.uk)**

**Business Plan Pro**  
Standard edition: **£79.99**  
Premier edition: **£129.99**

**Marketing Plan Pro:**  
**£129.99**

Business Plan Pro is described as 'No. 1 Best Selling', 'The No. 1 recommended tool for building a great business plan', and 'Simple and effective!'. It includes '500+ Sample Business Plans' and is 'Recommended by experts, trusted by entrepreneurs'. Marketing Plan Pro is described as 'No. 1 Selling Marketing-planning software for 7 years running' and offers 'More power More flexibility More tools'. A quote from Accounting Today states: '...the simplest way to create a marketing plan...'

**G**ECKOS, those small climbing lizards found in warmer climates, have been a magnet for biomimetic research for years because of the natural nanotechnology on the 'sticky' soles of their feet, and university engineers regard the reptile as a major inspiration for robots that look and move much like the animals they emulate.

Now the tail of the climbing lizard is providing engineers with the inspiration for more agile robots, and may aid in the design of unmanned gliding vehicles or even help astronauts move in space.

Evolution has finely-tuned the design of the tail of the lizard because its performance is a matter of life or death, and is crucial for high-speed vertical climbing and for ensuring they land on their feet after a fall, according to new research at the University of California, Berkeley.

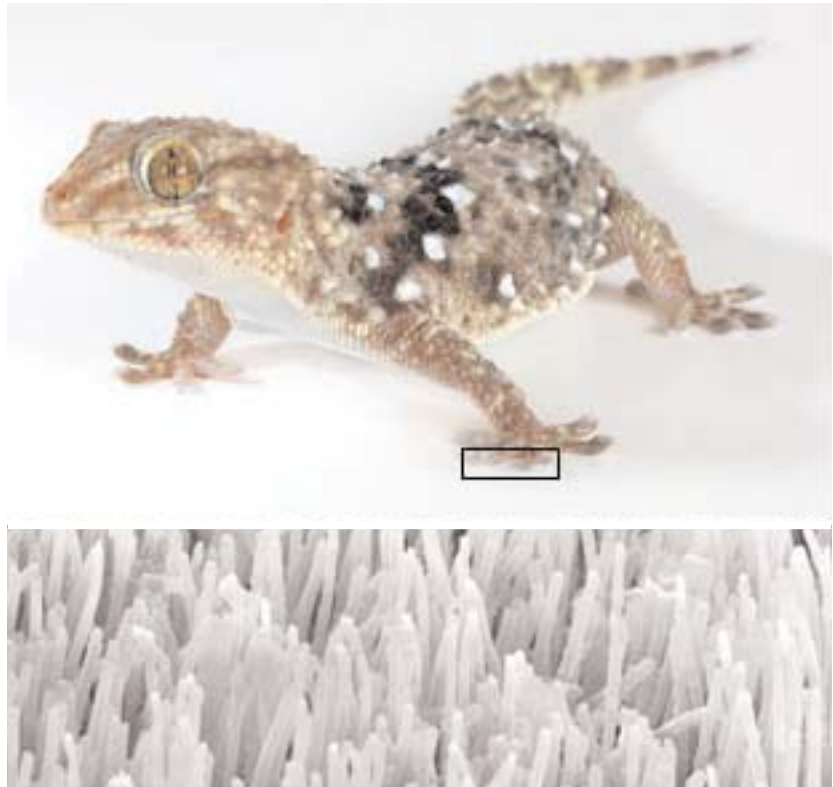
### Superman returns

In a study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences in the USA, the biologists report that geckos rely on their tails to keep from falling off vertical surfaces and, if they do fall, to right themselves in midair and adopt a 'Superman' posture, like a skydiver gliding to a safe landing.

According to senior author Professor Robert Full, previous experiments focused on their unique toes as the key to running up a wall and hanging onto ceilings: while claws help geckos climb rough surfaces, millions of microscopic 'toe hairs', or setae, make it possible for them to climb smooth ones.

All that power comes from a subtle electrical attraction between single atoms on the surface of each setae and single atoms on the surface of the wall or ceiling.

But only when engineers were motivated by these findings to create gecko-like robots such as Boston Dynamics's RiSE, Pennsylvania University's DynaClimber and Stanford University's Spinybot and



© PROFESSOR AUTUMN KELLAR

**STICK WITH IT** Each gravity-defying Gecko foot is packed with about half a million hair-like structures, known as setae, which produce electrical attractions that literally glue the animals down. The combined attraction of the weak electrical forces allow the gecko to stick to virtually any surface – even polished glass.

Stickybot did they discover that a tail might be necessary to prevent the robot from pitching backward and falling when it slips on a vertical surface.

"This is an undiscovered function for tails that tells us a lot about how active tails could affect the performance of vertebrates," says Professor Full.

### A new angle

With the help of high-speed video, the researchers discovered that when a gecko loses traction with one foot, it taps its tail on the surface to keep its balance until the toes can grab hold again. This all happens in a few thousandths of a second, since geckos can run up a wall at speeds of three feet per second – stepping and peeling off their toes 30 times per second.

"We were really surprised to see that they could pitch back up to 60°, return to the vertical surface and still traverse the slippery patches".

The team also notes that the lizards nearly always made a four-

point landing after using their tails to reorient in mid-air. They found that the geckos rotated their tails so that their bodies counter-rotated to face downward, then spread their legs and toes to parachute.

The lizards, after turning face down, often used their tails to manoeuvre in mid-air like a skydiver toward a targeted drop-zone. In wind tunnel tests, geckos could actually hover in the air stream and, using their tails, steer toward a solid perch.

"Why go into this Superman posture?" Prof Full asked. "We found that it allowed them to use their tails to turn or control yaw and pitch. In the wild, this might allow a gecko escaping a predator to just go off the end of a branch and manoeuvre to another place."

The engineers with whom Professor Full collaborates are now devising active tails for their robots to replicate these moves. This strategy could also help astronauts move in weightless environments. ■

Source: R&D Magazine/telegraph.co.uk

"The only way of discovering the limits of the possible is to venture a little way past them into the impossible" – Arthur C Clarke

# www.wrti.org.uk

THE INVENTORS WEBSITE

## CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE Remap

# You can't buy this

## NATIONAL NETWORK OF INVENTIVE VOLUNTEERS

**I**NNOVATORS wishing to offer their expertise to a worthy cause should take a close look at Remap, the registered national charity that has provided custom-made equipment to people with disabilities for over 40 years.

Remap operates a network of 1,500 volunteers, including professional engineers, technicians, craftspeople and medical personnel.

They have produced myriad innovative devices, including an automatic page-turner, a magnetic knitting machine, a rotary letter opener, a whole-body transfer trolley, a travelling stool and the ingenious 'Torso Trike'.

By only making devices that are unavailable over the counter, Remap turns out £2m-worth of individual aids every year that money just can't buy – yet every bespoke device is given free of

charge to the user to help them experience a better quality of life.

Their engineers also 'go green' when choosing materials for the job: discarded car components or a defunct dishwasher can be turned into items that open up new vistas for hundreds of disabled people.

Remap welcomes new volunteers – so what are you waiting for? ■

**To find your local branch, contact:  
Remap, D9 Chaucer Business Park  
Kemsing, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 6YU  
Tel: 0845 130 0456 www.Remap.org.uk**

### WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

**www.pro-talk.com**

Technical professionals from the building, electronics, engineering, finance, laboratory, marketing, manufacturing, printing and processing industries can sign up to receive free industry-specific e-newsletters at this website.

### BOOK OF THE MONTH

#### Little Book of Big Ideas: Business

by John Lipczynski  
A&C Black 128 pages  
ISBN 9780713686142  
£9.99

"This nicely produced little book (thick paper, cute line drawings)

offers bite-sized bios of business-world stars from Thomas Edison and Phineas T Barnum to Henry Ford, Anita Roddick, Warren Buffett and Akio Morita (founder of Sony), plus handy introductions to the ideas of risk, stock, monopolies and so on. Lipczynski's fluid narration allows one the forlorn realisation that a lot of the big ideas are, in retrospect, slap-your-head simple.

Here's the eureka moment of amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos: 'While investigating mail-order catalogues, he realised that, in book retailing, there were no comprehensive mail-order catalogues, simply because such a document (as opposed to a 'book club' type listing) would be far too large to post.'

Drat, I said, I could have thought of that."

– Steven Poole, books.guardian.co.uk



## BUSINESS LINK INNOVATION CLINICS

Are you thinking about developing a new product, process or service? Have you invented something and don't know what to do next? Through its series of free Innovation Clinics, Business Link provides confidential and impartial guidance on such subjects as investigating an innovative idea, product development, working with universities, R&D funding sources, protecting intellectual property rights and licensing. Innovation Clinics are held throughout the SEEDA region.

● Advice Hotline: 0845 600 9 006 [innovation@businesslinksoutheast.co.uk](mailto:innovation@businesslinksoutheast.co.uk) [www.businesslink.gov.uk/southeast](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/southeast)

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