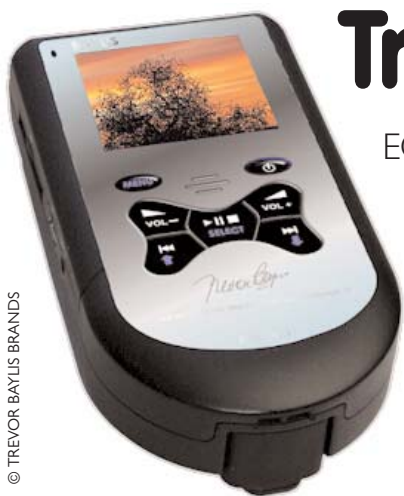


Inventique®

The newsletter of Wessex Round Table of Inventors

January 2008

THE \$100 LAPTOP IS HERE (but is selling for \$200) – see page 4



© TREVOR BAYLIS BRANDS

Trevor plays it clever

ECO MEDIA PLAYER HAS NINE DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS

TREVOR BAYLIS, inventor of the wind-up radio and Patron of the WRTI, has launched a new range of wind-up products.

The Eco Media Player allows users to listen to music, watch movies, tune-in to FM radio stations and thumb through photo albums, all on a single device – and without the need for batteries or external power sources.

Invented by Tony Davies, technical director of Brighton company TCL Products, the Eco is manufactured by Trevor Baylis Brands as part of its 'Next Generation' range, and is aimed at consumers of sophisticated electronic products concerned about their impact upon the environment.

Tony Davies said: "We wanted to create a device that could play high-quality videos and music yet deliver a wide range of additional features, including the ability to store computer data files like a USB memory stick. The obvious solution was wind-up technology."

In the beginning

The original wind-up radio was invented by Trevor Baylis sixteen years ago. He said: "My invention pioneered a new eco-technology that is as relevant and cutting-edge today as it was then. I'm really



Above: When fully charged by wind-up or via its USB port, the Eco Media Player provides 20 hours of constant music or 10 hours of video play.

proud that this range has been developed in the UK to meet the needs of the next generation." ■

● For further information:

Tel: +44 (0)5602 290240

info@ecomediaplayer.com

www.ecomediaplayer.com

www.trevorbaylisbrands.com

www.tclproducts.co.uk

ECO FEATURES FACT-FILE

- Video player
- Music player
- FM radio
- LED torch
- Photo viewer
- Hi-fi recorder
- Memo recorder
- Digital data storage
- Mobile phone charger
- Headphones included
- Supports Microsoft Windows

Next WRTI meeting WEDNESDAY 9 JANUARY

Richard Little of C-Cubed.co.uk will talk about the development of the PocketSense™ range of data acquisition products, followed by an Inventors Clinic. Room HC 017, Herbert Collins Building, Southampton Solent University at 6.30pm. Guests welcome, refreshments included.

● Non-members wishing to attend should e-mail: secretary@wrti.co.uk or tel: 01420 562 378

SALON INTERNATIONAL DES INVENTIONS

THE DEADLINE for registering to exhibit at Europe's biggest inventors' show is Monday 25 February. The 36th International Exhibition of Inventions, New Techniques & Products will be held at Geneva Palexpo on 2-6 April.

● International Exhibition of Inventions

Rue du 31-Décembre 8, CH-1207 Geneva

Switzerland Tel: (00 41 22) 736 59 49

promex@worldcom.ch

www.inventions-geneva.ch

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

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

IN THIS SERIES of Top Tips we've picked our winner, proved it works and confirmed its best markets. But for most inventors the biggest challenge of all is how to promote it.

Emma James of Tasty Marketing spoke wonderfully on how to do just that at WRTI's November meeting, and some members have tips to add.

First, get the product name right. Joe Silver's LifeLock (portable door security), or Frank Landamore's Grass Snake Cable Grip (helps avoid cutting mower cables), are great examples.

Then obtain high-quality product and action photos, and a video-clip, of your product – including launch customers' personal testimonials.

Ensure that you demonstrate and present your idea professionally and concisely, or find someone who can. As BBC TV's *Dragons' Den* shows, you never have enough time to explain, so practising your presentation until it is slick and the message is clear makes you far more credible.

You'll need to put your idea over in writing many times, be it in a press release, mail shot, business plan, data sheet or website. Boil it down to one powerful, succinct description and keep repeating it to everyone. It will read all the better if you base it on the tightly-worded 'pitch' you've spent so many hours rehearsing!

Get your words and pictures out to everyone you can [including *Inventique!* – Ed.], and remember that each new customer becomes a new story and a chance to go back to your contacts again. Success breeds success, as the saying goes.

As Emma said, PR is cheaper and works better than advertising, but getting press or investor attention is difficult. So winning an award or two can make a difference. Trade media are keen to feature award winners, and such exposure can enable you to command a premium unit price. Showing a positive return on early sales is always difficult, and investors may walk away if you're unable to sell at well over twice your unit cost.

Sincerely, Peter

PETER HEBARD, WRTI Chairman

INVENTORATOR Liz Jackson

Dreams to reality

PERSONAL PREPARATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Continued from last month

TO REALISE YOUR DREAMS you need to think positively. Everybody tells you that – but nobody tells you how to do it. Here's what I do and this has always worked for me:

Every morning I get up and I think about all the things I'm thankful for – I have a great family, I'm thankful for that; I have a great home, I'm thankful for that; I have a great husband, I'm thankful for that; and so on.

Whilst I'm thinking about all the things I'm thankful for I'm filling up my glass, and by the time I'm finished my glass is much more than half-full and I'm ready to tackle the day and fill it to the top.

Finally, here are three vital pieces of advice:

● **Don't be a 'nearly' man or woman.** I sometimes sit next to them at dinner and they tell me all

the things they 'nearly' did. Just get on and do it, whatever your particular 'it' is. If you fail, you'll have a much better story than you would if you 'nearly' did it.

● **Don't depend on luck, it doesn't exist.** Luck is where hard work meets opportunity. Work hard and the opportunities will come. As an entrepreneur your skill is to spot opportunities and grab them by the throat, not letting go until you've gained every benefit from them.

● **Starting a business is like running a marathon.** There are lots of ups and downs and pain barriers to go through. You have to have endurance to keep going until you get to the finish line; you're very unlikely to get rich quickly and you need to stick with it through the good and bad times.

It is the most exciting thing I've ever done. ■

© Liz Jackson 2007

● *Liz Jackson founded Great Guns Marketing (greatgunsmarketing.co.uk) in the lounge of her rented Basingstoke flat in 1998 with a £1,000 grant and a £4,000 loan from The Prince's Trust. One year later she lost her eyesight. She now employs 120 people with a turnover exceeding £2m.*

Reprinted with the kind permission of www.startups.co.uk, the UK's largest independent online information resource for people wanting to start up in business. Part of the Crimson Business publishing group, startups.co.uk contains over 15,000 free pages of advice, guides, news and features on prominent entrepreneurs, and is visited by over 100,000 budding entrepreneurs and start-up businesses every month.

NATIONAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY AWARD FOR USBCELL

START-UP company Moixa Energy won a UK National Energy Efficiency Award for their USBCELL batteries (*Inventique*, October'06) last month.

Moixa launched the batteries (available at Comet, Currys and PC World) to counter the 15bn 'disposable' batteries discarded every year. A cap on the USBCELL flips open to reveal a built-in USB connector and charger. When the cap is closed, the USBCELL operates as an ordinary battery.

Moixa Energy Holdings undertake R&D and investment in renewable energy and portable power technologies, backed by a £152,000 London Development Agency Grant.

● Moixa Energy Ltd, Unit 09, 10-11 Archer Street, London W1D 7AZ

Tel: 020 7734 1511 info@moixaenergy.com

www.moixaenergy.com www.usbcell.com



OUT AND ABOUT

● IAS FUNDING SEMINARS

THE INNOVATION Advisory Service is hosting free one-day seminars in Portsmouth and Southampton to help chief executives, technical directors, heads of R&D and other senior personnel gain a better understanding of what funds their companies should apply for – and how to do so successfully.

Entitled 'Navigating the Funding Landscape', subjects covered include how to identify funding appropriate to a company's needs, grants for R&D, collaborative programmes, regional and European project funding, investment networks, business angels and R&D tax credits.

● **Thursday 24 January:**
The Portsmouth Technopole.

● **Wednesday 6 February:**
Southampton Science Park.

Launched in April last year, the Innovation Advisory Service provides support for ambitious technology companies of all sizes in south east England to plan and implement innovation programmes. It is administered for SEEDA by Oxford Innovation, with the National Physical Laboratory and CLIK (the technology transfer arm of Rutherford Appleton Laboratory).

● **To book your place, email your name, position, company and the event you wish to attend to:**
events@iasse.co.uk
www.iasse.co.uk



Inventor's China option

A BRITISH INVENTOR who was frustrated with the expense of prototyping and manufacturing in the UK has relocated to China in order to help other inventors realise their visions.

James Peterson, from London, moved to Shanghai and has forged relationships with Chinese engineers, manufacturers and agents in order to source prototypes, samples and manufacturing for inventors at a fraction of what it would cost in the UK.

Based on technical drawings and specifications, James will project-manage each customers' order by finding the best-value manufacturer, reporting back with quotes and overseeing production and delivery. The London branch of his company, Products Made in China Ltd, ensures that customers are kept in regular contact about their order.

Nothing ventured...

James, an experienced negotiator whose 20-year background in mechanical and electrical engineering confirmed in him a belief that price is nothing without quality, has designed and patented a number of inventions including the Fetch 'n' Carry Bone, a business he sold to fund this latest venture.

In his efforts to prototype and manufacture the product, James became disillusioned with the expense and inflexibility of British manufacturers – so he flew to China and personally oversaw the production of his product, and is using the experience to ensure that other inventors get the cost benefits of manufacturing in China – without the complications.

"I couldn't believe the prices being quoted by British companies just to create a mould. There are some wonderful inventors in the UK and it frustrates me that we face so many obstacles to getting our products into the shops. I guess you could say I have a bone to pick with British industry!"

"If something like Products Made in China had been available when I was developing the Fetch 'n' Carry Bone, I would have definitely given them a call. Knowing that there's someone in China looking after my interests and getting the best possible price takes all the worry out of the situation." ■

● **David Montgomery**
Products Made in China Ltd
11-13 Uxbridge Road
London W12 8TB
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7371 3845
sales@productsmadeinchina.co.uk
www.productsmadeinchina.co.uk



Selling his dog training-aid business, The Fetch 'n' Carry Bone, financed James' new venture.

HUMORESQUE from Ian Moore

Scene: Open Day at the local psychiatric assessment unit...

VISITOR: "Doctor, how do you determine whether or not to institutionalise a person?"

DOCTOR: "Well, we give them a simple test. We fill a bath up with water, hand them a cup, a teaspoon and a bucket, and ask them to empty the bath."

VISITOR: "I get it – a normal person would use the bucket, because it's bigger, right?"

DOCTOR: "Not at all – a normal person would pull the plug out. Would you like a bed near the window?" ■

GRAHAM REACHES REGIONAL FINAL

EX-WRTI MEMBER Dr Graham Rawlinson has been named as a regional finalist in the E.ON EnergyLab competition – a nationwide search to find Britain's next big energy-saving innovations (*Inventique*, Aug/Sept'07).

Graham, who wrote a series of articles for *Inventique* on TRIZ, the theory of inventive problem-solving, formed the Rural Inventors Club in Plaistow, West Sussex over two years ago. His invention has been shortlisted for the £10,000 award by a panel headed by former BBC 'Tomorrow's World' presenter Philippa Forrester and ITV 'Dream Homes' presenter Oliver Heath, and he is now poised to pitch his invention to industry experts in Birmingham on 22 January.

E.ON, one of the UK's leading power and gas companies, launched the EnergyLab competition in September. A new category, the LIFE-IC Technology Award, has been added specifically for those studying or working in engineering or technology. The winner of this award will receive a cash prize of £5,000 and support from business accelerator LIFE-IC to develop their idea and get it produced.

● www.energyawards.org.uk



The \$100 laptop is on sale (for \$200)

THE COMPUTER developed for use by the world's poorest children, originally dubbed 'the \$100 laptop', (*Inventique*, November 2005) is now on sale – albeit at double the originally conceived asking price.

The not-for-profit One Laptop per Child Foundation, founded by MIT professor Nicholas Negroponte, has started offering the green-and-white machines in batches of 10,000 for \$200 apiece on its website, laptopfoundation.org. Unit prices rise if smaller quantities are ordered.

Right: Launched in October, the XO laptop dispensed with the original prototype's wind-up power option in favour of swivelling mesh-network antennae 'ears'.



© 2008 ONE LAPTOP PER CHILD FOUNDATION

Left: The new laptop offers hope to millions of schoolchildren and teachers in the developing world.



impractical, the yellow handle being supplanted by the green mesh-network antennae, or 'ears'. The XO is created expressly for children in developing countries, living in some of the most remote environments, and was designed collaboratively by experts from both academia and industry. "It's an education project, not a laptop project," said professor Negroponte.

The devices went into full production in China last month, when version 1 of the software was finalised. More than 200,000 are already thought to have been sold to donors, including the governments of Mongolia, Peru and Uruguay.

Fighting the flak

When professor Negroponte first announced his intention to produce laptops for \$100 he came in for criticism from Bill Gates about the quality of the product, while Intel – the world's largest semiconductor company – helped develop the Asus Eee PC as a riposte.

But although a classic marketing error was committed in announcing an eye-catchingly low starting price which could not subsequently be

Below: A black and white screen option is available, offering higher contrast in brighter conditions.



realised once the R&D commenced, Microsoft recently revealed that it is now trying to tailor Windows XP to work on the laptop, while Intel has teamed up with the Foundation and they may work together on a Generation-Two machine.

Some industry analysts believe that this innovative laptop could shake up the PC industry – to such an extent that it might usher in a new era of low-cost computing. ■

● One Laptop per Child Foundation
PO Box 425087, Cambridge
MA 02142, USA.
Tel: 00 1 617 452 5663
information@laptop.org
www.laptopfoundation.org

The laptops are purchased by donors who designate where they are to be sent through a programme devised to help finance the product's launch.

The R&D roller-coaster

Preceded by four prototype models, the Generation-One XO is a green-and-white laptop that is roughly the size of a schoolbook. It is made of safe, dirt-resistant materials such as the rubber membrane keyboard, features a screen that swivels for e-book capabilities, and utilises free and open-source software.

The wind-up prototype with its iconic yellow crank handle proved



Creating an e-business

CHILWORTH BUSINESS CLUB is hosting a lunchtime workshop on How To Create An e-Business by Tony Treacy of eConsultants.it.Ltd on Wednesday 23 January. Admission is free upon registration and includes a light lunch.

Tony has been in the e-learning industry for over 8 years and the training industry for over 25 years, and has spanned both the private sector as a trainer and the public sector as a lecturer in higher education.

His 40-minute presentation gives an overview of what is needed to get business online, and explains what free Internet resources are available, how to use them, and how to create a sustainable e-business for the long term. The presentation will be followed by a 20-minute Q&A session.

● For further information, contact:
Karen Morgan Tel: 023 8076 3795
info@southamptonhub.com
Chilworth Business Incubator,
2 Venture Road,
Southampton Science Park, SO16 7NP

NEWS IN BRIEF

● GLOBAL LAB IS LAUNCHED

SCIENTISTS IN LONDON are now able to use and manipulate multi-million dollar scientific instruments and other technology in the United States, in real-time, following the launch of the Global Lab at Imperial College London.

Worldwide, very few machines exist to provide scientists with true atomic-scale resolution. Imperial researchers are now able to access such technology in the USA to carry out important research into alternatives to fossil fuels – such as the next generation of low-cost solar power cells, advanced fuel cells and innovative biofuels.

The Global Lab links laboratories in the UK and the USA via the Lambda Rail, a high bandwidth/low latency network

Google's RE<C initiative

GOOGLE has announced an initiative to develop electricity from renewable energy sources that will be cheaper than electricity produced from coal.

Known as RE<C, it will focus on advanced solar thermal power, wind power technologies, enhanced geothermal systems and other potential breakthrough technologies.

RE<C is hiring engineers and energy experts to lead its research and development work, which will begin with a significant effort on solar thermal technology, and will also investigate enhanced geothermal systems and other areas.

A chance to shine

Google intends to work with a variety of organisations in the renewable energy field, including companies, R&D laboratories and universities. The company expects to spend tens of millions of dollars on R&D and related investments in renewable energy during 2008 alone, and anticipates investing hundreds of millions of dollars into breakthrough projects.

“There has been tremendous work already on renewable energy,” said Google co-founder Larry Page. “Technologies have been developed that can mature into industries capable of providing electricity cheaper than coal. Solar thermal technology, for example, provides a very plausible path to providing renewable energy cheaper than coal.”

“We are also very interested in further developing other technologies that have the potential to be cost-competitive and green. We are aware of several, and believe there are many more out there.”

“With talented technologists, great partners and significant investments, we hope to rapidly push forward. Our goal is to produce one gigawatt of renewable energy capacity that is cheaper than coal. We are optimistic this can be done in years, not decades.” (One gigawatt can power a city the size of San Francisco.)

Coal supplies 40% of the world's electricity, but the greenhouse gases it produces are one of man's biggest environmental challenges. Making electricity produced from renewable energy cheaper than coal would play a key role in reducing global greenhouse gas emissions.

Investment and grants

“We want to add something to the efforts of those trying to produce cheaper renewable energy technologies a bit more quickly,” said Larry Brilliant, executive director of Google.org, Google's philanthropic arm.

“Google.org's hope is that by funding research on promising technologies, investing in promising new companies, and doing a lot of R&D ourselves, we may help spark a green electricity revolution that will deliver breakthrough technologies priced lower than coal.” ■

● www.google.org
For RE<C recruitment information, see: www.google.com/jobs/energy

running across the Atlantic seabed. The Lambda Rail can move vast amounts of data virtually instantaneously across thousands of miles. Scientists have already shown that they can simultaneously manipulate complex equipment in the US, and talk to each other on the Lambda Rail via video link-up, without the time delays and low resolution usually associated with such long-range communications.

The Global Lab has been established as part of the AtlanTICC Alliance, a sustainable energy research consortium comprising Imperial College London, Georgia Institute of Technology and Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee.

● Source: R&D e-News

"Only one company can be the cheapest. All the others must use design" ● – Rodney Fitch

www.wrti.org.uk

THE INVENTORS WEBSITE

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE GB Electronic Productions

Circuit and sea...

BESPOKE PROTOTYPE-TO-MANUFACTURE SERVICE

A SMALL ELECTRONICS company based in Newton Abbot, Devon, GB Electronic Productions specialise in prototype and small- and medium-scale electronic manufacture.

The company encourages approaches from inventors reluctant to deal with corporations, offering a bespoke personal service to individuals and SMEs alike.

GB's broad-based portfolio of electronic product manufacture ranges from Active robots to ZTC controllers for model railways.

Their services include personally project-managed production, small, medium or large batch production, and pro-active client support with 24-hour turnaround when required.

The company caters for:

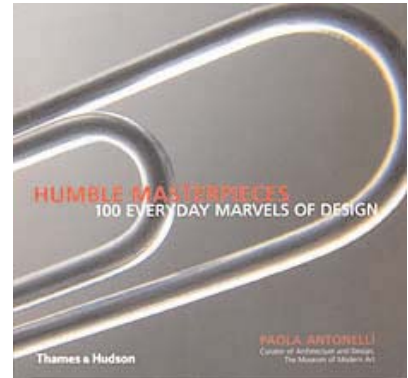
- Design, prototype and product development.
- Free issue solutions.
- Full turnkey procured solutions.

- Modular/chassis wiring.
- Printed circuit-board manufacture and testing.
- Population of both SMT and through-hole PCBs.
- Wave and hand soldering (with either lead or lead-free solder). ■
- **Steve France, Contracts Manager**
GB Electronic Productions Ltd
23 Daneheath Business Park,
Wentworth Road, Heathfield,
Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 6TL
Tel: 01626 833559
info@gb-electronics.co.uk
www.gb-electronics.co.uk

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

www.innovationtools.com

Innovation Tools provides the strategies, tools and techniques required to make your business more creative – and have more fun in the process. Contains dozens of archived articles, creativity tools, resource centres and more.



BOOK OF THE MONTH

Humble Masterpieces: 100 Everyday Marvels of Design

by Paola Antonelli

Thames & Hudson 216pp
ISBN 0500286035 £12.95

With the development of elastic steel wire the modern paper clip arrived in 1890, courtesy of the British Gem Manufacturing Company. It is one of the easiest to use and most enduring products ever designed, and shows no signs of being improved upon.

This book portrays one hundred fabulous objects, from bubble wrap to Zippo. Brief, informative descriptions accompany stunning photographs of each object, detailing the little-known history of some of our favourite things.

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 www.businesslink.gov.uk/southeast

WRTI PATRON Trevor Baylis OBE **CHAIRMAN** Peter Hebard chairman@wrti.co.uk

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN Richard Little deputychairman@wrti.co.uk **SECRETARY** Mike Overy secretary@wrti.co.uk

TREASURER Mike Wright treasurer@wrti.co.uk **MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY** Professor Richard Penson membership@wrti.co.uk

INVENTIQUE EDITOR Frank Landamore editor@wrti.co.uk **WEBMASTER** Mike Overy webmaster@wrti.co.uk

To receive free online editions of *Inventique*, simply follow the instructions on the 'Inventors newsletter' page at www.wrti.org.uk
Inventique © Frank Landamore 2003-2008. Text © the authors 2008.

All material in *Inventique* is copyright and may not be reproduced without permission or distributed other than in its entire original electronic and printed forms. Back issues of *Inventique* are available at www.wrti.org.uk

Edited, designed and produced by Frank Landamore, 42 South Way, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1LY on behalf of WRTI.