

# Inventique®

BFIIN Chairman's Award Winner 2007 [www.bfiin.com](http://www.bfiin.com)

The newsletter of Wessex Round Table of Inventors November 2007

12-18 November ENTERPRISE WEEK [www.enterpriseweek.org](http://www.enterpriseweek.org)



## It's quins!

**F**OUR WRTI MEMBERS won a total of five gold medals for their latest products at the British Invention Show in London last month, thanks to support from Business Link South East.

Kim Weiler won a gold medal in the leisure category for her Scott Holster™ – a sporting accessory already attracting interest in the USA. In addition, Kim gained a prestigious David Nicholas Design Award double gold.

Nick LeFeuvre also won gold in the leisure category for his SUHTL™ loudspeaker technology, which makes it possible to reproduce the full audio spectrum from a single point.

Andy Manuel and Bob Jackson won golds in the consumer category:

## RECORD MEDAL TALLY FOR WRTI AT BIS 2007

Andy for the Milli-grip™, a range of open-ended metric and imperial spanners with a revolutionary ratchet system; Bob for his LongLife Saw™ with instantly replaceable blades.

“All four products are sure-fire hits for investors, and received serious enquiries from potential

Above (from left): WRTI members Andy Manuel, Bob Jackson, Kim Weiler and Nick LeFeuvre, winners of five gold medals at the British Invention Show 2007.

backers at the show,” said WRTI chairman Peter Hebard. “It just goes to show that our formula for getting members’ products and ideas out in front of the public is working!” ■

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

WRTI @ BIS		Roll of Honour	
BIS 2004	GOLD	Autocone	<a href="http://safetcone.co.uk">safetcone.co.uk</a>
BIS 2004	GOLD	Czerniak Ducted Craft	
BIS 2004	BRONZE	Shamal Barzanji Gravity Pump	
BIS 2005	SILVER	Microwave UV Sanitisation	<a href="http://JENACT.CO.UK">JENACT.CO.UK</a>
BIS 2005	SILVER	LifeLock Portable Lock	<a href="http://LIFELOCK.CO.UK">LIFELOCK.CO.UK</a>
BIS 2005	SILVER	Talking Labels	<a href="http://TALKINGPRODUCTS.CO.UK">TALKINGPRODUCTS.CO.UK</a>
BIS 2006	GOLD X 2	LifeLock Portable Lock	<a href="http://LIFELOCK.CO.UK">LIFELOCK.CO.UK</a>
BIS 2006	BRONZE	Grass Snake Cable Grip	<a href="http://GRASSSNAKE.CO.UK">GRASSSNAKE.CO.UK</a>
BIS 2007	GOLD X 2	Scott Holster	<a href="http://SHOTGUNHOLSTER.NET">SHOTGUNHOLSTER.NET</a>
BIS 2007	GOLD	SUHTL Audio Technology	<a href="http://SUHTL.COM">SUHTL.COM</a>
BIS 2007	GOLD	Milli-grip Spanner	<a href="http://MILLI-GRIP.CO.UK">MILLI-GRIP.CO.UK</a>
BIS 2007	GOLD	LongLife Saw	<a href="http://GREATSTARUK.COM">GREATSTARUK.COM</a>

Wessex Round Table of Inventors meet at 6.30pm on the second Wednesday of each month at Southampton Solent University, East Park Terrace S014 ORP

## VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

LAST MONTH we talked about picking winners – and didn't we do just that: gold medals for all four WRTI entries at the British Invention Show. Congratulations! These are all world-class products well worth the attention of any investor.

But none of them got it right first time. Before launching their products, huge efforts were made to ensure the designs were right. And to prove that *you* have a world beater, you need to do the same with yours.

If you break the functions of your own product idea down and think laterally, you may come across simple solutions to that part of the problem. By finding the optimum choice for every aspect of your design you'll arrive at a radically better product. Common sense or simple calculation can usually provide the answers, but if not, seek expert advice.

Prototypes and tooling used to cost a small fortune, but modern 'rapid prototyping' equipment can produce your first components or moulding tools quickly – and cheaply, if you know how to ask.

It also pays to find customers prepared to fully test your prototypes: they can help refine your design and identify any final weak spots before you tool up for production.

Testing can be hugely expensive. I used to work for a company that tested new engines by running trucks containing concrete blocks up and down the motorways. We changed this by handing prototypes over to operators who tried their best to break them. When they did, we fixed it. Thus we obtained free (and much more realistic) testing, while the operators became our best advocates.

With your own testing, make sure you cover the extremes of use and environments – and the extremes of production tolerances as well. Once it all works without fail and your first customers are singing its praises, get some good testimonials – and prepare to tell the world!

Sincerely,  
Peter

PETER HEBARD, WRTI Chairman

INVENTORATOR Paul Sloane

# Leading the way

COMPANY CREATIVITY STARTS WITH THE LEADERS

Continued from last month

**H**OW CAN LEADERS become more receptive and more open to challenging ideas?

How can we create a climate that empowers people, allows risk-taking and encourages innovation? The following are some pointers that any current and future manager should absorb:

● **Listen more and tell less.** We are all in a terrible hurry, but if leaders swiftly dismiss the complaints, suggestions and ideas of their people and tell them to focus on the task in hand, they send out many negative signals and discourage initiative. If leaders spend time carefully listening to people's objections and proposals they are likely to uncover the real issues and find useful ideas.

● **Recognise risk-takers.** If an employee comes up with a good idea that you implement then make a fuss of them. Praise and recognise them in front of the crowd. Send a message that challenging the way things are done is welcomed.

● **Reward failure.** If a staff member makes an honest attempt to try something new and different and fails, do not chastise or blame them. Recognise their endeavour and see what lessons can be learned. Nothing crushes enterprise like a fear of failure. If a company is going to succeed with innovation, employees are going to have quite a few failures along the way – so welcome and manage them.

● **Ask for suggestions.** Throw down a challenge. Explain the goal you are trying to achieve and ask people for their input and ideas. Encourage a free flow of ideas. Suspend judgment during the idea-generation phase. Evaluate the best proposals and implement them.

● **Set innovation goals.** Define metrics for innovation and include

them in a balanced scorecard. These metrics may include the number of ideas generated, the number of prototypes in trial, the proportion of revenue from new products or the meantime between idea evaluation and implementation. People do what gets measured, so measure innovation.

● **Invest in training.** Train your people in how to generate, evaluate and implement ideas.

● **Borrow with pride.** Observe other organisations and copy their best practices. Establish a policy for sourcing innovations from outside your business. Establish links with universities, business networks and other successful organisations.

Most people blame 'the system' or their bosses for inhibiting their creativity. But when we talk about great leaders who inspire their teams it is plain that we all fall short of the ideal. Senior managers need to make greater efforts to encourage people to be creative, challenging and adventurous.

Ultimately, it all comes down to the actions of the leaders. Innovative leaders communicate with inspiring words and then quietly reinforce those words with actions. They challenge, they ask, they listen and they empower. In innovative organisations, leaders build the self-belief of their people. It is this self-belief that unlocks the door to successful innovation. ■

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● *Paul Sloane is a recognised expert on innovation, lateral thinking and leadership. He is the author of 17 books – including The Innovative Leader (Inventique, August/Sept'07). His clients include: AA, American Express, ARM, BT, DWP, Lloyds of London, Motorola, Reckitt Benckiser, Shell and 3M.*

psloane@destination-innovation.com  
www.destination-innovation.com



### Presentation Skills seminar

CHILWORTH BUSINESS CLUB is hosting a Presentation Skills lunchtime workshop by Claudine Hall of Creative Alliances on 22 November. Admission is free upon registration and includes a light lunch.

Making good presentations is a key step in winning new business. This two-hour event aims to take the fear out of making a pitch by helping participants learn the techniques of becoming a competent presenter: indicating how your presentations can make more impact, showing how to get your points across more clearly and concisely, and ensuring your pitch goes how you want it to in pressurised situations.

● **For further information, contact:**  
Karen Morgan Tel: 023 8076 3795  
info@southamptonhub.com

### Next WRTI meeting WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER

■ **'MARKETING TO PROMOTE your invention'** by guest speaker Emma James of Tasty Marketing ([www.tastymarketing.co.uk](http://www.tastymarketing.co.uk)) is followed by an Inventors' Clinic in Room HC 017, Herbert Collins Building, Southampton Solent University, commencing 6.30pm.

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

### LICENSING / IP CLINICS

WRTI and Business Link South East co-host a free lecture and a series of one-to-one advice clinics on 'Intellectual Property and Licensing your technology' at the SETsquared Centre, University of Southampton on Tuesday 27 November.

SETsquared is an initiative which supports high-tech, high-growth potential enterprises in Southern England.

● **Contact: Peter Hebard**  
[chairman@wrti.co.uk](mailto:chairman@wrti.co.uk)  
Tel: 01590 622 51  
[www.wrti.org.uk/events](http://www.wrti.org.uk/events)  
[www.businesslink.co.uk/events](http://www.businesslink.co.uk/events)

# Push for clean energy

**A** UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY to win support for your clean energy inventions will be launched by the International Clean Energy (ICE) Circle.

The initiative will be launched at the 2nd Fortune Forum Summit to be held at the Royal Courts of Justice, London on 30 November. Nobel Laureate Al Gore will be guest speaker at the event, which will reach a global audience of almost 1bn people and will be attended by 500 influential philanthropists, ethical investors and environmental supporters.

ICE Circle works towards addressing environmental degradation by identifying and promoting sustainable projects worldwide. It stimulates the implementation of clean energy technologies, energy-efficient

programmes, alternative fuels and emission-reducing initiatives

If you have an energy-generation or energy-saving invention that can really make a difference in the developing world or in the West, it could be presented to this gathering of 'green angels'.

It must be proven to make a real difference in the transition to low-cost clean energy or energy efficiency and be suitable for deployment where it will do the most good. An invention that can be scaled up in the developing world would attract publicity and potential investment.

● *Please email a synopsis of your idea to:* [richard@fortuneforum.org](mailto:richard@fortuneforum.org) (cc: [kane@thebis.org](mailto:kane@thebis.org)).

[www.icecircle.org](http://www.icecircle.org)

[www.fortuneforum.org](http://www.fortuneforum.org)

Source: British Inventors Society

## BEST IDEAS COME FROM UNISEX TEAMS

**TEAMS OF WORKERS** come up with the most innovative ideas if they are made up of even proportions of men and women, according to researchers. A study published last month by the London Business School found that professional teams with an equal gender split were much more likely to experiment, share knowledge and fulfil tasks, regardless of whether the team leader was a man or a woman.

An even mix allowed 'a psychological safe communication climate' and self-confidence among members, which in turn provided fertile ground for innovation, says the report from the LBS Lehman Brothers Centre for Women in Business.

More than 100 teams of 'knowledge workers' at 21 companies across 17 countries were surveyed. The report concludes that teams work best with an even mix because individuals tend to contribute less fully and confidently if they are in a minority. This applies to men as much as women, according to Lynda Gratton, lead author of the study. ■

● Source: [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

### ● EQUALITEC INNOVATION WORKSHOP

EQUALITEC are hosting a workshop to celebrate female innovation entitled 'Innovation for a Digital Future' on 13 November at the British Computer Society, Davidson Building, 5 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HA.

Brenda Hopkins, CEO of FeONIC Plc, will share her experience of running a company designing and innovating smart

material products, and Julie Meyer, CEO of Ariadne Capital, explains the venture capital support available to transform innovative ideas into business opportunities.

Award-winning innovators Eleanor Ford, Liping Zhang and Kathryn Bullock will also share their success stories.

● **Equalitec: Advancing Women in ITEC**  
14 King Street, London EC2V 8EA  
Tel: 0207 367 5348 [www.equalitec.org.uk](http://www.equalitec.org.uk)

# Enterprising women in control

**W**OMEN entrepreneurs responding to a recent survey stated that freedom of action and the need for greater control over their lives are the main reasons for starting their businesses.

The findings of the Enterprising Women's Research Report, one of the largest surveys ever carried out in the UK on women entrepreneurs, has found that work-life balance is rated as the biggest motivation for women who want to be successful.

Although making a profit is another factor that attracts them to go into business, being their own boss and getting control over their life are much higher motivators.

### Accurate measures?

The study also indicated that the traditional economic measurements of success are not always appropriate in the case of women business owners, who are often required to juggle between the conflicting needs of childcare, home life and career.

Other findings include the increasing involvement of older and minority ethnic women in starting

businesses, and the lack of correlation between education and success in enterprise.

Being patronised by trainers and professional advisors is another issue exposed by the survey.

Over 2,000 women are now members of Enterprising Women, which provides training, business advice, networking and a supportive entrepreneurial environment in the East of England from pre-start to established companies.

The organisation has helped create 147 jobs and 135 new businesses since July 2006, with a community turnover of £53m.

Enterprising Women provides the latest news, information, guides, resources, promotional and networking opportunities, peer support, training courses and seminars. Membership of the organisation is free.

Case studies are available on the Enterprising Women website. ■

● To request a copy of the report, contact Kate Naylor:

Tel: 01223 421 474

kate.naylor@ytko.com

www.enterprising-women.org

### Enterprise agencies merge

ENTERPRISE FIRST and the South Hampshire Enterprise Agency (SHEA), the two leading enterprise agencies in the south-east, merged in August.

Established in 1981, Enterprise First has assisted thousands of clients seeking to start-up a new business or develop an existing small business in Hampshire, Surrey and Berkshire.

Clients can meet one of 25 advisers, from a wide range of business backgrounds, at any of the agency's twenty locations in Alton, Aldershot, Andover, Basingstoke, Camberley, Dorking, Epsom, Eastleigh, Fareham, Farnham, Fleet, Godalming, Guildford, Havant, Portsmouth, Redhill, Southampton, Staines or Woking

As a not-for-profit company with sponsorship from the public and private sectors, Enterprise First can offer free support or help at a nominal cost. Research shows that clients taking an enterprise agency's advice are more likely to succeed compared with those that don't. ■

● Enterprise First, 11 Wellington Street, Aldershot GU11 1DX

Tel: 0845 4587535

info@enterprisefirst.co.uk

www.enterprisefirst.co.uk



**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY - PROTECTING YOUR IDEA**

SUSSEX INNOVATION CENTRE WEDNESDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2007

UK Intellectual Property Office ■■■■

Business LINK

THE SUSSEX INNOVATION CENTRE

**FREE FOR ENTERPRISE WEEK**

The Sussex Innovation Centre is hosting an Intellectual Property day in partnership with the Intellectual Property Office and Business Link.

**Programme:**

**10.00am - 11.00am** The Intellectual Property Office are doing a presentation on areas for examination in an Intellectual property Health Check.

**11.00am - 12.00pm** Expert Intellectual Property panel will answer questions from the floor in a facilitated open discussion.

**1.00pm - 5.00pm**

Would your business benefit from a one-to-one IP healthcheck with an IP specialist? We have a limited number available during the afternoon. To book your place, call **Paul Jordan on 01273 704424.**

**5 one-to-one Intellectual Property audits left - be quick!**

**For more information, please contact:**  
**Paul Jordan**  
 tel 01273 704424  
 email paulj@sinc.co.uk

"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work" – Thomas Edison

# www.wrti.org.uk

THE INVENTORS WEBSITE

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

every  
woman

## The developers...

THE ORIGINAL WEBSITE FOR WOMEN IN BUSINESS

**E**VERYWOMAN is the UK's leading provider of training, resources and support services for women in business.

Founded in 1999, it was the first website catering for women in business to launch in the UK and now boasts over 30,000 members.

Everywoman works to increase the number, and raise the status, of women in the economy, using its experience and expertise to help women achieve their aspirations and realise their business ambitions.

By joining Everywoman, members will:

- **Develop their network** Build contacts, find prospects and receive support from like-minded women.
- **Build their profile** Share their business success story on the site.
- **Stay informed** Receive newsletters, news and updates.
- **Receive discounts** Training events and conferences are cheaper for members

### 7th National everywoman Conference 2007

'Maximise your business growth'

This year's conference offers inspiration from some of the top businesswomen in the UK, plus panel discussions, workshops and networking breaks.

● Central Hall, Westminster  
Wednesday 14 November 2007

- **Be heard** The 'voice of everywoman' releases members views to the national media

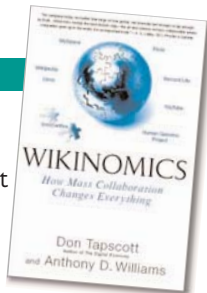
Everywoman offers a complete range of solutions and expert advice, providing members with the tools they need to succeed in business. Websites, publications, conferences, workshops and seminars offer further practical help and advice for women starting or growing businesses.

- **For further information, visit** [www.everywoman.co.uk](http://www.everywoman.co.uk)

### BOOK OF THE MONTH

**Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything** by Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams

Penguin 320 pages  
ISBN 1591841380 £16.99



In the last few years, traditional collaboration – in a meeting room, a conference call or even a convention centre – has been superseded by mass collaborations.

Items are being created by teams numbering in the thousands: smart firms now harness collective capability and genius to spur innovation, growth and success: Wikinomics shows how the masses can participate in the economy like never before.

Based on a \$9 million research project led by Don Tapscott, a leading authority on business strategy, this book challenges our most deeply-rooted assumptions about business.

### WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

[www.inventorslot.com](http://www.inventorslot.com)

Created this year by Joe Connolly, Inventors Lot is dedicated to showcasing new inventions and products that are available but not readily accessible. For free.

## BUSINESS LINK WESSEX INNOVATION CLINICS

Are you thinking about developing a new product or process? Have you invented something and don't know what to do next? Through its series of free Innovation Clinics, Business Link Wessex provides confidential and impartial guidance on such subjects as investigating an innovative idea, developing a new product or process, working with universities, exploiting inventions and intellectual property rights. Innovation clinics are held in the Bournemouth, Portsmouth and Southampton regions.

● **Advice Hotline: 08454 58 85 58** [innovation@businesslinkwessex.co.uk](mailto:innovation@businesslinkwessex.co.uk) [www.businesslinkwessex.co.uk/events](http://www.businesslinkwessex.co.uk/events)

WRTI PATRON Trevor Baylis OBE CHAIRMAN Peter Hebard [chairman@wrti.co.uk](mailto:chairman@wrti.co.uk)

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN Richard Little [deputychairman@wrti.co.uk](mailto:deputychairman@wrti.co.uk) SECRETARY Mike Overy [secretary@wrti.co.uk](mailto:secretary@wrti.co.uk)

TREASURER Mike Wright [treasurer@wrti.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@wrti.co.uk) MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY Professor Richard Penson [membership@wrti.co.uk](mailto:membership@wrti.co.uk)

INVENTIQUE EDITOR Frank Landamore [editor@wrti.co.uk](mailto:editor@wrti.co.uk) WEBMASTER Mike Overy [webmaster@wrti.co.uk](mailto:webmaster@wrti.co.uk)

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