

Inventique®

The newsletter of Wessex Round Table of Inventors September 2005

21 September PORTSMOUTH FESTIVAL OF INNOVATION & ENTERPRISE

Richard's success with MRSA-buster

UV TECHNOLOGY KILLS 'HOSPITAL SUPER-BUG'

WRTI CHAIRMAN Richard Little has developed a microwave-powered UV sanitisation technology to combat airborne viruses and bacteria such as influenza, SARS, tuberculosis and the deadly MRSA 'superbug'.

Created with co-inventor David Briggs – who has worked with microwaves since the 1950s – the break-through is based on the fact that at certain wavelengths ultra-

violet light kills viruses and bacteria.

By energising the UV sources with microwaves, the pair have developed a technology which significantly reduces airborne pathogens in food outlets, hospitals, surgeries, waiting rooms and offices. It is efficient, simple and economical, yet residue- and chemical-free – very important considerations in today's market.

"We have achieved success with this product overseas and now wish

to introduce it to the UK through technology licencing," said Richard, adding that his company, JenAct Limited, holds granted patents for a number of specialised products.

JenAct Limited are specialists in microwave-powered UV sanitisation technology, from wall-mounted sanitisers to patented UV systems for HVAC. The technology can be used in surface, air and water applications and for many industrial processes – such as decontaminating PCR tubes in DNA testing, or disinfecting plastic film. ■

● **Contact: Richard Little, JenAct Ltd**

9/10 Ardglan Industrial Estate

Evingar Road, Whitchurch

Hampshire RG28 7BB

Tel: 01256 892 194 Fax: 01256 896 486

jenact@jenton.co.uk www.jenact.co.uk

Next WRTI meeting WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER

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

● www.wrti.org.uk/events

Map: www.streetmap.co.uk (SO14 ORP)

WRTI membership fees

WRTI annual membership fees of £30 are now due from members and associate members for the year to 31 July 2006.

Membership is open to anyone over the age of 18 with an interest in inventing.

Associate membership is open to individuals or companies who are not themselves inventors but who wish to offer support services.

Student membership is free.

● Richard Penson, membership secretary
membership@wrti.co.uk
www.wrti.org.uk/membership

PORTSMOUTH FESTIVAL OF INNOVATION & ENTERPRISE

A CELEBRATION OF INVENTION, innovation and the entrepreneurial spirit, the third annual Portsmouth Festival of Innovation & Enterprise will be held on 21 September at the Portland Building, University of Portsmouth from 9.30am to 9.00pm.

The Festival, which is free of charge, enables visitors to hear successful local entrepreneurs and business leaders recount their secrets of success through a programme of morning, afternoon and evening seminars and case studies.

Sponsored by Business Link Wessex, Portsmouth City Council, Portsmouth & South East Hampshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the University of Portsmouth, the event also highlights the City's commitment to encouraging new and innovative businesses to the region.

A park-and-ride facility from Gunwharf Quays will be provided for delegates booking before Friday 9 September. ■

● **Reservations: www.chamber.org.uk or telephone 023 9244 9453**

For further information, visit: www.portsmouth-innovation.co.uk



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

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

THE WRTI EXPERIENCED a really enjoyable and successful club tour of the new Rolls-Royce factory at Goodwood at the start of the year, and I recommend such a visit to anyone. Interestingly, though, the good people at Rolls-Royce jokingly referred to us as a troupe of 'mad inventors' during the introduction.

The English are proud of their eccentricities – perhaps regrettably, there are many Rolls-Royce motor cars painted in psychedelic livery or adapted for tiger-shoots to prove the point – but I bet that BMW (Rolls-Royce's owners) have zillions more patents and inventions than the total combined membership of all the inventors clubs in the UK.

Does this mean the BMW hierarchy are therefore a bunch of mad German inventors – or prudent businessmen who have protected their interests by investing in intellectual property?

Apparently, direct manufacturing now constitutes less than 18% of the British economy, which sounds awful. In a world where anything that can be copied is copied, especially in the far east and eastern Europe, we have to fight back or we'll begin to notice the cracks developing in our economy.

Protecting our bright ideas so that they can't be copied protects our manufacturing economy. I implore the government to do more to help inventors by making it easier to protect IPR (even, possibly, by taking the job on themselves?), and by supporting our 'mad inventors' by realising what an asset for the future they can be – and treating them as serious potential contributors to the manufacturing base.

I KNOW I SPEAK for the whole club in offering sincere congratulations to Southampton Solent on its new-found University status. The WRTI enjoyed an exemplary mutual relationship with its previous incarnation, Southampton Institute, and I hope and believe this will continue and develop.

Sincerely, Richard

RICHARD LITTLE, WRTI Chairman

INVENTORATOR Farag Moussa

Come on girls!

INNOVATION IS

THERE APPEARS to be no discernable difference between girls and boys up to the age of ten with regard to creativity, but at that age some girls appear to start believing that they are 'only' girls. Their self-confidence decreases even as boys' self-confidence increases

– particularly when dealing with tools, mechanical techniques and so on. In mixed groups, boys tend to dominate: they demand more attention, and often get it. One of the consequences of this is that very few girls join engineering, science or technology classes or clubs.

There are also sociological and psychological reasons for this. First, many parents just don't see their daughters as scientists or technicians. And secondly, even when they do, children will often face negative peer pressure at school.

This is particularly true at the crucial ages of around 13 and 14 years old. Girls can feel socially constrained in the presence of boys, and where competition plays a role (in science or technology classes, for example), girls are not ready to compete with boys; they're afraid they might compare unfavorably.

Male models

Another difficulty for girls resides in the fact that they often lack role models: school texts and popular science books invariably offer male role models, with which girls cannot identify. It is important to bridge this gap by portraying women inventors more overtly – be they Nobel Prize winners, scientists, housewives, or 'simply' students.

I refute the notion that women are somehow less gifted in the study



FOR EVERYONE...

and application of technical subjects, or that girls show little interest in invention. Experience in several countries shows that, where special support is given, the percentage of girls taking part in Young Inventors competitions increases year-on-year.

Proof of principle

In Sweden, for example, when the Swedish Inventors' Association began their triennial student inventors' contests in 1979, only 12% of the participants were girls. That figure had risen to 56% by the year 2000.

In similar vein, an organisation called Technika 10 was set up in the Netherlands in 1986. Managed by women, it aimed to create technology clubs exclusively for 10-to-12-year-old schoolgirls, to encourage an interest in technology before the students entered secondary school.

"At Technika 10, girls study among their peer group in a safe environment, and can build their self-confidence," said a coordinator.

By the year 2000, more than 200 girls-only technology clubs had been created; 10,000 girls in over 100 towns and cities across the Netherlands now study computers, electrical engineering, metalwork, woodwork and so on.

Just like the boys, in fact... ■

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● Dr Farag Moussa is president of the International Federation of Inventors' Associations.

IFIA, PO Box 299, 1211 Geneva 12, Switzerland Tel: +41 22 789 30 74

Fax: +41 22 789 30 76

invention-iffa@bluewin.ch

www.invention-iffa.ch

www.technika10.nl

www.uppfinnareforeningen.se

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS-1

WITHOUT A DOUBT, intellectual property (IP) is one of the most important assets that a company will own, writes *Dr Rosanna Cooper*.

IP can be licensed, bought, sold, hired or mortgaged like any other form of property. One of the main sources of IP is from the results of research and development work. In order for companies and individuals to maintain the value of their IP, they must ensure a sufficient level of protection and safeguard against infringing a third party's IP.

Intellectual property right (IPR) is the right to use intellectual property. IPRs fall within two main categories, registered and unregistered rights. Patents, trade marks and registered designs are registerable rights. Unregistered IPRs include copyright, designs, brands and know-how. Domain names can be classed as quasi-registered rights.

Patents

Patents protect inventions such as processes and products. Patents in the UK are obtained by filing an application with the UK Patent Office. On examination of the application, the Patent Office determines whether a patent should be granted. The application goes through various stages and can take up to four years before it is granted, although under the UK system, the process can be expedited. It is always worthwhile carrying out relevant

ROSANNA COOPER CLARIFIES THE LEGAL POSITION FOR INVENTORS AND ENTREPRENEURS

patent searches to establish the risk of infringement.

To be patentable, an invention must satisfy the following conditions:

- **It must be novel** (not made or used anywhere in the world before the filing of the patent application).
- **It must involve an inventive step** (it cannot be an obvious step).
- **It must be capable of industrial application** (all industries apply).
- **It cannot fall within an excluded category** (ie a discovery, literary work or mathematical model).

On filing a patent application, the invention's owner then has only 12 months from the filing (or 'priority') date in which to file foreign patent applications.

It is good practice to decide, as early as possible, on an international patent filing strategy. An investor should be made aware of the significant costs involved in obtaining international patents.

The inventor may not necessarily be the owner of the invention, as an employer will own inventions made

during the course of employment.

A registered patent protects inventions by giving the owner of the invention a 20 year monopoly right of exploitation.

Patent protection applies only in the country in which the patent is granted. It gives a patent owner the right to bring an injunction to stop a third party infringing a protected invention (a third party cannot use, sell, hire or import the patented products or processes without the authorisation of the owner).

The remedies available are damages (compensation for any loss suffered) or a percentage of profit made by a third party. The claimant can also obtain an order from the courts to have the infringing products destroyed. ■

Continued next month

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● *Dr Rosanna Cooper is a partner at RT Coopers, a commercial law firm focusing on inventors and business start-ups.*

(RTC)
RTCoopers
Solicitors

5 Telfords Yard, 6/8 The Highway
London E1W 2BS

Tel: 020 7488 2985 Fax: 020 7488 2102

enquiry@rtcoopers.com

www.rtcoopers.com

FIERY PARTICLES SEEN IN THE SOUTH

AS REPORTED IN last month's *Inventique*, Southampton Institute officially changed its name to Southampton Solent University on 15 August – and used the opportunity to introduce its new logotype and 'spark' symbol (created after research among students and faculty).

The launch of the university's new corporate identity marked the beginning of an advertising campaign using the strapline: 'Spark your imagination'. A series of city-based events and activities is also being planned for the coming months.

Southampton Solent University has awarded more than 100 research degrees over the last 13 years, and offers career choices to 16,000 students across hundreds



Southampton
SOLENT
University

of disciplines from undergraduate degrees to professional courses. The advent of the new university means that the city now hosts two such centres of excellence. ■

● **Southampton Solent University**

East Park Terrace, Southampton, Hampshire SO14 0YN

Tel: +44 (0)23 8031 9000 www.solent.ac.uk

CALLING INVENTORS WITH PRODUCTS FOR SALE

THE SECOND SERIES of a national TV programme is about to be filmed, and the producers have approached ideas21 looking for inventors who have manufactured products already on the market – but, perhaps, not widely distributed, writes *Linda Oakley*. They are looking for products which have wide consumer appeal and retail at under £50. Your product could receive prime-time television exposure as well as being part of a promotional and sales campaign.

Filming for the programme begins in the next few weeks and therefore responses need to back in as soon as possible – before 1st September, preferably. If you

would like your product to be forwarded to the producers, email editor@ideas21.co.uk with details. The quicker you send over the information the better chance you have of your product being considered.

ideas21 has already advised the producers about products that are the subject of profiles on our website. If your profile needs updating, please log in and update.

ideas21 receives numerous media enquiries about inventors. The best way to ensure that you are included is to log in your details on the website below. ■

● editor@ideas21.co.uk www.ideas21.co.uk
ideas21, PO Box 36807, London WC1V 7XN

WANTED: MORE BUSINESS ANGELS

READY2INVEST SOUTH EAST, a new programme from Finance South East, aims to recruit and train a pool of business angels for the region. New angel investors – high-earning or professional individuals – are being sought who will be ready and able to invest in and foster local entrepreneurs.

Finance South East is hosting two free seminars at the Botley Park Hotel in order to introduce Ready2invest South East: an exclusive professional advisors'

event on 27 September, and another for those considering angel investment on 9 November. Both seminars commence at 6.30pm.

Finance South East is a specialist finance organisation working with entrepreneurs across a range of sectors, and is a subsidiary of the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA). ■

● jean.khan@financesoutheast.com
Tel: 01344 758 550
<http://www.financesoutheast.co.uk/desktopdefault.aspx?tabId=545>

Special offer

WRTI MEMBERS are reminded that RTCoopers Solicitors are offering comprehensive Shareholders Agreements to WRTI member companies for only £499 – an offer that expires on 30 September.

● RTCoopers Solicitors, 5 Telfords Yard
6/8 The Highway, London E1W 2BS
Tel: 020 7488 2985 Fax: 020 7488 2102
enquiry@rtcoopers.com
www.rtcoopers.com

PLACE YOUR ANSWERS ON A WEBSITE, PLEASE

Are you a post-1985 graduate who either studied in or currently works in Southampton?

If the answer is 'yes', the Institute for Entrepreneurship at Southampton University would like to hear your experiences, perceptions and views – by asking you to complete a questionnaire forming part of a research study into understanding how graduates' career patterns evolve and in what way higher education institutions and other supporting bodies enhance this process.

The National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship commissioned the study to help develop insights into graduates' career patterns.

The short questionnaire can be found at:
www.ife.soton.ac.uk/surveys/career-patterns

● Contact: Bernd Sass
Institute of Entrepreneurship
Tel: 01273 677035
berndsass@hotmail.co.uk

Business-KIT's free lunch

CHILWORTH BUSINESS CLUB is presenting a free *Business-KIT* lunchtime seminar in association with Business Link Wessex on Wednesday 14 September at the Chilworth Business Incubator, 2 Venture Road, Chilworth Science Park, Southampton SO16 7NP (12.30-1.30 including lunch).

Business-KIT is a scheme that matches SMEs with experienced, highly-skilled students for anything from short-term project work to strategic business and operational process reviews. All projects are supported by a Business Link Wessex advisor and a Higher



Education Institutes lecturer.

Companies benefit from the opportunity to address business issues they may not previously have had the time or skill-base to consider through rapid, economical access to a pool of highly-qualified and motivated talent. ■

● Reservations: Karen Morgan
info@southamptonhub.com
Tel: 023 8076 3795

Business-KIT information:
jackie.walker@businesslinkwessex.co.uk
www.business-kit.co.uk

"Working together enhances all our prospects..." – David Nicholas

www.wrti.org.uk

THE INVENTORS WEBSITE

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE R&D Magazine

High-tech record

WEATHER-VANE OF THE INNOVATIVE INDUSTRIES

PUBLISHED IN New Jersey, R&D Magazine is a monthly journal of applied research and development, and is mailed to laboratory, R&D and project managers in industry, government departments and universities across the continental USA and overseas.

Articles include news, views and features on topics ranging from automation and robotics through biotechnology to semiconductors.

Written in an accessible style that makes challenging concepts and scientific data easy to absorb,

R&D Magazine also publishes a range of supplements

and directories, and hosts major awards for Innovator, Scientist and Laboratory of the Year.

In addition, the R&D Directory Online allows readers to conduct specialised searches and obtain up-to-date information on thousands of suppliers and manufacturers.

Sounds familiar...

As if that weren't enough, R&D's free e-newsletter forwards science and engineering news, along with links to further information and articles by industry experts.

● **R&D Magazine,**
100 Enterprise Drive, Suite 600,
Rockaway, NJ 07866-0912
Tel: +1 973 920 7000
rdmag@reedbusiness.com
www.rdmag.com



HUMORESQUE from Dave Challice dchallic@bournemouth.ac.uk

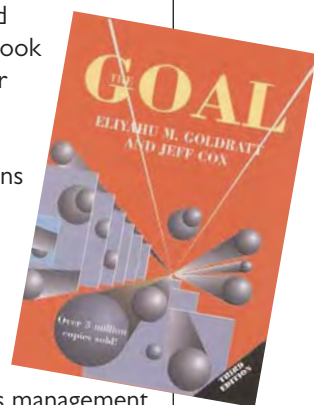
- **OBSERVATION 1:** The Japanese eat very little fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.
 - **OBSERVATION 2:** The French eat a lot of fat and also suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.
 - **OBSERVATION 3:** The Japanese drink very little red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.
 - **OBSERVATION 4:** The Italians drink excessive amounts of red wine and also suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.
 - **OBSERVATION 5:** The Germans drink a lot of beer and eat lots of sausages and fats and suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.
- CONCLUSION:** Eat and drink what you like – it's speaking English that kills you.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

The Goal: A Process of Ongoing Improvement

by Eliyahu M. Goldratt and Jeff Cox
Gower Publishing Limited £16.95
ISBN 0566086654 400 pages

Written in a fast-paced thriller style, this is a book to recommend to your friends in industry (though not to your competitors). It contains a serious message and explains the ideas which underline the Theory of Constraints devised by Eliyahu M. Goldratt, who develops new business management concepts and acts as an educator to many of the world's corporations.



WEBSITES OF THE MONTH

www.theengineer.co.uk

The Engineer Online is the UK's leading online resource for the engineering industry, bringing you the latest news and features, details on new products and forthcoming events for the engineering technology sector.

www.fundingagents.com

"Find almost every grant, award, trust, charity and lottery funding source in the UK quickly and easily!" (it says here). Publishers of the Funding Agents Sourcebook 2005, £16.95
Funding Agents,
Wonderstore Developments Ltd
54 Hazel Road, Reading RG8 8HR
Tel: 0845 1232552

WRTI PATRON Trevor Baylis OBE CHAIRMAN Richard Little chairman@wrti.co.uk

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN Professor Richard Penson 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

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