

Inventare Maximus

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Inventors Society of South Florida, PO Box 244306, Boynton Beach, FL 33424-4306

How to Find the Markets for Your Invention

Jeffrey Dobkin © 1996, from the book *Uncommon Marketing Techniques*

Have a new idea or new product? Here's how to find the markets, and what to do when you find them. But before I show you how easy it is to use the best tools available to find your markets, take a piece of paper and write down all the markets you think your product or invention would sell to. A market is any group of people you can define that has the potential to buy your product. Narrow it down as tightly as you can.

This is step one: figure out exactly what group or groups are the most likely to need, want, and be able to purchase your product. You've got to define who your market is exactly, before you're able to figure out how to reach them.

The tighter the specifications to find your markets, the lower your marketing costs will be. If you are selling books to middle school teachers, if you advertise to all teachers, most of your money will be wasted. Your market is teachers, grades 7 through 10. Any material you send to anyone else just shows up on the red side of your balance sheet under "expenses".

Let's take a few examples. Your task would be simple if you developed a new camera lens for Canon's line of professional cameras. Find a list of all the owners of Canon professional cameras and you've done all the homework you need to do: you've just found your entire market. Your advertising would have no wasted expense when you mailed to them, because every person in that list is a potential buyer for your lens. If this list isn't available (and a list this tightly qualified usually isn't) your market could be found in the readership of several magazines who's subscribers are a group of people defined as Professional Photographers. Although there is some wasted expense advertising to this group, it is still pretty easy to find this target market. Have a beer, then skip to the last section of this article.

Suppose you've invented a new tripod to hold any type or brand of camera. Here, your task of finding the specific markets - groups of prospects most likely to purchase your product - is more complex. Surely if your tripod is of good quality, the professional photographers' market is a good place to start. But, how about the consumer photographic market?

The consumer market is much broader and a little more elusive to reach: they don't all read the same dozen or so photography trade magazines the pros read. Since there is a large number of consumers, you must reach with the message that your new tripod is available, it's vastly more expensive. Still sales can be brisk, and you can make big money with a consumer product if you're good, and focus tightly on the camera market. Camera? Focus?

Maybe your tripod could also be sold to the video camera market, which is a totally different group of professionals and consumers who own a different classification of products that need your tripod. These folks read a totally different group of magazines, and shop in vastly different stores and catalogs. But these folks, these video camera owners - they have a lot of money. Now you're going to have to choose which market is better for tripod sales. Who are the more likely users, or better yet, the more likely purchasers?

Hey, how about sales of your tripods to back yard astronomers to mount their telescopes. Or how about selling to the security market where people need sturdy stands for surveillance cameras. Hey, how about...? Well, you get the idea. These are all separate and distinctly different markets. All the people in these markets can be reached through the



Special Interest Articles:

- How to Find the Markets for Your Invention
- Who Invented This Thing?
- Thomas J. Watson ...on Inventions

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Mission Statement

To provide a forum that fosters creativity, freethinking and education that will help further our members' innovations.



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magazines they read, but each reads a completely different set of magazines. Now you're learning about the finesse of marketing. Think about all the market niches your products would sell to. In a minute you'll see how to reach them.

Take another example. For a while I owned a company that manufactured I.D. tags. It wasn't too exciting, but we did some nice numbers – we placed about 25,000 pounds of mail into the mailstream a year. For a quick study of in-depth marketing, take a one minute look at where we marketed our I.D. tags. First, the pet industry was a big market for us - we marketed pet I.D. tags to the owners of 54 million dogs, and 57 million cats, give or take a few million. In a completely separate industry, we made emergency medical I.D. - personalized identification bracelets and neck pendants for the medical community, specifically for the sub-specialty markets of people with diabetes and people taking heart medication.

To the child care industry we sold I.D. tags to parents, to lace onto their child's sneaker: so young children would have some sort of identification on them. To the runner's industry we sold them as runners' sneaker identification tags. We marketed through runner's magazines and through race directors of marathons. Besides these industries, we marketed our product to laboratories and laboratory equipment manufacturers as permanent, indestructible name plates for equipment.

To the machinery industry we marketed our same product as valve tags; to the luggage industry as baggage tags; and to golf bag manufacturers and through golf and pro shops as golf bag identification. To the woodworking industry we personalized plaques for their custom cabinetry and hobbyist's hand made wood projects. To zoos we marketed our I.D. tags as name plates for animal cages; to the equestrian industry as horse halter, tack, and saddle identification tags.

To the medical and veterinary doctors we marketed our same I.D. tags as identification tags for their stethoscopes; to art museums for photo and picture nameplates; and to the commercial fishing industry as identification tags for lobster and crab pots - as required by law. So, what other markets did you say your product fit into? By the way, we manufactured only 5 shapes of tags, and offered only one style of engraving.

Here's the Plan

Think of all the markets where your product can be sold, then rank them - starting with your primary market as number 1. Exactly what groups of people will be most likely to buy your product? If you just came up with one group, as you can see from the examples, you can probably go back and find several more.

Figure out all your markets, then find all the magazines that go to these markets; then, finally create and send a press release to all those magazines. A press release is a one page document you send to magazines describing your product and its benefits. The magazine then publishes it for free. Simple plan, isn't it?

From the response you receive from your press releases you'll be able to see exactly which markets have the most interest in your product. If you're not familiar with writing press releases and sending them to magazines for free write-ups, drop me a note, \$2 and a large 2-ounce SASE and I'll send you an explicit, detailed article on exactly how to do this. Or, buy my book and read the first chapter: over thirty five pages on writing press releases, and how to submit them with the best possible chance of having them published. Ok, so I plugged my book, sue me. It's a great book.

Step II - Finding Your Markets

There are several great reference books found in most libraries that list all markets, and the magazines that are sent to each. All the reference tools are easy to use, and

you will be able to use them after this five minute introduction.

The main players are the directories of magazines. Big, thick - 1,000 to 1,500 page books of easy to use information. The best ones are *Burrelle's Directory of Magazines*, *Bacon's Magazine Directory*, *Oxbridge Communication's National Directory of Magazines*, (also their *National Directory of Newsletters* and the *Standard Periodical Directory*), and SRDS - formerly *Standard Rate and Data* but now officially just called by their acronym.

Each of these directories has a similar set up, with easy to use features. Why do I say they're easy to use? In the front of each book the publishers have a single page of instructions. From this you can understand using these marketing tools is quite easy - quite a contrast to using your VCR, for which you received a 30-page instruction manual! All the directories group the entire universe of people into about 90 to 110 distinct markets or industries, and they're all listed alphabetically by subject in the market classification section: 2 or 3 pages that are found in the front of each book. How convenient. If you can remember the alphabet, you can perform the marketing function.

Examples of industries you can look up would include everything, be it accounting, banking, fire fighting, heating, tourism, veterinary, woodworking, whatever, to briefly name a few. Any profession or industry you can think of has one or more magazines sent to it, larger industries may be served by hundreds of magazines. All the industries, markets and all their accompanying magazines are listed in these directories.

For example: if you were marketing a product to the motorcycle industry, you'd pick any directory and look up "M" for "Motorcycles" in the market classification section. Then you'd turn to the main section of the book - the magazine data section - where all the motorcycle magazines are found in a single locality under "M" for motorcycles. There you'd see all 38 magazines sent to the motorcycle industry, along with their data: circulation, ad costs, publisher, phone, fax numbers and other miscellaneous data.

Another way to use these books to find the markets you're researching, (and the magazines that serve them) is to know the name of any one magazine sent to that particular industry. Each reference book has an alphabetical title directory: if you know the title of a magazine, look it up there. While *American Photographer* would be listed under "photography" in the market classification section, in the title index you'd look under "A" for American, and scan down to *American Photographer*. The directories then show you the page in the magazine data section where the magazine is found. Turn to that page and lo and behold, *American Photographer* is grouped with all the other photographic magazines.

Fast and easy; and you thought marketing was hard. Nope. Just time consuming: some industries have plenty of magazines sent to them, and the lucrative markets even more. While the lawn and garden supplies industry may have only a dozen magazines sent to it, the computer industry has over 450 magazines that go to every niche of the computer market. Man, those computer geeks must like to read. But you don't have to worry about reading all of the magazines now. You only have to read them if you're going to place an ad in one. Right now, you're just going to be exploring the markets with press releases. Finding a single market would take you about five minutes, if you're a slow reader. Once you've found the markets you're prospecting to, and you see all the magazines sent to those industries, you'll have a pretty good idea of how you can reach your prospective buyers through those magazines, and how large each market is.

Here's an optional step, but I recommend it. If you think your product will really fit in well in a particular magazine, call the magazine publisher and ask for a media kit. It's free. Ask for a couple recent samples of their magazine, too.

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Disclaimer

The Inventors Society of South Florida, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation engaged primarily in the organization of monthly meetings, inventors fairs, and seminars for the purpose of facilitating networking and educating its members and guests. The Inventors Society of South Florida, Inc. disclaims any responsibility for any investment, legal, accounting, or other professional advice which may be rendered by individual officers, directors, sponsors, Members, speakers, or guests, at/or as a result of contacts made at any social activity. Information provided in this publication is from sources believed to be reliable. Anyone choosing to follow or use such information provided in this publication must verify with appropriate professionals before relying on any statement, article, or comment herein. The Inventors Society of South Florida, Inc. takes no responsibility for the accuracy or reliability of information presented in this publication. The intent is creative and thoughtful thinking, but not to provide definite answers or solutions. ❖

Membership

Your membership entitles you to all that is offered by the Society: events, meetings, contests, prizes, awards, nominations, and networking. Members also benefit from a monthly newsletter that includes tips, publications, useful websites and national expositions. Membership means added benefits to you and, of course, funds to the Society to hold meetings, send newsletters, hold special events, and maintain an Internet presence. Discounted Student Memberships are available. ❖

Palm Beach ISSF Meetings

ISSF Palm Beach branch meets at 1:30 pm on the first Saturday of each month at:

Coconut Cove Waterpark and Recreation Center

11200 Park Access Road
Boca Raton, Florida 33498
561-274-1140 Office
561-274-1150 Fax
www.pbcgov.com/parks/ccove/coco.html

From the Florida Turnpike: Exit at Glades West Road (Exit #75), then head west past US 441 to Cain Blvd. Turn right at Cain Blvd., then make first left at Park Access Road. Drive west ½ mile to stop sign and then make left turn. Waterpark is located inside of South County Regional Park and is 3.5 miles from the turnpike exit.

From I-95 South: Exit at Glades Road (Exit #39), then head west past US 441 to Cain Blvd. Turn right at Cain Blvd., then make first left at Park Access Road. Drive west for ½ mile to stop sign and then turn left. Waterpark is located inside of South County Regional Park and is 7.5 miles from the I-95 exit.

From I-95 North: Exit Yamato Road (Exit #40), then head west past US 441 for 3 miles until you see the entrance into South County Regional Park. Turn left into the park, following the brown signs to Coconut Cove Waterpark, which is 9.5 miles from the I-95 exit.

From the Sawgrass Expressway: Exit US 441 North (Exit #12), head north for 5 miles to Glades Road. Turn left at Glades Road and head west to Cain Blvd. Turn right at Cain Blvd., then make first left at Park Access Road. Drive ½ mile to stop sign and then turn left. The Waterpark is inside South County Regional Park and is 6.5 miles from the Sawgrass Expressway.

Contact:
Abby Waters 561-988-2020
abbysideas@aol.com



President's Corner



It was great seeing all of you and some faces we have not seen in a long time. What a lot of success stories I am hearing, and the type of tenacity is inspiring, to say the least. It reinforces my commentary that it takes a long time to make it in this biz.

I am pleased that it looks like the idea factory will be adding a third strategic alliance to round out the factory capabilities for taking ideas to market. The three parts are:

- Medical/hi tech
- Accessories...particularly hair accessories and related items, and car accessories.
- Really odd small novelty.

We are looking for unique items. I have seen some of the best inventions lately that are clever beyond words, and the best part is the factory is doing the graphics which is too much fun.

Our February 8th seminar is really swinging and bound to be a hit. If you are interested, sign up now. We only have 80 seats and we sent out 1600 emails and 2600 regular mailings. Register online. We accept MasterCard and Visa.

The Silken's just sold seven books, which shows people are hungry for knowledge.

Well, what a year for us and I am sure next year will surpass this. In January, all dues need to be paid. Please everyone take care of this. I look terrible in funny hats with my hands out. Happy holidays!!!

Creatively yours!

Abby

Plug Into the World of Inventing on February 8th

Abby's Idea Factory presents *Plug Into the World of Inventing*, an inventors' seminar to educate inventors about patents, trademarks, commercialization, marketing, licensing, public relations and internet newspapers. The event will feature a gourmet lunch, a strong panel of speakers, display tables, and freebies. Please contact Abby Waters at 561-988-2020 or abbysideas@aol.com for more information. ❖

ISSF Annual Membership Dues in January

The ISSF is only as good as its membership contributions, in dollars and personal participation. We look forward to receiving your annual dues in January to help us plan events for the coming year. Send your checks to: Inventors Society of South Florida, PO Box 244306, Boynton Beach, FL 33424-4306.

Also, we look forward to members assisting with planning and events to keep us effective for all inventors. Please notify us of your ideas to improve the ways we support inventors. We need help finding speakers, providing meaningful content to our web site and newsletters, and most of all, remaining a positive motivator for the members. Your expertise, ideas and experiences with the invention process need to be shared. Please offer articles, comments and your time to the organization so we can continue to enjoy top ranking as an inventor's organization. ❖

Who Invented This Thing?

A question often arises, who are the inventors of a particular application?

Sometimes the question is not difficult. But, be very careful. Do not just assume you “know” who should be listed as an inventor. An inventor is a person who conceived the claimed invention. (Note the word “claimed” in that sentence). Our patent laws require that a patent must be applied for in the names of the true and actual inventors. If you had a partner, and you are no longer partners, and that partner contributed in a conceptual manner to the claimed invention, that person **MUST** be named on the application. (An actual inventor must be listed, even if they don’t want to be!) The patent office is not concerned with your business arrangements or your personal feelings towards each other. The law is written to protect one person from receiving the unfair benefit of another’s ideas.

A co-inventor does not have to contribute to every claim, and does not even need to work in the same location.

The person who actually makes or builds the invention is not necessarily an inventor. So, you may solicit the opinion of an expert in the actual creation of a working invention and that expert may not be an inventor if all they do is make your idea function. If that expert adds something that otherwise would make the invention inoperable, they are an inventor and need to be on the patent application.

Why such a fuss? Because, the courts have and will continue to enforce the statute requiring correct disclosure of inventorship. What is the punishment? A patent will be invalidated by the court for incorrect declaration of inventorship. Like so many aspects regarding patents and the patenting process, inventorship has a legal definition and is determined by a legal standard far more complex than the limitations of this article. If you are unsure as to who is an inventor, seek out the advice of licensed patent professional. The effort expended far outweighs the risks of losing your patent completely. Good Luck to all!

David W. Barman is a Registered Patent Agent practicing in North Miami Beach. He can be reached at 305-332-4089 or on the web at <http://www.thepatentman.com>. ❖

January Meeting Agenda

The January meeting of the ISSF will include discussion of the Boca Raton and Miami branches, and how to make them more effective. Board members cited the following:

- Bob Levy needs members to share responsibility for the Miami meetings.
- Many people who attend the Miami meetings more than once are not paid members.
- Too many organizational responsibilities are left to the board to handle.
- Too few members are volunteering to assist the board’s efforts.
- Members are not giving feedback to promote and improve the organization’s effectiveness.
- Online newsletter archives may have to be limited to aged newsletters rather than current previous month.

Please contact board members with your concerns and input to make ISSF better serve membership needs.



Miami ISSF Meetings

ISSF Miami branch meets at 1:00 pm on the **third** Saturday of each month at:

N. Miami Beach Public Library
1601 NE 164th St
North Miami Beach, FL

Directions from south:

I-95 North to North Miami Beach exit 17 (167th St). Follow 167th St. east, which curves right and becomes NE 163rd St. Pass 163rd St Mall, turn left on NE 16 Ave. Go one block to NE 164th St. The library is straight ahead beyond the traffic light. Note that NE 167th St. turns into NE 163rd St.

Directions from north:

I-95 South to Miami Garden Drive (NE 183rd St.) exit. Go straight through traffic light (you are now at the top of NE 6th Ave). Follow 6th Ave to NE 167th St. and turn left (east). Follow NE 167th St. which curves right and becomes NE 163rd St. Pass 163rd St. Mall, then turn left on NE 16 Ave. Go one block to NE 164th St. The library is straight ahead beyond the traffic light. Note that NE 167th St. turns into NE 163rd St.

Contact: Bob Levy at 305-893-5989 or 305-205-2884 cell or boblevy@bellsouth.net ❖

Newsletter Submissions

If you have something you'd like to see in the newsletter, please discuss with or send it to Abby Waters. If it is something that has to be copied, please send the original or a high quality copy. If you need the original document returned, please note this in the submission package.

Please remember that the newsletter is black print only. Submissions that have color (especially over text, i.e. words in a colored box) may not be usable. Try to keep submissions simple and basic. ❖

“Ask the Experts” Panel

This panel was formed to assist our members in going to the next step in the inventing process. At the end of every meeting we will have a panel of experts address inventors and their questions pertaining to patenting, prototyping, and commercializing. The panel may include:

- **Alvin Blum:** registered patent agent
- **Freddy Lee:** prototyping expert
- **Bob Levy:** graphic designer
- **John Fulton:** patent attorney
- **H & P Silken:** commercialization

How to Find the Markets for Your Invention (conclusion)

Media kits contain the magazine's ad rates and are always sent free to potential advertisers. If you'd like to get the annual directory they publish - ask for a sample of that, too.

There's never a charge for any of this material if they think you're serious about advertising. If the directory is usually expensive, here's your chance to get it free, by mentioning how you may take out an ad in it, and you would appreciate a sample copy for evaluation. This is also a great way to get the directory even if it's published at a different time of the year and no longer attainable by normal channels.

If you don't want to call, you can also write to the publishers and ask for a media kit. Use business stationery so they know you're a serious player, and you have the money to place an ad. The magazine publishers are pretty good about getting their promotional material right out - it means revenue to them when an ad comes in, so they strike while the lead is hot.

The media kit contains all the hype about the magazine, and why you should spend all of your advertising money in their publication. All kinds of information about the industry is also included. While most of this package is usually fiction, there are always some industry insights that will help you with your marketing.

Now that you've found the magazines that serve the industries concurrent with your product, create a press release and cover letter, and send it to them with a photo of the product. In about three months you'll start to receive inquiries from the readers of the magazines who saw your press release published and are interested. Good luck.

Jeffrey Dobkin, author of *How To Market A Product For Under \$500!*, and *Uncommon Marketing Techniques*, is a specialist in direct response copywriting. Contact Mr. Dobkin at 610-642-1000 or visit his web site at www.dobkin.com. ❖

Web Site Resources

Packagingprice.com provides corrugated boxes and mailers, cushioned and rigid mailers, tape, stretch and shrink film, clipboard cartons, poly bags, mailing tubes and protective inner packaging with no minimum order and satisfaction guaranteed. Contact them online at <http://www.packagingprice.com> or by telephone at 888-236-1729. They offer catalogs, same day shipping and over 300 box sizes.

Cut Smart Manufacturing, Inc. provides custom die-cutting services, alternative cutting consultation and tooling for die cutting to a wide variety of manufacturers. Production methods include die cutting, stamping, laser cutting, routing, waterjet cutting, EDM and chemical machining. Cut Smart will determine the best method(s) and work with you to provide a perfect part. Contact them online at <http://www.cutsmart.com> or by telephone at 800-465-4141. Their mailing address is 4509B Main Street, Waitsfield, VT 05673.



Happy Holidays!!!

Notices

UIA Newsletter

The UIA newsletter is available on-line at <http://www.uiausa.com/uianews814.htm> ❖

Invention Trade Shows

Visit <http://www.inventorsdigest.com/current/shows.html> for an extended roster of invention related trade shows & events. ❖

Moderated Inventors Forum

Visit http://groups.yahoo.com/group/inventors_council/ for a moderated email list for important announcements in the invention industry. ❖

Inventor Advice

Visit www.asktheinventors.com for books, tapes & free advice to inventors through this website. ❖

Patent Search

Visit <http://members.aol.com/swfdav/PATSRCH.HTM> to find all the information needed to start a patent search. ❖

List of Inventions

Visit <http://www.time.com/time/2002/inventions/toc.html> to search lists of inventions from 2001 through 2002. ❖

European Patent Attorney

Find Paul Cole's resume and articles in Patent Cafe Magazine, at http://www.cafezine.com/editor_template.asp?editorid=4&deptid=23. If anyone has queries concerning the filing of patent applications in Europe and elsewhere, he would be glad to help. ❖

Submit Ideas for Montel Show

Visit http://www.montelshow.com/misc/show_ideas.htm and share your invention experience to gain product exposure on television.

The ISSF takes no responsibility for the accuracy or reliability of information presented in this publication. The ISSF does not endorse advertisers.

NOTE: Please leave a message at 561-737-2182, identifying any address that does not take you to the information cited.

2002 Schedule of Events – Palm Beach

ISSF Miami Branch
presents

December 21st

**Luke Alter,
Patent Attorney**

Licensing Agreements

General Meeting at 1:00pm

01/04	Guest speakers: Patricia Adams and Abby Waters . Topic: <i>Let's Get Graphic</i>the inventor's secret weapon for high impact selling.
02/01	TBD



PB Branch of ISSF Meets at New Time and Place

The Palm Beach branch of the ISSF now meets at 1:30 pm on the **first** Saturday of each month at:

Coconut Cove Waterpark and Recreation Center
11200 Park Access Road
Boca Raton, Florida 33498

For more information, read the side bar on page 4 for directions, telephone the facility at 561-274-1140 or visit <http://www.pbcgov.com/parks/ccove/coco.html> ❖

ISSF PB Branch
presents

January 4th

**Patricia Adams
&
Abby Waters**

Let's Get Graphic

Board Meeting at 12:00am
General Meeting at 1:30pm

ISSF Meeting Quote

ISSF members are a creative group of people who are respected for their ideas, industriousness and taking action on their ideas. They comprise a very small portion of the population. Certainly, being a member, or taking the initiative to join ISSF and contribute to ISSF is a positive step. One ISSF member expressed this with the following poem at the recent Boca Raton meeting:

“Isn't it kind of strange that princes and kings,
The clowns that caper the sawdust rings,
And the common folk, like you and me,
We, are the builders for eternity.

To each is given a bag of tools,
A shapeless mass and a book of rules,
And each must build their life as flown,
A stumbling block or a stepping stone.”

We're on the Web!

See us at:

InventorsSociety.com

INVENTARE MAXIMUS INVENTORS SOCIETY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

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To receive the newsletter via email, send your email address to filee766241@cs.com. For those without email, hard copy of the newsletter will be mailed through the USPS.