



We turn good ideas into *great* products.

Business Update

Since our last newsletter update, activities and accomplishments at Porticos have continued to grow. In addition to working hard to meet the needs of our existing client base, we have been busy working with many new clients and partners. We continue to enjoy serving a broad mix of customers, from large Fortune 500 companies to smaller entrepreneurial companies. To keep up with the ever increasing workload, our staff has continued to grow with the additions of Mike Frank and Todd Saltzman to our stable of talent.

Last newsletter we introduced you to a new product we were developing to satisfy a critical Homeland Security need, the "Porticool" advanced cooling garment. Our concept design and feasibility phases are complete and it has become clear that our patented cooling technology represents a huge step forward in the market. We are currently meeting with commercialization partners and expect to make this innovative product available to emergency first responders within a year. Stay tuned.

We want to once again thank our current customers for their confidence and support, as well as the many people who continue to spread the word and recommend us to companies in need of our expertise.

THE BUSINESS OF **IDEAS**

Greg Patterson, CTO

Part 4 in this 12-part series
focusing on the development of
ideas into viable products...

"The Six-Month Rule"

We've spent the last several issues in defining some of the attributes most prevalent to those who we'd consider to be innovative, possibly disheartening a few of you by painting a picture of the inventor as "all knowing". This time we're going to turn the looking glass around and point out some of the typical weaknesses of the inventor mentality. Why? Because the purpose of the series is to help understand what it takes to build a *Business of Ideas*. There's nothing wrong with being an inventor or a "tinkerer", inventing and exploring just for the fun of it. But to build this passion into a business requires more work and a variety of skills.

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RECENT HEADLINES & UPDATES

U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security

Research on improved and innovative cooling for Emergency First Responders has been completed. A commercialization partner will be chosen soon to aid in the development and distribution of the "Porticool" cooling garment.

Porticos Completes New Enclosure Designs for SAMSys Technologies

Porticos has been chosen by SAMSys Technologies of Durham as their source for all mechanical development needs.

Press Release:

[Porticos Completes New Enclosure Design for SAMSys RFID Device](#)

Porticos is Moving to a new office on Aviation Parkway starting September 1.

Press Release:

[Porticos Announces New Location](#)

NEW FACES

Porticos is pleased to introduce 2 new additions to the engineering team, and one returning member

Mike Frank joined Porticos full time in March. He is a seasoned designer, experienced in products ranging from electronic packaging to medical devices. In addition to his design background, Mike is skilled in AutoCAD and Pro-Engineer.

Todd Saltzman is a senior level mechanical engineer and innovator in his own right who began supporting Porticos in April. He is a good fit to the Porticos team with a strong portfolio of industrial and consumer electronics packaging. Todd specializes in designs requiring Solid Works CAD software

Dmitriy Dryga returned to Porticos for another summer internship after completing his first year at the University of Michigan. He is an extremely bright young man who will continue to support project research and development activities and internal product development. In addition, Dmitriy brings a strong knowledge of computer operating systems and networking, helping to maintain and enhance our computer systems.



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There are several areas in which an inventor will often have weaknesses (I can't tell them all here or I wouldn't have any fodder for future articles). In this section we'll look at what is often affectionately known as Time to Market, and introduce the six-month-rule.

Most people who've been in the work-world understand *Time To Market*. Basically it's the time it takes to bring a product from concept to the customer. Different products usually require different development times. You wouldn't expect a commercial jet engine to be brought to market in the same time that it takes to bring one of those McDonald's Happy Meal toys to your child's eagerly awaiting hands. But within each of those categories there are smart men and women working hard to develop new products and stay competitive every day.

Inventors aren't typically your most time conscious individuals. Even the simple time management tasks, like remembering to come into the house for dinner at 6:00 can be elusive. Just imagine how tempting it is for the tinkerer to spend an eternity making those incremental improvements.

It's for that reason I introduce the Six Month Rule for your consideration. What's the Six Month Rule? Most simply it means from the time you come up with a novel solution to a problem, resulting in an innovative idea, you probably have six months before some other smart person in some other town comes up with the same or at the very least a competitive solution.

I can't count the number of times I've had what I consider a good idea only to find with a little searching that there are solutions or products already out there that do the same thing. In those cases where there didn't exist the idea already, any procrastination will usually be made evident within a short time by seeing a new product show up that addressed the problem.

So what's the point? If you have a good idea and it isn't already being solved, you cannot take a lackadaisical approach at developing it. If you do, and it truly is a problem in need of solution, it will be solved by someone else.

Think of the great inventor duels of the past: Tesla (AC power) versus Edison (DC Power) bringing electric power into the home. Nicolaus Otto and Alphonse Beau de Roaches who developed the first automobile internal combustion engines (Otto's original patent was overturned in 1886 in favor of the patent granted to Alphonse Beau de Roaches for his four-stroke engine though Otto continued to work on the invention while de Roaches' mainly stayed on paper). Even fun things like Leo Fender and Les Paul for who was first to develop the solid body electric guitar. This isn't a coincidence. Recalling from one of our earlier articles, if you consider the number of US patents that have been granted in 2003 alone (334K) it really makes you question why it isn't more often the case.

Furthermore a lapse in activity can have a detrimental effect on your rights to patent the idea (again Otto vs. de Roaches). Although it's fairly well understood that in the US it's first to invent that gets credited with the idea. But what might be lesser known is that you have to have evidence showing continual progress or research on an idea to keep those early dates. So you can't expect to dream up some cool idea then let it sit on the shelf to resurrect at a later date.

What's worse is the more valuable ideas typically involve areas where there is the greatest market. And the greatest market quite often correlates to a large number of people who are faced with the problem on a daily basis. As I said before there are a lot of smart men and women out there who are faced with that problem and are actively pursuing solutions. Don't let your pride get in the way and give you the false impression that you're the only one capable of coming to a solution.

If you don't have the strength or discipline to adhere to time constraints don't be dismayed. Team up with someone who does. Let me give you a word of advice. It needs to be a situation where both share a mutual respect for each other. After all each is going to be pushing the other in areas they are not always comfortable in. But by building the right teams you can quickly see the value of a team synergy.

So let's recap the purpose of this section. Clearly stated if you have an idea or solution to an existing problem and there is not already a viable solution that addresses the problem, you better get going since you probably only have a six month grace period before someone else beats you to the punch.