

Tips to Sell New Ideas

A growing number of people are generating ideas not to pursue them, but sell them to those who will. This trend has led to a number of companies and services who promise the ability to sell new ideas. Before exploring the different companies who make this promise, it is important to look beyond "selling ideas" and understand what that truly means. In order to sell an idea, what you really need is a patent. The reason for this is simple: without a patent, you have no leverage. If you listed a mere idea for sale, what is to stop someone from seeing that idea, expounding upon it in his own mind, and filing for a patent himself? If he knew enough about the idea and followed the proper procedures, he would hold full rights to the idea. You just became a middleman in a matter of seconds! Clearly, this is not a situation you want to find yourself in. If you want to sell or license your idea, you need to patent it. This essentially means creating a proof of concept or prototype and filing it along with a patent application. Patent attorney Eugene Quinn of IP Watch dog website wrote an excellent article on how to do this called "How to Move From Idea to Patent." Quinn's article contains sound advice on how to get patent protection for your idea. But once you have it, how do you then go about selling it? Most inventors turn to the fly-by-night "idea marketing" companies Quinn mentions in his article. This is a mistake, and it is important for inventors to understand how these companies operate. As a general rule, these companies prey on the hopes and dreams of inventors. In shooting their infomercials and developing their websites, they know that inventors are a starry-eyed, ambitious group who wants to see their ideas succeed. But instead of providing practical, ethical, real-world advice, they lie. They charge extortionate fees with the promise of "evaluating and marketing" your idea, but all they actually do is blast unsolicited mail to a randomized mailing list of manufacturers. Unfortunately, the final destination of this mail is the trash can. No manufacturing company worth a dime considers proposals from idea marketing companies. They are sadly more aware of their empty promises than most inventors are. If you want to sell your idea, you should be the one to evaluate, develop and market your patent. If you think about it, you will wonder why anyone does it any other way. If you thought of the idea and know it inside and out, what do you need to pay some other company thousands of dollars for? You obviously know the market, or you would not have invented something for it! All you truly need to do is determine which company would ideally want to sell your invention. An article called "Presenting Patent Ideas to Companies" touches on this same subject, using the example of someone who invented a new type of bicycle tire: He might even want to go further down the chain and approach the company who creates bicycle tires, if this is a different company. The closer you can get to the physical implementation of your idea, the more likely it is that your presentation will be favorably received. The reason for this is simple. The higher up you go, the more layers your idea will have to pass through until it reaches the people whose lives will be concretely affected by it. Not only that, but other people will not present your idea with the energy and enthusiasm that you will. Interestingly, this is also why so many unhappy inventors report no success with "idea marketing" companies. You as the inventor do not benefit from blasting your idea out to any manufacturer who will listen. Instead, you want to focus your idea marketing efforts on a handful of carefully chosen companies who are likely to care. Fortunately, this type of research is inexpensive and you can do it yourself. Common sense and logic will tell you which company you want to try and sell your idea to. In closing, you should patent your idea before trying to sell it because this gives you the leverage you need to be taken seriously. Then and only then should you try to sell your idea: without using listing services.

About the Author

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