

Ten commandments of invention

- 1** DO check the originality of your idea. If it isn't original it isn't an invention. Non-originality kills off more ideas – even good ones - than any other cause.
- 2** DON'T immediately rush out to patent your idea. That could prove to be a very expensive mistake. Find out why first! (It's complicated...)
- 3** DO think 'great business opportunity' and not 'great invention'. No company or investor will be interested just because it's an invention.
- 4** DON'T say 'There is no competition for my idea'. Whatever is done in its absence is competition. A cat is competition for a mousetrap.
- 5** DO be wary of companies offering to market your invention for a hefty up-front fee. Google 'invention scams' to find out more.
- 6** DON'T disclose your idea to anyone without at least a non-disclosure agreement (NDA). And use NDAs routinely throughout your project.
- 7** But DON'T be too secretive or you'll get nowhere. As a rough guide, it's usually OK to say what your idea **does** but not **how it does it**.
- 8** DO expect the spotlight to shift from your invention to your business abilities as soon as you seek external funding or support.
- 9** So DO consider building a small team to help develop your idea. Investors rarely back individuals with no track record working alone.
- 10** DO plan to minimise risk to all stakeholders, including yourself, at all times. Invention projects are riskier than most, so show you recognise this.