

## The Beginnings of a Quality Patent Search

Hopefully you realize that before you do much of anything, you need to look at the marketability of your invention.

Remember, you don't want to do anything until you have a good feel for whether or not you can actually make some money from your invention. Of course, you can't ever determine with 100% accuracy if you will make money or how much, but you can gain an idea by looking at other products available in the marketplace.

So you need to become an expert at products in the marketplace similar to your invention!

Once that's done, what's the next step?

Well wouldn't you know it, it's actually a little more of the same! That's right; you need to become even more of an expert at product's similar to your invention. This time, in the form of a preliminary patent search.

You can't patent it if it's not new. Remember that phrase. It absolutely, positively, must be a novel invention. Now yours can be similar to something else, but it should have a feature or even better yet, features that make it stand apart. The novel feature(s) is what you eventually will seek to gain a patent on.

So in addition to searching through what is already sold and marketed, you need to determine if your invention has ever been written about. Whether in a publication, a patent or even in a thesis shelved away in the library, you need to make sure your invention is novel.

Of course, a patent search will be performed by an examiner when your patent application is received by the USPTO. But since filing a patent requires quite a bit of time and a decent amount of money, you should do your own preliminary patent search first. Make sure your idea really is new.

Wouldn't it be nice to know if all this initial trouble was going to get you somewhere?

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