



NEWSLETTER---

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NETWORKING AT WORK by Peter Lantos

Networking has been an important component of my consulting practice. For the first 4 years I was a solo practitioner, but soon recognized that I needed help for two reasons: to extend my own expertise, and to enable me to handle periods of high work load. Thus, after 4 years, I began adding several associates to my team. They were not on my payroll, since I did not want to be burdened with having to pay an employee at a time when I had little work, and the associates were anxious to maintain their own identity.

The networking took place by my interviewing potential candidates, and deciding on those who met my requirements. Some of them I knew from earlier industrial employment; some of them I met through the Association of Consulting Chemists and Chemical Engineers; some of them I met through other professional organizations; while some approached me to explore the possibility of working with me.

The networking helped me In a somewhat unexpected way: by marshaling an impressive team for assignments, I was able to impress prospective clients with the talents and capabilities which my group was able to bring to bear. The networking has enabled me to secure and execute client assignments which I could not have done on my own.

One illustrative situation involved a client who invited me to his office to "present a seminar on the PVC industry." Knowing of Elliott Weinberg's expertise and reputation in this area, I invited him to participate with me. We made the presentation and it resulted in a significant, major assignment of a strategic nature. In that first meeting, Elliott contributed his knowledge and experience in the PVC industry, while my input was to recognize the clients hidden agenda, and to slant the presentation so as to intrigue him with the potential that his business represented, provided they called upon us to help them identify, clarify and implement that potential. I doubt if either one of us alone would have been successful in making a solid presentation, in gaining the client's confidence, and in eventually executing the comprehensive assignment which resulted from that initial meeting.

REFERRAL FROM ACC&CE BECOMES A PATENT

Here is a story about a member, Daniel Kruh (# 830), who turned a Clearing House Inquiry (CHI) into a patent. He assigned the rights to the client, but believes there may yet be other opportunities for consultant involvement involving commercialization. Patent US 6,063,231 issued May 16, 2000

is not Kruh's first patent, but it is the one that came through ACC&CE.

The patent title is Method and Composition For Removing Adhesive Bandages. Kruh reports the history as follows.

I wasn't interested in the job but the client persisted and was urgent about it. He wanted a liquid chemical composition that could be easily made, had natural ingredients, had broad applicability and that would be patentable. After a short investigation, I came up with a workable approach that might be patentable. I was fortunate to be able to obtain a sample containing a key ingredient. A few tests convinced me that with some reformulation it was worth showing to the client and I brought samples of formulation and tape to potential clients. They liked it and wanted the improved samples I mentioned. A project was born.

Thereafter, I reformulated the liquid in several ways and tested for the best efficacy, provided the client options and quantities to allow a choice, had a search made and obtained a legal opinion on patentability, arranged to have skin safety tests run which were passed to allow claims to be made, determined that the composition needed FDA approval to be sold, did the required investigative work and obtained approval, located an experienced patent attorney and provided the technical input needed, found a cooperative packaging house that prepared and tested different materials and identified and confirmed storage stability. Discussions between the client and my suggested investor completed my work.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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New Affiliate members. They are interested in the affairs of ACC&CE and may apply for full membership in the future.

Mr. Jon Barb - No. 885 - Danbury, CT. Phone (203) 798 8006, FAX (203) 798 7487, e-mail, dw2jb@aol.com. Barb's undergraduate education was in chemical Engineering (BS) and has an MA in Human Resource Development. His work has been in sales and marketing training.

Mr. Henri Fromageot - No. 887 - Highland Mills, NY. phone (914) 928 2937, FAX (914) 928 5711. e-mail hfrom@frontiernet.net. Chemist. Specializing in biomaterials testing and biotechnology of forest products and wood pulping and bleaching.

Miguel A. Castro - No. 889 - Bowling Green KY. Phone (270) 793 0204, FAX (270) 793 5404, e-mail, mcastro770@aol.co. ChE, MBA consultant. Castro came from Peru and is currently plant manager in detergents and did technical work on beverages in Peru.

Ms. Sushma H. Gandhi - No. 890 - Cary NC. Phone (919) 388-0483, FAX (919) 465-0102, e-mail, sgandhi@ix.netcom.com. Gandhi earned BS and MS degrees in chemistry in Bombay and an MS in environmental chemistry in the US. She has had extensive experience in analytical chemistry in pharmaceuticals.

Please welcome these new members, look over their qualifications and, if you see you have something in common, call one or more or send them an E-mail. Don't overlook the possibilities for networking and income through joint consulting.

YES, WE HAVE RIPE BANANAS!

Who has not had to eat hard bananas because that were all the store had on the counter, and then taken them home to have all get ripe at the same time? That may improve. Polymers and formulating ingredients have been worked out to solve these problems, maybe not for us, but for the commercial end. The trick is to coat the fruit with an FDA-acceptable clear coating that controls the transpiration of gases through the peel of most fruits and vegetables. The coating is tuned to delay ripening and then support ripening on demand.

"FreshSeal" (TM) technology has patented a new composition for this application. As they explain in US Patent 6,165,529 , "The coating composition is effective to control respiratory exchange, i.e., the passage of gases, particularly oxygen, ethylene and carbon dioxide, into and out of the produce, thereby to control maturation and ripening of the produce."

The ingredients are not novel, although the adjustment of the proportions may be. They use a hydrolyzed cold water insoluble polyvinyl alcohol, a low molecular weight cold water soluble starch, and a surfactant. Optional constituents include antimicrobials and plasticizers such as glycerin. Many combinations of ingredients and the process of using them for controlling the ripening of green bananas or tomatoes are included in the claims granted by the patent.

The patent describes this process as effective for preserving fresh unripe produce and prolonging the period during which the produce may be stored at ambient temperatures without critical deterioration of the produce. The ripening process can be initiated by exposure of the green produce to ethylene gas that readily permeates the special coatings without need to remove the coating.

Current commercial practices usually involve chilling the green produce soon after picking and maintaining a low temperature until delivery near the retail store. With coatings previously proposed, coated bananas had to be rinsed with a solvent to remove the coating so that the ripening gas (ethylene) would have unimpeded access to the bananas when the gas is introduced into the ripening rooms. Due to the breathability of the coating of the invention, rinsing with warm or hot water prior to gassing is not necessary. The bananas may be gassed with the coating in place.

Although the ingredients of the coatings are "generally regarded as safe" (GRAS) by the FDA, for produce that is customarily consumed without removing a rind or peel, e.g., tomatoes, apples, and the like, it is recommended that the coating be removed prior to consumption by rinsing in warm water.

This newsletter ran a short piece on ripening in the July/August 1998 issue. That case was about a device displayed in the supermarket that promised to retard too-fast ripening of fresh produce by a simple device. The idea was to capture the natural ethylene given off by ripening produce by some potassium permanganate in the package being sold. We haven't seen it since. Has anyone else information on the subject?

This has reminded the Editor of his first industrial research job 48(!) years ago. It was for a company manufacturing cellophane under a license from duPont. There he learned about gas transmission through packaging films. Before there was polyethylene, cellophane was used for wrapping fresh meat for retail.

The bright red of oxygenated hemoglobin could only be preserved if oxygen could get through the transparent film. Otherwise the meat turned an unappetizing brown. Cellulose with a certain amount of water and glycerin for flexibility did a good job.

To add sealability to the packaging film a transparent coating was applied to one side. This was a nitrocellulose composition that was heat-fusible. But without the addition of microcrystalline wax it was too permeable to water vapor to keep the cellulose from drying out and becoming brittle. It was important to wrap with the coating outside.

Within ten years the new transparent polyethylene films were pushing cellophane out of the market.

By that time the Editor had moved on to another company that was a traditional manufacturer of cellulose esters as molding and extrusion materials. These materials began to feel the pressure from acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene and polycarbonate polymers. The proliferation of better and cheaper polymers still goes on while high-priced polymers with extraordinary properties find their niches.

FREE INTERNET ACCESS by Peter Hay

Most of us get onto the Internet through the easiest route. If we use Microsoft, we turn to Microsoft Net (MSN). If we use one of the many free signup discs mailed out by Juno or America Online (AOL), we hook up that way. We may have selected a provider on recommendation of a friend or a story in a magazine or newspaper. In all likelihood, we found ourselves tied to a monthly expenditure of \$10 or more. But there are some free Internet portals.

A thorough search on the Internet for free Internet service providers (ISPs) turns up many possibilities. A good way to look into this is to use your (paid) Internet service to log on to a site such as freeinternetaccess.home.att.net/ and choose one that suits you. They will provide the lowest speed in action, through the modem in the personal computer using the telephone line. Though slower in action than other means, they bring freedom from any expense. They will appeal to the thrifty who want to browse the Internet extensively without a surprise credit-card bill next month. Providers make their money selling advertising space on the site. You can get used to the pop-up ads that occupy some of the viewing area.

I still pay a provider for one site because my e-mail correspondents and the business sites I value all are used to it. But for the research I do on the Internet in preparing this newsletter and other purposes I use either Netzero or myamericanexpress. The former is available to all. The latter is free for holders of American Express cards. I chose them for another important no-cost reason: they dial up on a local telephone number. Not all free portals and some paid ones offer this extra degree of economy.

ACC&CE has been using e-mail successfully for some time to tie its wide-spread membership together. Members who have not been using this ubiquitous communication service as much as they could now have one less excuse to stay off the Internet.

