

July 2021

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THE INSTITUTE OF INVENTORS AND INNOVATORS - [info@iii.org.za](mailto:info@iii.org.za)

## The Newsletter of the Institute of Inventors and Innovators

III – A non-profit organization. A Home for inventors. Run by inventors. Supporting inventors.

III – South Africa - Business Award Winner – MEA Markets 2019

<https://www.mea-markets.com/q1-2020/> Page 10

**JULY 26<sup>TH</sup> celebrates ALL OR NOTHING DAY**

The grey bits mean room to negotiate. Are you doing all you can about your invention idea? Or nothing?



# ALL OR NOTHING

Load-shedding meant that Eureka!MEET from June had to be postponed to July so there'll be a summary in August, it was a case of nothing in the dark!

In the meantime we have some other interesting information and ideas for you to contemplate.

**Do you agree that it's time to create a Plastic-Bag-Free World?**

**The International Plastic-Bag-Free-Day is celebrated on July 3<sup>rd</sup>**

The day's a unique opportunity to learn that a plastic-bag-free world is possible. Sound environmental alternatives to single use plastic bags are available but the ones we get from the supermarkets are still used for so much more besides shopping ... will we ever stop using them?

**What are 'we' inventing to solve this problem?**

## Planned Obsolescence

Also known as **Built-in Obsolescence**, this essentially means deliberately planning or designing a product with a finite lifespan so it will become obsolete or non-functional after a certain period, most usually for profit and most often soon after the warranty has run out! Obsolescence comes from obsolete and when something is obsolete, it is no longer relevant, no longer used or desired and is likely to be seen to be old-fashioned or out of date.

Planned obsolescence is when various strategies are used to make a product seem unwanted, useless, and possibly disadvantageous but certainly non-functioning, non-compatible, outdated and essentially useless. A business can do this in many ways, and it is one of the standard 'tricks' that many companies use to make overweening profits.



Limiting the life of a light bulb. The inability to refill printer ink cartridges or the need to replace the printer because it's no longer supported by the upgraded computer or software. Nylon stockings that ladder or pantyhose that tear easily. Deliberately making older versions of software such as Adobe Flash Player unserviceable, even though technically it could keep working as intended. Irreplaceable batteries in tech products. Producing a new model for a car every year with minor changes. Reprinting text books with chapter changes and minimal editing to stop students buying second-hand books. Low quality fabrics, cheap manufacturing methods and fast and ever-changing fashion trends. Appliances that stop working with no spare parts available. Have you been 'caught'? Add your own.

In a specified time these products and services all need to be replaced for one reason or another, and not because it is necessary, but because they were designed in one way or another to be discarded.

Be careful though ... planned obsolescence is not when you want to upgrade, say a cell phone with new and more modern features or an app or a car etc. It's when you're happy enough using whatever you're using but after 'an inconvenient while' there are no replacement parts for what breaks or wears out and your hand is forced. You have to buy a new whatever whether you like it or not.

There are four main ways in which a company can achieve planned obsolescence. These are ▶ contrived durability, ▶ unnecessary software updates, ▶ customer-perceived obsolescence, and ▶ prevention of repair. Companies use any or all of these, the rationale being to generate long-term, repeat and brand loyalty sales by reducing the time between functionality and 'uselessness'.

**This subject is a rich one and worth further investigation, especially for Inventors of reusable products.**



**Youth Inventors are under the global spotlight in all sorts of exciting ways.**



The III has the KIDS CLUB for one (first Wednesday of every month via Zoom) and then there is news that follows about the **INVENT FUTURE Global Challenge**.

The **IF.G Food System Challenge**, coming up this month – yes, there are four South African places available - is a great event and a wonderful opportunity for students to grow in their problem-solving skills and learn as they work with other students from around the world to address the United Nation Sustainable development Goal #2 - Zero Hunger.

**Watch these two short videos then take action.**

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/lekycgisiz3ava8l/Food%20Challenge%20Promo%20JEM.mp4?dl=0>

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/3g0zcy7i3amgg2g/Food%20Challenge%20Promo%20V6%20.mp4?dl=0>

In summary: **WHO?** Students from 15 Countries aged 9-18 years **WHAT?** Students collaborate with other worldwide student innovators to solve real food and nutrition problems. **COST?** US \$50 per entry. **WHEN?** One week of 5 days x 90 minute sessions either this week July 19-23 or this one July 26-30 **AND THEN?** Each Student will receive a Certificate of Achievement, a letter of congratulations from a UN SDG representative and a global experience they will never forget!

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN - Students should sign up NOW – entries close 12 July 2021 (extended)**

The registration for the Food Challenge is still open and the spots for this amazing program were taken up eagerly, though there is still room. Contact Celeste on [celeste@iii.org.za](mailto:celeste@iii.org.za)



## Physical Toys and the Power of Touch

**Nancy Zwiers** gained wide experience managing brands at Procter & Gamble before becoming the senior vice president of worldwide marketing at Mattel for Barbie. She then founded the brand-building firm Funosophy before becoming executive vice president and CMO at Spin Master. She currently spends her time as an executive coach and mentor.



**Here are some interesting thoughts for anyone who wants invent toys and games.**

**Q.** 'My Company sells only low-tech toys. How can we effectively compete in an increasingly high-tech world?'

**A.** Nancy says: 'We should change your approach to that statement and rephrase your question, because 'physical' toys are not low-tech ... they're high-touch!'

Furthermore, physical toys, competing for market share against digital offerings, have a clear-cut advantage and that is **the power of touch**, the most ancient and fundamental of our senses.



Essentially, our brains are wired to exercising our motor skills (both gross motor and fine motor skills). In fact, neuroscientists contend that the very reason we developed brains in the first place was to be able to control and move around in our environment—make decisions to switch to different movements based on incoming sensory information and help us to understand and/or imitate the actions of others and so much more.

Toys that encourage children's fine motor skills have a good 'fiddle factor' and not only is this manipulative play good for kids, it is also irresistible. For infants, age-appropriate fiddle factors can be delivered through allowing opportunities for grabbing and holding, touching and squeezing, batting at dangling objects or similar. As infants grow into toddlers, classic 'put 'n take' play is endlessly fascinating, not to mention pulling levers, spinning dials, opening doors, manipulating blocks and balls, and so on.



For kids above three-years-old, the value of manipulative play abounds, such as putting together racetracks, rolling a car, activating a poseable body, jigsaw puzzles or moving pieces on a game board. Including a brush with each Barbie doll for instance delivers an instant fiddle factor. From the enduring strength of Lego to the recent growth of Kinetic Sand, in a sea of high-tech play, offering satisfying high-touch play is a winning strategy.



Consider these thoughts below, to help increase the 'fiddle-factor' value of your invention:

- Ask yourself, how little hands will manipulate 'your' toy and then make sure you build in the answer(s) in an age-appropriate way.
- Build articulation into your figure as a cost-effective way to increase play value—even if it is just one joint. This helps bring the fantasy to life, as well.
- Include a removable weapon, a prop, or a fashion piece with figures or dolls.
- In a play set, include as many moving parts as possible, use hinges, levers, slides, connectors, openers and so on.
- To encourage action, include a hand-held prop in role play sets such as a wand or a weapon. Something 'competitive' can also be a useful addition.
- Consider collectables that can be combined, sorted, re-sorted, rearranged or swapped.
- With games, create tactile satisfaction through movable parts and texture.
- Children talk to their toys and befriend them, make it easy for them to do so.



**Screen time cannot deliver on the rich manipulative play value kids crave in quite the same way, so make sure you take full advantage of this opportunity when inventing touch toys.**



**14-in-1 Key chain multi-tool** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96ODzfXt39Y> 18 secs.

Another Swiss Knife? Can't say, and while there are many multi-functional tools out there, in all shapes and sizes, there always seems to be room for one more. Inventive minds need never go to sleep or imagine that, just because it's out there, nothing new or novel can be done.

**Samsung Safety Truck (Argentina)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NGfse9ZK8&list=RDCMUCVxotPxp9JUc4wBWmdyXhYQ> 2 mins.



Where installed, Samsung Safety Truck has a huge display screen on its back doors which makes it possible for drivers behind the truck to see the road ahead before trying to overtake. It works with has front wireless cameras that stream live video of the road ahead. This life-saving innovation allows drivers to have a better view when deciding whether or not it is safe to overtake.



Link from **Interesting Engineering**

[www.interestingengineering.com](http://www.interestingengineering.com)

From polluted oceans to the introduction of micro-plastics the planet needs help everywhere. Some inventors have come up with unique and original ideas for products that can contribute to saving the planet. In the video above, they showcase several problem-solving inventions and innovations, some quite surprising.

<https://interestingengineering.com/video/unique-sustainable-products>

**French company Flyboard Air first to cross the English Channel on jet powered hoverboard.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3UbOG0ERCwM> 2019 4,08

Flyboard Air is now the world's first jet powered hoverboard to cross the English Channel. Its personal aviation transport is powered by five small jet engines which produce 1500 horsepower. It has enough kerosene fuel in its backpack to fly for about 10-12 minutes, and can fly at speeds up to about 110 mph. It also has the capability of flying up to 10,000 feet, but can only do so if it could carry enough fuel. The Flyboard Air can take off anywhere and land anywhere. France's military has also sought to develop the technology for itself, and recently gave this company, Z-AIR, a €1.3m (\$1.4m; £1.28m) grant. In an interview with France, Inter radio, French Defence Minister Florence Parly said the Flyboard could serve several purposes, "for example as a flying logistical platform or, indeed, as an assault platform." The expected retail price of the Flyboard Air will be around \$330,000 US. They are currently not for sale but the company is taking pre-orders.



**UK company Gravity - Jet engine designer Richard Browning**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=toADLyJnJSQ> 2017 1.37

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAJM5L9hhBs> 2018 7,33

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4FUBfp9kS0> 2020 1.34

Can't say how these companies above are connected – but inventing a way to fly, that has to be exciting for many. It gives a new meaning to human drones. Pizza anyone?

Richard Dickson, 2ndPresident and COO at Mattel, Inc. recently announced that "The Future of Pink is



Green!" Mattel is proud to announce that '**Barbie Loves the Ocean**' is the first fashion-doll line made from 90% recycled ocean-bound plastic. Mattel is another corporate that has a growing portfolio of purpose-driven brands that inspire environmental consciousness and support their goal to achieve 100% recycled, recyclable or bio-based plastic materials in both products and packaging by 2030.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBGlukcDjiU> 51 secs sizzle video

## Pitch it to the Panel™

Do you have an invention idea or a product or something to innovate?

Come to the next PITTP session on

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

Here there is a confidential focused meeting of minds where members are able to speak to a panel of experts - all subject specialists - who can offer the kind advice and guidance that Innovators and Inventors need.

Click on the Services/PITTP page on the website [www.iii.org.za](http://www.iii.org.za) read all about it, meet the panelists too – and note, because this meeting is run via Zoom, **anyone from anywhere in the world is welcome to participate.**

**Secure your place for PITTP soon**

**[www.iii.org.za](http://www.iii.org.za)**

## THE INVENTORS CLUB

**Runs on the FIRST, SECOND and THIRD Wednesdays of the month ... JOIN US in our Zoom room.**

There is **KIDS CLUB** on July 7<sup>th</sup> followed by **Eureka!MEET** on 14<sup>th</sup> July when 10 lucky inventors will get their personal questions answered by a Patent Attorney. Make sure you are there to get some smart and useful information even if you didn't ask a question. Could be time for some extras? On July 21<sup>st</sup> there is **CLUB NIGHT** where interesting topics for Inventors come up for discussion.

All sessions are from 17h30-18h30 SAST via Zoom

See the last page of this newsletter for connection details.

**Load-shedding? No electricity? Always a possibility so if you have trouble connecting and you're using the right link, check up for areas without power – lights out may be the problem.**



Joining the III is very easy if you go to the website [www.iii.org.za](http://www.iii.org.za)

This association offers so much value to Inventors Innovators and other

Creative people – but like much in life, you have to participate to gain. **MEMBERSHIP?** Oh so easy – join, pay R375 once for **LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP** then reap the benefits of associating with interesting, smart and inventive people

Depending on the antics of world financial markets the South African Rand is a giveaway – it will only cost you around US\$27 or £19 or €22 for **LIFETIME** membership of our Institute that does all sorts of interesting things and offers some really fine services!

## Membership Matters

Do you offer a service or a product that would be useful to inventors, innovators and other creative people?

**ADVERTISE HERE**

The rates are very easy on the budget and the message will go out to a lot of interested people who have *invention* and *innovation* on their minds.

[www.iii.org.za](http://www.iii.org.za)

### Doing Beethoven's Fifth



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wVfp\\_hy9pbw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wVfp_hy9pbw)

Watch it and take a break from all this inventing stuff.

## In case you missed it - Italy's K9 Lifeguards



Italy's coast guard has deployed hundreds of specially trained dogs to help rescue tourists on Italy's busy summer beaches. Each dog works in a team with its human lifeguard 'colleague', who is also its trainer. The duo is trained to rescue drowning swimmers. The dogs are willing to jump directly from helicopters or moving speedboats or jet-skis into the water to rescue swimmers. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NTOj-sdFMU> 2,41

## How to Write a Benefit Statement that will Work.

They say that if your advertisement or sell sheet or informational flyer or proposition or pitch costs you R10, then R8 is spent in the HEADLINE or BENEFIT STATEMENT or ATTENTION GRABBER and R2 pays for the rest. **If you don't grab your customer's attention in the first 5-10 seconds**, then you lose 80% of your investment cost for customer who moves on.



Spend your money wisely. Capture your 'customer' get their heads nodding, get them to be thinking 'yes'. Do you remember those nodding dogs people used to have in their cars? Imagine. That's what you want your 'customer' to do, nod, agree, take notice and stop looking around for something different. You need to pique their interest, get them to ask for more information (at least) or 'buy' (at best).

So. Where do you start? The short answer is with your product. You need to have more than an idea, to write a benefit statement; you need to be as close as you can be to your final iteration/prototype; you need to have something tangible that you may tweak but not fundamentally change. Then you need to know your product inside out. Its features. Its advantages. Its benefits. What it does for the customer? What value does the customer get by buying your invention.

Think of yourself as a customer for a moment. When you buy a car, what do you buy? Of course a means of transport but you buy so much more. Status? Size? Engine capacity? Safety? So think about it. Besides the physical aspects of your product, what is your customer buying? Once you establish that, within it all you will find your benefit statement.

Benefit statements are all about **value** to the consumer in relation to the '**problem**' they are experiencing, and when writing a good benefit statement consider the following:

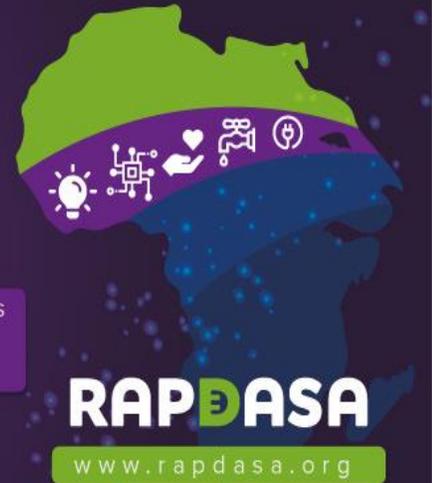
- It's crucial to know the difference between a feature and a benefit.
- Avoid clichés if you can ... 'Don't delay, call today' ... 'Saves you time' ... 'Saves you Money' These have been so overused that people don't even see or believe the words anymore.
- Must be WOW but should be informational in some way too, what is the product?
- Keep it short and to the point.
- Be realistic with any promises you make
- Do you have any competitive advantages? Be careful. Be able to back up what you say.
- Know the difference between tangible and intangible benefits – tangible you can see (portable/transparent/lightweight), intangible you can't (happiness/convenience/fun)
- Make the benefits measureable – no vague wording or 'empty' promises, offer figures and facts.
- Cover what the product does for the customer, answer their question WIFFM 'what's in it for me?'
- Make it sparkle. Make the 'reader want to read on. Make the customer want to find out more.

Sometimes, with all the advice that's available out there, it can get confusing. Opinions differ, experiences differ, products differ. Well of course they do - that's just stating the obvious! The thing is to take the advice you get and put it into the context of your own invention story. Much that is taught makes sense because it works and if what you read or hear makes sense to you, then go with that. **Whatever you do though, keep moving forward**, perfection does not exist. Do something to move your project along, **and if the best use of your time right now is to work on your Benefit Statement, do that.**

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# 3D GET KIDS THINKING DESIGN COMPETITION



## INNOVATE LOCAL

Design a solution for local communities that can improve people's lives e.g. access to clean water, hygiene system, technology for children, place for the elderly etc.

Competition is free for children ages 4-16 and closes on the **31st of August**. Amazing prizes to be won worth R10 000! To find out more details and submit your creations please go to [www.whytoyz.com](http://www.whytoyz.com)



What a fabulous opportunity this is for **BRIGHT SPARKS** to get going!

Join Us! It's our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual 3D Design Competition in partnership with RAPDASA and III. Come and hear all about it on Wednesday 7th July at the KIDS CLUB meeting, but that doesn't mean you have to wait that long to start thinking about your FREE entry to this competition OR about your ideas that will improve people's lives in our local communities.

Here's a quick overview ... and for more information go to [www.whytoyz.com](http://www.whytoyz.com)

- Design a solution to improve lives for local communities ... and there are many issues to choose from.
- Two age groups 4-9 years-old and 10-16 years-old
- Various prizes worth over R10 000
- Competition closes on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August.

**A competition of note for KIDS. We'll be thrilled to see your submissions!**

Be creative! Think outside the box! Have fun!

<p><b>UP-COMING EVENTS</b></p> <p><b>THE INVENTORS CLUB</b></p> <p>First, Second and Third Wednesdays of the month 17h30-18h30 SAST</p> <p>We're 6 hours ahead of New York ...</p>	<p align="center"><b>Join Us!</b></p> <p align="center">On the first three Wednesdays of the month via MeetUp and Zoom!</p>		
	<p align="center"><b>JULY 7th</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>KIDS CLUB</b></p> <p align="center">Hosted by Petra Rees <b>Find out all about the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual 3D design competition</b></p>	<p>Inventing and Innovation amongst the youth is so important for our future. This is the place to come to where your ideas and questions are welcome!</p>
	<p align="center"><b>JULY 14th</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Eureka!MEET</b></p> <p align="center">Hosted by III and Rina Gunter, Patent Attorney</p> <p><b>Coming up</b> – August 11<sup>th</sup> hear <b>APRIL MITCHELL</b> from the USA on Timing and Method for Inventors</p>	<p align="center"><b>Q&amp;A ON IP PROTECTION</b></p> <p>10 lucky people will get personal advice from our expert on questions they sent in! They gave some context (as much as they could for this public forum). Their names will not be revealed so it will be confidential exercise.</p>
<p align="center"><b>JULY 21st</b></p>	<p align="center">Hosted by III <b>CLUB NIGHT</b></p> <p align="center">... as from August 2021 <b>FOR MEMBERS ONLY</b></p>	<p>A mix and match of topics, speakers, Q&amp;A sessions and invention discussions – a person could learn a lot in this forum! Ten-minute Training spots? Those too.</p>	

**TO GET TO THE ZOOM ROOM, COPY THE LINK BELOW INTO YOUR BROWSER**

<https://iii-org-za.zoom.us/j/93217339232?pwd=NVhQSmRFdkgrNkM5ME5zNTAzMnBMZz09>

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➡ **As always, make that what you read, see, or listen to anywhere is fit for your own purpose.**

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Share your ideas and suggestions with us – we'd love to hear from you.

Email [info@iii.org.za](mailto:info@iii.org.za) or call 072 6643749

## human needs

