

Virtual Ecosystems Accelerate Innovation!

By Jayson D. Pankin



Should LES Members go online to find IP opportunities?

Let's find out.

LES members know sometimes it pays not to be first, unless you are going to file a patent. Ask Apple, who invented the first MP3 music player

before the iPod, or ask Google about earlier search engines, or ask Uber about taxis and ride share.

Detroit's **AutoHarvest Foundation** was not the first to create a collaborative meeting place for innovation online. The first, "Collaborator," was developed by the US Air Force. I was in the test group during my tenure at Delphi Automotive. Like many first movers, it was ahead of the market and withered. My inspiration came from General Dynamics Land Systems (GDLS), which created Maneuver Collaboration Center "MC2") to help our mutual partner, the United States Army, urgently improve the performance and safety of ground vehicles during the Iraq war. This private online platform openly posted "needs based" IP opportunities as part of a much bigger physical testing center in Michigan. If you had a good idea, whether a supplier or a student from Romania, they told you to submit the solution and be prepared to show up at the gatehouse of this secure installation, 24/7, to demonstrate it. I met many of these new solution providers who responded to off-the-wall needs posted on MC2 and pivoted to new applications that saved lives. Inspiring!

GDLS was gracious and shared their system, experiences, and expectations. I am glad they preceded us. During the Great Recession, when **Dr. David E. Cole** and I assembled a leading group of automotive OEMs, Tier 1 suppliers, academics, and federal agencies. We formed the Innovation Advisory Council (IAC), not knowing what the world would look like post-recession. We did know the challenge for transportation was dual-pronged: to raise money

by monetizing IP (and using IP to spark the new economy with startups) and to build a vast dynamic network of global innovators to identify, and then bring in-house, technology to rapidly make tomorrow's safe, green connected cars.

We started with a blank sheet of paper and studied the megatrends, especially the convergence of smart phones, internet, social media, and virtual networks. For brevity, suffice it to say the automotive industry was well-placed, having been visionary in 2000, by creating a private Internet called Covisint that has connected over 30,000 suppliers, with the OEMs enabling just-in-time delivery to global assembly plants. That rivals could cooperate to create a substantial mutual benefit unattainable alone changed everything in complex manufacturing. AutoHarvest's IAC determined we would model Covisint and integrate the emerging popular Internet functions of Google, eBay, Amazon, Facebook, and Wikipedia to deliver an empowering, direct-line-of-sight platform. In this neutral ecosystem, innovators and commercializers of all sizes and shapes meet privately to transact on common IP opportunities and to buy, sell, license, and/or collaborate across the entire spectrum of advanced manufacturing. This included areas from transportation to medical devices to infrastructure, defense, security, and consumer products.

Empowering? That is why White House CTO Aneesh Chopra in 2011, held a Town Hall meeting in Dearborn hosted by the Ford Motor Company, our IAC chair, to launch AutoHarvest. We would enable IP to be unleashed in a new, democratic way. Today, five years later, our experiment is helpful to many organizations, both grass-roots and multinational.

I first joined the Licensing Executives Society in 1984, when LES was helping to transform traditional pharmaceutical and

medical device professionals into new age biotechnology executives. LES fostered a nascent industry based on licensing after Bayh-Dole opened the floodgates. In my case, I was backed by Johnson and Johnson to create the first spin-out from the University of Texas System Cancer Center for immunotherapy. Back then, many "changed the world" without fax, e-mail, social media, or cellphones—just landlines, airplanes, and paper and pencil. Today, it is an honor to partner with LES and present AutoHarvest.org as a free 21st century tool, which will help LES members advance their careers by accelerating the adoption of innovation.

AutoHarvest is free for all LES members to join and become a vibrant user in an inclusive ecosystem—"shop" and to discover new relationships and IP opportunities. Your employer can join, too, as a "merchant" and display IP opportunities for users to uncover, connect, and transact. As a public charity, we do not ask small concerns to pay membership fees; only the well-to-do and foundations. Trends and technologies change, but meeting new doers remains one of the keys to delivering tomorrow's products.

To add deeper insight, please view Accenture's new website and read about "Digital Shoring for Networked Innovation." This extensive study reveals the emerging phenomenon of online collaboration and social media described by experts from Harvard, Genivi, London Business School, MassBio, and AutoHarvest. Hear how they are using cyberspace to grow communities and broaden their audiences.

AutoHarvest.org
Collaborate, Innovate and Win

We invite you to join AutoHarvest today.

