

# Community Partners collaborate with Patent & Trademark Depository Libraries (PTDLs)



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Northern Kentucky University, Steely Library,  
ALA, Washington, D.C., Summer 2007

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual *InventorFest*

- Cincinnati's Public Library and Wright State University Libraries presented the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual *InventorFest* on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006.
- Rotated annually between Cincinnati and Dayton, the event attendance has tripled to 750 attendees traveling from as far as Florida, Arkansas, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Tennessee.
- It is a regional forum open to anyone interested in inventions and the process of inventing. In 2006, more family-related video gaming and energy technology, plus copyright and music programs, were added.



The poster for Cincinnati InventorFest 2006 features a blue background with white and yellow text. At the top left is the logo for The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County. To its right is the event title 'Cincinnati InventorFest | 2006' and the tagline 'Bringing inventors, experts and the curious-minded together for free!'. On the top right is a photograph of a hand holding a glowing lightbulb, with the Wright State University logo below it.

**Saturday » October 14 » 2006**  
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Public Library of Cincinnati & Hamilton County  
800 Vine Street, Downtown Cincinnati

**Hear Speaker David Pressman »**  
 David Pressman is a nationally recognized patent attorney and the author of *Patent It Yourself*.  
Saturday | October 14 | 10:00 a.m.

**Attend a Panel Discussion »**  
 Attorneys and representatives from the U.S. Patent Office and Federal Trade Commission will share tips and advice.  
Saturday | October 14 | 1:00 p.m.

**Visit the Exhibit Booths »**  
 Browse through dozens of booths and exhibits sponsored by businesses and organizations that support inventors.

**Inventing Is for Everyone »**  
 A series of special programs and activities for teens and children.

**Related Resources »**  
 Resources, in print and online, for adult, teen, and kid inventors.

**InventorFest, presented by the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County and Wright State University Libraries, is a regional event open to anyone interested in inventions and the process of inventing.**

Programs  
Visitors, Product Scouts, & Exhibitors

Related Resources  
History of InventorFest  
Mission Statement



U.S. Patent and Trademark Office  
Cincinnati Recreation Commission  
Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber  
Downtown Residents Council

# *InventorFest* Best Practices Outline



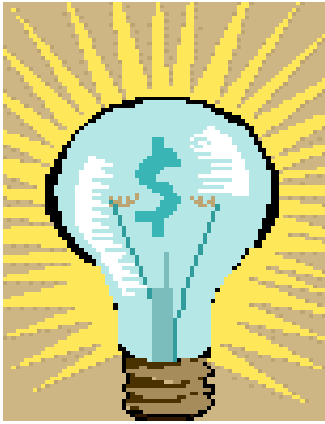
- I. Building outreach support through partnerships with community organizations increases target market.
- II. Expanding related programs throughout the year attracts established and new PTDL customers.
- III. “Inventing Is For Everyone” theme inclusive of all ages. Event extended with new related topics beyond inventions and patents; gaming and music.
- IV. Publicity and Fundraising; some highlights.
- V. Quantifiable impact of PTDL usage and services.

# Program model, not only for PTDLs

- Success of first *InventorFest* introduced on a modest shoe-string budget in 2004.
- Concept may be applied to other library outreach target groups, e.g., authors, musicians, genealogists, small-business owners, job seekers, grant writers, tax form patrons, pet lovers, home gardeners, health/legal researchers, students, etc.
- Program partner collaboration not only assists a PTDL in fulfilling its mission to proactively raise awareness of its services and resources, but contributes to a community's economic development.



# *In the beginning...*



- Success of our programs such as *From Dreams to Dollars* and our kids' and teens' programs prompted *InventorFest*.
- D2\$ patrons wanted more networking, experts contacts, and subject related speakers.
- PTDLP suggested we collaborate with nearby PTDL in Dayton, WSU.



Teen American Inventor!!!



Patent, Trademark, Copyright, and More!



# *InventorFest* is...

- FREE patent and marketing tradeshow, that not only promotes a PTDL to its local community, but the surrounding region.
- Dedicated to educating inventors and entrepreneurs on patenting their inventions, bringing their products to the market, and avoiding common business frauds and scams.
- Initiated through educational presentations and tradeshow-like exhibits that connect inventors and entrepreneurs with information related to intellectual property and marketing.

# I. Building Outreach Support

- Networking and meeting customer needs are documented factors behind success of these type of specialty target customer programs (Jane Fama).
- Specialty Library Customers such as inventors and entrepreneurs utilize specialized resources at the PTDL which require expert database searching skills; PTDLP provides training for PTDLs.
- Book Fair and Trade Show concepts utilized.
- Planning guide from first event and our library's programming policies and procedures followed.
- PTDLs Best Practices @ Roundtable (Nan Myers).

# I. Building Outreach Support



- Collaboration between two different libraries (public and academic) organizations results in greater accomplishments not possible alone (Hodge & Tanner).
- Partnership with WSU broadened PLCH's sphere geographically within the region. Cincinnati and Dayton are approximately 50 miles apart.

# I. Building Outreach Support



- Collaboration (between PTDLs and community partners) is essential to our future viability.
- Inventor's Council relationship since 1950s; strongest tie to PTDL programs.
- These partners helped us to reach out to new local communities: public television, recreation commission, chamber of commerce, downtown residents' council, etc.

# I. Building Outreach Support



## Two-tier planning committee established

- In addition to the partnership with WSU, the core committee was composed of library departments: Government & Business, Science & Technology, Children's Services, Teen Services, Public Relations, and Programming Director. Enhanced camaraderie within organizational culture from collaboration.
- Community partner committee: Inventor's Council president, local public television, recreation commission, chamber of commerce, etc. Instilled sense of ownership and investment in event. Community committee started 6 months before event.

# II. Expanded Programming

Reinvigorated established PTDL customers while attracting new inventor/patent patrons

## PatentQuest *EXPRESS*



Public Library of Cincinnati & Hamilton County - 2006

- *PatentQuest* and *Dreams to Dollars*
- Monthly Inventor's Council meetings
- *Invention @ Play* and *Teen American Inventor* programs drew over 500 attendees to youth inventor/creativity programs in the summer leading up to *InventorFest 2006*. Tied to summer reading. program theme: "Get into the Game."



# III. Inventing Is For Everyone

## Guest speakers are event drawing card



- David Pressman, patent attorney and author of Nolo's bestseller *Patent It Yourself*, keynote speaker attracted one-third of attendees.
- Expert speakers panel: PTDL patent examiner, FTC field representative, Inventor's Council president, and two local attorneys answered many inventor-related questions.
- FTC field representative's scam stories are always the most popular.



# III. Inventing Is For Everyone



- Between 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., the Library's first floor atrium looked like a trade show.
- Over three-dozen exhibits representing inventors, patent attorney/agents, marketing consultants, prototype and drawing services, etc.
- *ABC American Inventor* finalists.
- 1/3 repeat exhibitors were on hand.

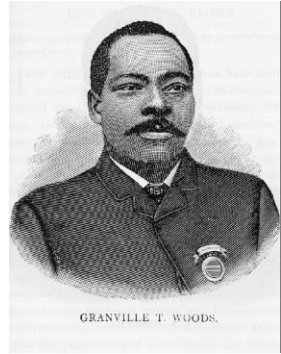
# III. Inventing Is For Everyone

Successful youth programs tied to summer reading affirmed inclusion of afternoon family programs:



- Investigative Energy: interactive experimenting stations by *COSI (Center of Science & Industry)*.
- *Happens Toy Lab*: inventing new toys from recycled old toy parts.
- Open video gaming area for teens.
- Michael Fatten, graduate student in Telecommunications at Indiana University, spoke about careers in video game creation profession.

# III. Inventing Is For Everyone



- Mayor Mallory honored posthumous induction of Granville Woods into the Nat'l Inventors Hall of Fame.
- Patent Professional database searching classes, day before.
- Aspiring musicians' program related to copyright, day after.
- 750 people attended during the entire weekend program.



# III. Inventing Is For Everyone



- PTDL program attendance is generally higher at public libraries. (Harwell, 1996)
- Although academic library environments are well-suited to informative guest speaker presentations, some attendees affirmed their preference for public library's casual book fair crowds. Academic libraries should consider these comments if initiating such a program.
- Models of public library literary fests, e.g. Queens Borough Public Library relied on partnerships to fulfill their goals as with PLCH's *InventorFest*. (Dempsey, 2005)



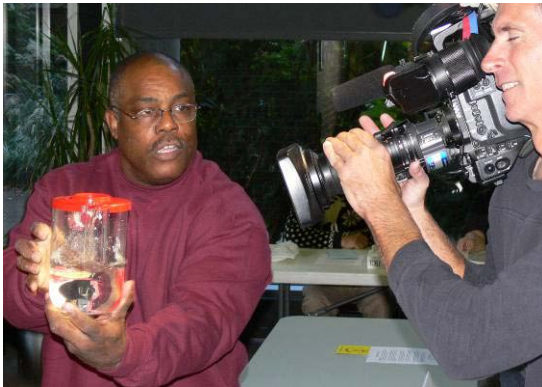
# IV. Publicity and Fundraising



- Publicizing inventor stories first.
- Press releases started months before.
- Community partners supported publicity/fundraising efforts.
- In-house printing and web-site development; close to heart of event.
- Library and PTDL customer mailing lists for “mark the date” post cards.
- Subject related library book list/displays.

# IV. Publicity and Fundraising

Every inventor has a story...



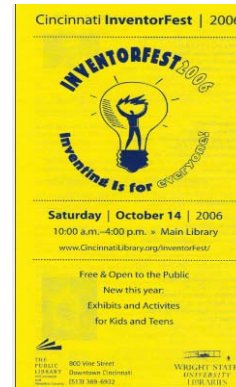
- Local media wanted to cover inventor stories.
- Inventor stories featured in media also promoted Library's *InventorFest*.
- Free publicity from partners and national media, e.g., PTDLP, *Inventor's Digest*, History Channel's *Modern Marvels*, Big Idea Group, Doug Hall's *Brain Brew*, etc.



# IV. Publicity and Fundraising



- Tri-fold event brochures not only promoted event, it helped direct people throughout Library's two-city-block Main Library facility.
- Bright yellow t-shirts with event logo worn by volunteers and staff to help visitors with directional guidance and other questions.



# IV. Publicity and Fundraising



- \$5,000 sponsorship raised to grow the event with more guest speakers, family related activities, free lunch for volunteers/exhibitors, door prizes, and souvenirs such as 250 Inventor Notebooks.
- Library Friends and local intellectual property law firm provided majority of support. Exhibitors and local restaurants and retailers provided additional support.
- After event, reviewed strengths/weakness for next round. Thank you notes sent to speakers/sponsors. Report used as after event publicity and support for future.



# V. Proof Is In The Numbers

<b>Year</b>	<b>All Programs</b>	<b>Adult Programs</b>	<b>Youth Programs</b>
<b>2003</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>1018</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>1188</b>	<b>1014</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>1503</b>	<b>519</b>
<b>Four-year growth</b>	<b>246 % increase</b>	<b>224 % increase</b>	<b>333 % increase</b>

*InventorFest* and the cross-promotional affect among related programs are credited for these growth figures.

# V. Proof Is In The Numbers

- Inventor's Council attendance increased up to 10% per year since first *InventorFest*. They also saw new membership double the few months following each *InventorFest*.
- 1/3 of *InventorFest* 2006 exhibitors were returning participants, validating the event as an established venue.
- Local SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) Chapter reported quality leads.



# One giant step



- Collaboration between library departments, different libraries, and community partners, accomplishes what cannot be done separately. Libraries can achieve great things when they work with others. Partners can facilitate and support library efforts because they are linked into communities that libraries may not reach. (Nevins, 1997)



Besides increasing attendance at PTDL programs and the use of PTDL resources, *InventorFest* contributes to the economic development of a community:



- Youth learn about intellectual property and creativity to enhance their future.
- Today's inventors and entrepreneurs network and learn from one another and from the experts at PTDL programs.
- The general public is informed about questionable invention promotion firms and how to avoid common business scams.

What more could a **PTDLP** ask for?

# Acknowledgments



- Phyllis Hegner, PLCH Public Relations Manager, and the entire PLCH Core Committee.
- Ran Raider, WSU, Academic Library Partner.
- Andrea Brady, ICC President and the entire Community Partners Committee.
- Generous event sponsors and supportive library customers attending our programs.

**Collaborative support; passion for event; and confidence in one another.**

# Resource Highlights



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