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Independent Inventors: An Uncertain Future

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Publication Date

2013-05-15

Supplemental Material

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/92f895sc#supplemental>

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Title: Independent Inventors: An Uncertain Future

Abstract:

From Benjamin Franklin to Thomas Edison, individual inventors have long been symbols of American ingenuity and innovation, creating products and launching businesses based on new technologies they developed. And for more than 200 years the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has been their protector.

In recent years decades, independent inventors are facing new opportunities to cash in on their creations, thanks to the marketing and networking power of the Internet. But they also face new challenges from an increasingly complex and expensive patenting process.

This year, a new federal law changed the method the patent office had used for 200 years to determine who should hold rights to a patent. Some say the change will help correct the problems small inventors face, while others say it will only hasten their decline.

Source List:

Interviews:

Pieter Schouten, Owner, Schouten Innovation, Berkeley, Calif.

Thomas Young, Inventor, Richmond, Calif.

Chris Samu, Owner/Operator at The Guitar Hanger, Albany, Calif.

Ted Sichelman, . Associate Professor, University of San Diego School of Law

Lila Bringhurst, Author/Historian, Fremont, Calif.

Tim Swenson, President, Museum of Local History, Fremont, Calif.

Mark Hatch, CEO and Co-founder, TechShop

Articles, Reports and Websites:

The United States Patents and Trademark Office

<http://www.uspto.gov/>

Jonathan Rothwell, José Lobo, Deborah Strumsky and Mark Muro, “Patenting Prosperity: Invention and Economic Performance in the United States and its Metropolitan Areas.” Brookings Institution, February 1, 2013

Paul Swamidass, “Does the Patent Office Snub Inventors Who File without an Attorney?”
Inventor’s Digest

<http://www.inventorsdigest.com/archives/3425>

Patent Fail: In Defense of Innovation

<https://www.eff.org/patent>

Inventors Alliance

<http://www.inventorsalliance.org/>

Christopher A. Cotropia, “The Individual Inventor Motif in the Age of Patent Troll”. Yale Law Review, January 1, 2010

Leonid Kravets, “First-To-File Patent Law Is Imminent, But What Will It Mean?” TechCrunch, February 16, 2013

<http://techcrunch.com/2013/02/16/first-to-file-a-primer/>

Books:

David Pressman. 2012. *Patent It Yourself: Your Step-by-Step Guide to Filing at the U.S. Patent Office*, Kindle Edition

Dave Weinstein. 2008. *It Came from Berkeley: How Berkeley Changed the World*, Jones & Bartlett Learning, Sep 10, 2008