

The PARAGON Perspective From the President

PARAGON Perspective is sponsored by PARAGON Development

We want to use this newsletter to do the following:

- Share information we have learned that we consider important concerning best practices, trends, successes and failures, conferences, and other elements that will enable all of you to grow your organizations with maximum top and bottom line results.
- Share information about select client initiatives that may be of interest based on technologies, markets, or business needs that you believe could fit within the scope of those client's interests.
- Share personal observations and even humorous items given to us by others.

We welcome your comments on any topic and encourage you to contribute to future newsletters. The PARAGON Perspective is now in its sixth year. We thank everyone for their newsletter contributions and for the ideas and suggestions that have brought recognized improvements and made it easier for us to produce.

All issues of *The Paragon Perspective* are archived on our website so you may easily pass along past issues to colleagues.

This month's 'newsletter perspective' will be one that we have touched on before but is worth repeating. The issue is as relevant today as it when discussed several years ago. The topic is: **"Single Point Accountability--SPA"**.

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Paragon Update

PARAGON has just started several projects that have a common theme in addressing business 'failures'; that is looking to fill the gap between expectations and under-achieving business results. Two of these are with mature product platforms that have fallen far short of expectations in size and value contributed creating considerable pressure on everyone involved with the business to stimulate growth but without any new offering to the market. Another project that fits this category is looking for business opportunities for a technology that has had several unsuccessful attempts at commercialization and yet it is distinct and offers broad potential.

We continue to see an increase in projects with new clients accounting for over 50% of our business where traditionally our projects averaged over 90% from previous clients. Without advertising or aggressively marketing our resources, this speaks well for referrals from many people who know us. We thank those of you who have done so.

Conferences

This space is reserved for announcements of conferences or events that may have value to our readers.

Licensing Executive Society Meeting May 16-18 Atlanta GA

THE LES is an organization that has a value well beyond licensing as they really are about best practices in technology transfer and intellectual property in a much broader way than just licensing. It is a dynamic, growing organization and they have an excellent Spring Meeting in Atlanta. We are strong supporters of the organization and people who we have recommended it to are not disappointed.

For additional information, please go to www.USA-Canada.LES.ORG

Technology Transfer/Capabilities

This section is open for clients, friends, and other newsletter recipients to spotlight technologies they have available for licensing, acquisition, development, or could be available to use. Please send a description of your technology to be posted in this section for future newsletters. Inquiries can either be sent directly to those who have posted information, or, we could forward any/all inquiries to you. This section highlights non-client project technologies.

This newsletter has a distribution of several thousand individuals who are primarily in new business development, so the audience has the potential to generate legitimate interest. We do reserve the right to withhold posting any technology closely related to ones in which we have a client conflict.

Technologies of Interest

New technologies of interest for license or acquisition are:

- A new process that successfully 'combines' Styrenics and Poly-Olefins without the need for compatibilizers and at almost any percentage of either component. This allows new materials improvements by changing properties of one of the components to bring required performance attributes of the other.

Anyone with technologies fitting the above should contact us as and we will forward the responses to our clients so they can contact you directly.

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Quotes of the Month

"There is great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burned up. Thank God we can start anew" *Thomas Edison (after his huge laboratory was destroyed by fire.)*

"Talent does what it can. Genius does what it must." *Edward George Bulwer-Lytton*

"The power of accurate observation is frequently called cynicism by those who don't have it." *George Bernard Shaw*

"Problems worthy of attack prove their worth by fighting back". *Paul Erdos*

"All successful people have a goal. No one can get anywhere unless he knows where he wants to go." *Norman Vincent Peale*

"Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can't lose." *Bill Gates*

"History is a better guide than good intentions." *Jeane Kirkpatrick*

"Take calculated risks. That is quite different from being rash." *General George Armstrong Patton*

"Experience is a wonderful thing. It enables you to recognize a mistake every time you make it." *Many sources*

"A professional is someone who can do his best work when he doesn't feel like it." *Alistair Cooke*

"We are tomorrow's past." *Mary Webb*

Interesting Words

Titivate: (TIT-i-vayt) Verb

1. To make smarter.
2. To 'spruce' up; to decorate.

Embrocation: (em-broh-KAY-shuhn) Noun

1. A liquid medication rubbed on the skin.
2. The act of applying a lotion to the bruised part of the body.

Caesious: (SEE-zee-uhs) Adjective
Bluish or grayish green.

Ipsso Facto: (IP-so-FAK-to) Adjective
By the very fact or action.

Epigone: (EP-i-gone) Noun
A mediocre imitator or follower of an important artist, writer, etc.

“Single Point Accountability--SPA”

Case study examples:

The examples below are very recent so names have been omitted. The examples our staff has encountered are innumerable.

We were involved with a client in medical devices who had a new product with platform potential that went into an application that was not the core of their other business. This would be marketed and sold to a different segment of the Physician market and the client wanted to understand the overall potential along with the best way to capture value from their invention.

From the time we started, we dealt with a team which is normal; but, in this case, they had no single project manager or even a coordinator or spokesperson that could speak for the team. Basically, we had to represent 9 different interests with 4-5 diverse perspectives exemplified by the staffing of Expert Forums where some people wanted **all** technical experts, others wanted **all** market people, another group wanted nothing but customers, while a different group wanted everybody from overseas. Needless to say, we could not get the direction needed and it was impossible to have everyone requested. And, without a single coordinator, we had to deal with each individual in this ‘matrix’ organization.

Another project had a different problem in that there were 4 separate SPA’s over a period of only 5 months, each with their own unique determination of what should be done and how. This led to little to no clarity or continuity both of which are critical success factors.

One last project was in chemicals where a person was assigned with single point accountability. The problem was that this person was not given any authority. The client was a European based organization. The individual needed approval on everything and his managers were never available. In fact he typically needed 3-4 different approvals for even the most minor items. So although he was declared an ‘SPA’; he was anything but.

Lessons learned and recommendations:

- Often, we have more ‘projects’ than we have project managers which spreads us thin and we end up sharing responsibilities. An SPA still needs to be assigned even if he/she is the SPA on multiple projects. (Three maximum and very rarely that many.) We cannot count on stage-gate to take the place of a dedicated individual who is committed, motivated, and responsible to a project.
- There should not only be an SPA but also a management ‘sponsor’ who supports that individual and therefore the project. If a project manager is forced to move on, the sponsor will have knowledge at a level to assign a new SPA and work with them to ensure minimal momentum loss.
- The SPA should have business experience beyond any specific functional area. As an example, someone with technical but no marketing experience will spend 95% of resources on technical development. It is reversed if the SPA has only marketing experience.
- Make sure the SPA and project are properly resourced. We have seen cases where someone was an SPA on two projects but also had a ‘day job’ that was full time in process development. This happens with all too common frequency.
- Maintain continuity of the SPA through as many stages as possible. It is also common to have an organization change the SPA at each stage. Over-specialization can result and big picture strategy is missed along with development time as each person comes up to speed.
- Assign an SPA at Stage 0, at the earliest possible development phase. The worst that can happen is that an early and promising project gets killed quickly. That isn’t a bad result if justified; and an experienced SPA is better at killing projects than the initiator of the project who has a vested stake in moving it forward.

As always:

We address many topics and most are at the request of readers, clients, and other business colleagues as this one was.

We hope that this perspective has stimulated thoughts and helps improve your future returns. It has been our intent to pass along things we have learned or experienced on topics involving growth and new business development. Particularly ones that may be provocative or be beyond those considered every day. We do not try to presume to be the leaders in all areas we cover and we invite others to contribute with comments, additions, or criticisms. We encourage feedback in any media and will post your contribution in a future newsletter if you allow it.

We also will continue to focus on topics that the readers choose in almost all cases over ones we consider within our staff so please continue to send requests for topics that you want to have covered.

PS:

We want to remind our readers that this section of the newsletter is open up to anyone with a development topic or an approach they would like to share. Four of the twelve topics last year were submitted by others and we know many consultants, company managers, and academics who have very solid and profound contributions they could make in future newsletters. We ask that it be from 600 to a 1000 words although that is not a 'hard' range. Let us know and we will gladly distribute your topic to the thousands of people on our distribution list. Also, we will agree that the copyright and ownership is kept by the contributor and that we only have a right to reproduce it in conjunction with this newsletter.

Trivia:

How do American football officials measure to confirm first downs and ensure accuracy?

It's difficult enough to figure how the officials spot the ball when a running back dives into a large group of tacklers and blockers; but that is the most difficult part of it. It is much less difficult for the chain crew on the sidelines to retain the proper spot on the sidelines and not lose their bearings when carrying the chain back out on the field to measure for a first down. It all comes down to an inexpensive metal clip.

If the ball is placed on the 17 yard line at the beginning of a series, the head linesman would back up to the sideline, and, after sighting the line of the ball, indicates to a member of the chain crew that he wants the back end of the down markers to be set at the 17 yard line. Then, one of the members of the chain crew would take a special clip and place that on the back end of the 20-yard line. (The clip is placed on the relative 5-yard marker closest to the original ball placement.)

When a first down measurement is about to be made, the head linesman picks up the chain from the 20-yard line and the chain crew marches out to the field holding the stakes. The head linesman places the metal clip at the back end of the 20-yard line. (The 'back end' of the stakes is placed on the original 17-yard line; but that is just for affect.) The front end of the stake is extended to its maximum position and the referee makes the decision as to whether or not the ball has extended beyond the forward stake. So, the chain crew does not measure from the actual spot of progress at the 17-yard line but merely from the 20 yard line where there is a clear mark to start from

We hope you learned something from this and/or stimulated an action that leads to new opportunities for you and your organizations.

Previous issues of our newsletters can be found at <http://www.paragondevelopment.com/perspective.html>.

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Mission:

To ensure that our clients make decisions that optimizes their growth and measurable value creation. We will do this with unequalled effort and efficiency.

Background:

PARAGON employees and affiliated industry partners are dedicated to helping clients optimize their planning and development efforts. We bring a network of external industry experts who provide objective information and insight into critical areas affecting our client's success potential. In addition to our own experience base and the external access to knowledge, we utilize a decision making process that combines best practices such as Voice-of-Market™; Stage-Gate; and Discovery Based Learning. Very simply stated, we combine efficient processes with the information necessary to ensure that commitments are made with solid, objective knowledge. We allow planning and development from the 'outside in' that compliments internal efforts.

We are not industry specialists. The experts from our PARAGON Network™ provide the specific knowledge in their fields while PARAGON brings process and functional experience that generates and interprets the relevant information.

Focus:

Our client assignments are broken into three main areas:

1. Retainer agreements in which we offer discounted plan with minimum thresholds for numbers of Forums or phases. They are exemplified by clients who may write us into their R&D or new product development processes in which a PARAGON Forum is required as a part of a gate approval.
2. Evaluation and monetization of assets such as technologies, operational capacities, or new product extensions. PARAGON's support is particularly valuable when the potential is unknown but falls outside core markets or industries.
3. Support in strategic planning and strategic expansion into non-core business areas. The deliverables are typically in the form of a strategic commitment into new platforms.

Mechanics:

The steps employed are a combination of internal (client) and external events. The internal events include:

- Setting criteria for the project.
- Examining the internal knowledge base.
- Setting scope and charter issues.
- Determine specific outputs required for overall success.

External events are:

- PARAGON Forums that have 6-8 external experts who bring distinct but complementary knowledge about markets, industries, trends, competition, channels, downstream value, and function excellence that is specific to the assignment. These are typically day long events that have been referred to as "Super Focus Groups" with the client involved in the planning and then viewing the group and providing guidance and direction throughout the day. All this without the outside experts knowing whom the client is and they are thus unbiased, creative, and provide different perspectives than our client has because of their 'inside-out' viewpoints.
- Surveys and interviews with people from our PARAGON Network™ that generate very targeted information that our clients require.

We hope that you have enjoyed the issues of *The* Paragon Perspective that you have received and will let others who might find this newsletter useful know about our publication. To provide us with profile changes; or to let us know about other individual interested in receiving our newsletter; or for other information just click on this link <http://www.paragondevelopment.com/contact.html> (or copy and past this shortcut) and complete the Contact/Request for Information form (be certain to include your email address) or you may simply reply to this email and provide us with (or ask us) the information.

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