

## *The* PARAGON Perspective

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### 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.

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

This month's short essay is on 'timing' of growth efforts based on our economic situation. The title is: "**The World Has Changed.**"

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### Paragon Update

2009 was the third best revenue year in our history only surpassed by 2007 and 2008. We had set records for growth in 5 consecutive years until this past year but the overall poor economy hit us like it did many others and certainly our clients. That said, we were very blessed and grateful to have the significant business we did. We are also seeing an increase in projects with both existing and first time clients that have scheduled projects in Quarter 1.

Based on present first quarter scheduling, we are expecting 2010 to meet or exceed the levels of 2008.

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### Conferences

No requests to post conferences have been sent to us for either January or February. (Just a reminder that we are glad to do so without any charges if the conference has appropriate fit with our readers' interests)

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### 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 over six 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.

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## Technologies of Interest

**Acoustic Foam:** A client has a new thermoset based foam that has superior values in acoustic insulation in building and construction. It also has thermal insulation properties based on the unique combination of material and cell design. It is felt that this has large potential based on the growth in applications requiring and benefitting from acoustical barriers within building and non-structural walls/ceilings.

**Liquid processing:** A client has developed an ultrasound based system for mixing; dispersing; and emulsifying liquids—>liquids and solids—>liquids. It has considerable cost and performance advantages in comparison to comparable batch and other processes used today. There are so many benefits that it is impractical to try and list them, but we can send information if requested.

**Artificial Muscles:** A client has developed a system that includes ‘muscles’, sensors, controllers, motors, and actuators. Initial applications are focused on: prosthetics; motors for small devices such as cameras; objects that can propel things through water or other fluids; and many types of human machine interfaces.

More information can be gained about any of the above by contacting:

Jack Peregrim @ (203) 288-4154 or [Peregrim@ParagonDevelopment.com](mailto:Peregrim@ParagonDevelopment.com)

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## Quotes of the Month

“Moral victories are like a 6 foot man drowning in three feet of water. He’s still dead.” *Bobby Bowden*

“It is often easier to fight for principles than to live up to them.” *Adlai Stevenson*

“Swift gratitude is the sweetest.” *Greek Proverb*

“I’d rather be a failure at something I enjoy than be a success at something I hate.” *George Burns*

“Expert advice is a great comfort, even when it’s wrong.” *Ellen Currie*

“We all know a fool when we see one, but not when we are one.” *Arnold Glasgow*

“Consensus is the negation of leadership.” *Margaret Thatcher*

“Anyone can hold the help when the sea is calm.” *Pubilius Syrus*

“You have got to stand for something or your gonna fall for anything.” *John Cougar Mellencamp*

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## Interesting Words

**Ploce:** (PLO-see) Noun

The repetition of a word or phrase for rhetorical emphasis or for extended meaning.

**Epanorthosis:** (ep-uh-nor-THO-sis) Noun

Immediate rephrasing of something said to make it stronger or to correct it.

**Arrogate:** (AIR-uh-gayt) Verb

To claim as a right for oneself or another presumptuously.

**Pother:** (POTH-uhr) Noun or verb

Noun: A commotion or fuss. Or mental turmoil. Or a smothering cloud of dust or smoke.

Verb: To worry or fuss. Or to confuse and worry someone else.

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## The World Has Changed

### Entree:

The past 14-18 months have been the most difficult in memory for the majority of our clients. This is based on the poor overall economy combined with uncertainty. It has been easier (not easy) to make operational adjustments because they are at least straight forward even though they were unattractive. But, in planning for the future we face a huge level of uncertainty and this affects all planning related functions - strategic, business, R&D, technology, product development, business development, etc.

Most of us are in a 'holding pattern' until we have a more predictable sense about the future so we can make our investments productively. It looks like 2010 will at least be past the most difficult times and we are seeing clients making commitments to growth again in the functional areas mentioned above but we are now faced with the fact that "the world has changed" and the foundation for our projections has also been significantly if not completely changed.

We have written about change in past editions and even prior to this calamitous period we had been in a world of change at a level that was increasing at an extraordinary pace. (50% of the technological advancements in our entire civilization have occurred since 1999!) Even so, we talked about ways to manage that and to make projections in different ways and using different mechanisms than we had in the past. The degree of change does not allow us to be as data oriented as we had been or even information oriented but we have had to be knowledge and foresight driven. As difficult as things had been in **understanding** (a key word) the world we **will** be facing, we are now facing business, economic, political, and demographic environments without any solid foundation to project. Quantifying market or business potential for new investment is almost impossible.

### Managing Change:

Again, past editorials have focused on many of the aspects highlighted below and we will break them into categories of "do's & do not's".

#### **Do's:**

- Employ a **staging strategy** where early investment is limited and a plan is employed that bases the most significant investment with funding from initial returns. This avoids the large risk of 'hockey stick' projections that are rarely accurate. There are many ways to employ this strategy such as using contract manufacturing to delay capital investment and using business, market, and channel partnerships.
- Formalize a process to identify and monitor **signposts** which are those signals that tell us about the 'potential' for success at interim stages of development. Too often we engage in formal planning and make our projections at a stage that is inherently impossible to do so. We need to determine those factors that will have impact on success or failure and the signs that allow us to recognize them at all stages of our development. (If it's impossible to make accurate long term projections then we must at least understand potential at the earliest possible point)
- Employ **new and different processes** that are being developed and improved to deal with the knowledge and foresight needs. Processes such as scenario planning and Voice-of-Market™ are only two of many that are being offered and used.
- Utilize **portfolio planning** to allow for the various scenarios in regard to success or failure and not just to stage out growth over time.
- Set realistic **expectations**. First recognize that 'quantifying the future' is impossible so the burden to waste time and effort in exhaustive data generation has much less relevancy than it had in the past. Historical projections based on past data cannot keep pace with the world we are facing.
- Embrace **risk management** and have formal organizational seminars on it. From top to bottom, all employees need to recognize that managing risk is different than it was in the past and we need new tools and attitudes to succeed in the future.

#### **Do Not's**

- **Do not become paralyzed** into inaction because of the rapidly changing and uncertain environment. That is the most certain way to fail in a rapidly changing situation. You may make mistakes but you are much better moving *with* the current than by fighting it and being static.
- **Avoid overconfidence in data** that is much less relevant that it had been in the past decade. The world has changed and past data does not fit tomorrow's reality.

- **Don't rely on the same personnel** in your planning and development without adding knowledge about the new factors that will be playing a role in future success. They can be regulatory, demographic, socio-economic, energy policy, or any of a number of areas that will have a much greater impact as you move forward than you needed to consider in the past

Summary:

As we enter 2010 and a new decade, the ones who succeed will be the ones who adapt to the new and vastly changed world we are facing. Many of the changes are still not finalized and some are only in their nascent stages. We must resolve to be 'quick on our feet' and to recognize and capitalize on the change that has occurred so that we maximize value capture in our business endeavors.

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. This edition and three of the last Perspective topics were submitted by others. 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.

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## Trivia

1. What do Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw and Al Gore have in common?  
*They both won Nobel Prizes and Academy Awards.*
2. What is the origin of the names for the elements: Ytterbium, Yttrium, Erbium, and Terbium?  
*They are all named after the small village of Ytterby in Sweden.*
3. What do the opposite sides of a dice cube always total?  
*Seven.*

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We hope you learned something from this and/or stimulated an action that leads to new opportunities for you and your organizations and that you will let others who might find this newsletter useful know about our publication. Previous issues of our newsletters can be found at <http://www.paragondevelopment.com/perspective.html>. If you would rather not receive the newsletter please respond to this email and include the word REMOVE in the subject line or in the message. To subscribe to our newsletter, please send an email to [contact@paragondevelopment.com](mailto:contact@paragondevelopment.com) and include the word SUBSCRIBE in the subject line or message. We will never sell your email address to others.

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Your friends at:

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