



The PARAGON Perspective

PARAGON DEVELOPMENT

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From the President

The best of luck and success to all our clients and friends for 2013! May all of your objectives be achieved.

For those of you not familiar with us and may have received this as a ‘forward’ from the original recipient, The 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 editorial is titled “*Beyond the Obvious*” and it is a repeat of a newsletter editorial from several years ago and requested by a client team we met with recently.

Jack T. Peregrim
Pres., PARAGON Development
Peregrim@ParagonDevelopment.com

Paragon Update

By all indications, 2013 is not being looked at as robust or expansionist. But we at PARAGON are encouraged as the year begins as several key clients have already told us they will be engaging us at high levels this year starting with a number of project starts in Q1.

Our website redesign is planned for late Q1

Conferences

LES Exec 100
Licensing Executives Society – Invitation only
Phoenix, AZ. February 11-12, 2013

The Licensing Executives Society is a premier organization for licensing and commercializing technology and they hold a once a year event with an upper limit of 100 executive who hold relevant positions in corporations and universities. Service providers are not provided invitations.



We have found the content, attendees, and format to be a superior value and would recommend requesting registration for all who qualify at <http://LESUSACanada.Org> The conference is global, as are the attendees.

SMTA Pan Pacific
Microelectronics Symposium
Maui, Hawaii. January 22-24, 2013

The SMTA (Surface Mount Technology Association) is holding a Pan Pacific Symposium at the Makena Beach & Golf Resort and will be a premier event for technology presentations as well as business networking. There are at least 3 keynote presentations of high interest and more information can be found at <http://WWW.SMTA.Org/PanPac/> or by contacting Joann@SMTA.Org. We highly recommend this to anyone involved as a supplier to or a producer of electronic assemblies.

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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 in executive positions who either oversee or practice 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

Biomass to glucose: A new technology has come to our attention that appears to have high potential. It is based on a silica based catalyst for converting cellulosic biomass to glucose. They can be described as artificial enzymes that can work effectively for months at 150°C.

For more information contact Beth Stewart at: Stewart@UnitedCatalyst.Com

Ultrasonic nozzles: A client has created ultrasonic nozzles that have very high levels of effectiveness in atomizing liquids including those with high viscosity. This capability has large application potential in fuel combustion, coatings, spray drying, and numerous others.

If interested contact: Jack Peregrim at (203) 288-4154 or Peregrim@ParagonDevelopment.Com

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Quotes of the Month

"For a man to achieve all that is demanded of him he must regard himself as greater than he is." *Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

"A man too busy to take care of his health is like a mechanic too busy to take care of his tools." *Spanish Proverb*

"Reason often makes mistakes but conscience never does." *Josh Billings*

"All things are difficult before they are easy." *Thomas Fuller*

"A subtle thought that is in error may yet give rise to fruitful inquiry that can establish truths of great value." *Isaac Asimov*

"Talk sense to a fool and he calls you foolish." *Euripides*

"Never grow a wishbone where your backbone ought to be." *Clementine Paddleford*

"Nothing will even be attempted if all possible objections must first be overcome." *Samuel Johnson*

"The most pathetic person in the world is someone with sight but no vision." *Helen Keller*

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Interesting Words

Guerdon: (GUHR-duihn) Noun & Verb

Noun: A reward or recompense.

Verb: To reward or recompense.

Expostulate: (ik-SPOS-chuh-layt) Verb

To reason earnestly with someone in order to dissuade.

Elysian: (i-LIZH-uhn) Adjective

Blissful; delightful.

Micawber: (mih-KAW-buhr) Noun

An eternal optimist.

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“Beyond the Obvious”

Background:

Many projects over the past few years have had to address critical success factors that were either unknown by the client prior to our work, or were known but not designated as ‘critical’. And, in every case we were targeting markets that represented significant ones for the existing business.

An example of this is one in which we were commissioned to identify new product platforms for a next generation product. Market experts in the Voice-of-Market® Forums were expected to focus almost exclusively on new products and best targeted segments but each Forum inevitably focused on a new business model as the most critical success factor. They emphasized this as much more important than most potential functional product improvements. In addition, a key value was in branding which had been virtually overlooked to that point.

Another project dealt with a technology targeted to commercialize in various applications. We were again surprised by the results which showed a much more lucrative value to the client from licensing than by their traditional product development approach. Even with the information quantified, the results were always much higher in both financial as well as strategic value.

The real question is: “Why did these (and other) clients miss out on critical success factors that were so obvious in hindsight?”

Reasons:

There are many underlying reasons that we fail to optimize our value creation in new opportunities. The following are not meant to be comprehensive but merely exemplify some of the reasons that we have experienced:

- Our processes focus on the standard ‘Big 4 P’s’ – Product, Place, Price, Promotion, yet, there are dozens of other factors that can influence the amount of value we create and capture for ourselves. We don’t spend the requisite time we need to on alternative - channels, implementation vehicle, or business model options.
- We have become lean organizations so that we don’t have the experience, time, personnel, or skills to look beyond those areas that represent our core competencies.
- We have become risk averse to the point that we don’t do anything considered innovative unless it is proven that it is the most optimal way. And, it is impossible by definition to prove that something is better until the initial approach establishes a ‘baseline’. It is a “catch 22”.
- Our business processes such as Stage Gate are set up to allow us to work in teams but these teams are comprised of specialists who don’t have the generalist background to look at options beyond their specialties.
- NIH - not invented here. Our present approach has many, many years of time and study behind it so how could there be a better way?

Recommendations:

The first and primary step is to look outside the box at the existing business. To the extent that you are investors in this new business and will look at new ways to capture value. By far the best way is to get people outside your industry to do this. As an example, if you are in a commodity or high capital business, have a branding or consumer group come up with options, or have outsiders with expertise in a completely different channel generate options. Of course you will not make “wholesale changes” in your basic business structure at least in the short term but you may add a few of the recommendations that can



provide new competitive advantage. Plus, the experience will open the organization to new ways to look at opportunities. It will be much easier to implement new ways of doing things when you start with a clean sheet of paper.

Another factor that will be critical is to get senior management to encourage innovation beyond the lab in all functional areas (with limitations in legal and accounting of course). Make innovation a cornerstone in human resources, marketing, operations, planning, etc. The message is that “We should do different things unless we are certain they are not as good as the present way.” This is radically different from the present approach which is: “We won’t change anything unless we are convinced it is better”. It should be clear that the latter is almost impossible to prove in practice and thus nothing is tried.

If the above sounds like we might be suggesting an environment without “structure or rules” then we need to clarify. There needs to be boundaries and mechanisms put in place to ensure that major mistakes are not made. The first process step must be to do a risk assessment in making a change either in existing or new business areas. Changes should be done in a very limited way at first, in most cases limited to one product line until there is a history or to a new channel in one non-core market segment. Then, a much deeper assessment needs to be made before a new approach is systematized and becomes a part of our formal business processes. In simple terms: try, study, embrace. In most organizations today our approach philosophically is avoid, resist, study, study, delay.

Other recommendations are:

- Be ready to handle the apocalyptic responses that are always exaggerated. An example is the sales people who will tell you that you could lose your best customers when they find out that you are pursuing downstream customers in non-core markets. This exemplifies the “silo” nature that exists in large organizations. The sales people have narrow responsibility and that is to *protect* their customers and get orders. Anything that may affect that, even very remotely, is a threat and will be resisted even if it benefits the business overall. That is NOT what they are judged on. This applies to all the functional areas as well including specific geographic ones.
- Have a few generalists involved. Particularly in new business development and planning. Certain areas should be filled more often from people outside the company and these are the best ones. In strategic planning, it is much easier to learn the technologies and markets at a strategic level than it is to teach a long time ‘insider’ to look outside the box at different business models.
- Get an executive champion at senior management, not just a sponsor but a champion. Without that, nobody would stick their necks out and nothing will happen.
- Encourage key people to go to non-traditional events. Go to conferences on branding, licensing, functional ones but in different industries, etc. Let people understand that there is no one, best way to do things.
- Incorporate new approaches into existing processes to ensure new things are looked at. An example would be to take a new product platform and designate that at least 3 different channels or business models will be used in the initial commercialization.

In summary:

The above is not to say that we need to turn our organizations ‘inside-out’. It is to bring up the side of our dilemma that is overlooked. We need to stick to our core competencies which is systematizing things we do and getting better at them without doing something different. Yet, we are in a period of rapid and dynamic change in all facets of our world. We believe organizations serve themselves better by being better at reacting and embracing change than in ‘digging in’ to the same-old, same-old.

In closing:

We will continue to focus on topics that the readers choose over ones we consider within our staff, so please continue to send requests for topics you want covered.

We want to remind our readers that this section of the newsletter is open to anyone with a development topic or an approach they would like to share. Many of you - consultants, company managers, and academics - have very solid and profound contributions that could be presented in future newsletters. We ask that your submission be from 300 to 800 words. Let us know and we will gladly distribute your topic to the thousands of people on our distribution list. We agree that the copyright and ownership be kept by the contributor and that our only right is to reproduce it in conjunction with this newsletter.

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Anecdotes

Cato—Roman Statesman

When Cato was 80 years old he surprised his friends by setting himself the task of studying Greek. Asked how he could contemplate such a lengthy course of study at his advanced age, he replied that it was the youngest age he had left.

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Alliances and Partnerships

The number of organizations that we have worked with and collaborated with is too numerous to mention but we wanted to add this section to highlight organizations we are comfortable endorsing to our wide body of readers. We will add a new organization each month and listing those from previous months with a few words about their focus and contact information.

This Month:

Firespec LTD

John Aitken, John@Firespec.Co.UK or (44) 7739 775509

Firespec LTD is an organization in Scotland who was engaged in a project with us and who we were very impressed with. They are focused on designing and meeting fire specs in buildings that includes inspections, consults, estimations, and all comprehensive services. For more information contact

Last Month:

Global Sustainable Solutions

Jamshid Armaghani, Ph.D. P.E. Phone: (352) 336-1161, Mobile: (352) 338-2913, Jamshid@BellSouth.Net

Global Sustainable Solutions is a consulting company that specializes in pavement and materials engineering, new product/technology evaluation and marketing. Focused on infrastructure engineering, they provide innovative and sustainable solutions and intelligence to public and private clients.

Two months ago:

XLR8 Business Solutions

Krishna K Rao. Phone: (281) 298-6622 or (281) 795-4600 KrishnaKRao@GMail.Com

XLR8 has a focus in the petrochemical industry although they have taken assignments beyond that. We have found that they have a very high degree of competence in attaining and interpreting business, market, and technology/product intelligence. We have employed them looking at many vertical applications in petrochemicals that ranged from exploration, refining, downstream processes, and end products. Also, they have generated reports focused on India, China, and Taiwan. We would recommend them for anyone needing high quality and comprehensive understanding of any issue or area in petrochemicals.

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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 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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