

The PARAGON Perspective

Features

Conferences
Technology Transfer/Capabilities
Technologies of Interest
Quotes of the Month
Interesting Words
Vertical Vision
Trivia

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 perspective can be invaluable in both determining and capturing new value. The title is: "[Vertical Vision](#)".

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[Return to #Top](#)

Paragon Update

We have a few updates this month. The first is that we are undergoing a greatly past due make over. Our website and presentation materials have basically been unchanged since we started in 2001. We will be updating our website over the next month or two, adding new features such as project examples that will communicate the type of work we have done with the results to the clients. As we undergo this effort, we would very much appreciate recommendations and feedback to create the best possible 'face' that reflects our value proposition with the utmost clarity.

A business update reflects that PARAGON is finishing this year with a much stronger 3rd and 4th quarter than the first two had been. Our clients are budgeting and investing in projects that had been delayed until now and others are adding projects to their 2010 budget. We hope it is not premature to say that our business environment may finally be turning the corner.

[Return to #Top](#)

Conferences

LES (Licensing Executive Society)
Annual Meeting
October 18-21, San Francisco, CA

LES is the premier organization for licensing; technology transfer; and related business growth professionals. Their annual meeting is expected to have over one thousand professionals from corporations around the world. Information can be found at: <http://www.lesusacanada.org/>

[Return to #Top](#)

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.

[Return to #Top](#)

Technologies of Interest

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.

Imbedded systems: A client has developed an imbedded reactive processor compatible with Java that integrates many computer languages and is a breakthrough from previous attempts to write multi-language compatible software.

Nano material: A client has developed a way to produce materials that enable the following:

- Enhanced absorption or storage of ions and molecules both gravimetrically and volumetrically. Exceeds capability of existing commercial materials.
- Doubles electric energy storage in comparison to existing commercial materials with no decrease in power.
- Doubles volume increases in gases captured and stored in comparison to alternatives at both high and sub-atmospheric pressure.
- Enables rapid and complete removal of toxins, proteins, etc. from bio fluids and other aqueous media.
- Detection and capturing of single and multiple gases in a wide range of atmospheric conditions including high moisture environments.
- Reversibility of gases, particles, and energy is easy and complete.

For more information on the above opportunities contact:

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[Return to #Top](#)

Quotes of the Month

"There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all." *Peter Drucker*

"The way to get things done is not to mind who gets the credit for doing them." Benjamin Jowett

"Competence, like truth, beauty, and contact lenses, is in the eye of the beholder." *Laurence J. Peter*

"Recognition is the greatest motivator." *Gerard C. Eakedale*

"The need for planning is clear but it cannot exceed the time between awareness and the need to act. It may be years or only a second." *Jack T. Peregrim*

"Life is what happens when you are making other plans." *John Lennon*

"There is nothing more exhilarating than to be shot at without result." *Winston Churchill*

"Idealism is what precedes experience, cynicism is what follows." *David T. Wolf*

"When ideas fail, words come in very handy." *Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

[Return to #Top](#)

Interesting Words

Tranche: (tranzh) Noun

A portion of the whole, specifically in the financial sense of a piece of an investment, bond, etc.

Equanimity: (ee-kwuh-NIM-i-tee) Noun

Evenness of temper in all circumstances.

Menticide: (MEN-tuh-syd) Noun

The systematic undermining of a person's beliefs, attitudes, and values.

Exogenous: (ek-SAH-je-nuhs) Adjective

Originating from the outside.

Fug: (fug) Noun

1. Stale, humid, and stuffy atmosphere. As in a crowded, poorly ventilated room.
2. Also, a system or situation without creativity or fresh thinking.

Note: We thank the many recipients of this newsletter for the dozens of comments on last month's word section, even though it was to chastise us (rightly so) for several errors in misspelling moue and omitting definitions and applications from other words. We hope we will be more accurate and thorough in the future.

[Return to #Top](#)

Vertical Vision

Example:

In several projects we have encountered what appears to be a systemic problem across many organizations.

A client had a new technology to functionalize a new material in unique ways that appealed to trends and market needs. The project was about 4 years old and the timeline up to this point was:

Year 1: Completed basic R&D as well as documentation of results, patent searching and initiation of filings.

Year 2: Began basic market research and entered Stage 2 in Stage Gate process, then chose initial market target.

Year 3: Did applications development oriented toward the targeted market and developed new data that would satisfy targeted customers. Also, they discovered new properties that could add value in use.

Year 4: Completed business plan and prepared for launch. First targeted customers delayed acceptance due to pricing and changes in their product requirements.

At this point we were called into a "What should we do now?" meeting. It was clear that our client had made a common mistake in re-evaluating its targeted market and the underlying assumptions made 2 years previous. However, the bigger mistake made was in their drilling down to a targeted market early and then staying focused down at that level to the exclusion of anything else without periodically backing up to get a 20,000 foot viewpoint and more strategic view of value, particularly since new data was continually generated that changed value potential in more than the targeted market.

Background:

There are many understandable reasons the example above occurred.

They are **understandable** because:

- We need focus to ensure a project has clarity and direction. We drive for this and many stage gate processes require early commitment to a market as a means of achieving that.
- We 'ramp up' projects with adding support staff based on acumen or experience with the market(s) targeted. This populates projects with personnel who know things from a ground level viewpoint in a restricted area and are not necessarily capable of rising up to a bigger picture perspective.
- We remember the past failures where we tried to do too much so we discourage time and resources spent outside the main project scope.

- We do not have a mechanism in our processes to step back and look at things from a higher viewpoint once we have committed to a narrow target. (It typically is felt that the gate keepers should do this; but they almost always focus solely on evaluating what is presented over what is not being looked at.)
- Our organizations are set up with many distinct business or product platforms and each has its own budget and P&L. In commercialization, we tend to put projects within a dedicated business that will not look beyond its own purview into markets or applications beyond their existing core.

Some of the **remedies** are:

- Set formal times to ‘take a step back’ and look at the bigger picture, particularly if/when new information is identified that changes the potential value and initial assumptions.
- Get outside thinking and not just once. Use your external advisory boards or processes like Voice-of-Market™ to bring objective and unbiased views without the confined scope that is necessary to have within the core team.
- Add a member(s) to the project team whose role is to keep a big picture perspective. Possibly rotate people onto the team to keep things fresh and to always have someone looking at the big picture.
- Make “Vertical Visioning” a formal part of project activities. Much like a value or supply chain, review at each meeting where things are and then project what would happen if you increase or decrease the scope from where they are.

In summary:

We believe the opportunity potential and efficiencies in utilizing resources are considerably reduced because we have lost the ability (or will) to visualize vertically to the degree that it is not healthily balanced with focus. The flip side is also true in our being at ‘20,000 feet’ too long and not getting a better ‘ground’ focus. There is much written about that aspect and little or no attention paid to the benefits of continually backing up as we ultimately move forward. The best analogy may be that we need to take 5 steps forward like we are clearing a path. Back up to the start and look to ensure the path would not be better served by redirection, then go to the end of the path again and make the course corrections.

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 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. 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.

[Return to #Top](#)

Trivia

1. Why are bubbles round?

In the scientific community, bubbles are referred to as “minimal surface structures”. What does that mean? Geometrically speaking, the foam with the least surface area for any given volume is always a round shape—the sphere. Surface tension and the composition of water molecules also come into play. A water molecule is comprised of 2 atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen (H₂O). Each water molecule has six bonds that they can share with their neighboring molecules. Those molecules at the surface don’t have any adjoining top molecules to share their bonds so the extra bond is given to

those molecules beside them. The result is an extra bond that creates a slightly tighter bond between the top, surface molecules. A custard skin effect is the result and is called surface tension. This effect happens everywhere that water and air meet.

Blowing bubbles requires the addition of soap into the water. It serves to decrease the surface tension of the water to approximately one-third of the normal amount and makes for better bubble-blowing conditions. Blowing in the air, the bubble assumes the spherical shape. As air is trapped inside the sphere, it pushes outward against the water film. Surface tension creates inward force. Balance between the two forces allows the bubble to maintain its size. An increase in air pressure inside the bubble will cause it to expand its surface with the water getting thinner. A continued increase will eventually cause the bubble to pop!

2. What boils faster: salt or fresh water?

Adding something to water makes it denser and therefore makes it harder to boil. Thus, salt water takes longer.

3. What is the Blue Peter?

It is a flag that is raised on a ship when it is about to set sail or embark. It is blue with a white square in the middle.

[Return to #Top](#)

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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[Return to #Top](#)