Student Start-Ups Go Beyond the Tuck Advanced Entrepreneurship Course

Nine student teams from Tuck’s Advanced Entrepreneurship second-year elective course spent the Fall semester developing a start-up business concept. They formulated an executable business plan and finished the semester with a presentation event on November 21st (see final presentations write up on page 8).

As in most years, student projects entered the course at a range of early stage maturities. Some students began the semester with an executive summary in hand from the Introduction to Entrepreneurship course and First-Year Projects, or even existing businesses on which students have been working for some time previously. Other students entered the class with the desire to be exposed to the entrepreneurial experience, but no identified project idea.

Three of the nine student teams are showcased on the following pages. These three teams along with two others, will be working well into 2009 and beyond as they prepare to launch their businesses.

TellEmotion

AskOnline

Morphology Games

continued on pages 2, 3 & 4
Total U.S. energy demand is projected to increase by more than one-third by 2025, with electricity demand rising by almost 40%. At the same time, scarcity of energy supplies and the environmental impact of energy supplies present challenges to energy producers, regulators and consumers. With efficiency becoming a key solution, changing behavior around energy use is an essential piece of the equation.

TellEmotion, Inc. is the first company to focus squarely on using a powerful combination of science and art to change behavior and encourage resource conservation, making this start-up company an interesting project for three students in the Advanced Entrepreneurial Class at Tuck. TellEmotion provides real-time energy use information through compelling animations and well-designed graphs, showing the real effects of energy use and creating an emotional response to the data presented. In the prototype, animations of a polar bear are displayed on monitors and the web. When electricity use is low, the polar bear is playing and happy: when electricity use goes up, the sun comes out, ice under the bear cracks, and the bear falls through the ice.

TellEmotion (www.tellEmotion.com) began as a student/faculty project at Dartmouth, led by Research Associate Professor, Lorie Loeb. Prof. Loeb (computer science and digital arts) has expertise in information visualization—making complex data meaningful and easy to understand. Working with a group of students from computer science, engineering, studio art, environmental science, cognitive science and sociology, staff from FO&M, ORL and the Provost’s office, Prof. Loeb launched a prototype of a system called “Green Lite Dartmouth” in April 2008. Seed money from the Dean of Faculty and the Provost’s office supported the project’s launch on two floors of the McLaughlin Dorms. Green Lite Dartmouth provides real-time feedback about those energy uses students have control over (plug-load and lighting, for example).

As a result of the overwhelming success of the Green Lite Dartmouth project—students in one dorm named their bear and in both dorms students sent classmates back to their rooms to turn things off—electric use was reduced and the project received attention in the press. Stories about Green Lite Dartmouth appeared in Newsweek, on the AP wires and a video about the system became viral on the Internet (www.cs.dartmouth.edu/DigitalArts/news.html).

Sustainability Directors from colleges and boarding high schools across the country expressed interest in the system for their schools. Dartmouth assigned the rights to the invention to Prof. Loeb, Evan Tice (D’08), Tim Tregubov (special student) and Luke Wachtler (D’07). A provisional patent was filed, and working with the DEN, TellEmotion, Inc. was launched in August, 2008.

The Tuck student team took on the task of creating a business plan for TellEmotion and began by looking at the institutional market, in particular colleges and boarding schools. From there, the team looked towards the home market, examining market validation, value proposition and product positioning of each of these sectors. Determining this is a fragmented market, with no clear leader, the TUCK team looked at potential partners, go to market strategies, financial implications, pricing and competition approaches.

- continued on page 16
With AskOnline’s online tutoring and online advising platforms, students can connect over the Internet with tutors and advisors at their college or university any time, day or night. With college drop-out rates hovering at close to 50% nationwide, the need is huge for a simple way to get help with class work and with all of the other decisions that go into attending succeeding in college.\(^1\) The typical college student in the United States is 26 years old and typically works at least one job in addition to attending classes either in person or online.\(^2\) Despite the traditional image of the residential college campus, only a 33% percent of colleges and universities provide on campus housing for their students.\(^3\) So for the typical student who commutes to campus for class or takes classes online in addition to working at a job and perhaps taking care of children or siblings, there is no easy way to get help from their college or university at night when they typically do their homework.

AskOnline’s online tutoring and online advising platforms allow students working from home or elsewhere to interact in real time through chats, whiteboards and video conferencing with tutors and advisors from their college and university. Students can also interact asynchronously with tutors and each other either by sending messages or by searching a database of previously asked and answered questions.

For the colleges and universities who are AskOnline’s customers, the AskOnline platforms provide a means to leverage their staff of qualified tutors and advisors in a new way by making them available to their students over the Internet. For the college or university, keeping students enrolled keeps their tuition dollars flowing and helps the college to allocate their physical and financial aid resources more effectively.

\[\text{Early Story}\]

- Idea in 2000 to service a Boston community tutoring program
- Launched in 2003
- In 70 colleges and universities today
- In beta testing now with new online advising service product

Currently, Mac Dougherty and CEO Lisa Philpott—recently of WebCT, an e-learning company that exited successfully through an acquisition—are raising an A round of financing to grow the business faster than it can grow organically and take advantage of the opportunities that exist for AskOnline’s platforms. This effort recently launched in Tuck’s Advanced Entrepreneurship class and is ongoing. For more information please contact: Lisa Philpott, CEO at lisa@askonline.net.

\(^1\) [www.csmonitor.com/2008/1204/p02s01-ussc.html](http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/1204/p02s01-ussc.html)
\(^3\) [www.securityoncampus.org/schools/research/doi/97402.pdf](http://www.securityoncampus.org/schools/research/doi/97402.pdf)
Kate Ryan Reiling T’09 invented Morphology, a creative, laugh-out-loud board game prior to arriving at Tuck in the Fall of 2007. The genesis of the idea began during a winter night in Minnesota when she was bored with the old board games and decided to play around with a new idea: using glass beads and wooden blocks, her friends created visual representations of nouns and verbs to get their teammates to guess the word. The night was so much fun that she decided to take the simple concept and develop a board game. “I always called it my hobby gone wild; but I couldn’t stop inventing the game. Every time I played a new version with friends, they would email or talk to me the next day about how much fun it was to play. I loved making people laugh while doing something so creative.” When she arrived at Tuck, the prototype had been tested over 400 times and many people who played the game had asked to buy a copy. But, Kate didn’t know how to go from a single prototype to a full company.

Kate did know however, that the First Year Project provided the perfect opportunity for her to investigate her idea. She pulled together a team of six other students to help her with the project. The team looked at everything from the feasibility of entering into the board game industry to running additional prototyping sessions. They built a robust financial model, a detailed business plan, and developed a pitch for interested investors. The final session involved pitching to a group of investors who gave her great feedback to move forward.

Returning to school for her second year, Kate enrolled in the Advanced Entrepreneurship Course taught by Gregg Fairbrothers D’76 and Phil Ferneau D’84, T’96. She partnered with Ryan McGovern, a second year classmate, to dig more deeply into the go-to-market strategy and manage the logistical, legal, and graphic design work necessary to begin production. Together, she and Ryan interviewed local board game owners, distributors, boutique store owners, and wine store owners to understand distribution and sales. They began to create a distribution plan to successfully launch the game.

Additional prototyping sessions were held during the fall to finalize rules and test the final board; a trademark and LLC applications were filed, and logo and graphics were finalized. A production company was chosen and work has begun to source the wide range of pieces for the game.

Kate and Ryan felt the speakers in the Advanced E-Ship class were incredibly helpful in both giving the insight into how to think about all aspects of a business, from purchasing a company outright, to marketing beverages to the masses. It was also great exposure to entrepreneurs who have struggled with the lifestyle, but found great reward in their work.

Kate continues to work on Morphology Games in the Tuck Classroom via an independent study during the winter term. Following this study, Morphology Games will begin production of its first game, Morphology. Kate will produce 1,000 games and use independent retailers and local relationships to seed the market.
DEN Bay Area, Chicago, and Colorado Recently Launched!
DEN LA Expected to Launch in Spring 2009!

■ DEN Bay Area by Derek Draper D’02
The DEN Bay Area is up and running! DEN BA’s inaugural event was held on December 10th at YouTube in San Bruno, California (many thanks to Melissa Crounse, D’03 at You-Tube for hosting). Turnout was strong and there was definitely lots of entrepreneurial energy buzzing around the room. Attendees enjoyed food, drinks, lots of networking time, and a panel discussion about entrepreneurship, led by Gregg Fairbrothers D’76. The panelists included Gregg Brockway D’88 from Tripl, Brad Jefferson D’98 from Animoto, and Jack Herrick T’97 from wikiHow. Thanks to all who attended the event and also to those who helped put it together (Al Henning D’77, Eric Reinhardt D’02, Melissa Crounse D’03, Brad Jefferson D’98, and Zach Berke D’02). We’re already planning our next gathering, so stay tuned! If you’re interested in learning more about the DEN Bay Area or joining our email list, please visit us at www.denbayarea.org.

■ DEN Chicago by Alex Stojanovic DMS’04
DEN Chicago recently launched under the leadership of Alex Stojanovic DMS ’04 and Sean Harte T’91. The chapter kicked off with an event on January 14th at Mesirow Financial’s Conference Center, hosted by Sean Harte (Mesirow Financial). Gregg Fairbrothers D’76 flew out for the Windy City’s kick off event. After an hour of networking, Gregg presented an informative session on DEN and its impact on the Dartmouth community. Thanks to Gregg for making it out during a severe bout of Chicago weather! In the face of dreadful conditions, DEN Chicago kicked off in style with nearly 50 alumni in attendance. In addition, the chapter has grown to over 70 members registered on the website, with many volunteers eager to participate. Several follow-up events are being anticipated and planned, including one that will begin to shape the future of DEN Chicago in the DEN Business Plan Competition. Those interested in learning more about DEN Chicago should please visit www.denchicago.org or email alex@denchicago.org.

■ DEN Colorado by Tom Wooton T’07
The DEN cities continue to expand! DEN Colorado hosted it's first event on January 15th at Cherry Hills Country Club. The event featured Tuck Professor Emeritus J. Brian Quinn and DEN founding director Gregg Fairbrothers D’76 discussing today's entrepreneurial environment. With approximately fifty alumni participating, it was a huge success! If you would like to read more about DEN Colorado, get connected with our members or hear about future events, please visit us at www.dencolorado.com.

■ DEN LA by ArminEllis TH’06
The Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network (DEN) is coming to Los Angeles—are you interested in being a part of it? Today the DEN outreach includes active groups not only in Hanover, but also in New York, Boston, Seattle, Chicago, DC, Colorado, the Bay Area, and we
DEN LA by Armin Ellis TH’06 (continued from page 5)

are now working with a group of alumni to launch a DEN chapter in Los Angeles. While sharing common ties with Hanover and other cities, DEN Los Angeles intends to bring together alumni based in Southern California from Dartmouth, Thayer, Tuck and the Medical School who are interested in entrepreneurship. Our goal is to create a safe networking environment for aspiring and seasoned entrepreneurs, investors, and service providers, and to foster strong community building, and mentorship. We are currently building a core team of proactive volunteers to help bring DEN to Los Angeles. Please get in touch with us and share your suggestions about how you would like to be involved. Our first organizational meeting is being planned to take place during the first quarter of 2009. DEN LA contact: armin.ellis@alum.dartmouth.org.

DEN Seattle by David Cohen D’02

DEN Seattle has been consistently growing throughout 2008. We’ve had two events over the past couple months. In early September, we had a networking event at Duke’s Chowder House right on the waterfront of Lake Union—40 alumni and Den friends attended. Our most recent event, "The Start," featured four successful local entrepreneurs with a variety of different backgrounds but all with the same passion for their respective businesses (see article on page 7). DEN Seattle is planning its next event in late January / early February—“Building a Value Foundation: Moving toward Financing in Difficult Times.” We are also preparing for our regional business plan competition to select a team to send to the Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network Business Plan Competition in May 2009. DEN Seattle is beginning to look for interested sponsors. If you or your company is interested in sponsoring an event, please contact DEN Seattle through our website at www.denseattle.org.

DEN Boston by Meagan Nichols T’06

DEN Boston wrapped up its second year with a keynote from John Bello T’74 entitled “So You Want to Be an Entrepreneur?” on November 18th at the Charles Hotel in Cambridge. Over the course of the year, the group organized its first Entrepreneur Showcase, featuring Dartmouth affiliated start-ups including OpenVote, TSI, YouCastr, and Zeer. DEN Boston also hosted a keynote by Steve Hafner D’91, founder of Orbitz and Kayak.com and has been actively organizing networking, mentoring, and roundtable discussion events throughout the year. The group plans to be back in early 2009 with another full slate of entrepreneur-focused events. Alumni and friends of DEN who are interested in more information on DEN Boston are welcome to visit us at www.denboston.org.

DEN NYC by Keith White D’82, edited by Alex Barnes D’82

DEN NY is currently planning and preparing a number of exciting projects. The team has held several networking events and is coordinating upcoming panels on current issues affecting many businesses, including changes in digital marketing and advertising and how the New York Angel and Private Equity community is weathering the economic crisis. At the same time, preparations are being made for the local metro NY business plan competition. This competition is intended to be a qualifier for the national DEN business competition scheduled to be held in the second quarter 2008. Efforts are underway to try to raise funds to contribute to the national prize. In parallel, Alejandro Crawford, who has been a major sponsor for DEN NY, is spearheading efforts to develop the Tuckipedia project—an online resource basket, like Wikipedia, supported by and developed for the Tuck and Dartmouth entrepreneur community. Anyone who would like to be involved in Tuckipedia Project should contact Alejandro directly at ale@nolej.net. Ale is looking for resources to expand our ability to connect entrepreneurs, investors and advisers within the Dartmouth/Tuck/Thayer community.
Many of us have thought of chucking it and going out on our own. DEN Seattle asked three alumni to share their unique perspectives on their new ventures. Parker Karnan D’90 (parker@karnanassociates.com) expertly moderated the lively discussion in front of more than 30 alumni. Passion, hard-work, persistence and an ability to laugh when you feel like crying were all part and parcel of their business adventures.

The October 16th panel included:

**Bruce Cullen D’84, Small Energy Group** – bruce@smallenergygroup.com
Bruce is the first employee of Small Energy Group. This Vancouver, B.C. based software start-up monitors, analyzes and displays real-time building energy data. He shared his thoughts on the importance of finding excellent staff and staying focused on one pursuit. The company has added 15 employees in the past year and looks to continued high growth with the new Federal Government's shift to energy conservation.

**Andrew Bennett D’95, Deneki Outdoors** – andrewb@deneki.com
From 1995 to 2004 Andrew worked for Onyx Software. With a desire to run a small business in an industry that combined personal interest with great business opportunity, Andrew started Deneki Outdoors in 2004. Deneki Outdoors owns and operates fly fishing lodges in Alaska, British Columbia, the Bahamas and Chile. Simply installing basic business practices brought about numerous savings and he has found that his devoted customers can be his greatest advocates.

**Lauren AdlerT’95, Chocolopolis** – lauren@chocolopolis.com
Lauren is the owner of Chocolopolis, a chocolate store on Queen Anne Hill dedicated to educating chocolate lovers about the finer points of bean-to-bar chocolate made by artisan chocolate makers. Lauren was very patient in finding the ‘best location’ for her shop. She credits the incredible experience she received at Merrill Lynch and Star Markets with enabling her to successfully launch her new business venture.

The crowd appreciated the frank discussion devoid of corporate jargon. And by the end, they recognized the importance of following your passion and trusting your intuition in launching a new business.

Thanks to Bob Mighell D’85, TH’86 (bob@worldmedicalequip.com) for organizing the event.
Spring is just around the corner . . . and so is the Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Business Plan Competition . . . it’s May 8th at Tuck!

The Tuck Entrepreneurship Club

is pleased to announce the Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Business Plan Competition to be held at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth on May 8, 2009.

The DEN Business Plan Competition is open to any startup team or company having one or more members with a Dartmouth affiliation (student, alumnus, faculty, researcher, or staff). Teams or companies must not have signed financing term sheet (in order to exclude teams with significant resources already secured).

All finalist business plans (one per DEN City chapter and two will be selected via a preliminary competition to be held at Dartmouth) must be submitted by a local DEN City organization to the DEN in Hanover by email (sandy.rozyla@dartmouth.edu) or mail a 'hard copy' to the office (100 Tuck Hall, #203A Tuck, Hanover, NH 03755) on or before 5 pm on Friday, April 24th, 2009.

Contestants outside Hanover who seek to enter the contest as a designated entrant from that city may contact DEN organizations around the country directly (see a DEN City list on pages 5 and 6 of this newsletter). The contest will recognize one entrant per city, as designated to DEN by the local organization. Each business may have, at most, one plan submitted to the competition through any channel. Individual team members may be members of more than one team.

$50,000
1st prize

We encourage everyone with a Dartmouth connection thinking about a startup or working on a startup (that has not signed a term sheet) to get involved!

For questions or additional information please email
mac.dougherty@tuck.dartmouth.edu or mike.adair@tuck.dartmouth.edu
The final presentation event started at 2:00 pm on Friday, November 21st at Tuck School. Approximately forty-five students and reviewers moved over to the Norwich Inn later that evening for a mixer and dinner in the wine cellar. Networking and lively entrepreneurial discussions went well on into the evening!

Got burritos? Mike Adair T’09, Founder of Red’s All Natural and Tuck teammate Mary Woodka T’09 provided hot appetizers for guests.

Reviewer and former Advanced E-Ship student, Daniella Reichstetter T’05, CEO of Gyrobike, served demos of the Gyrobike wheel!

Reviewer Bob Rosenblum D’73, T’75, Setareh Olgiati T’09, and Joerg Heise T’09 from team TellEmotion enjoy the mixer.

The women behind Petite Palate, Tuck team includes: Hadley Fuller T’09 and Lisa Rockefeller T’09 and Petite Palate Co-Founders: Christine Naylor D’94 and Lisa Beels.

Reviewer John Stahler T’69 checking out the Gyrobike wheel.

Tonight’s Fare by Three Dartmouth Culinary Start-ups
Petite Palate
Gourmet baby food
Red’s All Natural
Burritos!
Verde Farms
Free-range organic beef
Introduction to Entrepreneurship Course at Tuck
Winter Term 2009

The Tuck School of Business and the Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network (DEN) are again pleased to offer members of the Dartmouth community an evening mini-course, “Introduction to Entrepreneurship,” designed to provide basic education in commercialization of technology, entrepreneurship, and the starting of new business ventures.

Introduction to Entrepreneurship has a unique format unlike any other Tuck course. This course is open for auditing to anyone in the Dartmouth or DHMC community in addition to the Tuck, Thayer, and DMS students who take the course for credit.

Between January 7th and March 3rd, students will be exposed to the startup process in detail. The course will combine lectures, visiting speakers, workshop sessions, and readings. Throughout the term, students will develop an executive summary of a business idea and a PowerPoint presentation which they will present, as part of a team, to a panel of entrepreneurs and potential investors at the conclusion of the course on Tuesday, March 3, 2009.

There is no tuition charge for this course. However, class size is limited to the capacity of the classroom with first priority given to for-credit students. The course is oversubscribed at this writing. However, if you are interested in taking Introduction to Entrepreneurship next winter, please email sandy.rozyla@dartmouth.edu in November 2009, and watch for course announcements around that time as well.

Class Speakers This Year Include:

- Michael Clarkin D’85
  “The Need and the Market”
  VP of Marketing, Sykes Enterprises

- Sarah Hoit D’88
  “Business Models and Execution”
  President and Founder, My Way Village

- Tom Naughton D’89, T’96
  “Financing”
  Managing Partner, NeoCarta Ventures

- Patrick Byrne D’85
  “Putting It All Together”
  Founder, Chairman, & CEO, Overstock.com

- Andy Palmer T’94
  “Are You Sure You Want to Do This?”
  CEO, Vertica Systems

The Introduction to Entrepreneurship class fills the Georgiopoulos Classroom in Rather Hall in Tuck’s new classroom building complex.
Jason Cianchette T’05
Jason Cianchette T’05 recently started Liquid Wireless, a Boston-based internet and mobile product development company. The goal for Liquid is to connect companies with the mobile generation by developing custom mobile websites, Facebook applications and other internet applications. Before Liquid, Jason was the Vice President of Product for MocoSpace, which was one of the most popular mobile sites in North America. The company is signing new customers and looking to hire Dartmouth students interested in internet marketing or software development.

Steve Hallowell D’01, T’10
If you’re looking for Steve Hallowell in Boston, take note Steve’s moved to Hanover to attend Tuck. Prior to coming to Tuck, Steve was a Principal at Commonwealth Capital Ventures in Waltham, MA. At Commonwealth, Steve focused on early-stage investments in technology companies and was a Board Observer at Copanion, Reval, and Zeemote. Steve also played a lead role in launching DEN Boston, serving as a member of its executive committee for a year and a half. He is joined in Hanover by his fiancée, Johanna Visuri.

Dave Mott D’86
David Mott joined NEA in September 2008 as a General Partner focused on biopharmaceutical investments. Prior to joining NEA, he was President and Chief Executive Officer of MedImmune, subsidiary of AstraZeneca Plc, and Executive Vice President of AstraZeneca. Dave joined MedImmune in 1992 and served in roles of increasing responsibility including Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, President and Chief Executive Officer as the company grew from a venture-backed startup (founded in 1988) into one of the top five biotechnology companies in the world.

Changed Firms?
Have a new position?
Involved with a new Start-up?

Let us know by emailing sandy.rozyla@dartmouth.edu so we can include your new information in the next DEN People Page.
The Founders’ Forum series is a Larry King Live interview format which brings successful entrepreneurs to campus to examine their backgrounds, their careers, and their insights into successfully launching entrepreneurial ventures. Mark your calendars for the following DEN Founders’ Forums and workshops. We hope to see you there!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 16th</td>
<td>5:00-6:30 pm</td>
<td>Tuck School</td>
<td>Founder’s Forum</td>
<td>Patrick Byrne D’85, CEO, Overstock.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 23rd</td>
<td>5:00-6:30 pm</td>
<td>Tuck School</td>
<td>Founder’s Forum</td>
<td>Dr. Jim Bernstein, Chairman and CEO, Noxilizer, Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 18th</td>
<td>5:00-6:30 pm</td>
<td>Tuck School</td>
<td>Message &amp; Image Development Workshop</td>
<td>Marjorie Klein, Principal, Message &amp; Image Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 23rd</td>
<td>5:00-6:30 pm</td>
<td>Tuck School</td>
<td>Founder’s Forum</td>
<td>Tom Cooper, Partner, Aperture Venture Partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2nd</td>
<td>5:00-6:30 pm</td>
<td>Tuck School</td>
<td>Founder’s Forum</td>
<td>Tom Cooper, Partner, Aperture Venture Partner</td>
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Learn more about these upcoming events at [www.den.dartmouth.edu/news/](http://www.den.dartmouth.edu/news/)

On November 11th, more than 80 students, alumni, and friends of the DEN filled Barclay classroom to attend a workshop titled “Building A Board.” Mark Stein D’83, Partner, Corporate Department at McDermott Will & Emery LLP and Phil Ferneau D’84, T’96, Co-founder and Managing Director at Borealis Ventures led this workshop and open floor discussion about the process, ideas, and rewards behind building an effective board. Topics discussed included the role of a board, size and composition, compensation, and best practices, to name a few.
If you get malaria, you take medicine, and you get better.

At least, that's how the process should work, but a flood of counterfeit medications is threatening the doctors' ability to treat sick people in the developing world. A 2006 study found that more than half the anti-malarials in southeast Asia contained no actual medicine.

While public health officials fret, the increasingly sophisticated shadowy network of fake-drug producers will rake in an estimated $75 billion by 2010, according to a pharmaceutical industry research group. Despite rapid growth in counterfeiting over the last decade, no one has quite figured out how to stop handbag knockoffs, let alone ersatz pills that the FDA admits, "can be difficult, if not impossible" to tell apart from the real thing.

Sounds just like the kind of problem that a couple of scrappy twenty-somethings with a dream can solve, right?

Maybe not, but that's just what N. Taylor Thompson and Nathan Sigworth, the youngest members of PopTech's new fellows program, are trying to do. Using cellphones to connect the people who produce drugs with the people taking them, the Dartmouth-schooled duo's big goal is to reduce the amount of counterfeit pharmaceuticals in the world by 25 percent. "Not only are we doing something that has a positive benefit for consumers who are sick, but it's something that actually takes away from the profits of people making money on fake medicines," Sigworth told Wired.com.

Thompson and Sigworth are excellent examples of the post-internet social entrepreneurs that PopTech is trying to attract. Comfortable with the digital world, they can bring youthful vigor and tech know-how to the occasionally stodgy world of nonprofit development causes. Perhaps most importantly, they remain optimistic that new technological and business models can overcome daunting challenges that have defeated their elders.
"How do you tackle a problem like this yourself at 22 or 23?" Sigworth asked. "From the beginning, we've tried to surround ourselves with people from pharma and other organizations that could really help make this happen."

And it wasn’t as if they chose this problem at random from the huge-world problem bin. Sigworth said that he and his partner saw a unique opportunity to fight counterfeit drugs because Big Pharma's needs match up with the needs of poor, sick people in the developing world. Like a Yahoo Pipe, they could connect corporate money to social needs. "It really is the nexus of where public health concerns and private concerns come together," Sigworth said.

The entrepreneurs' nascent company, Pharmasecure, has developed a business model to drop the cost of authenticating drugs low enough that supply-chain security can be extended into countries like China and India. Using their cell phones to check identifying numbers on the drugs with the manufacturer, sick people in the developing world will be able to authenticate that the drugs they are using don't come from shady operations that often neglect to include the actual medicine in the pill. The innovation isn't the technology, it's the business model that will allow the poorest people on earth access to the technology.

They’ve gotten support from C. Everett Koop, former surgeon general of the United States, and fellow Dartmouth alum, and are in the process of raising capital to take their ideas from the prototype to the people who need them.

As you might expect, people working to fight counterfeit drugs don't make a lot of friends among the illegal racket, so some of Sigworth and Thompson's plans — and their whereabouts — remain secret, but they are planning to be operating in eight countries across Asia and Africa over the next few years.
The Right to Remain Silent . . .
When Does A Public Disclosure Cost You Your Patent Rights?
by Bill D’85 Principal Attorney, Loginov & Associates, PLLC

You have the right to remain silent . . . Anyone hearing those words from a police officer will surely get the chills. But when your helpful and friendly patent attorney utters roughly the same words regarding your new development or invention—listen closely—or you might lose your rights and freedom. Fortunately, in this case it’s not your personal freedom, but the freedom to obtain US and international patent protection. In my last article I discussed basic considerations in filing for patents abroad. In a nutshell, every country or region has its own patent system and accompanying rules for obtaining a patent. With the big exception of the US, almost all require absolute novelty, in which no public disclosure sufficient to allow another to practice the claimed invention has occurred before your earliest patent filing somewhere. That original somewhere is the US Patent and Trademark Office for most US-based inventors. However, the US applies a different standard, requiring only that you file US patent application within one year of a public disclosure, public use or offer for sale of the invention being claimed. The dichotomy between the US and the general international standard on what bars obtaining a patent is the source of endless confusion, frustration and loss of valuable intellectual property. In this article, I hope to clarify these seemingly conflicting rules and provide guidance for preserving both US and worldwide patent rights.

The US-only Patent Applicant

If the patent concept is definitely to be filed only in the US, then the doctrine of absolute novelty is not a concern to the applicant. Rather, the applicant can file either a provisional or utility patent application within the one year grace period following a barring activity. That barring activity under US patent law is a publication of the claimed concept anywhere in the world, or a public use, public display, oral disclosure to a public group or offer for sale in the US. This means that if the concept is written up in a magazine, journal, internet website, a patent must be filed within one year of the publication date. The publication date is the date the paper or article is first released to readers in the public without restriction. The term “public” means that there is no restriction on the recipient’s own ability to disclose the information. For this reason, publications, displays or presentations of the concept within a group in which each recipient is bound to confidentiality are not considered “public” activities, and do not trigger a barring event under US law. Typically, a group in which each recipient has signed a non-disclosure agreement or employee confidentiality agreement will have no public members. One must carefully avoid disclosing to unrestricted visitors, staff or others outside the group. When in doubt get an NDA.

Assuming the activity was indeed public—a published paper, trade show display, presentation to a class—then the applicant must mark the date and file an application within one year.

The very special case in the US is the offer for sale. If a concept finds its way into a sales discussion that is sufficient to set terms or a price, then this starts the one year US bar clock—a good reason for engineering to keep the sales department in the dark about the new feature. Aside from publication, all the activities bar filing under US law are only bars if they occur inside the US. That is, a public display or presentation (without publication) only in Germany is not a US bar—though it could well be a bar to international protection, as discussed below. Since many foreign activities require a US component, like phoning a German customer from the US to offer the new product, care must be taken when relying on non-US activities to save the day.

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The Right to Remain Silent . . . (continued from page 15)

Sometimes the applicant gets lucky and the disclosure was not sufficient for one of ordinary skill to practice the concept. For example, the product is written up in a magazine, but no details on the new technology are given, or they are insufficient to act upon. In such cases the disclosure is not enabling of the invention and not a barring event to filing. However this does not apply in an offer for sale if the offered product was otherwise “ready for patenting.” Likewise, using a product publicly, a trade show for example, is a usually bar, even if the product is used under covers.

The International Patent Applicant

Many of the rules governing what is and isn’t a public disclosure in the US also apply to those seeking international rights. However, absolute novelty dictates that a patent be filed at least in the US before there is any public disclosure sufficient to enable the ordinarily skilled person the practice concept. Follow-on filings internationally should occur within a year of the US filing. There is no offer for sale in most non-US jurisdictions, and a public use or display that doesn't teach how to make the concept is not a bar internationally. When in doubt, file first in the US before making any public disclosure. Until filing, exercise your RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT.

There is a universe of exceptions and permutations on these general principles. When in doubt consult a patent attorney before disclosing your concept to the wider world. Coming next time, some discussion of the recent In re Bilski decision, and the future of business method patents, if any.

In addition to studying the market, the TUCK team needed to familiarize themselves with the technology. The TellEmotion system works as a software interface between “smart meters” that have a public API and the web-based display. Live, real-time outlet-load and lighting data from two Dartmouth dorms can be seen at www.greenlite.dartmouth.edu.

There are several companies on the market providing real-time energy data. They display energy use through charts and graphs, which provide interesting information but don’t create an emotional response and motivate students in schools or children in the home. And while studies have shown that bill-payers respond well to charts showing cost savings, long-term behavioral change has been shown to occur for more altruistic reasons. By creating a meaningful link between an individual’s actions and the larger impacts of energy use on the environment and the polar bear in the displays, the TellEmotion/Green Lite system has the potential to motivate long-term changes in habits and social norms around energy conservation.

Consumers interested in putting TellEmotion’s “bear-o-meter” in their homes contact TellEmotion regularly. The company is working with off-the-shelf meters to make this possible but the development of a reasonably priced smart meter along with determining how to get meters into the home, creates a bit of a challenge. Good news on this front comes from states like California where plans are in place to put smart meters into every home and business by 2012. President-Elect Obama included smart meters, efficiency and behavioral changes as part of his stimulus plan and environmental initiatives.

The TellEmotion founders—Evan Tice (Lead Software Architect), Tim Tregubov (Content Developer), Gary Loeb (Vice President) and Lorie Loeb (President)—have benefited tremendously from advise and coaching by Dartmouth and Tuck alums such as Jim Lang T’89, Phil Ferneau D’84, T’96, and Wendell Smith D’64.
"I’ve been asked by a company’s co-founders to take one of the board seats they control. Does this mean I should represent their interests (for instance, on compensation) or should I vote for what seems to be in the best interests of the whole company?"

MIKE
It’s common for investors and other stakeholders to be given a specific number of board seats, but in fact all board members are supposed to represent all shareholders, not just the group that "owns" their seats. This is particularly important for certain board committees, such as the compensation committee, where just two or three directors can easily control the committee’s recommendations.

Of course, there may be times when the board is split by a major conflict between shareholder groups. If you take sides against the person who suggested you for the board, you should be prepared to lose your board seat and a friendship. Talk to the company co-founders to make sure they’re comfortable with your decision to play an independent role. If they’re not, you might want to pass up the invitation.

"When my VC firm raised its money, they promised investors a return of at least 100%. The firm has no companies in its portfolio that are likely to be a home run, so now the fund is being liquidated and the VCs are pressuring me into a premature sale of my company. What can I do?"

MIKE
No, you are not too sensitive. Your director’s "bingo" comment was probably inspired by a comment made by Sidney Weinberg, who ran Goldman Sachs for many years and who got annoyed by an especially boring financial discussion. The message you’re getting couldn’t be any clearer.

Your job as CFO isn’t just to blitz the board with numbers—it’s to provide meaning and context to the numbers. Start with the assumption that your board members (most of them, anyway) probably understand the key financial issues that face the company. You need to give them an idea of exactly what will happen if something important changes—for instance, how much will profitability suffer if the company misses a sales target? Is the budget still on target? Will you have enough cash on hand to meet expenses like payroll? Focus on issues like these and I promise no one will ever be bored.

With economy in a tailspin, investors are getting nervous about parking money in long-term, relatively high-risk ventures. There’s also less money around for traditional liquidity events—IPOs and acquisitions. I think you’ll see more venture funds close down if the fund managers can’t show a clear path to significant profits. The good news is that you have some leverage: Your VCs will have a hard time completing any kind of sale if you and your management team refuse to cooperate with a potential buyer.

However, a better alternative is for you to start looking for another investor who’s willing to back you for a few more years (that is, until your company has reached a point where you can get a much higher price than your current VCs would accept). This won’t be easy, because it’s always tough to value investments in early-stage companies. But if you can really demonstrate that a sale now is "premature," there are bound to be investors with cash who are looking for a bargain.

"The last time I did a financial presentation to our board, one of the directors muttered ‘bingo’ after I was done. I assume that was his way of complaining that there were too many numbers. But I’m the CFO, so numbers are my job. Am I just being too sensitive?"

Q
Mike is a finance expert and a trusted advisor to technology CEOs and investors.

Have a question? Email Mike at mchael@gonnerman.com.
DEN Contact Information
Dartmouth College
10 Allen Street, 2nd Floor
Hanover, NH 03755
Tel: 603.646.0295
Fax: 603.646.0291
denet@dartmouth.edu
www.den.dartmouth.edu

DEN Fellows

Colin C. Blaydon
Director, Tuck Center for Private Equity and Entrepreneurship; Buchanan Professor of Management; Tuck School of Business

Philip J. Ferneau D’84, T’96
Co-Founder and Managing Director, Borealis Ventures
Adjunct Associate Professor of Business Administration
Tuck School of Business

Peter T. Glenshaw
Director of Community Relations, Dartmouth College

Mark Israel
Director, Norris Cotton Cancer Center, DHMC

Aaron Kaplan
Associate Professor of Medicine & Director
Device Development Lab, DHMC

Roger Sloboda
Professor of Biological Sciences, Dartmouth College

Fred Wainwright T’02
Executive Director, Tuck Center for Private Equity and Entrepreneurship;
Adjunct Associate Professor of Business Administration
Tuck School of Business

DEN People Information
Gregg Fairbrothers ’76
Director, Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network
Adjunct Professor of Business Administration
Tuck School of Business
Chair, Dartmouth Regional Technology Center
Dartmouth College
gef@dartmouth.edu

Sandy Rozyla
DEN Administrator
Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network
sandy.rozyla@dartmouth.edu