

Invention Promotion Companies and How to Avoid Scams

Written by Michael S. Neustel, a U.S. Registered Patent Attorney, founded the National Inventor Fraud Center, Inc. (NIFC) with the goal to provide information to consumers about invention promotion companies and how people can market their ideas. Many inventors do not realize that some invention marketing companies charge thousands of dollars, yet have success rates of 0.00%. The goal of the NIFC is to educate and help inventors make the right decisions. The NIFC is owned by www.patent-ideas.com.

Tips for New Inventors

1. Don't Rush. Never "rush" into the invention process. Make sure to take your time before making important decisions that affect you and your invention. Rarely are there situations where an inventor needs to make a decision within a few days.

2. Investigate. Thoroughly investigate any invention promotion company BEFORE providing them with your invention or money. You can visit the FTC web site (www.ftc.gov) to search for information about invention marketing companies.

3. Education. Educate yourself about the invention process and invention marketing companies. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the United States Patent & Trademark Office (USPTO) have several informative articles for inventors to read prior to starting the invention process:

- [Scam Prevention \(USPTO\)](#) (PDF)
- [Invention Promotion Firms \(FTC\)](#)
- [Spotting Sweet Sounding Promises of Fraudulent Companies \(FTC\)](#)
- [So You've Got a Great Idea? \(FTC\)](#)

4. "Objective" Evaluations. It is important to have an objective invention "marketability" evaluation performed by a third-party. If the company you are considering will not evaluate the marketability of your invention, then seek the assistance of another company which will (see the [Good Guys](#)).

5. Inventors Groups. It is very important to network with inventors in your area. Contact a local inventors group and attend a meeting before going further with the invention process. Ask the experienced inventors in the group for guidance and support. We have a listing of [Inventors Groups](#) for you to contact.

Recovering Your Money

It is unfortunate when an inventor pays thousands of dollars for services that have little value to them. If you desire to get your money back from an invention marketing company, you should remain calm and follow a [strict plan](#) for getting your money back. Expressing anger and frustration to the company usually will not help you. We have a [Suggested Approach](#) for you to review that may help you in getting your money back.

Good Guys

Some of the invention marketing companies listed on the [Good Guys](#) section operate upon a percentage of the money the inventor receives from their marketing efforts. Many of the *Good Guys* charge for their services, but do not be discouraged solely by their fees. You should investigate any invention marketing company before paying money, even if they are listed as a *Good Guy*. It is also recommended that individuals join a [Local Inventors Group](#).

Finding Additional Information

Information is a valuable tool for inventors during the invention process. It is important for inventors not to rush into the invention process without performing thorough research. There are numerous informative places for inventors seeking to market their invention such as the [Federal Trade Commission](#), [Attorney Generals](#), [Inventor Groups](#), the [U.S. Patent Office](#), and Internet search engines.