Meeting the Staff:

Charles Riverburgh
Director

Joe Panguy
Assistant Director

Chase Kasper
Licensing Associate

Donna Collier
Licensing Coordinator

Sheree Bouchillon
Administrative Secretary

Meet the Staff: Spatial Information Solutions

Turning Mississippi State Research & Technology...

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Mapping the Course from 'Lab to Market'

The precise location of a fire hydrant can determine where a city planner decides to place a new street.

If the city's aerial or satellite images are not accurate, it can cost delays in the project, additional money to locate the street, and lots of frustration. It makes spending taxpayer dollars on the images seem like a waste of resources.

However, until recently no commercial company in the region was available to check the accuracy of maps without spending nearly as much money as the original satellite images cost, in the range of $15,000 or more.

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Looking Out:

The Office of Technology Commercialization (OTC) recently launched a new website, which is loaded with information aimed at assisting MSU faculty, staff and students with protecting and commercializing their inventions and software... So, why (and when!) should you disclose a new invention to the OTC? Just what is a patent and what does "patent pending" mean? And where do I go for guidelines on starting my own company? For these answers and much more, check out the links under "For Inventors" and "For Entrepreneurs" at:

otc.msstate.edu
The Big Business of IP

Mississippi State researchers and inventors from across campus learned key areas to take caution when dealing with joint research during the Office of Technology Commercialization's most recent Power Lunch.

Craig Grossman, an attorney specializing in intellectual property, copyrights, and trade secrets, discussed measures researchers should take if they decide to enter a joint research program with another person or company. Grossman spoke as a part of the lunch series, which aims to allow MSU inventors, entrepreneurs, and others to gather for networking and learning about topics related to establishing and maintaining business relationships when commercializing technology.

As leader of the intellectual property and technology practice at the firm Butler, Snow, O'Mara, Stevens, and Cannada, Grossman examines law as it relates to intellectual properties. During his talk, he encouraged inventors to consider factors relating to joint research programs before entering them. He explained why inventors and potential business owners should sensititize themselves to issues such as revealing trade secrets and disclosures.

"The good news is you can deal with all of this up front," Grossman said.

When MSU inventors have questions about how to approach potential business situations, the Office of Technology Commercialization can be a good reference tool, since the office regularly works with many issues researchers and start-up companies must navigate through while working with third parties to commercialize university research.

Grossman also advised inventors to guard their trade secrets, even if a formal agreement is made. He warned that once they're revealed, they're potentially fair game for others to use. "Others do not have a duty to maintain the confidentiality of what you told them," he said.

Other important factors to consider:

- Use caution when managing third party information. You don't want to create the appearance of anything improper when others share their documents and secrets.
- Protect your work whenever appropriate and use Material Transfer Agreements. This can save a lot of heartache.

Inside the Filing Cabinet:

What is “Intellectual Property?”

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<td>Patent</td>
<td>A legal, temporary right granted to prevent third parties from making, selling, or using an invention.</td>
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<td>Trademark</td>
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Letter from the Director:

The Office of Technology Commercialization brings ideas to life by licensing inventions, software, and creative works developed by MSU faculty, staff, and students. Commercialization of the university's technology helps society benefit from the new ideas, inventions, and discoveries that are continually emerging from MSU's research programs. It also helps foster economic development in Mississippi and beyond.

We've been averaging about 70 disclosures per year over the last few years resulting in a portfolio of over 100 patents, patent applications, and copyrights. Licensing income from successfully commercialized projects has averaged about $450,000/year and is shared with the inventors (up to 50%) and with different parts of the university.

As you go about your daily activities, please consider whether your ideas, research, or creative works could be the next big commercialization opportunity. We'll support your idea by providing a market assessment, making the necessary arrangements for patent or copyright protection, and marketing the technology to prospective licensees.

In some cases, all we need is a draft manuscript to get the necessary patent protection. And, gap funding may be available to further develop technology that is too early to license.

This newsletter profiles Spatial Information Solutions as it evolved from a research project into a start-up company with a bright future. It's one of 21 new companies that were started over the last several years based on MSU research results. Can your idea provide the spark that leads to a new company?

Please bring your ideas to life by working with us to commercialize your technology.

Witten ig Bobbie Ward
Research Writer
Office of University Relations

Photography by Kristen Hines
Photographer
Office of University Relations

Cara Baer
Butler, Snow, O'Mara, Stevens & Cannada, PLLC

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Charles “Chuck” Rivenburgh
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Intellectual Property (IP) can be defined as intangible works or property that can be legally protected. Forms of IP protection include the following:

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The Power Lunch Series will resume this fall. If you would like to be added to the email distribution list for announcements of future Power Lunches and other OTC events, please notify Sherree at sherreeb@otc.msstate.edu.

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