



Focus on the Future

Guest Predictions: Ted Carvis

Guest Predictions is a regular Agenda feature in which we interview leaders in a number of professions for their opinion on questions that effect us all.

*Our first guest is **Ted Carvis, BScHE, J.D.**, Member of the Virginia & Patent Bars (37 years) Outside Patent & Trademark Counsel to Multiple Client Corporations Worldwide*

Q: What changes in your professional environment in the past 3-5 years have you found to be the most beneficial?

A: The Internet flourished. Widespread participation in the Internet has greatly increased availability of first class resources and communications. This has increased my range. I can now service clients with greater availability and speed. The fact that I may be traveling for one client no longer impedes my ability to act quickly and thoroughly for another.

Q: What changes have been the most troubling to you?

A: The US Patent and Trademark Office is overburdened and poorly managed. The result is that new legal procedures and management policies have started to have a chilling effect on the patent system. Because the system is designed to stimulate innovation, these issues place national security at risk. Abraham Lincoln said that "the patent system adds the fuel of interest to the fire of genius". Poor management is throwing a wet blanket on the fire.

Q: How will globalization (e.g. the emergence of new global powers, such as China and India) affect your professional area in the near term?

A: Globalization is very positive. We are having contacts with Europe and China that go beyond anything we were doing even ten years ago. Marketing by innovation is here in some industries. The energy and environmental pressures that face the US are creating markets for connected clients abroad. This development makes it clear that research and development for energy and environment are not expenses, but investments. These investments can now promise higher returns because of the global market place.

Q: What significant challenges might be anticipated in your professional area in the next few years?

A: The greatest challenges are how governments, both in the US and abroad, will manage the patent systems they oversee. Will they take the wrong direction and try to discourage patent activity to limit their workloads, rather than fully fund and effectively manage the agencies? The emerging situation calls for a concerted effort to keep the agencies' 'feet to the fire'.

Q: What are the greatest challenges confronting young professionals in Western culture today?

A: There appears to be a growing tendency for firms to grow too large. This seems to be what businesses think they want for a sense of security, because they are too understaffed to manage multiple relationships to subject matter experts. The size of the organizations, however, seems to dampen creativity, personal motivation and entrepreneurship. The lawyers that are products of this type of system tend to look inward to the firm, rather than outward to the profession.