

Newsletter Review: *Systematic Innovation E-Zine* by Darrell Mann
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Subscriptions: <http://www.systematic-innovation.com/Subscribe/subscribe01.htm>
Published monthly, £25 per year if bought with a book, £30 otherwise.

TRIZ Journal readers have been big fans of Darrell Mann's books **Matrix 2003**, **Hands on Systematic Innovation**, and **Hands on Systematic Innovation for Management**. His prolific writing in the TRIZ Journal and in engineering and management publications around the world have made him familiar to many people who are looking for an accessible, understandable, but not over-simplified way to start learning TRIZ. Since TRIZ Journal editor Ellen Domb is Mann's co-author, co-instructor at many events, and long-time friend, we have invited three of our contributors and readers to review Mann's newest venture, a monthly e-zine, available by subscription. As with book reviews, our goal is to help the reader decide if the content and style suit their needs, so that they can decide whether or not to buy the newsletter.

These e-zines will guarantee Mann's subscribers a level of exclusivity—he won't publish the contents anywhere else for at least 6 months after his subscribers have received it. Our three reviewers evaluated the January and March 2005 issues, as samples of the series. Both e-zines contained six sections: feature articles (two articles related to TRIZ and Systematic Innovation concepts and tools), one humorous article, patent of the month, best of the month, investment opportunity and biology.

Summary of 2 typical issues: e-zine Issue 34, January 2005-04-20

This issue contains five entertaining papers and two very interesting articles for TRIZ-niks.

Finding The “Missing” Functions describes the situation of mature products in saturated markets. It becomes more and more difficult to differentiate our products from the competition. Asking the customers is useless. Most of them cannot imagine how things could be better. This article explains a pair of techniques how you can find out what might be missing. Such techniques will become more and more important and it is astonishing, that they are not yet better known. This is a very useful article and worth to invest some time in it to study the details.

TRIZ And Stage-Gate describes how TRIZ (or any other method) can be better integrated in the daily R&D work. If we are successful to integrate TRIZ-questions into the checklists of milestone reviews there is pressure to use TRIZ methods. It is important that new methods are not “disturbing” but helpful and successful for all. We have to try to organise “win-win-situations”.

In the more entertaining part we read about the

Bad Design Of the World Part 129

The author complains about his anger with opening Cat Litter Bags. He encountered the problem, because he had to care for the cat of a girlfriend. He finds out that just a conventional scissors would do a better job. In the meantime he thinks about a new opening mechanism that can be opened by the cats themselves. What I think the author forgot is “trimming” and solving the

problem on a different level. Then alternating approaches could be: trim away the cats or look for a new girlfriend without cats.

Patent of the month

Unfortunately there is only the abstract and now drawings. After loading down the original patent from the Internet it is easier to follow the explanations how the patent involves physical contradictions. This is a very interesting example for TRIZ-users, very well explained.

Best of the Month – Keith Jarrett: The Art Of Improvisation

An interview with the king of improvisation: Conclusion: For the pianist, music is the result of a process. He creates it on the spot.

Investments – Polymer Magnets

Information about an interesting new magnetic polymer that is developed at the university of Durham, and is just beginning to be commercialized. This part of the newsletter will be of interest to people who want to invest in new technologies, and Mann gives his views on which are likely to be commercial successes.

Biology – Tardigrades

Small animals also known as “water bears” can survive extreme conditions. The precise mechanism how they can do this is not yet understood by biologists. But TRIZniks know how: they use Inventive Principles and most promising seems the principle 35 “Parameter Changes”.

Summary of **e-zine Issue 36, March 2005** This issue is quite a literature review. It contains five entertaining papers and two more philosophic articles.

Anticipate And Pre-Empt takes reference to Haekel’s “Adaptive Enterprise” and Gladwell’s and Blink’s “The Power Of Thinking Without Thinking” The author describes how the evolution trends of controllability of technical systems can be found also in business systems.

However while the feed-forward-principle in technical systems so far is based on experience from the past in business we can include information about future discontinuities.

The Red Queen Principle is based on Lewis Carroll’s book “Alice in Wonderland”. In this book the Red Queen states: “In this place it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place.” The author shows that there exists competitive situations, where all participants get in an evolutionary “arms race” that finally leads to an absolute decrease in fitness. But all have to keep running just to survive. The Red Queen Principle is also connected to the TRIZ Ideal Final Result concept and the trends of evolution. The function will not disappear, but might be realised by something new on a hierarchical higher level.

A Native American saying talks about how everyone has 83 problems. That means, that if we have solved one of them a new one will appear. The 83 problems will never disappear; they merely migrate to higher hierarchical levels.

Humour – Trimming in extremis

Here we hear about a story how you can save money in the dubbing process of movies from the original language for different countries: instead of employing different speakers you ask them to

imitate different voices. The article describes a situation of trimming in extremis, where in Estonia they used just 1 speaker for a whole movie. Most exiting became a scene with 3 women at the hairdressers all of them with dark male voices. The spectators at Tallinn seemed unaffected.

Patent of the month

This is a patent about nanoporous laminates with a low dielectric constant because of the nonopores present in the laminate matrix.

Best of the Month – Edward DeBono, The Six Value Medal

Also this article is not only based on one book of DeBono. The author makes comparisons with Ken Wilbur's "A Theory of everything" and finds connections with NLO (Neuro Linguistic Programming). Most noticeable for the author came out: "If you reward creative effort, you will get creative results. If you reward creative results, you will not get creative effort."

Investments – Transparent Transistors are an entirely new class of materials which could be used to make transistors transparent, stable and environmentally benign. This is a significant breakthrough and we will soon wonder in how many different applications the new technology will come to the market.

Biology – Spoonbill

Many birds find their food in the water. But when the water is not clear they can not see the food and will remain hungry. In this article it is explained how the effects work the spoonbill uses to find food also in shallow water.

The reviewers were asked to answer two questions:

Were the contents interesting? Useful? If not to you, who do you think is the right audience for this newsletter? (TRIZ beginners, TRIZ teachers, advanced consultants, etc.?)

Examined articles address relevant TRIZ and Systematic Innovation issues. Up-to-date examples provided from patents, biology and other sources are always welcome by TRIZ teachers, consultants and students.

Readers who like Darrell Mann's view of TRIZ and Systematic Innovation concepts and tools and his writing style (from books and TRIZ Journal articles) will like the newsletter. Those who prefer the traditional TRIZ approach (laws instead of trends, test of each new tentative tool in tens or hundreds of problems before adding it to the toolbox) will not.

Is Systematic Innovation E-Zine worth it? Two aspects--is it worth the time to read it, and is it worth the cost?

The Ezines are provocative and provide interesting examples. This makes them worth the reading time and the cost. (Two reviewers.) Is it worth the time and money? May be! I would not buy this newsletter not because I find it worthless, but because I already do not find the time to read the other journals I get each week. The flood of information is a general problem of today's society. (third reviewer.)

See the subscription website for summaries of other issues, and details on purchasing. Darrell Mann will continue to write major articles for the TRIZ Journal, but his “fans” can welcome the e-**zine** as a way to share his insights sooner, and in a delightfully informal style.