

Autoharvest Seeks to Become the “Amazon of Innovation”

Sarah Schmid | 3/6/13

AutoHarvest, a nonprofit website that aims to connect the auto industry with entrepreneurs and inventors, has just announced a partnership with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. It's the latest big name to come aboard—other supporters include Ford, Chrysler, General Motors, Covisint, and various universities and economic development agencies.

“Our mission is to help accelerate the adoption of innovations in the advanced manufacturing space,” AutoHarvest CEO Jayson Pankin says. “We've created a unique virtual community marketplace and ecosystem.”

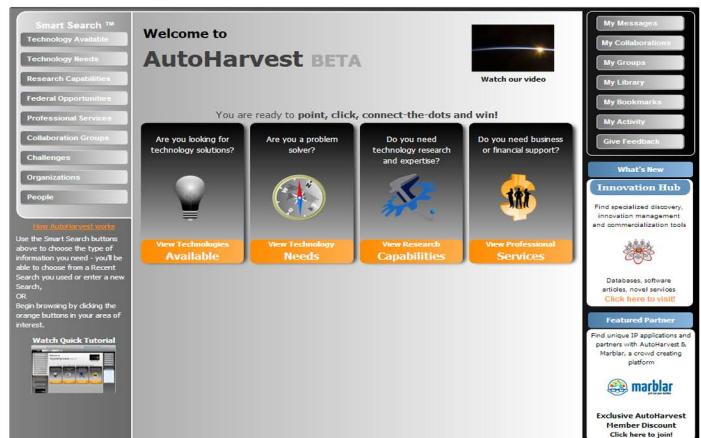
Pankin says AutoHarvest wants to be “the Amazon of innovation” by becoming the singular go-to place for people involved in automotive or advanced manufacturing IP, whether they're early or late in their careers, part of a small or large company, or working in the mainstream or for a fledgling startup.

AutoHarvest, he says, empowers individuals or groups to buy, sell, and collaborate on ideas. The AutoHarvest platform also allows users to create a secure profile where they can post video demonstrations of their technology in hopes of marketing and commercializing it. Also available at AutoHarvest are templates for licensing agreements and non-disclosure forms.

“We can provide all our members with a transparent, neutral marketplace so everyone is on the same level,” Pankin notes.

In addition to the beta test, which has about 1,000 members and is expected to go live in 2014, AutoHarvest has launched its Innovation Hub. In that area, AutoHarvest curates databases like federally awarded SBIR and STTR grants; software; published articles; and other tools to help inventors and commercializers get their products to market faster.

The federal patent office is the latest entity to join the Innovation Hub, and Pankin sees its inclusion as valida-



tion of what AutoHarvest is doing. It's also an indication of how seriously the Obama administration takes rebuilding American manufacturing and the patent office's desire to increase community interaction by opening satellite offices, the first of which was opened last year in Detroit.

“Manufacturing is becoming advanced manufacturing or smart manufacturing, and transportation is at the heart of the sector,” Pankin says, noting that connected cars and the drive toward eco-friendliness is dictating changes in manufacturing. “The tech prowess in those areas is staggering.”

In fact, it's this renewed interest in manufacturing that led Pankin to co-found AutoHarvest with Xconomist David Cole, the former chairman of the Center for Automotive Research think tank.

“Each night, when we go home, the team is more convinced that a renaissance is occurring in manufacturing, and not just in Detroit, but in the United States,” Pankin adds. “Being a part of a very large effort, I do believe we'll make a substantial contribution and economic impact.”

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