Bet You Missed It -- Press Clippings -- In the News -- Carefully Selected by Your Crack Team of News Sleuths

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WHEN CASH COWS RUN DRY
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Internet advertising and books online have cut into media companies’ profits from traditional cash cows TV ads and paperbacks, leaving giants like Viacom and Bertelsmann desperate for growth. They are responding by diversification. Bertelsmann has been building its services division Arvato which runs printing presses, repairs mobile phones and stores medicine for a wide range of clients.


JOURNALS ARE MAGAZINES,
NOT HOLY SCRIPTURE
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Tom Stossel, American Cancer Society Professor at Harvard Medical School decries the AMA Journal’s demonization of drug companies and their research with specific reference to Merck and Vioxx. In the Journal’s Manchester world view, drug companies are demons, medical academics are saints.

But, he says, many of his academic colleagues “would run over their grandparents to claim priority for a discovery, impose their pet theory on the field, obtain a research grant, win an award or garner a promotion.”

The drug companies operate under tough FDA review where the Korean cloning fraud — published in prestige journals — would never have occurred. Top journals can reject a lot of submissions because herd behavior gets them a lot of submissions. “That’s brand creation — not science.”


THE BLACKBERRY SPAT IS NOW THE NORM
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Want to defeat a patent claim? Just find one example of “prior art” — a reference to similar technology that was publicly available. A Rube Goldberg cartoon defeated a patent application for a dog food dispenser that dumped food when the dog jerked a chain attached to its collar.

An inventor laying claim to bar code technology was beaten by a cover of MAD magazine showing a huge bar code and the caption “MAD hopes this issue jams every computer in the country.” It was used to prove that bar coding was part of Americana long before the inventor’s claim. The vital April 1978 issue was found on eBay and attached to an appellate brief.

An applicant for a patent is now required to attach examples of prior art and assist the patent office in its searches. The Web has opened up university archives, out-of-print textbooks, and national patent filings — all at the touch of the fingertips.