

Making Copies!



Remember the old Saturday Night Live show when one of their stars, Rob Schneider, was the focal point of the office? Behind a copy machine, with people and documents flowing in and out, he kept saying, "making copies, making copies, making copies...."

Well, he didn't know it at the time but he was stating one of the original 40 Inventive Principles of TRIZ problem solving. It's principle #26. The reason copying is one of the all-star principles is for the simple reason that copies are cheaper than originals, and when they can replace originals, a significant amount of time and expense is saved. None of us could afford to pay a movie star to perform live for us, so we go to the movies. We can't afford all the fancy gems, so we settle for synthetics that look the same. It's too much trouble to take 20 original photos, so we make copies. Rather than re-invent the wheel, companies "benchmark" each other. It's all the same stuff! We keep saying that there really aren't any new solutions to problems, just new applications of the old principles. Recently, two fascinating new consumer products have appeared which use this "making copies" principle.

In the community lunch room at any organization, some people have the nasty habit of stealing other peoples' lunches that are stored in plastic bags. What would keep you from wanting to steal someone's sandwich? Maybe it's not something you like, but what if you thought it had mildew from being in the refrigerator too long? You'd move on to something else, wouldn't you? Well a clever new sandwich bag:

http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1152318/mold_sandwich_bags_a_good_idea.html?cat=6 is on the market which contains artificial stains on the bag which look like mildew. And they are a lot more expensive than normal bags!

Diet portion controls are also a nuisance because you need separate measuring devices to make sure that you're not overdoing it. A new product with the portion sizes pre-painted on the plate takes the mystery and guess work out of this, eliminating the extra measuring step. See <http://www.thinnerware.com> Where could you use copies instead of the original? What "copying" feature could you incorporate into your product that would make life easier for someone?

Next public TRIZ class for ASME/AIChE is in Orlando, March 29-31.

Go to:

http://catalog.asme.org/Education/ShortCourse/TRIZ_Theory_Inventive_Problem.cfm?ProgramNumber=SC3606&CFNoCache=TRUE

This course can also be brought to your site.

We had the honor of being one of the keynote speakers for the Mexican TRIZ Association last week in Santiago. We spoke about "Learning from Others" as well as repeating the workshop done last year on "Measuring Styles of Relating and Innovating".