



A head full of Inventions

Published: in: [Nacelles](#)

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Peter à Porta from Design for Manufacturing in Nacelles is quite an inventor. Some inventions have been filled for patent application others did not make the cut. - Some ideas came in close collaboration with colleagues other ideas were his alone.

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Senior Specialist at Design for Manufacturing Peter à Porta does not strike you as a Gyro Gearloose kind of type when you first meet him. But he is. Since 2008 he has handed in seven Patent applications to be processed by Vestas IPR.

Carl Barks' anthropomorphic chicken is quite outrageous in his productivity making his inventions lack important functions. This is not the case with Peter. In his work, from the very beginning his point of origin is to ensure the product is optimized according to the value chain it will be a part of.

"I represent Nacelles. I need to take into account that the product we design in cooperation with Technology can be produced, assembled and transported in the best way possible. Our success criteria for good product design are; high quality, low costs and high safety. Our turbines have to be saleable. - It is not a woman's handbag, where the price apparently does not matter, that we are making," is the blunt statement from the Senior Specialist in Design for Manufacturing. It is during this process he sometimes happens to catch new brilliant ideas that he sends off to Vestas IPR Compensation & Reward Department.

Vestas has decided to have remuneration policy where employees are rewarded financially for securing the intellectual property rights of innovation achievements across the company. This policy is aimed at creating a stronger incentive to protect our inventions using a financial reward.

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A really good idea

Peter à Porta is flicking through the many pages of the application. He smiles and says:

"It has been a while since we filled it out and send it in. But when I started reading it again I realized that this is really a very good idea."

The background for the idea is the increase of the turbine size and thereby an enormously increase in the size of the Nacelle. The large Nacelle causes enormous costs in terms of transportation and installation as well as large investments if the setup and equipment that is already available cannot be utilized.

"The transportation cost in itself is huge when we reach the size of a turbine like the new V164 turbine. Erecting it will be even more expensive because of the need for a special type of crane. So we started thinking about how we could reduce cost. The answer was simple. Build the Nacelle in modules," explains Peter à Porta and goes on;

"This idea will not make us build a better turbine but it will make it possible to reduce lifecycle costs and give Vestas a competitive advantage on the market that none of our competitors will have. Reducing the Cost of Energy is how we have to survive in the long run. Get costs down from the beginning while designing the turbines. It is much easier than trying to do it afterwards"



Gyro Gearloose wearing his thinking cap

Build your own turbine?

The similarity between the Vestas inventor and Disney's cartoon figure is the speed of good ideas though the Senior Specialist does not need a Thinking Cap to make his head spin. His little Helper is a great team of employees that surrounds him in his everyday work.

"Most of the times the good ideas spring to mind when I sit with a group of creative people. You ping pong with each other's ideas and make them grow. Then I simply fill out the application form for us and send it to the IPR department who makes a patent screening in advance. This to make sure that the idea we have come up with holds water. And sometime it does." Peter à Porta says.

While he is talking his eyes rest on the drawings of the Nacelle modules in the application. He gets up and starts drawing at the white board:

"If you take the module idea even further you could actually apply it to the concept of product platforms. Let the customer build the turbine they need - Like a modern sofa where you as a customer can create your individual sofa by combining standard modules so it meets your needs in your living room." Getting in to the idea he keeps talking and explaining:

"The key is to offer the customer a large variety of products – and at the same time to base

it on a very limited variance in the design. This will keep down the internal costs. The patent of the modular Nacelle might support this approach – It would indefinitely give a great competitive advantage for Vestas,” the inventor concludes, smiles and says: “I just came up with that. That is how it is. I just can’t help myself. My head is spinning with ideas.”

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