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## Executive Summary

### Background of the Product

The manufacture and design of traditional masks pose two conflicting challenges. The mask must serve as a disguise, but the wearer must be able to see and breathe effectively. Historically, these requirements have resulted in trade-offs where eye, mouth and/or nostril holes are needed for visibility and breatheability, yet expose the wearer's face and limit design possibilities. InVision Masks not only resolve these traditional conflicts, but also significantly improve upon visibility, breatheability, and comfort while affording unlimited design possibilities.

### Summary of Present Invention

Micro Perforated Technology (MPT™) represents a revolutionary leap in mask production. Masks utilizing this technology have thousands of tiny holes or perforations (approximately 150/in<sup>2</sup>) throughout all or part of their surface. The interior surface of the mask is uniformly dark (at least around the eyes) which further enhances visibility for the wearer. Made from almost any material, from rigid to pliable, and by any number of different manufacturing techniques (e.g., thermoforming, vacuum molding, etc.), this technology can adapt to infinite design criteria.

### Benefits of the Invention

**Dramatic Impact.** InVision Masks allows for a fuller and more dramatic realization of the character or image represented. For example, masks with glow in the dark eyes, masks with no eyes or entirely non-representational masks are now possible. InVision Masks are so versatile that mask design will now only be limited by the designer's imagination.

**Visibility.** Traditional masks with eyeholes often create visibility problems due to differences in eye spacing from person to person. Furthermore, traditional masks have a tendency to slip along the face, causing misalignment of the eyeholes. Even when aligned properly, eyeholes produce tunnel vision, limiting peripheral vision. The tiny perforations throughout InVision Masks allow for 180° of visibility.

**Safety.** Improved visibility means improved safety. Almost any parent whose child is running through darkened streets on Halloween will purchase InVision Masks for this reason alone. However, whether you are an on-stage actor or are dressing up for your next costume party, safety is a central issue for all mask wearers.

**Breatheability.** Air circulation in traditional masks is poor. Moisture from the wearer's breath condenses on the inner surface, perspiration cannot evaporate, and eventually the mask becomes hot, humid, odorous and generally uncomfortable to wear. The thousands of holes in InVision Masks act as miniature vents allowing for excellent circulation and breatheability.

**Comfort.** InVision Masks (as currently prototyped) are semi-pliable and extremely lightweight. While rigid enough to hold their shape, they also gently conform and flex to fit almost any face. Another advantage of InVision Masks is that eyeglasses or sunglasses can be easily and comfortably worn underneath.

### The Opportunity

Shields Design is looking for an exclusive licensee to bring InVision Masks to market. Parties interested in a product demonstration should contact Michael Hall (415) 577-5442.

**I****PRODUCT DESCRIPTION****Introducing InVision Masks with MPT™**

InVision Masks and Micro Perforated Technology (MPT™) will revolutionize the mask-making industry. Traditional masks require large eye, nose and/or mouth holes to allow visibility, breatheability and comfort. However, these large holes invariably conflict with design possibilities. The creator of InVision Masks realized that it is not the holes themselves that are problematic in traditional masks, but the *size and placement* of the holes. As demonstrated in the image to the right, InVision Masks feature tiny, numerous, uniform holes over the entire surface of the mask. This invention permits a design that covers the full face without impairing vision and solves the persistent form vs. function problem endemic to traditional mask design.

**The Competition**

Traditional masks are further limited because designers must guesstimate the size and spacing of eyeholes to enable proper visibility. The average distance between an adult's eyes (average pupillary distance) is 64 mm. However, eye spacing can vary more than thirty percent from one adult to another (from 55 mm to 72 mm)<sup>1</sup> and variability in pupillary distance is even more exaggerated between children. Moreover, traditional masks have a tendency to slip along the face, causing misalignment of the eyeholes. Even when eyeholes are properly aligned, masks often protrude outward from the face due to differences in facial structure, producing tunnel vision and further limiting peripheral vision. This obstruction of vision poses serious safety concerns for all mask wearers, increasing the risk of injury and even death (see the Safety section below for statistics).

Traditional masks also tend to be made of non-breathable materials such as plastic, vinyl and latex. These materials trap heat and moisture from the wearer's breath and perspiration on the inside of the mask, resulting in a hot, humid and generally uncomfortable environment.

Finally, for many costumes the mask is the most important identifying feature for character recognition. Furthermore, the eyes and/or the mouth (or even their lack thereof!) are oftentimes the most important and recognizable features of the mask. The necessity of traditional masks to include eye, nose and/or mouth holes invariably compromises character representation and recognition.

**Now you see it...****now you don't.**

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.hydrooptix.com/glossary.htm>

## II PRODUCT BENEFITS

### Visibility

The thousands of tiny perforations in InVision Masks offer its wearers 180° of visibility. Furthermore, the interior surfaces of InVision Masks are uniformly dark (or at least around the eyes) which further enhances visibility for the wearer by reducing ambient glare.



Traditional Masks:  
Tunnel Vision



InVision Masks:  
180° Visibility

### Safety

Poorly fitted masks, or masks with small eyeholes can block children's view of oncoming traffic, curbs, steps, etc. Hospital emergency room statistics indicate that *a child is more likely to be involved in an injury-producing accident on Halloween than at any other time of the year,*<sup>2</sup> while the CDC reports that on Halloween night, *children are four times more likely to die in traffic related accidents.*<sup>3</sup>

A recent survey by The Halloween Association of more than 16,000 clippings from newspapers around the United States found "a marked increase in articles on Halloween safety."<sup>4</sup> Consistent with this finding, a survey by The Macerich Company of over 4,000 Halloween shoppers found that 78% of adults and 66% of children are concerned about safety.<sup>5</sup>

Although it is difficult to determine what percentage of Halloween accidents are due to masks obstructing vision, what is certain is every article this researcher was able to find on Halloween safety stressed the importance of children being able to see and breathe properly when wearing masks<sup>6</sup> with most articles going one critical step further—*urging parents not to buy traditional masks at all*, opting for face paints instead.<sup>7</sup> Correspondingly, many retailers have seen a reduction in their old-style traditional mask sales and an increase in the sale of face paints.<sup>8</sup>

Yet, face paints have significant drawbacks. Design possibilities are extremely limited, they inevitably smudge and smear, and cleanup is a chore.

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<sup>2</sup> *Halloween Hazards*, Educational Digest, Sept 98, Vol. 64, Issue 1, p. 75

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/epo/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00049687.htm>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.halloweenassn.org/trends.html>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.macerich.com/press/releases/archive\\_html/PR991004.zulu](http://www.macerich.com/press/releases/archive_html/PR991004.zulu)

<sup>6</sup> *Halloween Safety Measures*, Child Health Alert, Oct 96, Vol. 14, p. 5; *Safety Tips for Halloween*, 1994, p.1

<sup>7</sup> *Healthy Halloween*, American Health 10/96, Vol., 11 Issue 8, p.104; *Slowly I Turned...*, Woman's Day, 10/98, Vol. 61, Issue 16, p. 146; *Halloween Hazards*, Educational Digest, Sept 98, Vol. 64, Issue 1, p.75

<sup>8</sup> *A Hard Day's Fright*, Playthings, Mar 99, Vol. 97, Issue 3, p. 30.

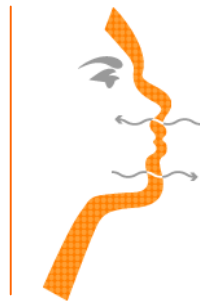
## Dramatic Impact

InVision Masks are completely unique in the costume industry because, unlike traditional masks, they do not require eye, nose or mouth holes, thereby allowing for the widest design possibilities and the most realistic character representations. For example, masks can now have eyes of any shape, size, number, placement or color. Completely non-representational masks, masks that are upside-down or even backwards are now possible! InVision Masks are so versatile that their only limitation to design will be the designer's own imagination.

According to the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association, licensed products have increased their share of Halloween sales to 50%. In choosing between alternatives, one of the most important considerations consumers use is how representative the licensed costume is. Given the mask is often the most important identifying feature of character recognition, having to include mouth, nose and/or eyeholes may dilute the illusion, while trying to minimize them, again, interferes with visibility, breatheability, and comfort.

This is no less true with non-licensed character representations as well.

## Breatheability



InVision Masks with MPT™ have thousands of tiny holes (approximately 150/in<sup>2</sup>) throughout all or part of its surface.

Air circulation in traditional masks is poor. Moisture from the wearer's breath condenses on the inner surface, perspiration cannot evaporate, and eventually the mask becomes hot, humid and uncomfortable. The thousands of holes in InVision Masks act as miniature vents allowing excellent circulation and breatheability. This is especially important in warmer climates where mask sales tend to be lower.<sup>9</sup>

## Comfort

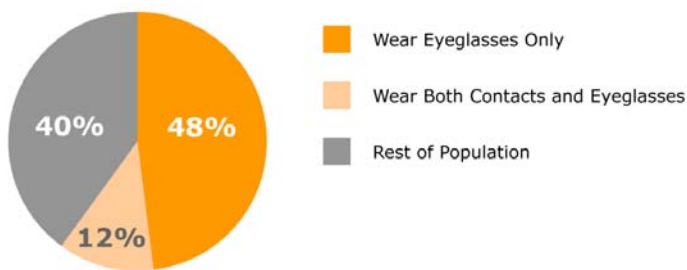
InVision Masks are semi-pliable and extremely lightweight. While rigid enough to hold their shape, they also gently conform and flex to fit almost any face.

Generally, eyewear cannot be easily worn underneath traditional masks. In the rare instances where this is possible, the eyewear tends to push the mask forward further increasing tunnel vision. A tremendous advantage of InVision Masks is that unlike traditional masks, eyeglasses or sunglasses *can* be easily and comfortably worn underneath without compromising vision.

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<sup>9</sup> August 21, 2001 phone interview with Richard Seigel, Owner of Halloween Experience

## U.S. Population



The Vision Council of America estimates that about 60 percent of the U.S. population (161 million people) wears prescription eyewear with only 12% (31 million people) wearing both contact lenses and glasses. The difference—48% of Americans or 130 MILLION PEOPLE—only wear prescription glasses. This represents an enormous untapped market for the sale of InVision Masks.

## Patent Status

MPT™ masks are covered under U.S. Patent No. 5,465,427 which was approved and issued on November 14, 1995. Due to unavoidable circumstances the patent holder was unable to pay this patent's 3.5-year maintenance fees. However, on August 21, 2001 a Petition to Accept Unavoidably Delayed Payment of Maintenance Fee in an Expired Patent (37 CFR 1.378(b)) was submitted to the USPTO, well within the allotted grace period for filing such a petition, with all appropriate fees and declarations. The USPTO Petitions Office anticipates active and enforceable patent status in 3 to 5 months.

The scope of competing products based around this inventive matter is extremely limited. Therefore, the claims of U.S. Patent No. 5,465,427 are unusually broad, covering not only the product itself (a mask with a plurality of holes, perforations, slits, apertures, etc. for the purposes described above), but also the processes of manufacture for said masks (covering any number of current manufacturing techniques to achieve the product's features).

### III TARGET MARKET

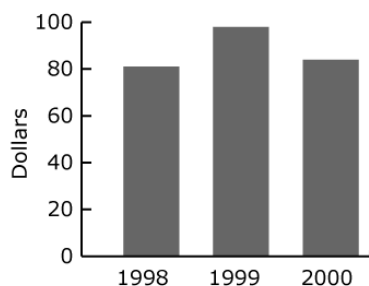
#### Introduction

Though masks are sold throughout the year for parades, cultural events, parties and the like, by far the largest market for the sale of masks is during the Halloween season. With an estimated \$6.8 billion in sales this year (and growing), Halloween is the second largest holiday after Christmas in terms of dollars spent.<sup>10</sup> According to the Halloween Association it is also the third biggest party day after New Years Eve and Super Bowl Sunday. Costumes (including masks) represent the second largest spending category during Halloween accounting for \$1.5 billion in sales and growing.<sup>13</sup>

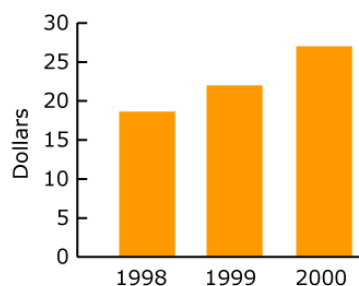
#### Market Description

This tremendous growth in the Halloween industry has kept both retailers and manufacturers on their toes, forcing them to come up with more exciting and innovative ways to grab consumers attention—and of course, their money.

##### Halloween Budgets Increase 4%



##### Costume Budgets Increase 45%



According to American Express Retail Indexes from 1998 to 2000, the average Halloween budget for American shoppers grew by only 4%, while their budget for costumes (including masks) grew 45%! So how are costume manufacturers responding?

According to Howard Beige, vice president of Rubie's Costumes, costumes are becoming more and more upscale each year with consumers willing to pay higher prices for costumes as long as the quality is there. As a result, Rubie's is developing better quality costumes.<sup>11</sup>

According to Jeff Coppens, director of marketing and product development for Disguise Inc. "Costumes are selling that have more styling to them. Price is important, but not the determining factor." Adding, "Smart retailers are offering more to their customers."<sup>12</sup>

Yet mask sales are moving in the opposite direction, decreasing in both quality and price.<sup>13</sup> Until now, manufactures of masks have not been able to offer more to their customers because the long-standing problems of comfort, visibility and limitations of design are inherent to their process of manufacture. By radically rethinking the process by which masks are made, InVision Masks with MPT™ represent a true innovation that promises to revive this category of costume spending.

<sup>10</sup> National Retail Federation ([www.nfr.com/content/press/cot400.htm](http://www.nfr.com/content/press/cot400.htm))

<sup>11</sup> *Mask Appeal*, Playthings, Mar 01, Vol. 99, Issue 3, p. 28

<sup>12</sup> *Scaring up Share for Halloween Holiday*, Discount Store News, Apr 00 Vol. 39, no. 7

<sup>13</sup> Aug. 24, 2001 phone interview with Robert McKinnon, CEO of Eddie's Trick & Novelty

## IV A BREAKTHROUGH OPPORTUNITY

### Market Readiness

The tremendous growth of the Halloween industry in recent years has resulted in a proportional increase in the number of products competing for consumers' pocketbooks. InVision Masks represents a true innovation that will allow our licensee to stand out from the crowd and capture a larger market share.

Couple this with unlimited design possibilities and consumers willing to spend more and more on costumes every year, and there has never been a better time for the introduction of InVision Masks.

### A Unique Branding Opportunity

With growing consumer concerns about Halloween safety (and corresponding decreases in mask sales), the company who brings this product to market may very well become known as "the company that cares".

Recognizing the marketing potential of this approach HNT Brands, in association with Paper Magic and 3M, has successfully introduced a brand of adhesive masks (Magic Masks™) on its safety benefits alone. In fact, 3M uncharacteristically put its name on the packaging and agreed to fund a national public relations campaign to build awareness of the product. Retailers include Target, Wal-Mart and Kmart and revenues for 2001 are expected to double over last year.<sup>14</sup>

### Broad Patent Claims

Due to the unusually broad nature of this patent's claims, the licensee can be less concerned about the competition "designing around" this patent and introducing similar, competing products. Because Shields Design is looking for an exclusive licensee, the company we sign will benefit from a monopoly in the U.S. market for the negotiated term of exclusivity.

### Barriers to Entry

**Manufacturing.** Because of the novelty of this product, its process of manufacture is somewhat different from that of traditional masks. Does your company possess the manufacturing expertise needed to guide this process and coordinate efforts with your designers? Does your company have the resources to devote to redesigning and/or coming up with new designs for masks?

**The Right Marketing Approach.** All new innovations require significant marketing to educate buyers and end users regarding product features and benefits. Does your company have the expertise and resources to devote to this large-scale effort?

**Distribution Network.** With most of the Halloween market being owned by mass merchandisers and discount department stores<sup>15</sup>, can your company successfully introduce new products into these large retail outlets? The novelty of this product should make the process easier, but unlike specialty stores, mass merchants tend to buy primarily from large vendors with established product lines.

### Long-term Opportunity

We are looking for a licensee who is interested in a limited exclusive or non-exclusive license.

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<sup>14</sup> *Cashing in on Costumes*, Star Tribune Newspaper of the Twin Cities, 8/25/00

<sup>15</sup> <http://home3.americanexpress.com/corp/latestnews/halloween-index.asp>

**V**

## Management Team

### **Rodney M. Shields, Founder and President, Shields Design**

Rodney is an experienced product developer, who has three U.S. patents in the field of one-way vision panels and has several others pending. He is the inventor of ImagoImage one-way window graphic material (US Patents # 5,609,938 and 5,773,110) that was successfully licensed to 3M and now appears as advertisement media on buses, cars and storefronts, creating a billion-dollar industry worldwide.

With two children of his own, the genesis of this patent came from his first-hand experience of having to negotiate with his children over safety vs. styling when buying traditional masks.



### **Michael Hall, President, Lucid Designs**

Michael Hall is a published medical researcher and left UC Davis Medical School to pursue a career in product development. Before starting Lucid Designs, he managed the product development group (iDev Group) at Ideadollar, Inc. and co-created an invention evaluation system used to assess the over 14,000 new product ideas submitted to the company (incidentally, InVision Masks ranked in the top 1% of all submissions). His experience as iDev Group Manager gave him a broad knowledge and skill base—from identifying high opportunity ventures, managing IP related issues and contracts, conducting market and manufacturing research, to identifying appropriate licensees and negotiating licenses. Michael founded Lucid Designs to research and develop his own product ideas and provides contract work to interested third parties. Visit [www.luciddesigns.net](http://www.luciddesigns.net) for more information.