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OCTOBER 2009



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Utynam's Heirs

A monthly column devoted to IP curiosities and controversies, named in honour of John of Utynam - who received the world's first recorded patent in 1449

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Joining the Twitterati

Keen, as ever, to take part in the latest technology trends, *Managing IP* is pleased to announce that it joined micro-blogging service Twitter over the summer.

We are in the company of well-known bloggers Dennis Crouch of Patently-O, Jeremy Phillips, Axel Horns and, of course, the latest artist to wade into the copyright debate – Lilly Allen (see below).

So far, Utynam has been impressed by the way in which the IP community has taken advantage of this new way to share information. He has also been pleasantly surprised by the number of lawyers able to express themselves in only 140 characters.

For anyone who wants to follow our tweets, we are [@managingip](#).

Break a leg

Fans of the TV show *Dragons' Den*, where would-be entrepreneurs expose their business plans to scorn and scepticism in the hope of winning investment for their schemes, may have seen Michael Pritchard's triumphant bid to secure funding for his anyway spray invention last month.

Utynam is pleased that two UK firms are also sharing in Pritchard's success: patent agency Gill Jennings & Every helped him build his IP portfolio while law firm Speechly Bircham advised the inventor on exploiting his product, a system that allows spray products to work whichever way the bottle is held. But he was particularly happy to learn that Gill Jennings went above and beyond the call of IP duty when it came to helping Pritchard to prepare for his admission into the Den.

A team from the firm put on a mock show to make sure the inventor got the explanation of the IP aspects of his business plan correct. Partner Peter Finnie played telecoms millionaire Peter Jones while associate Rowena Powell took the part of Deborah Meaden – a dragon who can crush the business dreams of any knee-knocking budding entrepreneur with the raising of an eyebrow. "Rowena wasn't happy about it but played it like the pro that she is!" reports Finnie. Congratulations all round.

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