

IIT tech fest fuels patent-creativity debate

Inventor of first pre-Web search engine Alan Emtage talks about patenting at inauguration of IIT-Gn's two-day annual technical summit

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Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar inaugurated its two-day annual technology summit Amalthea-2013 on Saturday. With 'Innovation' as the theme this year, the summit has lined up interesting exhibitions and competitions, along with a special event inviting innovative ideas from across the country.

Day one of the summit was made special by the presence of Alan Emtage, the brain behind the first version of Archie, a pre-Web internet search engine for locating material in public FTP archives.

Emtage took the opportunity to express his views on the concept of patenting. "I think patenting of basic ideas is problematic because future innovations build on these basic ideas." Emtage, who did not patent Archie said, "At that point in time, US



Several school children visited the summit at the Gandhinagar institute on Saturday

had not started patenting algorithms and software. But the main reason for not patenting the concept was that we did not want to suppress the innovation that would follow otherwise."

He also emphasised on the disadvantage of 'customised search results' in which, "the search engines give the results of searches according to the

user's search history. It narrows the focus of users and limits them from exposure to new ideas."

This year, Amalthea-2013 will incubate innovative ideas from across the country through a special event called 'Incubation for Innovation' through a fund of Rs.50 lakh. Meanwhile, Design and Innovation



Alan Emtage spoke at the festival

Expo has participants from renowned companies and organisations such as DC designs, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Bhaskaracharya Institute of Space Application and Geo-Informatics (BISAG), INDEXTb, Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA), among others. The summit also had events like

APP TO SCHEDULE DAY

Keeping in mind today's chaotic schedules, Meet Vadera and Samarth Vajjanapurkar, second year students of B.Tech (mechanical) and Mudit Rathod, a second year student of B.Tech (electrical engineering) created a mobile application named Amalthea 2013. "This application will help create a schedule. It will remind the user about an event, half and hour before the scheduled time. Moreover, the application can be synchronized with Google calendar and mobile too," said Mudit. Users with internet access on their mobile phones will be given a QR code from the helpdesk which will help them download the application for free.

Robo-Militia, a robotic competition, Chem Car, a competition of running cars with different chemicals, etc.