

# Elegance in Pocket

MAN'S SQUARE HOLDER SOLVES AN AGE-OLD PROBLEM

BY EDITH G. TOLCHIN

**Y**EARs AGO when I majored in apparel design, the focus was on women's fashions. Men were lucky if they had a few different styles of slacks (that's what they were called then!), shirts—mostly button-down and polo styles—ties, and a woefully small variety of accessories. We didn't even have the option to major in menswear!

Fortunately, markets and majors have evolved, and there's an exciting number of options for men's clothing and accessories. Here's an exciting new men's fashion item that changes those old, boring handkerchiefs that were folded and placed into a suit jacket chest pocket.

**Edith G. Tolchin (EGT):** How did the Best Pocket Square Holder come about?

**Cedric Cobb (CC):** My background includes retail management, outside sales and national nonprofit management. The Best Pocket Square Holder was birthed out of frustration and necessity. I was tired of seeing well-dressed men wearing apparel valued between \$300 to \$3,000 with no dignified solution to fix the century-old problem of how to keep their pocket square looking good all day.

The straw that broke the camel's back was when I saw a "Steve Harvey Show" segment about five years ago that revealed his secret of holding a pocket square in place with a piece of fabric tape. I thought it was criminal that arguably the sharpest-dressed man in America had to use such a primitive method to secure his look. Then I went on my mission to create the Best Pocket Square Holder. Two years later, I applied for my patent.

**EGT:** What are the advantages over just inserting a pocket square into a jacket pocket?

**CC:** No more falling pocket squares! The Best Pocket Square Holder is a hinged, pouch-like device that squeezes open, like a clamshell. Once you style your pocket square and insert it into the pocket square holder, the mechanism holds the pocket square fold securely. Then, you insert the full assembly into the sports coat chest pocket, and it will stay styled all day long. Problem solved!

There have been products submitted to the patent office for almost a century that have spoken to the symptom of this pocket square issue but never anything to be the cure for pocket square cancer. Our product is the official solution. Our product is to a pocket square what a belt is to a pair of pants—a must-have.

**EGT:** How many tries did it take before you created the perfect prototype?

**CC:** I had about eight different iterations of it before our final, perfected design. It is also available in a slim edition for slender pockets or smaller suits.

**EGT:** Are you manufacturing in the United States?

**CC:** I am proud to announce the Best Pocket Square Holder and many of our other products are produced right here in the United States of America. Our manufacturing facility resides in the heart of St. Louis, Missouri.

**EGT:** Can you share your journey from prototype to manufacturing to retail?

**CC:** This was a pretty arduous journey, because I was not able to produce the final prototype of the Best Pocket Square Holder all at once. It happened over time through trial-and-error research development focus groups and a lot of frustration, but never once was it an option to give up.

Overall, it took about five years to get a good working prototype that I felt confident enough with to put into the patent process and bring it to market for proof of concept. Educating consumers was the biggest challenge because men needed it but did not know it was



The Best Pocket Square Holder is a hinged, pouch-like device that squeezes open. Once the pocket square is styled and inserted into the pocket square holder, the fold is held securely. The full assembly is then inserted into the pocket.

**“Our product is to a pocket square what a belt is to a pair of pants—a must-have.”**

—CEDRIC COBB

available to them. Even still, the level of awareness has barely scratched the surface because it is a men's furnishing more than it is an accessory. That means it is a necessity for securing your style—not an option. We are trying to re-educate men all around the world.

**EGT: Are you aware that there are MANY knock-offs of your exact product being manufactured and sold in China via alibaba.com?**

**CC:** I am very much aware of everything that's going on in the market as it relates to our product. Although we were the ones who created this market, due to lag times and constant communication with patent examiners, the process of getting a patent has taken longer than expected. And even when you have a patent, you must make a decision about whether or not to put your resources and energy toward holding people accountable for infringement.

Once our patent is issued, we will make the determination about whether to shut them down. In the meantime, we will continue to innovate and stay far ahead of what any imitators can possibly think of. We have a superior vision.

**EGT: Please tell us about your patent process.**

**CC:** When going after a patent for the Best Pocket Square Holder, I did not want to run with a concept. I wanted to run with a fully developed product. Therefore, by the time I sat down with my patent attorney I already had a good working prototype, an initial marketing strategy, a production process, resources and relationships with materials manufacturers, a website, and a sales strategy. We are still patent pending, but our patent should be issued later this year.

**EGT: How many styles, colors and fabrics are you featuring? Pricing? Packaging?**

**CC:** The Best Pocket Square Holder and the Slim Edition Best Pocket Square Holder are available in 12 different styles and colors, with prices between \$19.99 and \$24.99. We also offer special packages like



the “Shark Tank Special” that range from \$44.99 to \$55.99. We always say our product is a \$20 fix for a 100-year-old problem!

**EGT: Where are you selling?**

**CC:** We offer a variety of avenues for people to purchase and/or resell our line of Best Pocket Square Holders and complementary products. Our products are available on our website, as well as amazon, etsy, ebay and cufflinks.com. We also wholesale our products nationally via approximately 500 retail outlets.

You can check the store locator on our website for participating locations. We distribute the bulk of our products through major trade shows such as the Magic Show, The COBB Show, and soon to be others such as the Chicago Collective, Northwest Buyers, and so on.

**EGT: Please share your experience on “Shark Tank.”**

**CC:** “Shark Tank” was truly an out-of-body experience and a huge blessing! After doing my homework, I learned that more than 55,000 people annually try out for the show. They narrow it down to a couple hundred businesses who get a national opportunity.

My “Shark Tank” experience has helped me understand that I am among a group of chosen few who

Cedric Cobb is aware that there are many knock-offs of his product but has experienced delays in getting a patent.

received worldwide recognition. I went into the tank with confidence, enthusiasm, pride and passion. I am proud that I represented myself, my family, my city, and my God at the highest level. Not only did I avoid being eaten in the tank, I also bagged a shark, Daymond John.

I am forever indebted and loyal to the "Shark Tank" family for the opportunities and exposure that resulted.

**EGT: Do you have any plans to add to your product line?**

**CC:** Yes, we plan to expand our pocket square holders and other complementary products and services. Due to our overall vision and demand from our clients, we have plans for custom, unique items that fit every personality. That's all I can share right now, but stay tuned to our social media platforms and our free mobile app, "Best Wardrobe Solutions," which is available for Apple and Android devices.

**EGT: Which obstacles have you encountered?**

**CC:** A few obstacles occurred with locating suppliers who could handle our quantities and turnaround times. In addition, we encountered obstacles with securing the right facility and team to continue manufacturing our products in the United States. Fortunately, we overcame these challenges and are equipped to fulfill all order levels—from the smallest to the largest.

**EGT: Can you offer guidance to novice inventors seeking to develop their products?**

**CC:** Absolutely! It's important for you to understand that developing a product is more like a marathon than a sprint. Be open to change, tweak, and modify your idea so your product has the best chance to be accepted by the marketplace.

However, stay true to your vision! Also, protect your idea as much as possible, especially in its infancy stage. Secure an attorney for guidance and obtain a non-disclosure agreement before discussing your product or idea with others.

If your vision is big enough, the opinions of others should not matter. Many people around you will not have the same drive or zeal about your vision or product. You will experience fear throughout the process, but exercise courage by moving forward despite the presence of fear. Do it scared! ☺

*Details: [bestwardrobesolutions.com](http://bestwardrobesolutions.com)*

Books by **Edie Tolchin** ([egt@edietolchin.com](mailto:egt@edietolchin.com)) include "Fanny on Fire" ([fannyonfire.com](http://fannyonfire.com)) and "Secrets of Successful Inventing." She has written for *Inventors Digest* since 2000. Edie has owned EGT Global Trading since 1997, assisting inventors with product safety issues and China manufacturing.



## 2 Critical Steps to getting your NEW PRODUCT "out there"

### 1 GET IT MADE

Contact Edie Tolchin – "The Sourcing Lady" (SM) for sourcing, China manufacturing, product safety issues, packaging assistance, quality control, production testing, final shipment inspections, freight arrangements, import services and delivery to your door!

[www.EGTglobaltrading.com](http://www.EGTglobaltrading.com)

[EGT@egtglobaltrading.com](mailto:EGT@egtglobaltrading.com)

P.O. Box 5660 - Hillsborough, NJ 08844

845-321-2362

### 2 GET A WEBSITE!

Contact Ken Robinson – While your order is being manufactured, you need to start working on your WEB PRESENCE! Get people talking about your product on Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+), get good search engine placement (SEO)!

[www.widgetsontheweb.com](http://www.widgetsontheweb.com)

[kenrbnsn@widgetsontheweb.com](mailto:kenrbnsn@widgetsontheweb.com)

614 Van Liew Court - Hillsborough, NJ 08844

908-963-2447

Get more BANG for your BUCK from two professionals with a combined total of over 60 years of experience!

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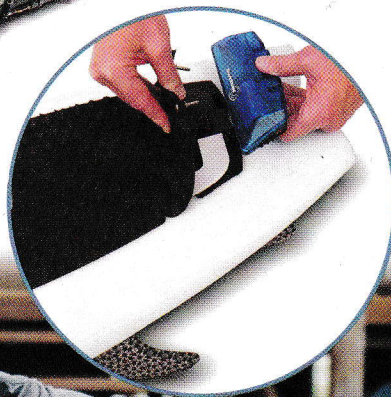
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**Desmond Wheatley**  
CEO, ENVISION SOLAR

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