



Why All the **Fuss?**

WOMAN'S LINE OF PRODUCTS DESIGNED TO CALM NEWBORNS—AND PARENTS **BY EDITH G. TOLCHIN**

WHEN I STARTED working with inventors almost 30 years ago, it was quite uncommon for women to be identified as inventors. It still is.

But there is hope in the words of an old Bob Dylan song, “The Times, They Are A-Changin.”

Here are two products from Tranquilo Mat inventor Melissa Gersin that are intended to help calm fussy babies, which can help exhausted parents get some ZZZs.

Edith G. Tolchin (EGT): How did the Tranquilo soothing mats come about?

Melissa Gersin (MG): I was working as a maternity nurse in a Boston-area hospital when I completed a training as an infant crying specialist with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. During that training, I learned the science of calming crying babies by mimicking the sounds and motions of the womb.

At that time, there were no products on the market that effectively did both things—and nothing portable and versatile for the modern, on-the-go parent. One night, while trying to simultaneously soothe three fussy babies in my hospital’s nursery all in different

settings, I had an epiphany and the idea for the Tranquilo Mat was born.

EGT: Have you had any difficulties manufacturing, as well as obtaining CPSIA (Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act) certifications?

MG: Like any company starting out, we did run into at least one or two small issues with manufacturing, but I feel fortunate they weren’t major issues nor insurmountable problems.

As for CPSIA certifications, I was diligent about contacting multiple experts to confirm the rules and regulations for a unique product like ours. My meticulous research meant obtaining all the proper safety certifications wasn’t hard!

EGT: Please share your patent process.

MG: I took a book, “Patent it Yourself,” from my library and after reading it set about adequately researching existing patents before finally venturing up the gusto to submit the provisional patent application to the United States Patent and Trademark Office myself.

Fortunately, I had a college friend whose husband was a patent attorney and he handled my patent submission for a very discounted rate. His firm also provided me with free trademark and international patent application submissions. About \$15,000 and four years later, we are a patented product and trademarked brand!

The Tranquilo Mat (above) emerged from the premise of calming babies by mimicking the sounds and motions of the womb. The Baby Soothe massager (below) is the first to mimic a mother’s fingertip massage.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MELISSA GERSIN

EGT: Did it take many prototypes before you came up with the current product?

MG: Between myself and our factory, it took over 10 prototypes before our beta-product was delivered to our Indiegogo backers in December 2015. With a few more minor tweaks, we launched our product and we've been learning from customers ever since! We are currently finalizing development for the next version, a Bluetooth-enabled device with a few other often requested features.

EGT: How is the Tranquilo Mat packaged? Where are they sold?

MG: The product is rolled into a tall square box and sold online as well as in stores at a variety of locations: our website; Amazon.com; in store or online at buybuyBABY; Target.com; Walmart.com, or at more than 100 independent baby boutiques.

EGT: Who handles your PR? What has worked and what hasn't?

MG: We handle our PR ourselves, focusing more on a grassroots effort. We mainly work with influencers and partner with other synergistic baby brands to do giveaways and share marketing resources. We've found today's mom is almost 100 percent online using social media and other online resources to learn about products before buying. We market directly to moms on social media.

EGT: You were on "Shark Tank." Tell us about it.

MG: That experience was amazing! The show reached out to me in late June 2016, asking if we'd be interested in applying. I sped through the process and was flown to Los Angeles for filming in September 2016. I felt very prepared for the show and found it to be a pretty great experience.

The Sharks were much nicer than they seemed on TV. My pitch was about an hour. Overall, we shook hands with Robert Herjavec and when our show aired in February 2017, the response was incredible.

We sold out of 2,000 units in less than 24 hours and went on to over \$1 million in sales for 2017, mainly from the show's exposure and connections alone. It's how we also launched into big-box retailers that same year and grew the business before selling in November 2018 to Baby Brezza. I'm now working with them to continue to grow the Tranquilo brand and product line.

EGT: You have another product featured on your website, the Baby Soothe™ massager, which launched last September. Who invented them? How did they come about?

MG: Baby Soothe is the first baby massager meant to mimic Mom's fingertip massage, a well-documented natural soothing aid. Baby Brezza was working on developing Baby Soothe with inventor Lauren Piccirillo when we started the process to sell Tranquilo's assets to them.

Once they acquired us, they decided to launch her product under the Tranquilo brand name as they work to create a full line of innovative sleep and soothing products to complement their line of feeding products.

EGT: Can the battery pack on either product get hot?

MG: Neither product has ever had any issues with the battery pack getting hot. We designed the product to use simple AA batteries instead of lithium ion batteries to avoid this issue. We also work with a factory that makes FDA-grade medical devices and rigorously test each batch to ensure they are as safe as possible for our smallest, most precious consumer—babies!

"It's a long road to developing and launching a baby product, so do ample research to figure things out but do it step by step and don't get overwhelmed."

—MELISSA GERSIN





Mom Lauren Piccirillo invented Baby Soothe.

EGT: Do both products come in different sizes? What are the age ranges for the Tranquilo Mat and Baby Soothe?

MG: The Tranquilo Mat is recommended for babies up to 6 months but can also work well for babies 6 to 18 months old with known sleep issues—not sleeping through the night, difficulty with crib transition training, and so on. It comes in two sizes, large and small, but the large is our best seller as it's best for any sleep and soothing settings—crib, bassinet, activity mat, stroller, and so on. The small is best in a car seat or baby carrier, two very specialized uses.

The Baby Soothe only comes in one size, but the belly band included is adjustable to fit a variety of babies. It can be used for babies of any age but is recommended for those up to 12 months.

EGT: Are you manufacturing these massagers together with Lauren Piccirillo, or are you manufacturing separately?

MG: Manufacturing is all done under the Tranquilo brand name, but the factories used for the products or parts of the products may differ. We try to work with the best factory for each product, even if that means working with more factories.

EGT: Can you share advice with novice inventors, especially for manufacturing a baby product?

MG: Follow your curiosity and take things one step at a time. It's a long road to developing and launching a baby product, so do ample research to figure things out but do it step by step and don't get overwhelmed by how much there is to do. 📌

Details: Inventing or product development-related questions, mgersin@beteshgroup.com; products, TranquiloBaby.com

Books by **Edie Tolchin** (egt@edietolchin.com) include "Fanny on Fire" (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!

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)!

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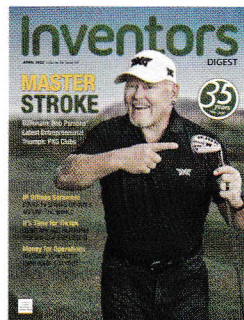
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ON THE COVER
PXG founder Bob Parsons;
photo courtesy of PXG



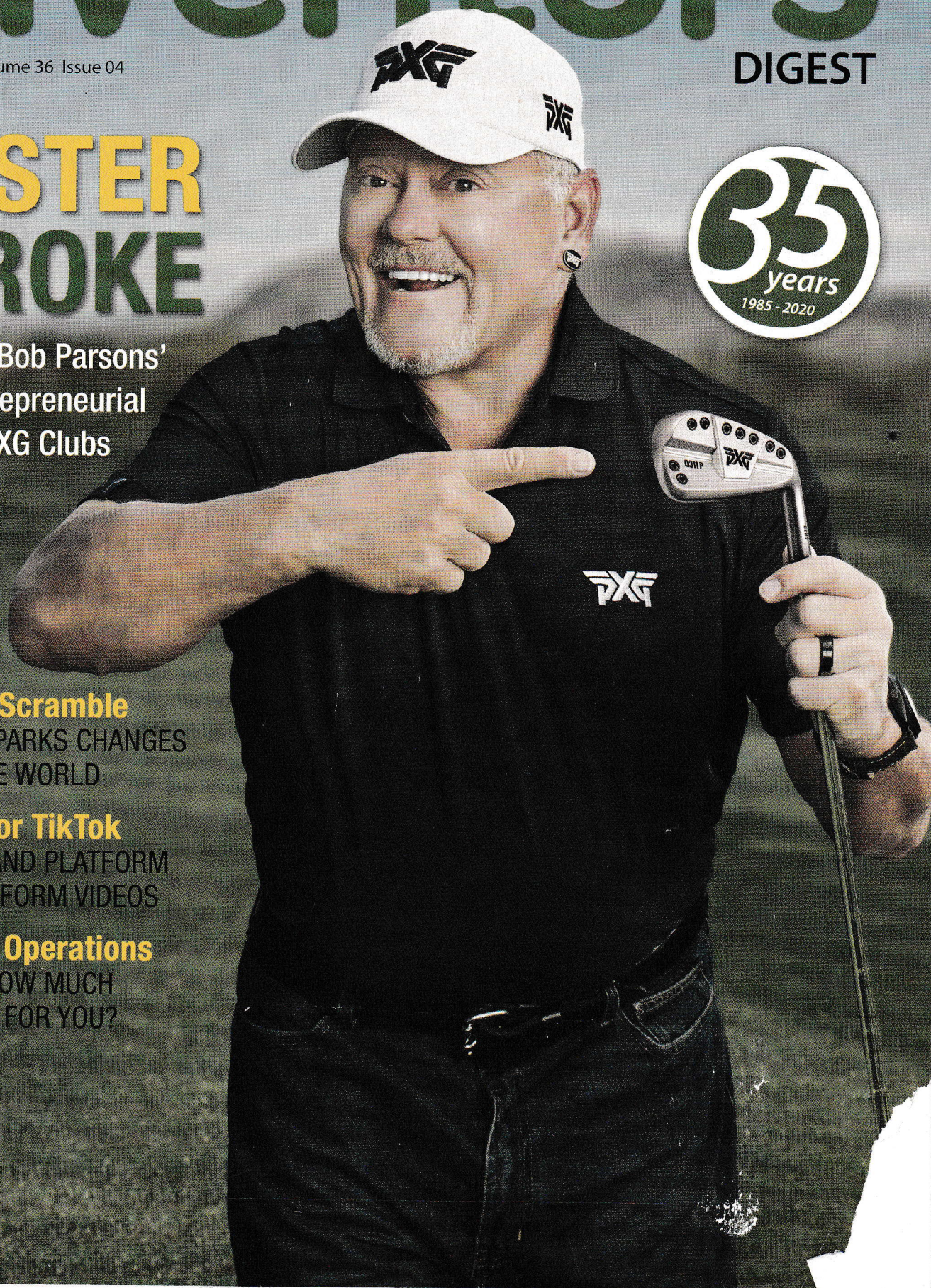
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MASTER STROKE

Billionaire Bob Parsons'
Latest Entrepreneurial
Triumph: PXG Clubs



IP Offices Scramble

COVID-19 SPARKS CHANGES
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