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<http://www.wordlock.com/press.html>

Contact Information:

Boyd Pearson

Ricochet Partners

503-220-0212

email@wordlock.com

New Technology Revives 800-Year-Old Idea

Former Apple VP reinvents lock combinations that use letters, not numbers

- The idea for combination locks is over 800-years old, an Arabic invention first chronicled by an engineer named Al-Jazari. Al-Jazari served the Turkish Artuqid rulers in Jazira from 1174 A.D. to 1222 A.D. in modern-day Iraq and Syria. Al-Jazari wrote about a combination lock in his catalog of inventions called "A Compendium on the Theory and Practice of the Mechanical Arts."
- At about the same time, the Chinese used word combination locks, puzzle padlocks that had anywhere from three to seven rings of characters and were probably not used to protect riches, but rather as interesting status symbols.
- Western Europe used key locks until a wave of lock picking thefts hit in the 18th century. As a solution, an inventor named Buttersworth made the first European combination lock in 1846. In 1878, Joseph Loch patented the first U.S. combination lock for Tiffany's in New York City. Both of these locks were keyless, used Arabic numbers and resembled Al-Jazari's lock of nearly 600 years before.
- In 2004, former Apple engineering VP Todd Basche, frustrated by forgetting the number combination to a padlock on the family pool, revisited the idea of word combination locks. However, Basche added a high-tech twist: He designed his modern Wordlock using a computer algorithm to optimize the letters that appear on the lock dials so that users could set thousands of words themselves. In a world of computer passwords, the modern combination lock finally caught up...and it only took it 800 years!

LINKS

"A Step Down That's a Step Up," Jennifer Wang, Entrepreneur Magazine, 11/14/08

An expose on Todd Basche's move from VP at Apple Computer to founding his own business.

<http://www.entrepreneur.com/startingabusiness/successstories/article198510.html>

"Wordlock—Redefining a Product in an Already Existing Market," Sara D. Anderson, Fast Company, 9/29/08

<http://www.fastcompany.com/blog/sara-d-anderson/fast-slice/wordlock-redefining-product-already-existing-market>

"Padlocks in China," Raine Borg, Ph.D., www.historicallocks.com

About Wordlock, Inc.

Todd Basche, former VP of Software Applications at Apple, and Rahn Basche founded Wordlock in 2007 in Santa Clara, California, to create and manufacture combination locks that use letters instead of numbers. A patented algorithm maximizes the number of possible words on a Wordlock, with up to 100,000 different combinations on five letter dials. Wordlocks are made of hardened steel and come in luggage locks, bike locks, padlocks, cable locks and commercial locks. Wordlock won the Staples Invention Quest in 2004 and was named "Top 100 New Inventions" by The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Invent Now America competition in 2008.