



SOUND SOLUTION

Young people causing a nuisance outside a shop will be a thing of the past if owners install a the Mosquito which emits a high-pitch deterrent sound

Life's a real buzz now for inventor of the Mosquito

AN ENTREPRENEUR whose invention deters youths from hanging around outside shops by emitting a high-pitched noise is coming to terms with life as a minor celebrity.

Howard Stapleton's device, which emits ultrasonic sound waves that can normally be heard only by people aged under 25, has captured the public imagination at a time when confronting job culture is one of the contentious political issues.

In the course of a week, he has appeared on national breakfast television and been profiled in newspapers, and is now in the final stages of negotiating a major order with a chain of convenience stores.

He claims the device, named the Mosquito after the flying insect's notorious whine, does not cause pain but is so irritating that young people will not linger in an area where they can hear it.

David Williamson

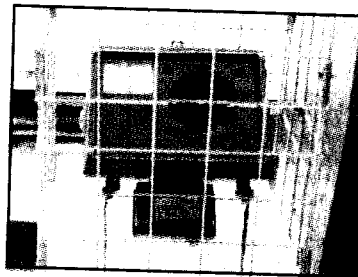
Business Correspondent
david.williamson@wme.co.uk

Explaining the rush of interest in his product, Mr Stapleton said, "With this trouble in France, it looks like we are descending into gradual anarchy. They have picked up on a novel idea that's really needed."

He was provided with free business support by Venture Wales, an agency committed to encouraging entrepreneurship. The organisation linked Mr Stapleton up with consultant Simon Morris.

Mr Morris said, "This has gone absolutely ballistic ... We are getting phone calls from shops and councils from the south coast to the other side of Edinburgh."

They expect Mr Stapleton's company, Compound Security Solutions, having a turnover of £250,000 in the



first year of trading, following an investment of about £40,000.

Production costs are low, Mr Morris said, because "all the components are straight off-the-shelf - there are no bespoke items so there are not a lot of up-front costs in manufacturing".

At present, the devices are put together at the Servonetic Control (Instruments) plant at Taff's Well.

The plan is that revenue from this project will fund a much more am-

bitious invention. This is a security system for the fences around construction sites which will be detect if a vibration is caused by someone climbing over it.

Present systems can be set off when a football hits the fence, causing many alarms to be ignored.

Prototypes have been made, but despite gaining some grant support he is still gathering the financial support necessary to fully develop the product.

"Hopefully, this will make enough money for him to go into production," Mr Morris said.

"The idea has been in the back of my head for many years," Mr Stapleton said.

Asked how he found the most annoying sound for the Mosquito device, he said, "I've got four kids aged six to 15. Over the last six months I've been experimenting on them."