The CONUNDRUM is a kind of "next-generation Rubik´s Cube", specifically one where on each of the six faces the nine coloured stickers have been replaced by the nine letters of the word CONUNDRUM. When the customer gets the puzzle it should be in a scrambled state and accompanied by a note that reads: "Rearrange the cube so that each of the six faces contains all of the nine letters in CONUNDRUM. The letters don´t have to be in any particular order but on/within each face all of the letters have to be oriented in the same direction. There is only one configuration of the pieces that will produce both of the above results".

Even in the unscrambled state the letters don´t appear to be any particular order but they have in fact been arranged with great care: they have of necessity been arranged in a very special way in the original design in order to provide a pre-arranged path back to the unscrambled state--this is the very heart of the puzzle. In general, however, even if a special arrangement did provide such a path "in theory", that wouldn´t necessarily make it good (=elegant), and I put a great deal of effort specifically into making the proposed arrangement as elegant as possible.

In practice there is indeed a whole spectrum of better and worse arrangements; at the extreme "bad" end of the spectrum, off the scale actually, would be a lousy non-puzzle "created" by just writing down the nine letters of the puzzle´s name at random on each face and then scrambling the cube--but the result would then be that although we would know for sure that there was at least one solution (the original state), it would not at all be certain that it would be humanly possible to find it*, and even if someone could do so the whole exercise would be nothing more than a stupid grind anyway.

At the opposite end of the spectrum would be a puzzle constructed with great finesse, with the letters arranged in such a way as to

provide a set of clues to unravelling the mystery which were subtly hidden yet relatively simple in themselves, almost "obvious" in retrospect, and as I indicated above, I have made every effort to ensure that the CONUNDRUM-arrangement is as close as possible to the "finesse" end of the spectrum.

The situation is thus the following: as far as the **Patents** on the mechanism of the "Rubik´s Cube" are concerned, these have expired a long time ago, and there are also numerous other mechanisms available; as far as **Copyright** is concerned, as you very well know this only protects the expression of an idea and not the idea itself, thus anyone would have the right to come up with alternate arrangements as long as they are not too close to the one proposed here. Now this isn´t a problem at all, as a matter of fact it would be a very good thing!--in light of what I have claimed above about the proposed arrangement being at least close to the limit of what is possible in terms of finesse (as defined above), this would hopefully only serve to highlight the (as far as possible) "original and best"-character of the proposed arrangement.

I think I should mention here that my arrangement is the only one in the world with an advanced 2x2 plus 5x1 distribution of letters (or other symbols showing orientation) which is considerably more difficult to solve (and construct) than an arrangement with a simple 9x1 distribution of such symbols: the 2x2 plus 5x1 and the 9x1 distributions have in fact absolutely nothing at all in common with each other, so without even having to get into the specifics of any arrangements, we can instantly see that there can be no connection whatsoever between my arrangement and any 9x1 arrangement, should anyone imagine such a thing. I would like to formally state for the record that the proposal is 100% original/own work and that it is also 100% technically sound, i.e. the puzzle contains no hidden errors, having been checked hundreds of times in minute detail.

As far as **<u>Trademarks</u>** are concerened, the name "CONUNDRUM" cannot be Trademarked as it can to some extent be seen as a description of the product, however I have an alternative which is even better I think, and you might very well be able to come up with something which is even better than that! The only requirement is to have two letters doubled up and one each of the remaining five, otherwise the puzzle won´t work. Of course one doesn´t even have to use letters at all, and I am sure that you would be able to come up with all sorts of alternative symbols (providing they show orientation**)** which could be customized for specific markets at your discretion.

I am very much hoping that this letter will prove to be the start of a fruitful cooperation between us and I would like to suggest that it wouldn´t be a bad idea at all for us to meet personally, at which time you could examine the prototypes that I have prepared.

With best regards,
Peter Tchamitch
permanent contact address:
petertchamitch@hotmail.com

*At least with the 2x2 plus 5x1 distribution of the letters in "CONUNDRUM"; with a simple 9x1 distribution, i.e. nine different letters, it might just be (humanly) possible to solve a random arrangement, depending also on the overall relative orientation of (the letters on) the faces in the original/solved state.

**And/or one could use the device that I came up with to indicate orientation, namely the triangle-design. The CONUNDRUM is the only cube in the world with this feature, which everyone finds both elegant and striking! I´m not sure if it´s possible to completely protect this design, but there´s absolutely no doubt that it was first used with the CONUNDRUM, and thereafter been in use for quite some time, so some degree of protection is certainly not unthinkable.