

Preface

Innovation capability is one of the main indicators of the economic “health” and power of a nation and of a society. But inventive ability without its protection and exploitation is sterile. The success of the whole process can be achieved following a methodologically structured pathway, from the idea to the product. The knowledge about tools, strategies, time and cost is fundamental to identify the best solution. Too often this knowledge is absent in the inventors, whoever they are, both university researchers or industrial developers.

This book wants to address this lack of information providing a short but hopefully comprehensive description of the Intellectual Property forms of protection, and the methods and tools to be used in its management.

The protection of the innovation is the first choice that can also drive the exploitation. A correct first step is crucial and starts with the identification of the most suitable typology of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) to apply for. Coaching the innovators in this decision is the goal of this book.

It is addressed to different readers: Students, University Researchers and Professors, Designers and Industrial Researchers too, from Engineers in any discipline (mechanics, electronics, mathematics, ...) to Designers and Architects. Also, all the results of innovation should be considered: products, systems, fashion items, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), etc.

Each one of these applications can need different solutions to face their protection. But before protection it is necessary to properly understand what to protect and if it is possible. This means to codify the knowledge in the suitable form (mathematical formula, electronic circuit, drawings, ...) and to carry out a dedicated research into the corresponding databases and through the most proper codes and keywords. From this crosscheck arises the possibility to protect the creation in terms of patent, utility model or industrial design. Together with this opportunity and decision, the analysis of the options (for example and simply the designation of the territory where to apply for the protection, i.e. the national or international geographical area) and the related time scheduling and corresponding expenses is another key factor to consider. This leads to a reasonable and sustainable business plan that will drive the next steps of exploitation (licensing, spin-off/start-up company initiatives, ...).

At the beginning we defined Innovation as an index of the economic health of a society. Health is a human basic value, and for this reason we chose Biomedical devices used in healthcare as the case study in this book.

The text was updated in spring 2013: for new or more recent laws or determinations please consider also further readings.

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