



Using an IP Asset Management Database to Enhance Your Marketing Efforts

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Since 2001, Fuentek has relied on an intellectual property asset management (IPAM) database to support our core marketing process. Along with a collection of other best practices for marketing IP, this database has played a key role in our success in the commercialization of innovations across a diverse array of technology categories for universities, federal government labs, and commercial companies.

Effective IPAM database systems enable your technology transfer organization to proactively monitor and manage your marketing initiatives, helping you gain maximum value from your IP portfolio. When successfully implemented, these systems facilitate communication, collaboration, and consistent adherence to licensing processes.

IPAM database solutions vary by feature and functionality, and each has its own unique advantages and disadvantages. However, Fuentek has found that the most crucial factor in realizing maximum value from your database system is not **which** system you choose, but the consistency and discipline with which you use it. The more diligent your entire organization is about entering IP-related data into your database in a consistent fashion, the more value you will get from your IPAM solution.

We follow these best practices, gained from our experience with IPAM database systems over the last decade:

1. Establish and follow clear, concise, and consistent classification schemes
2. Incorporate full-featured search capabilities
3. Integrate workflow management capabilities
4. Include reporting tools for staff productivity and efficient project tracking
5. Invest in proper training and mentoring for your staff
6. Adhere to your institution's technology guidelines

1. Classification Schemes

It is very beneficial to establish—and have the discipline to maintain—standard



attributes for each technology in your IP portfolio, such as advanced materials, optics, or transportation. The use of standard taxonomies for categorizing your technologies is a prerequisite for incorporating an effective search capability within your IPAM database solution. Investing time up front to appropriately classify your technology assets is a prudent investment. It helps:

- Ensure easy access to all elements within your IP portfolio
- Enable your team to be more efficient
- Position your technology managers for more effective decision making by fully capitalizing on your institutional knowledge

Comprehensive Search

Choosing an IPAM database solution with a robust search engine will provide your staff with more reliable search results, providing elements throughout your entire database, including all database fields and documents. Well-designed comprehensive search capabilities enable your staff to mine information from your database and capitalize on lessons learned from earlier actions and decisions regarding similar technologies. Of course, the overall effectiveness of your search engine is directly related to the diligence and consistency of the attributes that you use to describe and categorize your technologies (see #1, above). Relevant searching can become even more effective if your system allows for tags or other keyword fields.

Integrated Workflow Management

Integrating at least a basic level of workflow management within your IPAM database system will provide a foundation for efficient collaboration and communication across your organization. Your workflow solution should factor in how you can most efficiently manage the data and documents necessary to support your technology transfer initiatives. Successful workflow solutions promote staff accountability, efficiency, and timely results.

Reporting and Project Management

Effective reporting capabilities assist your staff in increasing their personal productivity and are vital to your organization achieving specific goals and objectives. Well-designed reporting tools provide the ability to quickly and easily obtain status information on all aspects across your technology portfolio—from how many hours spent on a project to which companies have been contacted to what technologies may be a match for a visiting company. Such reporting tools also satisfy your management-reporting requirements. Look for a solution with reporting features that provide excellent visibility and transparency across your



IPAM database solution to avoid a “black hole” scenario. (*I know it’s in here somewhere!*)

Business analytics software tools offer a strategic advantage by assisting with identification of trends and revealing additional opportunities for licensing and partnerships that may exist throughout your IP portfolio. Powerful reporting tools can provide a foundation for effective project management to ensure that you are maximizing your deal potential while minimizing surprises that spin your team into reactionary mode.

Staff Training and Mentoring

Effective training that is planned and delivered at the right time with the right amount and level of information will help you gain the most value from your IPAM solution. Web-based multimedia tools can be very efficient and cost-effective options for training your staff and should be accompanied by a high-touch connection that includes mentoring from senior staff members and system experts. Put simply: If the staff doesn’t feel comfortable using the system or recognize its value, they won’t use it.

Technology Guidelines

Engage information technology (IT) professionals in the planning and selection process to ensure compliance with your IT architecture; online security; technology; and product guidelines, standards, and procedures. Web-based IPAM solutions are ideal because they facilitate ease of access. These online solutions should be supported by a standard commercial or open-source database along with development languages that are endorsed by your technology support organization. There are a number of installed (in-house) or software-as-a-service (SaaS or hosted) commercially available solutions today. If you are using or planning to use a commercial IPAM solution, the following questions for potential solution vendors should help you narrow down your options:

- What is the support process and the depth and qualifications of your support organization?
- What is the process to request enhancements and what is your track record for publishing new software releases?
- Are you using a users’ group or steering committee that includes customers to prioritize new features?
- Do you provide a forum with other IPAM system users to share best practices?



Successfully commercializing a vast and diverse portfolio of technologies is a fundamental and often daunting undertaking for all technology transfer offices. World-class organizations seek out and capitalize on best practices within their offices and across the industry. Properly and diligently using an IPAM database solution can have a positive impact on the overall success of your organization's technology commercialization initiatives.

If you would like to discuss the concepts presented here in further detail, please contact Fuentek at info@fuentek.com or 919-249-0327.