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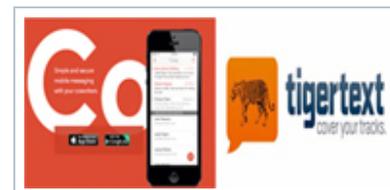
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Does India Lack Interest In Patents?

By [SiliconIndia](#) | Monday, 09 January 2012, 21:01 Hrs



Bangalore: The number of patents filed by Indian companies in 2011 stood at 37,000; a meager increase from the 34,000 applications filed in 2010. The total number of patents for trademarks stood at 1.7 lakh, and the growth for the number of patents filed is an impressive 11 percent.

According to Bindu Sharma, Patent Attorney, Origin IP Solutions, "The prime reason

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because of which India is lagging behind when it comes to filing patent application is the lack of IP awareness; we still believe in sharing knowledge without money. The time-line to get a patent in India is too long, as thousands of applications are still pending which is another reason that discourages patent filing.” The time required for getting a patent in India is around 36 to 48 months; while in U.S. it is a minimum of 22 months and can go upto 45 months; and in France the minimum waiting time is 22 months.

Sharma also says, “The enforcement of law is very poor and there are a lot of challenges in commercialization of the invention, as Government policies are not very conducive.”

However, a patent would enforce a startup against its competitors, prevent the theft of intellectual property by others, and the most important generate licensing revenue. Having received a patent or a having one pending would enable a startup to attract investors as they would expect the startup to be of some value before putting in their money. A patent would help a startup to deter patent infringement lawsuits and increase leverage over the partners.

The emergence of India in the field of filing patents has been raised highlighted by Pari Natarajan, CEO, Zinnov Management, who stated that India is actively contributing to the development of new products and it becomes imperative to evaluate the state of innovation and intellectual property in India. It is essential to bring all the constituents of the ecosystem to a common platform, which can be done by the creation of an independent institutional entity to cater to the IP related needs of the Indian industries.

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China is targeting to file two million patents, annually by 2015, which would make it difficult for other countries to catch up with it. Patents are a powerful economic weapon for any country and with China, U.S., and Japan taking the top three positions; it would be tough for India to emerge as a superpower.

But the scenario is not that bad as it seems. Praveen Bhadada, Director, Zinnov Management Consulting says, “The ecosystem is maturing and there are a lot of startups coming up, MNCs are becoming more innovative and the number of PHDs has gone up significantly, which is contributing to the increase in the number of patents filed in India. Though the number of patents filed is less as compared to the other nations, still there is an increase by around 30-35 percent, which is a good sign.”

The Indian market has become a key focus area and the companies are able to scale up rapidly, which can be attributed to the large number of VC investments. There is a growing respect for IP by the startups and that clubbed with the growing interest from VCs is helping the patent scenario evolve.

In order to bring India at par with the other countries, the university curriculum has to be aligned with the industry requirements and the entrepreneurial activity has to be encouraged. The good news is that India is a good testing field, the startup activities have increased significantly, new IITs, IIMs and IP Protection institutes are coming up, which would help to strengthen the IP base in India. Thus, there has to be a proper backing by the government in making the people aware of the benefits of filing patents, and setting up of more institutions, which would cut down the patent-pending time. These would ensure that India not only jumps on the track with more patents, but also leads the other countries.

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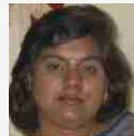
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