

Intellectual Property Business Management Practices: A survey of literature
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Until recently, the non-legal literature dealing with protection of intellectual property (IP) was limited in scope and quantity. The situation has changed dramatically since the mid nineties. With the increasing importance of knowledge, private firms and public institutions such as universities, colleges and research institutes, discovered the importance of intellectual property rights (IPR) and their protection.

The present survey is necessarily selective. It starts with an overview of changes in the U.S. and international IPR regime leading to the so called "patent friendly era". Surprisingly, the notable increase in use of patents in the US can not be attributed mainly to favorable changes in the U.S. IP regime. The rise of patenting and use of other IP instruments has often little to do with their effectiveness in protecting IP and much more with their usefulness in corporate strategies blocking competition and providing bargaining chips for cross-licensing. The overview of the IPRs use and strategies focuses on the US, Canada, EU, Japan and Australia . The importance of various IP instruments varies significantly from one industrial sector to another. The presentation focuses on IP practices and strategies used in information technologies and communications, including computers, software, business methods and internet applications.

The empirical literature shows that small firms are less likely to use IP than the larger ones and multinational corporations more likely than firms owned by nationals. The reluctance of small firms to use IP is, to a certain degree, explained by the financial burden patenting and patent litigation represents for small firms.

With the increasing importance and use of IP, its management is becoming an integral part of firm's competitive strategies. The cost of IP, its management and human resources involved, the valuation of IP portfolios, its accounting and integration in corporate financial strategies is briefly presented in the concluding section of the paper.