THE TRANSITION FROM IP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM TO IP PLATFORM

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INTRODUCTION

IP has played a central role in innovation for centuries, yet is one of the last major industries to fully benefit from the disruptive effects of technology. Many IP practices and processes still remain - in effect - manual. IP teams are often forced to wrestle with legacy systems that impact agility, resulting in inconsistent data and inefficient communication throughout the Idea Lifecycle. How can leaders empower IP teams with technology to meet the needs of the changing IP landscape?

THE FUTURE OF IP TECHNOLOGY

Disruption of industry by technology has been the story of the past four decades. From the collapse of the music industry - first through piracy and then illegal streaming - to the challenges currently facing the taxi industry from disruptors such as Lyft. The world is doing business in a completely new way - driven by simplicity, accessibility, usability and the ability to immediately see information and order services. Now is a relevant time to take stock of the IP industry and see how it could be impacted by technology in the future.

CPA Global recently conducted a customer survey around the future of IP technology to better understand its importance and the role it needs to play to empower IP professionals. Spanning a global audience of 300+ IP professionals across small and large corporations and law firms, the survey suggests there is a gap between the IP tools available and what organisations want to achieve from their portfolios. Seven in ten people did not view IP technology as more innovative than other industries. The same number believed that IP technology will be increasingly important for businesses in the future. There is growing recognition that good IP technology will help deliver improved customer service, greater efficiencies and competitive advantage.

According to WIPO’s annual World Intellectual Property Indicators (WIPI) report, innovators across the globe made 2.9 million patent applications in 2015, representing a 7.8% increase from 2014 and the sixth consecutive year of rising demand for patent protection. Trademark applications increased by 15.3% to almost 6 million in 2015 - with worldwide industrial design applications growing by 2.3% to 872,800. Chinese innovators filed the most patent applications (1,010,406) in 2015, followed by those from the United States of America (526,296) and Japan (454,285). With the increased growth in innovation, disrupted technology needs to help manage the future of IP.
TRADITIONAL IPMS FALLS BEHIND

A traditional intellectual property management system (IPMS) driven by the manual completion of tasks – such as filing an application or renewing a patent – is not efficient. An IPMS is not designed to manage hundreds –or thousands – of patents and trademarks at one time.

Consider the process of filing for a patent. The global filing business is a multi-billion dollar industry, yet it is still surprisingly archaic in the way it operates. Although things have moved on from the posted communication of the 1980s, the process is still cumbersome. It relies on reams of paper being completed and decisions take months, if not years to be concluded. When filing globally, every individual filing will come with its own workflow, its own issues and its own invoice - significantly increasing the amount of administration associated with the process. Even those claiming to automate global filings still rely on human intervention, essentially offering little more than an outsourcing service with the accompanying risk of human error.

Developing a product from an intangible idea takes time, money and work. The Idea Lifecycle includes numerous stakeholders and manual IP tasks: docketing, filing, communication with agents and OCs, report generation and distribution. Traditional IPMS’s do not have the tools to connect these stakeholders, the information they use or the IP data they generate - which can significantly impact data accuracy. As IP information is passed between stakeholders, it can quickly become inconsistent or outdated. While waiting for IP information to be shared manually means relevant data is not always available. Without connected services, current information is near impossible to share or validate and this can greatly affect decision making.

With IP making up as much as 70% of a company’s value, inaccurate information can fundamentally impact core asset value of a business. The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) believes that 25% of the patent ownership data available on public registers is inaccurate. Inaccurate data harms patent owners by increasing risk, cost and uncertainty. This can be caused by something as simple as a mis-spelling on a patent application. IP information needs to be verified through a trusted service to ensure misinformation is not shared between stakeholders.

Platform technology has the capability to fundamentally change the way IP information is shared and used to generate insight. Technology platforms have been adopted by a number of industries looking to provide a multi-layer, connected service. Online platforms enable a number of tools, data sets and services to be accessed in one place, from anywhere with an internet connection. If a modern IPMS can use a similar template to connect the dots of the ideas lifecycle - as well as the stakeholders and the IP they generate - the industry will be disrupted.
CPA Global’s research into the future of IP found that information, connectivity and consumption are key areas for improvement. Speed in accessing verified information is fundamental and respondents expect a move towards more automation.

Patent data is uniquely suited for big data tools and techniques, because of its high volume, high variety, and high velocity of changes. New technologies enabling predictive analysis of big data provide IP professionals with a platform for better decision-making and vastly improved efficiencies. Today, organisations are using big data techniques for a competitive edge and to discover insights in their markets.

**CONNECTING THE DOTS: A MODERN IPMS**

IP professionals have been trying to work with disconnected systems and inconsistent data sources, detached from the outside counsel, foreign associates and PTOs. A connected IPMS will combine and integrate the expertise of IP professionals involved with the IP lifecycle. Technology has the capability to connect hundreds of agency networks, across more than 200 different IP jurisdictions to provide a simple, more streamlined approach to global IP management. Connectivity should also mean accessibility through all connected devices. An integrated IP service has the potential to deliver an improved user experience and access to relevant information at the touch of a button.

Aggregating and reporting meaningful data from different systems is an important process for all organisations. IP professionals and law firms need to provide customers with accurate, thorough, and timely updates. A modern IPMS with dashboard functionality will enable information to be presented to different types of users on-demand. Current software solutions can appear complex to users, and more user-friendly software is desirable. Usually positioned as a landing page after a customer login, dashboards can be customised to enable strategic presentation of data using interactive widgets.
CPA GLOBAL IP PLATFORM

The IP Platform by CPA Global provides faster, personalised and seamless access to IP products and services, as well as connecting customers to advisors and law firms across the IP world. Delivering new technology that enables customers to increase efficiency in global collaboration and generate unique business insight from IP data, the platform makes greater IP connectivity, integration and collaboration a reality for customers. Alongside a number of integrated apps and products – such as the File and Renew App – the IP platform is the first step to delivering the future of IP.

How does The IP Platform counteract the limitations of a traditional IPMS? The CPA Global service provides reassurance regarding the data customers receive and use by constantly validating the accuracy of data in the platform. Time intensive manual processes are replaced by automated services such as the File and Renew Apps – all available within the platform. Decision making is also improved with Innography® analytics that augments private data residing in CPA Global IPMS and presents the supporting dashboards in the right context at the right time.

When introduced to the concept of The IP Platform, 90% of the professionals involved in CPA Global’s IP survey saw the immediate benefits to their organisation. While 80% said they would use the platform if it could deliver on its promise.

CONCLUSION

Providing an efficient, connected management service across the entirety of the Idea lifecycle has clear benefits. Time intensive manual processes are automated, costs are reduced and IP practices are made more efficient. The IP platform provides functionality and analysis at customers’ fingertips and they can make better informed decisions, quicker. However, the key benefit of The IP Platform is confidence. Users are empowered by new found confidence in the IP they create and the new seamless, real-time connections they can make internally and with their agent network, PTOs and service providers. The IP Platform repurposes time, money and resources into the thing that matters the most – creating and realising the value of ideas.
ABOUT TONI NIJM

Toni Nijm is Chief Product & Strategy Officer at CPA Global, the world-leading IP technology company. Mr Nijm is responsible for CPA Global’s product and services portfolio, including all software platforms. In this role, he drives the company’s strategy to deliver products that help R&D departments maximise the outcome of their investments and make IP management a more efficient and collaborative function.

Mr Nijm believes connected IP technology and consistent data is the future of intellectual property. With an R&D background in many high-tech companies and a background as a qualified patent attorney, he understands the challenges IP professionals within corporations and law firms face as the level of innovation and filings rise.

Mr Nijm was previously the CEO of Ipendo, a Sweden-based IP management software and services provider he co-founded in 2004 and was acquired by CPA Global in 2011. Since the acquisition, Mr Nijm was also the chairman of the board of Swedish three-dimensional technology company Simplygon, which was acquired by Microsoft in January 2017. He is currently a member of the board of directors at Univrses, an embedded computer vision and deep learning technology company, and a business adviser to Cortopia Studios, a virtual reality and augmented reality company based in Stockholm.

ABOUT CPA GLOBAL

CPA Global is the world’s leading IP management and technology company, trusted by many of the world’s respected corporations and law firms. Our integrated offering is underpinned by an outstanding global team of 2000 people.

Now we offer customers The IP Platform: delivering integrated Innovation and IP Portfolio software, services and insights across the entire Idea Lifecycle, supporting customers every step of the way to realise the value of their ideas.

TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY

To discover how CPA Global can help you adapt and thrive in today’s environment, visit us online at cpaglobal.com/the-ip-platform