

MAINTAINING A PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT DATABASE

It is important for a company to ensure that its patent portfolio is maintained appropriately to provide for timely handling of matters as well as providing access and review options to determine how the patents can help achieve corporate goals.

A Portfolio Management Database managed by an Outside IP Counsel can serve as an effective tool for achieving this purpose. This database may be in the form of a list or docket of issued patents and pending patent applications. Graphical representation illustrating categorizations and relationships may also be used to help visualize the portfolio.

ORGANIZATION

The portfolio should generally be organized by patent family, so that U.S. items for a particular invention are listed in the same location as their non-U.S. counterparts to allow the reviewer to understand what patent rights protect which inventions in which jurisdictions. The following information could be useful to maintain the database.

Pertinent Bibliographic Information:

- ✓ Country or jurisdiction
- ✓ Inventor(s)
- ✓ Title
- ✓ Issue, filing and priority dates
- ✓ Serial, publication and patent numbers
- ✓ Internal and external docket reference numbers

Valuable Non-Bibliographic Items:

- ✓ Technology Category
- ✓ Relevant Business Segment
- ✓ Applicable Product(s)
- ✓ Comments regarding the purpose of the patent application

The database should also ensure that proper ownership is attributed to the patents and applications. This can be checked and confirmed through review of assignment documents recorded in the patent offices or other recorded title.