
IP Landscape Initiatives

1. Introduction

IP landscape is becoming widely recognized as an offensive intellectual property strategy. The main entity in this initiative is the intellectual property division within the company, but close coordination with the management, R&D division and business division is essential. As the degree of recognition of IP landscape rises, services that provide external consultation and analysis software to support companies are seizing this business opportunity and starting to increase.

Looking back on intellectual property strategies at the national level, first of all, the declaration by the Cabinet of Junichi Koizumi on Japan as a “Nation Built on Intellectual Property” in 2002 to increase the creation, protection and exploitation of intellectual property (IP) such as patents and contents that have traditionally been strong areas for Japan, to compete against the US who have increased their competitiveness by using IT (information technology) such as the Internet as a weapon, and the rapid growth of Korea and China regarding manufacturing can be mentioned¹⁾. At that time, the Intellectual Property Promotion Plan was established as a national strategy, and the founding of the IP High Court, and revision of the patent law related to inventions by employees were promoted at the national level.

In June 2018, the government further announced “Aiming for a “value design society”, Intellectual Property Strategy Vision”²⁾. This summarized a vision to direct the long-term developments and measures for thirty years onwards from 2025 that utilize technology such as AI and blockchain against the backdrop of a transition from paying for physical goods to paying for

experiences. In these times when the societal image of the future is drastically changing, it is important to continuously consider and disseminate new values and have these values felt by the people throughout the world, and it was anticipated that intellectual property such as “service”, “solution” and “information data” would drive the future.

In June 2021, the Financial Services Agency and Tokyo Stock Exchange revised the Corporate Governance Code to include the description, “In view of the importance of investment into human resources and IP, effective directions should be taken to help sustainable growth of companies by distribution of these and other management resources and strategic implementation of business portfolios”³⁾. With this, Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters at the Prime Minister’s Office and METI collaboratively established a “Study group on effective disclosure and governance of IP investment and utilization strategy” from August 2021. At this study group, it was recognized that in a time where the management environment of companies is significantly changing with the recent advances in digitalization and going green, IP and intangible assets that are indispensable for a company’s management are considered to be also drastically changing. Therefore, it is further required to accurately recognize how IP and intangible assets can be utilized for sustainable management of a company’s future” and “validate their business model based on the importance of IP and intangible assets for management and it is unavoidable to construct a strategy to maintain and strengthen IP and intangible assets that support competitiveness and investigate a sustainable business model that utilizes the IP and intangible assets that are a strength upon firmly

understanding and analyzing why IP and intangible assets are necessary for the company's management and what IP and intangible assets are the source of competitiveness and differentiation as a strength of the company and how this leads to value creation and the creation of cash flow". This is the current situation where companies are even more expected to understand their own company and other companies' strengths and weaknesses from the perspective of IP and investigate sustainable business models.

2. What is IP landscape?

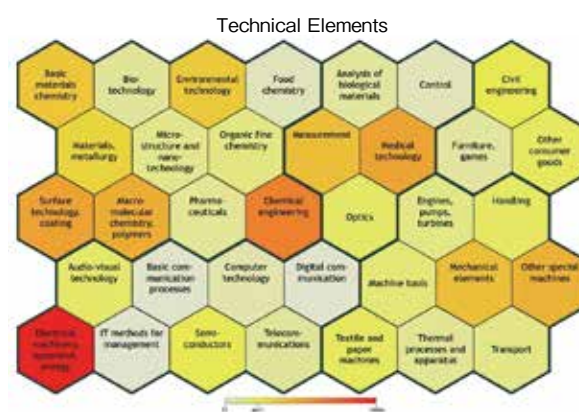
Among these formulation and promotion of IP strategies at the national level, there is a growing movement to directly utilize IP analysis in management and business. Although many companies are now considering IP landscape, since the target of IP landscape in each company is analysis handling confidential items such as business strategy and R&D strategy of each company, no company completely discloses its analysis process and results, and many companies only disclose a summary. The definition of IP landscape differs widely and the content of each company's measures is varied because there is no set definition. Some major companies have established a specialist team to actively handle this in an organized manner, and there are some examples of public announcements regarding the results, but it is extremely rare for a company to disclose detailed content such as introducing development cases of specific products and services.

In this report, we define IP landscape as "analysis of IP information within the global market, observing customer needs, technological trends and the situation of players in a multifaceted way to utilize it for searching new markets and uses for products and developing new businesses and products". At Valqua, we are already utilizing IP landscape for searching new uses and opening up new businesses and products, and promoting the development of value-added products and services to resolve unknown issues in discussion with the Development Division and Business Division.

3. Investigation tool

In this report, an example of an analysis method for IP landscape targeting PTFE is introduced.

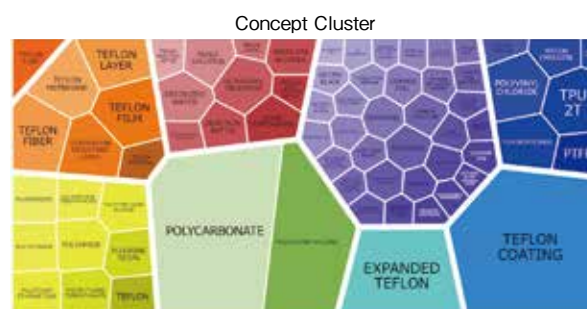
Mapping was conducted to allow a visual understanding of which technical areas have the most PTFE-related patent applications (Figure1). This technical classification was prepared based on the international patent classification designated by a global IP association and the number of patent applications for PTFE is displayed by the shade of the color. Red is the technical area with the most patent applications and grey is the technical area with the least patent applications.



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Figure1 Patent application technical classification for PTFE

By using such figures, it is possible to visually and macroscopically understand the technical areas regarding PTFE that are being focused upon and those that are not. In addition, by focusing the analysis target on specific companies, it is also possible to understand the PTFE-related fields that each company are focusing upon. Figure2 indicates the technological concepts that



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Figure2 Technological concept mapping of PTFE

5. Conclusions

In this article, we introduced Valqua's activities related to IP landscape, but the content is limited because of the need for confidentiality. Valqua intends to work on solutions that can provide ways to solve our customer's issues by implementing value creation from a new viewpoint, IP, in addition to technical development based on our customer needs and on seeds that we have always provided.

6. References

- 1) The Prime Minister's Office, Main points of the "Intellectual Property Strategy Outline"
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