Licensing Executives Society – Arab Countries
Advancing the Business of Intellectual Property Globally
Member of TAG-Foundation
عضو في طلال أبوغزاله فاونديشن

Issue No.
76

www.lesarab.org

LES-Arab Countries Newsletter

September 2017

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Firms to Get Help with their IP Efforts Abroad

SINGAPORE - Companies that make use of intellectual property (IP) - especially in the biomedical and healthcare, manufacturing and engineering, and deep tech fields - are getting a boost to scale up and expand abroad.

The Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS) and Deloitte South-east Asia Financial Advisory Services are teaming up to help 100 innovative enterprises commercialize their IP and compete globally.

The signing took place at the IP Week @ SG 2017, an event bringing together IP thought leaders, legal experts and companies to discuss IP commercialization and business growth.

"The partnership reflects IPOS' ongoing efforts as an innovation agency to build a vibrant and globally connected innovation ecosystem, strengthen innovative enterprises' competitiveness through using IP as a strategic business asset, and help them take their products and services to international markets," the agency said.

IPOS and Deloitte said they aim to help companies understand technology trends to make strategic decisions for investment, as well as commercialize their IP and other intangible assets for business growth.

"The enterprises of today are increasingly built around IP and other intangible assets like know-how, data and digital platforms. As Asian economies develop, we are seeing more and more companies where a significant share of their enterprise value is in their intangible assets, including IP," said Mr. Daren Tang, IPOS chief executive.

Separately, at the opening ceremony of IP Week @ SG 2017, six local enterprises were given WIPO-IPOS IP awards.

The awards, presented by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and IPOS, are into their fifth year and recognize companies which have grown by using IP.

One of the award winners was local menswear label Benjamin Barker, which received the IPOS Award for IP Champions.

Co-founder and chief operating officer Damien Tan said having a strong brand has helped the firm open doors to new partnerships.

It recently signed a deal with a Cambodian franchisee and will be opening two stores in Phnom Penh in the second quarter of next year. The firm is also talking to potential partners in the Philippines and other Southeast Asian markets.

"We're looking for partners to expand because we want to focus on our strengths - designing and manufacturing apparel," said Mr. Tan.

Investing in IP protection can be costly - the company had to register its trademark in multiple jurisdictions - "but we thought it was important because it's very easy for people to replicate our brand".

Source:
http://www.straitstimes.com/business/companies-markets/firms-to-get-help-with-their-ip-efforts-abroad

Brand licensing Industry Sees Opportunity for Growth in India

NEW DELHI - The brand licensing industry, now in its 'nascent stage' in India, is set to grow manifold in the foreseeable future with rising brand consciousness among consumers and higher penetration of modern retail and e-commerce, industry experts said.

"The owners of intellectual properties (IPs), including major cartoon, entertainment and corporate brands, are keen to enter the Indian markets. Everybody wants to tap the 1.3 billion customer-base that the country has, especially when awareness of brands among consumers in 900 cities is very high," Chairman, License India, Gaurav Marya told IANS on the sidelines of the recent India Licensing Expo 2017.

He said international agencies that manage these assets (brands) are also looking at India as the 'potential market'.

The country's potential licensees, who were "earlier not growing up enough to hire international brands" to push their sales, are now realizing the need of brand power for improving their bottom lines.

"According to the latest Global Licensing Industry Survey, 2017, India currently ranks 20 with US $1,396 million retail sale of licensed merchandise in 2016. The country's rank in the global scenario is expected to improve as it has huge opportunity and there is global optimism for India," Executive President of the US-based International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association (LIMA), Maura Regan told IANS on the sidelines of the Expo.

She said India is expected, in the next 5 to 7 years, to be at the level where China is today in terms of retail sales of licensed merchandise and generating royalties.

According to LIMA's Global Licensing Industry Survey, 2017, the market size is US $262.9 billion with a 4.4 percent growth over the previous year.

Brand licensing is basically renting the brand to an industry manufacturer or retailer. It is a legal process where a brand owner allows other businesses to use the brand for promoting their own products in the market.

In fact, foreign licensors have been seeing India as an advantageous destination over China because of its positive cost benefit.

EVP Business Development and Co-Chief Business Officer, ABG (Authentic Brands Group), which owns and manages a portfolio of brands including Elvis Presley, Muhammad Ali, Marilyn Monroe, Michael Jackson (managed brand) and so on, John Erlandson told IANS: "India has a huge English-speaking population and they can go online and explain the brand story globally while many of the Chinese don't have that skill-set. Thus marketing of the brands can be done much more rapidly."

"Along with the Goods and Services Tax roll-out, organized retail and e-commerce are going to be the major enablers for the brand licensing industry," Marya noted.

According to industry estimates, close to 95 percent of the retail in India is still dominated by traditional and unorganized retailers, but organized retail, which is growing exponentially, is estimated to reach US $220 billion by 2023.

"This is the space where international brands need to mark their presence. As many as 32 foreign brands forayed online and 22 global brands launched brick-and -mortar stores in 2016. Most of them are using brand licensing as a business model," Marya said, adding, "About 460 foreign brands confirmed their entry in the consumer space either through licensing or franchise model".

The experts said the licensing model in India has been thriving in categories like fashion, media and entertainment, sports and fitness, back-to-school and so on but is yet to pick up in the real estate, fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) and packaged foods sectors.

“The industry is still restricted to metro and major cities and a lot of growth opportunity is there. I foresee at least 15 per cent growth over the next five years as with the popularity of e-commerce, the Tier II and III cities would come on the licensing industry map,” EVP and Business Head, Viacom 18, Saugato Bhowmik told IANS.

However, the flip side is the rampant presence of counterfeit products from unorganized retail segments, where manufacturers or retailers are selling products under the name of popular brands but without giving any royalties to the brand owners, the experts said.

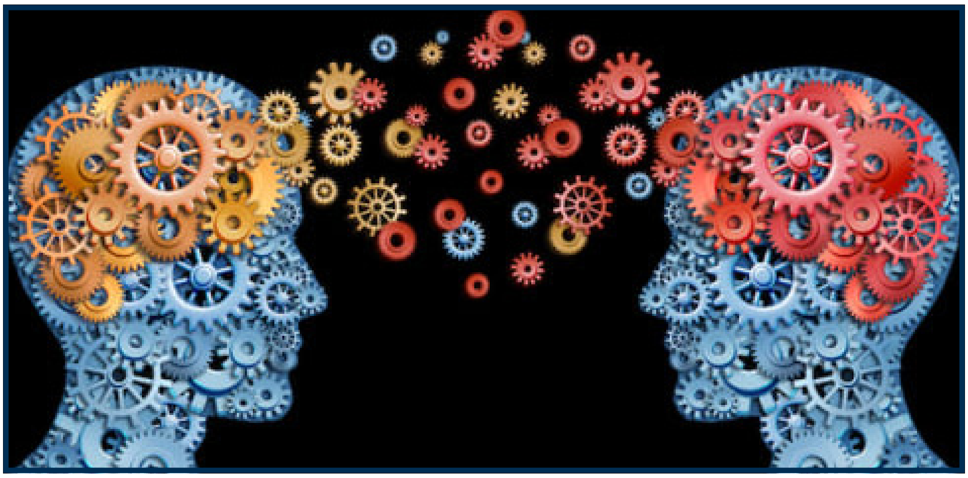
Another challenge is that though home-grown IPs or brands are gaining in popularity in the country, they are not able to penetrate the international markets in a bigger way.

According to Marya, the owners of such home-grown brands were “limited to core functions and had not extended themselves”.

Home-grown brands like Mahatma Gandhi, Bollywood and others which have huge brand recall in the international market could do wonders overseas, he added.

Source:
http://www.indiaretailing.com/2017/08/30/retail/brand-licensing-industry-sees-opportunity-growth-india/

Patent Licensing Firm Peddles More Than 6,000 Nokia Patents



SAN FRANCISCO - Patent licensing firm Aqua Licensing is selling 6,069 patents and 734 patent applications that it purchased from Nokia. Many of the patents were developed by Alcatel-Lucent prior to Nokia’s $17.1 billion acquisition of that company in 2015. The intellectual property for sale covers many different technology segments including software-defined networking (SDN), MPLS, mobile core, and radio access networks like 2G, 3G, 4G, and 5G.

According to Aqua, the patents are available for cash, in whole or in part, on a first-come basis. Interested parties don’t have to buy the entire portfolio, but Aqua said it will not break up patent “families.”

Aqua added that about 82 percent of the patents originated from Alcatel-Lucent assets while 15 percent came from Nokia’s services and technology business.

Nokia spokesman Mark Durrant told SDxCentral that Nokia sold the patents as part of its plans to optimize the company’s patent portfolio.

When Nokia purchased Alcatel-Lucent two years ago for $17.1 billion, many speculated that much of Alcatel-Lucent’s appeal was based on its vast patent portfolio, which was estimated to be worth between $155 million to $696 million.

But maintaining patents is an expense for companies because they have to pay licensing fees to keep them. These costs can become a burden, particularly if companies aren't planning to use those patents in any technology they are developing or if they are not "essential" patents, which means the patent is part of a standard.

Nokia appears to know how to make the most of its patents. The company benefited from its resolution of its recent patent dispute with Apple. Nokia announced in May that it had resolved a multiyear intellectual property dispute with Apple and would become a supplier of IP networking gear to the company in addition to receiving a cash payment.

That cash payment, which was reported in the company's second quarter earnings call, was responsible for a sizable jump in its operating profit. Nokia reported a second quarter operating profit of $669.3 million, a 77 percent increase from a year ago. In addition, net sales were up 1 percent year-on-year to $6.53 billion.

Source:
https://www.sdxcentral.com/articles/news/patent-licensing-firm-is-peddling-more-than-6000-nokia-patents/2017/08/

Abu-Ghazaleh to Announce the Establishment of the UNWTO International Smart Tourism Center

AMMAN – Based on the recommendations of HE Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh concerning the need to utilize ICT in developing the tourism sector, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the United Nations Specialized Agency for Tourism approved the establishment of the UNWTO International Smart Tourism Center.

Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh will announce the Center during the UNWTO 22nd General Assembly session which will be held in Chengdu, China September 11-16 under the theme "Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030".

Headquartered in Amman and hosted by Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization, the Center will be headed by Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh as chair and a Board of Directors which includes high-profile individuals, UNWTO Special Ambassadors and experts in the field of tourism with HE Mr. Taleb Refai as the honorary chair.

"The Center will have all the required resources to develop the tourism sector, locally, regionally and globally. Members of the Board of Directors will have the combination of expertise and dedication to solve, amend and plan all tourism-related issues for the next 50 years," Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh said.

"I am happy that the UNWTO has decided to establish the Center with Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization and at the same time we are happy to host at our headquarters in Amman and it will be fully operational and staffed with the needed expertise and technology," he added.

Early this year in Madrid, the UNWTO named HE Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh a Special Ambassador in recognition of his special contributions to the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (IY2017).

The United Nations 70th General Assembly has designated 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development which aims to support a change in policies, business practices and consumer behavior towards a more sustainable tourism sector that can contribute to the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It is worth noting that Senator Abu-Ghazaleh has chaired more than 14 UN taskforces and initiatives and he was Vice Chair with Their Excellencies Kofi Anan and Ban Ki-moon of the UN Global Compact as well as being a member of several UN programs, most recently being named Special Ambassador to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and a member of the United Nations Social Impact Fund High Level Advisory Board (UNSIF-HLAB).

The UNWTO 22nd General Assembly session will be attended by delegates from 161 states and representatives from more than 500 UNWTO Affiliate Members representing public and private organizations, destinations, NGOs and educational institutions.

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