



WORLD
INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION




 PCT

One
million
and
counting



The Smart Patenting Solution



“Companies are increasingly being judged on their... success in strategically leveraging their intellectual assets – the PCT system lays down an excellent path for achieving [this].”

- Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairman and Managing Director, Biocon Group of Companies, India.

With innovation today driving economic growth and social development, innovators the world over are choosing WIPO's international patent filing system, the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), as the preferred path for patenting their inventions. By year-end 2004, the PCT topped **one million** applications from across the globe.

One million new ideas. One million new solutions. One million technical advances publicly disclosed, fueling technology transfer and stimulating still more innovation. WIPO pays tribute to the world's innovators, and reaffirms its commitment to provide them with continually improving PCT services.

One million applications speak for the PCT's success. Set up to offer inventors a **user-friendly, cost-effective** and **efficient** system for filing international patent applications, membership has snowballed since the PCT began operating in 1978. From the first 18 Contracting States, the system now counts 124 member countries. Expansion has been accompanied by regular updating of the Regulations to meet the needs of applicants and patent offices, and to keep the PCT at the forefront of international patenting.

Across the Globe



Apple Computer Inc. used the PCT for its iTunes software, now beating digital piracy with a legal solution for digitally downloading music.



Ashok Gadgil's UV Waterworks, a simple water disinfection device using UV light, is delivering safe drinking water to rural communities in India, Mexico and the Philippines for \$1.50 per person per year. He filed the PCT application in 1997.

Chinese scientists from Tsinghua University filed a PCT application in 2003 for their process for creating a more environmentally-friendly, two-component wet cement.

In Kenya, a partnership between university scientists in Nairobi and Oxford, United Kingdom, funded by the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, produced a potential new vaccine against HIV. Following their PCT application in 2000, the nonprofit partners pledged to use patent ownership in pursuit of their commitment to make a successful vaccine available at minimal cost in developing countries.

In his workshop in Peru, entrepreneur Jose Vidal Martina designed a low-cost drill bit as an alternative to expensive ultrasound machines. Following his PCT application, his device is now selling internationally.

One of the first Egyptian applications after Egypt joined the PCT in September 2003 was filed by Osman Fathi Osman for a honey-based, anti-bacterial, wound-healing compound. Some 50 applications were filed from Egypt during the first year of PCT membership, most by individuals.

“In my opinion, the PCT is the greatest advance in foreign patent practice and patent portfolio management since the Paris Convention came into force in 1883.”

– T. David Reed, Senior Patent Advisor, The Procter & Gamble Company, United States of America.



American inventor Dean Kamen has 56 published PCT applications, many in the fields of health care and personal transportation. This is his revolutionary, stair-climbing iBOT™ wheelchair.



Japanese ground-breaker Sony used the PCT as it developed sophisticated techniques to control the movements of the company's humanoid robots. Sony remains among the top five PCT filers worldwide.

Creators Great and Small

From the biggest corporations, to university research institutes, to small businesses and individuals, the PCT serves innovators from all walks of life. Complex advances in digital technology, life-saving discoveries in biotechnology, new products using traditional knowledge, labor-saving devices, games – all are among the more than 10,000 applications now processed by the PCT Office each month.

The United States of America, Japan and Germany are currently the most prolific PCT user-countries, with major, multinational companies dominating the top 20 list. But PCT use by developing countries is rising fast. The Republic of Korea is now the 7th overall user worldwide, with China moving into 13th place.

Top 5 overall users

Philips Electronics N.V.
(Netherlands)

Siemens (Germany)

Matsushita (Japan)

Bosch (Germany)

Sony (Japan)

Top 5 developing country users

LG Electronics
(Republic of Korea)

Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd
(Republic of Korea)

Council of Scientific and
Industrial Research (India)

Huawei Technologies Co. Ltd.
(China)

Ranbaxy Laboratories Ltd.
(India)

Getting the Benefit: One Application - 124 Countries

A single, international PCT application enables an inventor to seek patent protection simultaneously in any or all of the 124 Contracting States. One application form, one language, one set of fees, providing the same legal effect as a national application in each State. The PCT route gives applicants up to 18 months longer to decide in which countries to pursue national patent protection: **more time** for testing and technical development, for researching marketability in different countries, for arranging manufacturing licenses and financing. It means **delayed costs** associated with subsequent national applications. During the international phase, applicants receive **high-value information** from the PCT international search and preliminary examination on the likely patentability of the invention in different countries. By the time applicants come to consider national applications, they have a wealth of information on which to base business decisions.

Towards the Future

Electronic Filing: Faster, cheaper, safer. Now handling over 120,000 increasingly complex international applications per year, WIPO is automating PCT procedures for greater efficiency and security. On-line, electronic filing was introduced in August 2003 and is being rolled out to receiving offices. PCT-SAFE (Secure Applications Filed Electronically) cuts costs and saves time for applicants, for WIPO and for offices.

PCT Mission. The PCT has found its place as an exceptional tool in patenting procedures worldwide. With applications mounting towards the next million, WIPO is vigorously pursuing its PCT mission of assisting applicants and potential new users the world over in the realization of the most precious of natural resources, human creativity.

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