

### Developing an IP Strategy

- Identify it!
- Protect it!
- Look for it!

Intellectual property is perhaps the most valuable asset your business has. Consequently, it is vital to implement and maintain a comprehensive and effective IP policy, in order to maximise the benefit that can be derived from your IP.

This information sheet outlines the considerations that should be made when developing your IP strategy.

Hill-IP Limited  
The Warrant House,  
High Street  
Altrincham, Cheshire,  
WA14 1PZ  
T: 0845 862 1429  
F: 0845 862 1606  
E: [contact@hill-ip.com](mailto:contact@hill-ip.com)

#### 1. Identify it!

- Take IP seriously
- Know what to look for
  - Consider the different types of IP
- Find out what IP you already have
- Conduct an audit if necessary
- Identify your IP – A single product may embody several types of IP;
  - Patents and/ or confidential information (for example in the manufacturing process)
  - Designs (in the packaging)
  - Copyright (in the packaging decoration)
  - Trade Marks
    - Which Trade Marks might you want to protect?
    - Indications which serve to identify your products and/ or services from those of your competitors – components of your brand, i.e.:
      - Corporate names
      - Corporate logos
      - (Potentially) distinctive colour schemes
      - Product and/ or service names
      - Advertising slogans

#### 2. Protect it!

- Make sure you own it
  - Check details of collaboration agreements, standard terms of business, employment contracts, etc.
- Is registration available or necessary?
- Be prepared to defend what you have
  - Monitor for potential infringement
  - Ensure that Trade Marks are correctly used (see later)  
Don't allow infringement to go unchecked

#### 3. Look for it!

- Encourage your employees to develop IP
  - Identify potential IP as early as possible
  - Keep records, where appropriate
- Ensure that Trade Mark issues are considered when developing a new brand, logo or internet domain.
- Consider how best to protect a new product or process;
  - Patent
  - Design
  - Confidentiality