

THE SPARK OF INVENTION

2014 WIPO GENERAL ASSEMBLY SIDE EVENT

A ground-breaking Time/Qualcomm poll reveals that the world's greatest era of invention and innovation is yet to come.

The TIME Invention Poll, a global survey of more than 10,000 people in 17 mature and emerging markets about what drives innovation, was the hot topic of a 23 September side event of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) 2014 General Assembly.

Jeffrey Kluger, Editor at large of TIME magazine, gave a thought provoking presentation of the poll. Michelle Lee, Deputy Director of the United

States Patent and Trademark Office (PTO), discussed the survey results and presented a range of PTO initiatives that aim to accelerate global invention and entrepreneurship. Half of the people surveyed in the TIME/Qualcomm poll believe that, in terms of technological advancement, the future will be even brighter than the past. According to both speakers, the protection of inventions using intellectual property rights will be crucial



to incentivize investments in new ideas, and to ensure that innovators can transform their ideas into products and services.



Back to Edison, Back to innovation

The TIME/Qualcomm poll found that Edison was by far the best known inventor (27%), followed by Albert Einstein, Alexander Graham Bell, Leonardo da Vinci, and Steve Jobs (3%). Not surprising given Edison's numerous inventions – with 1,093 patents to his own credit, and a legacy ranging from the light bulb, the movie camera, the cylinder phonograph, the disc phonograph, advanced fluoroscopy, a commercial stock ticker, a vote tabulator, and more.

Nurturing innovation

Introducing the presenters, Mr Thaddeus Burns, Senior Counsel, Intellectual Property & Trade at the General Electric Company (GE) said the key question was, "How do we capture a fleeting idea and turn it into something that is clearly expressed and around which manufacturing can be established and jobs created?"

A bigger and better future

TIME's Jeffrey Kluger introduced what the poll was all about. It revealed a wide range of opinions about who inventors are, how they do their work, and which countries are viewed as the most

inventive. "It's easy enough to recognize a prolific inventor when we see one," said Mr Kluger, referring to Edison. "It's far harder to define what the act of invention is—how it springs into being, how it visits some of us and not others, how an idea that seems so obvious after the invention has been conceived and built was so opaque, so elusive before."

When people were asked what the attributes of an inventor were, said Mr Kluger, 40% cited persistence, 43% curiosity, and 55% imagination.

The Poll also looked at whom respondents felt were best qualified to invent. "In our poll 65% said inventors are special people who are kissed by the essence of creativity. Only 35% believed anybody could be an inventor," noted Mr Kluger.

Although most respondents believed inventors have a special level of creativity not found in the general population, the number of people who thought they themselves could be inventors changed dramatically from country to country. For instance, 94% of South Koreans said they themselves could be inventors, whereas 33% of Russians and 26% of Americans shared this sentiment.

Only 24% of respondents believed that inventors from the United States would dominate the 21st century as they did in the past, when the country was manifestly the most inventive one. Fifty-four percent said the future would

be bigger and better than the past. Less confident were countries that had perhaps benefitted less, relatively speaking, from previous technological advancements. In Kenya, only 30% were optimistic. This was a common finding across the developing world.

Touching on patents and intellectual property protection, Mr Kluger said 90% of those surveyed believed that a strong patent system is important to encouraging innovation. Among the countries that respondents felt are best at protecting intellectual property rights, the US finished first with 40%. In second place was Germany with 10 percent.

Protecting innovation

According to Michelle Lee, based on the TIME/Qualcomm poll results, inventors around the world continue to believe in the patent system as an important facilitator of innovation. Eighty-two percent of respondents from emerging markets held that the patent system was important.

Despite this, she noted, when asked whether their own countries protected the intellectual property rights of their inventors, 73% of respondents in mature economies said yes, compared to only 56% in emerging markets.

Ms Lee stressed that inventors everywhere deserved to have their inventions protected. "This is why our international focus in policy making and IP processing specifically advances this through a prism of global promotion and protection."

One important element of the US PTOs' global focus was the Global Dossier Project - a one-stop shop for applicants to file and manage a global portfolio of patent applications. "This 2005 initiative by China, the European Union, Japan, Korea and the United States, will have huge long-term benefits for inventors worldwide," she added.

Among the benefits, as Ms. Lee puts it, "An effective global dossier allows you to map out your travel on the patent prosecution highway. This patent prosecution highway program spurs other offices to speed up examination processes in a very powerful way."

Q&A

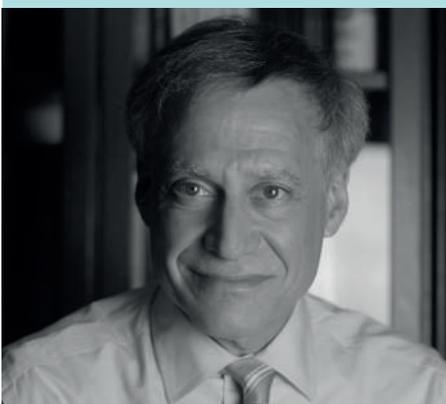
Q. Why do think the patent system is portrayed by some to be an impediment rather than as a spur towards innovation?

A. Michelle Lee: I don't think that people view patents per se as impediments. What you are witnessing are perhaps complaints about our US litigation system, and questions about what we can do to create the best overall patent system.

A. Jeffrey Kluger: It could have to do with the kinds of things we are patenting today. For instance, take a patent on

a new medical treatment. Lives will either be saved or lost depending on who gets those molecules. It touches us in a primal way that earlier patents on mechanical inventions did not. But it's easy to say 'get rid of patents and push the product out otherwise people are going to die'. This misses the larger point that without patents, innovation will not take place in the first place.

Q. Are you aware of a study by Yale University and the Carnegie Mellon Institute that found that, depending on the sector, patents are not always the first choice among IPRs for businesses?



A. Jeffrey Kluger: What I was addressing was more is the visceral response by people to patents in areas such as medicine, which speak to life and great abstract issues. They may respond in that way because they don't see these inventions as typical inventions, and their reaction is an emotional one to what are basically legal and policy questions.

A. Michelle Lee: There are multiple forms of protection. Patents are not the only form. There are also trade secrets. And copyrights can be used to protect expression, for instance with software. One has to weigh the situation and decide on the best form of IP

protection for their needs. You need different forms of intellectual property protection to safeguard the fruits of creation, otherwise people will lose the incentive.

A. Thaddeus Burns: It also has to do with the business model. For example, in the medical diagnostics world, even though patents may be relatively less important than other forms of IP protection, they are still necessary because of the need to cross license with competitors. You need to have something to put on the table, something to trade, to get access to others' technology that your company needs.

Q. On the issue of international harmonization – what are the areas that will require more efforts?

A. Michelle Lee: There are many ways to harmonize and many of them are pragmatic and revolve around nuts and bolts of IP systems: accessibility, computer systems, user rights. For maximum impact, harmonization initiatives can't only remain within a small group of countries. Going forward harmonization would benefit greatly from solutions that are multilateral.

Event Sponsors: Innovation Insights, IFPMA, ICC, Global IP Center (US Chamber of Commerce), CropLife International, BIO, EuropaBio, and the Global Innovation Forum.

IFPMA-related highlights

The event was also the place where IFPMA projected its new video that features an interview with IFPMA's President, Dr John Lechleiter, on 'What's an innovation ecosystem from an industry perspective'.



Dr Lechleiter highlights the vital components of the innovation ecosystem that are required if added value is to be given to patients. A key issue identified is the need for an enabling environment that

fosters greater investments in R&D through adequate incentives and the efficient allocation of human and financial capital. Dr Lechleiter also stresses the necessity for efficient regulatory systems that are predictable, consistent, transparent, and stringently scientific to ensure quality, safety, and efficacy of the products delivered.



Another video was on the 27th IFPMA Assembly which is being held on 4 November in New York, featuring Riz Khan,

international journalist, on what innovations are needed for today and who will foot the bill for these innovations? The one-day conference hosted in partnership with DEVEX will bring together a distinguished line-up of government decision-makers and leading players in the field of global health to review how ever-broader healthcare systems can sustainably meet the needs and expectations of patients and societies.

Visit IFPMA Youtube page for more.

For more information about IFPMA:
www.ifpma.org

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Jeffrey Kluger

Editor at large of TIME magazine will present the TIME Invention Poll, a global survey of 10,197 people in mature and emerging markets about what drives innovation

Michelle Lee

Deputy Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office will discuss the survey results and present PTO initiatives to support global invention and entrepreneurship

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