

Patent Analytcs Hub

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Organisation: IP Australia

Country: Australia

Level of government: Central government

Sector: Economic affairs

Type: Data

Launched in: 2015

Overall development time: 3 year(s)

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

IP Australia's Patent Analytics Hub helps Australian innovators make the most of their intellectual property (IP) to more effectively commercialise research. The services offered by the Hub supports the Government's National Science and Innovation Agenda in the areas of collaboration and government as exemplar. The Hub works to achieve this by extracting insights about developments in science and technology to provide Australian research organisations 'IP intelligence' to harness value from their patent portfolios and stimulate collaborations with industry and improve their IP decisions. By identifying research organisations and firms who are active in similar or complementary areas, this information can help foster and increase collaboration in Australia. The service offered by IP Australia is unprecedented in the public service and contributes to solving problems of Australia's relatively high scientific output compared to other OECD countries but relatively low innovative output. It is one of the first examples of an agency making use of data to equip publicly funded research organisations with evidence to increase collaboration, translate inventions into products and assist with commercialisation.

Why the innovation was developed

- The Patent Analytics Hub contributes to solving problems of Australia's relatively high scientific output compared to other OECD countries but relatively low innovative output. It also addresses a need to strengthen Australia's science-industry linkages. Australia's publicly funded research organisations do not or cannot budget for IP intelligence services from the private sector, and lack sufficient internal resources to conduct such research in-house. The Hub seeks to offer a solution to these problems by providing analytics services not only to government, but to publicly funded research organisations such as universities, medical research institutes and cooperative research centres, as well as small to medium enterprises that would not otherwise have access to this service.
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Objectives

Improve effectiveness, Improve efficiency, Support economic growth

Main beneficiaries

Academia, Government bodies

Existing similar practices

Informatics Team

In other countries' public administrations
United Kingdom IPO

The Informatics Team at the UK Intellectual Property Office (UKIPO) also offers an analytics service, but their work is mostly for clients within the UK Government. Only five per cent of the Patent Informatics work undertaken at the UKIPO is for commercial entities. The UKIPO finance department determines the fee for commercial work done by the Informatics Team, which is currently set very high. As a result of this high fee, the Informatics Team does not work with universities.

Results

Service quality

Accessibility:

- The Hub allows research organisations to access the service of patent analytics at a subsidised price point so that they can be more informed about patent activity and this information in their management and research decisions. Without IP Australia offering this service, research organisations would not be able to afford patent analytics.

Development

Design

The idea was generated by a team at IP Australia that included frontline and policy staff and well as executive management. The basis for the Patent Analytics Hub was the understanding that although patent data was publicly available and existed through multiple systems, the sheer volume of information meant it was difficult to search and collate the information to analyse trends and inform decision making. In response to this problem, IP Australia used its expertise in patents, technology and data mining to create a service that could be used help both government policy and university commercialisation strategies.

Testing

- The Patent Analytics Hub in IP Australia was created to facilitate the strategic use of intellectual property information. Before launching the programme, IP Australia undertook six confidential pilot projects with Australian research organisations, including medical research institutes, a university technology transfer office, an innovative small enterprise, and a leading manufacturer of medical devices. The feedback received from the participants confirmed that access to IP intelligence and patent analysis can help Australian research organisations to increase collaboration, translate inventions into marketable products, and assist with commercialisation and business decisions. These outcomes are important as Australia ranks at the lower end of the OECD countries in terms of collaboration performance (4th to last). Furthermore, many participants commented that IP analytics services are generally not provided by commercial providers or are beyond their financial reach.

Testing time: 24 year(s)

Implementation

Tools used:

- There were two innovative streams that IP Australia used to initiate the analytics Hub. The first was upskilling staff in a range of data analytics and coding tools that would allow the analytics Hub to manage big data efficiently. These tools included Tableau, which is a visualisation and data manipulation tool and a range of coding languages that allow the Hub to manipulate data in relational databases. This combination of big data analytics and visualisation allows IP Australia to produce comprehensive and informative reports in a timely manner. The second approach was to consult and visit with representatives of universities and research organisations to engage their thoughts on how patent analytics could be applied to the management of research. This has led to a strong engagement focus within the management team to continually improve the service and create relevant reports.

Resources used:

- Whilst starting off with a small team, the success of the Analytics Hub has led to an increase in staffing levels to include a fulltime three person management team – and ten analysts. The budget was increased to cover the additional staff, along with travel to meet with the research organisations. The fee for service nature of the government work means that the universities projects can be heavily subsidised.

Implementation time: 12 year(s)

Challenges and solutions

- The forming of the Patent Analytics Hub and expanding it to its current successful state has required a number of obstacles to be overcome. These include: • being the first Australian analytics service, not only absorbing best practices from abroad, but building the capacity to match, and overtake, what is offered internationally • transitioning to a much larger team with increased capacity, knowledge and skill, and dealing with the increased training and managerial loads that this imposes • upskilling of analysts with a range of skills including coding, visualisation, improved oral and written communication, networking and strategic thinking skills • producing a long term strategy that not only provided sustainable growth for the Analytics Hub, but also adhered to the agency vision and strategic plan and contributes to the governments innovation agenda.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- That offering this service to our users has been worthwhile. Our feedback has been that the reports generated by the Hub have been valuable in making research and commercialisation decisions.
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Conditions for success

- To be successful, the Hub requires users to be asking questions about their research.
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