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First announcement
call for papers

Invitation to form a new interdisciplinary network
for the handling of knowledge
in a knowledge-based society

International symposium

September 4th to 5th, 2008, Munich

Draft programme

September 4th, 2008

- 10:00 – 10:15 Welcome and Introduction
- 10:15 – 10:30 Greeting
- 10:30 – 12:00 Basics I: Interdisciplinary talk about the knowledge society
Terms and concepts of the knowledge society in different disciplines: law, humanities, economics, technologies
- 12:00 – 13:00 Lunch break
- 13:00 – 14:00 Basics II: Visions for interdisciplinary cooperation
Exchange of information about objectives, scientific interests, premises of the different disciplines; Definition of common visions for interdisciplinary research
- 14:00 – 15:00 Basics III: Methods for an interdisciplinary approach
Finding adequate methods for interdisciplinary research
- 15:00 – 15:30 Coffee break
- 15:30 – 16:00 General information about EU FP7, COOPERATION, THEME 8: Socio-economic sciences and Humanities
- 16:00 – 17:00 Project preparation I: Education/Further education in a knowledge society
The organisation of education in a knowledge-based society; new curricula and professions
- 17:00 – 18:00 Project preparation II: Innovation and technology transfer
The creation of value in a knowledge-based society; standardisation; knowledge transfer; intellectual property
- 18:30 Dinner, get together

September 5th, 2008

- 09:00 – 10:00 Project preparation III: Constitution of the knowledge society
Public institutions and regulations for a prosperous social development; how to handle knowledge in politics and companies
- 10:00 – 11:00 Project preparation IV: The knowledge society as a social challenge
The future of the employment system; justice, social opportunities and challenges in a knowledge-based society
- 11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break
- 11:30 – 12:00 EU FP7 in practice: current calls and application
- 12:00 – 13:00 Arrangements between potential project partners
- 13:00 – 13:30 Final discussion: The future of the network

Registration/call for papers

- » We expect 25-30 organisations from various related disciplines to join the symposium. Every topic should be covered by 3-4 short lectures (approx. 15 min) from different perspectives (law, management, economics, education, sociology...).
- » Register and specify your research profile, your co-operation interests and the title of your presentation on the attached form.
Deadline for registration: July, 4th
- » Send us an abstract of your presentation, no more than 3000 characters.
Deadline for abstracts: July, 18th
- » Participation at the workshop is free of charge, the travel costs of the speakers can be covered.
- » The final workshop programme and travel information will be sent to registered participants in late July.

The project partners

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The project

This project, granted by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, aims at creating a knowledge platform for the designing and public discussion of a European strategy for the handling of knowledge in a knowledge-based society. It brings together researchers from all relevant disciplines: jurisprudence, economics and business management, humanities, technology and engineering. The emerging interdisciplinary network project underpins research approaches in the field of social sciences and humanities within the Seventh EU Research Framework Programme (FP7).

The vision

The conceptual framework of the knowledge economy serves to describe the significant shift in the critical wealth-generating resources from tangible and financial resources to intangible resources. This change in importance is associated with substantial social, economic and political changes. Since the 1950s, there have been attempts in the specialist literature to describe this effect. But there

has not been a broad, systematic realization of the consequences in practice, and in particular the resulting extended options regarding intellectual property and its economic application have as yet not been greatly developed.

One characteristic feature of the difficulties associated with the knowledge economy is not only the fact that there is no customary positive definition of intangible resources, but that the understanding that prevails is based on the role of intangibles in the industrial economy, not necessarily the knowledge economy. In the literature discussions tend to focus on the negative delimitation from tangible and financial resources as it relates to industrial production and finance. In a deliberately simplified manner and based on Alvin Toffler's perspectives for a company in the 21st century, it would also be possible to talk of an "invisible economy" as something new. However, the economy has always been "invisible", or if you prefer "intellectual", the question is whether society has the tools and capabilities to reify these seemingly invisible social structures and make them trustworthy or "visible". In configuring and implementing IP management in the frame of property and capital, the specific economy of intellectual property and intangible assets must be taken into account from a knowledge-based business and finance perspective, not only from the viewpoint of legal rights. This requires a fundamental re-thinking of how knowledge can be transformed into property, and capital beyond the industrial paradigm in order to achieve tangible success in the form of wealth and welfare.

The effect and position of intellectual property in the knowledge economy includes three different perspectives. The first way of looking at it is in a capital-oriented manner. For the individual company, IP is part of the company's assets, a resource and a basis for competitive advantages. The second perspective is based on a functional observation. IP serves to define property based on the resource of knowledge. The third perspective focuses on the way in which an economic advantage can actually be achieved from the resource and the property, i.e. on the operational acquisition mechanisms.

Companies are not interested in protection per se for example through patents, but rather develop acquisition strategies for achieving the highest possible returns from their knowledge.

From this perspective, it becomes clear how the expansion of

the function of intellectual property and the increasingly important development of acquisition strategies from and using intangible resources places a list of demands on the economic management of intellectual property. The emphasis is not on the intellectual property as such, but rather on the economic functions built thereon and their exploitation in acquisition strategies.

Basic mechanism for generating wealth in the knowledge economy

It is essentially possible to distinguish three subsystems with inherent individual mechanisms and respective groups with a stake or interest therein.

The first individual mechanism is creation or acquisition, maintenance and enforcement of the intellectual property within the legal system of industrial property protection. The main route of entry into this system comprises the creative-imaginative efforts of the inventors and authors. The main result comprises industrial protection rights and copyrights. In this subsystem, besides the inventors and authors, the groups with a stake or interest therein are in particular patent attorneys and lawyers and also professionals in the field of industrial property protection and copyright. This "law" subsystem is dominated by legal questions and matters.

The second individual mechanism is the capitalization of intellectual property. In order to generate wealth, it is vital that this created intellectual property is put to productive use. Through this (demonstrable) productivity, the intellectual property becomes an intangible asset. Exploitation and recognition thereof is essential for capitalization, i.e. representation as a company asset. Important groups with a stake or interest in this "capitalization" subsystem are the company management, financial controllers and accountants.

The third individual mechanism is the conversion of intangible assets into alternative commodities. Conversion paths may include the exploitation of the asset within the company or outside the company (e.g. by issuing licenses) and also direct conversion of the intangible asset into equity capital and borrowed capital. This conversion path must work in both directions with the lowest possible transaction costs. The main groups with a stake or interest in the "conversion" subsystem are financial services providers such as commercial and investment banks, private equity companies or

leasing companies. Through conversion, the available means can be used by the company to generate further intangible (or tangible) resources.

As a result, along the basic mechanism and via the individual mechanisms of creation, capitalization and conversion, there is a generation of wealth based on the intangible asset. It becomes clear from this description that at least three different subsystems – law system, management (including accounting procedures and accounting standards) and finance system (investors) – have to interact in order to generate wealth.

The management of intellectual property with the aim of generating wealth in a knowledge economy must accordingly face this multidisciplinary challenge and overcome the subsystem boundaries by means of integrative, interdisciplinary approaches.

Towards a new interdisciplinary approach

Europe as a region can benefit from the economic changes by evolving from an industry-based economy to a knowledge-based economy. The important thing is to accept that these changes are associated with fundamental adaptation processes in the economic context of valuable assets in companies. The challenge becomes greater due to the "invisibility" of the assets, from their fundamentally different economic behavior compared to tangible or financial assets, and from the intrinsic multidisciplinary nature of adding value due to the various autopoietic subsystems in the basic mechanism of the knowledge economy.

In conclusion, this new field of work can be defined as the main content of IP management. It is not a sub-discipline of any of the disciplines concerned, but rather is a new, emergent phenomenon as defined by Luhmann, i.e. the appearance of a qualitatively new order, the properties of which cannot be fully explained based on the properties of the substructure or the specialist disciplines involved. The direct result of this is the opportunity to explain the management of IP not through a "rearview mirror" as a continuation of what is already known, but rather to present it as something which is fundamentally new and open and future-oriented.

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