

## UK: look before you leap

Every business generates intellectual property (IP) and stopping to recognise the role it can play in the success of your business is an important first step before jumping to file patent, trade mark or design applications. Without looking before you leap, you may find yourself falling further and faster than you intended.

### Intellectual Property Audits

An IP Audit is a review to look into the existing IP assets of your business and provide guidance towards identifying and maximising the value of that IP. It is also intended to help you ensure that potential future IP assets are identified and properly managed.

An IP Audit will typically cover a wide range of areas, such as current and future IP assets of your business and whether they warrant protection, as well as exploring potential issues involving ownership of IP that is being generated and risks associated with other people's IP.

The Audit can help you to decide where to focus your efforts in relation to IP protection, focussing on the IP assets that give you an edge over the competition, taking account also of your (actual or potential) revenue streams associated with the IP.

### Mewburn Ellis & IP Audits

At Mewburn Ellis LLP we have a wealth of experience in obtaining European patents, trade marks and designs for our clients, undertake a considerable amount of "IP due diligence" work and a substantial number of patent and trade mark opposition and appeal proceedings.

We apply this expertise when conducting IP audits and will work with you to learn about your business and help you understand your IP position and how to apply it to best advantage your business, offering clear, creative and practical advice.

We would be very happy to help you look before you leap.



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## Tanzania

*Ms Lea Mkono is an Associate with Mkono & Co Advocates, the leading Law firm in Tanzania. She specializes in Intellectual Property.*

A company's intellectual properties are often more valuable and also proprietary than the company's tangible properties. A company must take a positive approach in protecting its intellectual properties. Regrettably, many companies do not realize the worth of protecting their intellectual property until they face its loss.

Protecting a company's intellectual property aims to guarantee its continued income from technology. A company must always be diligent about disclosing new ideas, particularly those covering new processes and products. It should be company practice to apply for patents covering any inventions made as a result of research development so that the company sustains its top competitive position.

The key benefits of licensing intellectual property apply to all sorts of industries. It should also be noted that companies can gain substantial amount of income from licensing. Due to the worldwide importance of patents we believe there will be an increase in patent filings in East Africa in 2014.

Mkono & Co Advocates is the most successful firm operating in the Tanzanian legal market; over the last 12 months we have won some of the most desirable deals in East-Africa. We have a competitive edge and a close association with international law firms which puts us in a dominant market position.

Our intellectual property team can assist clients with preparation, filing, prosecuting and maintenance of patent applications in Tanzania, Zanzibar and Burundi. We also have expertise in advising on validity of patents and defending against infringement claims. We assist clients with applications that have been refused by the patent Examiner and prosecution during subsequent opposition.

Our firm works with clients locally and internationally, representing clients from many different fields, including corporations, consumer goods industries as well as other law firms located around the globe. We pride ourselves on expeditious filing of patent applications in Tanzania, Zanzibar and Burundi.

*The firm has been ranked in Tier one by Chambers Global since 2000 and remains at the top level in the 2013 edition*



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## Korea

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In knowledge-based economies, innovation is a must for surviving in business. So a good IP portfolio is required not just for the protection of IP but also for creation and commercialization. Accordingly we believe that IP boutique firms should be able to provide highly business- and strategy-oriented services beyond legal matters.

We anticipate the IP market in Korea will be more challenging in 2014 due to the long-term recession. However, new types of IP-related services (IP valuation, securitization and consulting service) will grow – as will the numbers of global IP service providers.

We provide an A-to-Z service for prosecuting patent applications. For domestic clients, we usually start our service by reviewing a few page-length invention

reports. After interviews with inventors and analysis of prior arts, we make out several tens-of-pages drafts for domestic filings and thereafter related versions in English for foreign filings as well.

For foreign clients, we usually start by reviewing applications. As instructed by the client, we make some amendments to fit the Korean IP system. Our plentiful experience and knowledge of the prosecutions in the area where our foreign clients' cases come from further guarantees our quality service in handling foreign clients' cases.

Amendments of patents happen a lot both for domestic filings and foreign filings. It mostly happens in response to office actions (monthly 400 OAs for domestic and 1,100 OAs for overseas filings). Amendments may be made in preliminary reviews for filings. Our principle is 'to do in proactive ways'.

Founded in 1985, YP Lee, Mock & Partners has grown to be a leading IP law firm in Korea, having over 130

patent attorneys providing services on all IP-related matters. We are noted to be highly experienced in foreign filings (nearly 5,000 filings in 2012) in addition to the usual domestic filings (over 4,100 filings in 2012).



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