



Intellectual property *GIVES YOU THE EDGE*

Canadian Intellectual Property Office, a special operating agency of Industry Canada

Whether your goal is to break into a new market, build on your company's achievements, attract investors, market a product or protect your rights as an inventor, you need to think about intellectual property (IP).

Almost all the trappings of our daily life involve IP. New products, new brands and new creative designs appear on the market every day. They are the fruit of ongoing innovation and creativity.

Everything from your new state-of-the-art mattress to your alarm clock to your favourite brand or book to the latest innovative product involves IP. Your business has many invaluable IP assets, including its name, its customer list, its annual report, its research documents, its logo and the look of its product.

IP also includes products of the human mind such as inventions, literature and art, as well as the symbols, names, images, designs and models used in business. IP rights are protected by patents, industrial designs, trade-marks, copyrights and integrated circuit topographies.

- **Patents** give inventors exclusive rights to their inventions. Patents are granted for products or processes that are new, workable and ingenious (novel, useful and inventive). The inventor must provide a full description of his or her invention so that all Canadians may benefit from it.
- **Trade-marks** are used to distinguish the wares or services of one person or organization from those of others in the marketplace. A trade-mark is a word or design (or a combination of these features) that distinguishes you.
- **Copyrights** apply to all original literary, dramatic, musical or artistic works from the moment they are created.
- **Industrial designs** include the shape, configuration, pattern or ornament (or any combination of these features) applied to a product.
- **Integrated circuit topographies** refer to the three-dimensional configuration of the electronic circuits embodied in integrated circuit products or layout designs.

These rights are “property” in the same way as a building or plot of land you have purchased, since they are based on a legally recognized right.

IP lets you:

- safeguard your assets and prevent others from diminishing your competitive advantage;
- exploit the wealth of strategic information contained in Canadian and international databases; and
- stand out from your competitors.

The Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO), a special operating agency of Industry Canada, is the primary office responsible for the administration of the IP system in Canada. It consists of a patent branch, a copyright and industrial design branch, and a trade-marks branch.

CIPO's website is a preferred means for clients to find the information they need to make sound business decisions.

Visit our website at www.cipo.gc.ca.

*Also check out our publication *Stand out from your competitors* at www.cipo.gc.ca/standout.*