

Brain League set to tap start-up pharma, biotech cos for variety of IP services

Monday, November 09, 2009 08:00 IST

Nandita Vijay, Bangalore

BrainLeague, a knowledge management and Intellectual Property (IP) consultancy company has now started a special service for pharma-biotech start-ups where it will offer IP generation, protection, management and commercialization advise. This will also include IP agreement drafting, negotiation and review services.

Last year, the company developed a dedicated software 'BL' to manage IP portfolios services. It offers patent searching, drafting, filing and prosecution services at Indian Patent Office, US PTO and EPO.

IP is critical for the pharma/biotech sector. Inadequate IP protection can wipe out a start-up company at any point of time. Despite the importance of IP, most start-up companies in India cannot take necessary steps because of prohibitive costs for its protection and risk clearance. For pharma companies, trademark protection is important as they come up with number of brands on a regular basis. Trade mark protection would cost around Rs 10,000 to Rs 50,000 based on the service provider. This cost also can be optimized by adopting appropriate strategies, Dr C Kalyan Kankala, chief knowledge officer, told Pharmabiz in an email interaction.

With the markets showing clear signs of recovery, a number of biotech start-ups are looking to market their technology, developed last year. Protection of IP provides the much needed competitive and business advantage. It helps to withstand cut throat competition from large multi-nationals by creating 'exclusivity' status in the market. IP is also an important factor to make funding decisions for most Venture Capitalists and Investment agencies when support start-ups, he added.

According to the report on Indian Patent applications in pharma sector, in 2008, a total of 6,217 applications were filed of which 4,267 were in the pharma sector and 1,950 in the biotech space. Between 2003-04 and 2005-07, patents applications have grown from 2,548 to 3,736 In 2006-07, 5, 013 patents were filed.

This sector has not witnessed any slow down as there have not been any decrease in number of filings compared with the previous years. The cost of patent protection in India varies from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 5 lakh based on the service provider chosen by the company. Appropriate strategy and IP optimization can bring down the cost and spread the expenses over a period of time. Brain League offers IP optimization services in order to help companies strategize their IP protection in such a way that the upfront cost can be minimized. More often than not, start ups fail to take simple cost effective steps also due to lack of awareness about IP protection mechanism, management and risks, said Dr Kalyan.