

## Intellectual Asset (IA) Audit – Starter Tool

The purpose of this IA Audit Starter Tool is to facilitate a preliminary review of your key Intellectual assets and management processes. It is not intended to be a detailed IA audit and is not a substitute for an audit by a professional service provider.

This document is for internal use within your organisation only. So, once completed, treat it as a confidential record with copyright protection. You can use it to facilitate ongoing internal discussions on how you might develop an intellectual asset management system to suit your organisation.

The document is divided in to 2 sections, each with a different purpose:

1. **Intellectual Assets:** To identify the main IAs in your business and whether or not they have any IP protection.

Ideally, discuss each category in turn with colleagues and try to identify your key IAs, be as specific as you can. If you do not know what to input in any section or if you think it is not relevant to your company, then write 'don't know' or 'N/A'. This may act as a prompt for you to seek more information at a future date. If the process highlights something you think you may need to act on, make a short note of it in the space provided.

2. **Intellectual Asset Management:** To assess how well you think you manage the IAs created or used in your various innovation activities.

In this case you are presented with a number of statements that relate to specific IA management scenarios. You are asked to rate, in your own opinion, how well each statement describes behaviours and systems that apply in your organisation. As with section 1, if the process highlights something you think you may need to act on make a short note of it in the space provided.

When completed review the actions identified, prioritise the ones that need most immediate attention and assign responsibility and deadlines for completion. Aim for about 3 priority actions so that you are not undertaking too much too soon. Continue to use the document to facilitate regular reviews in the future, producing an updated revision each time with new priority actions. This will also help you track your progress.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** This document may contain confidential information relating to your business and/or products and services. IT IS YOUR PROPERTY. DO NOT MAKE COPIES, EMAIL OR DISTRIBUTE WITHOUT ENSURING CONFIDENTIALITY IS MAINTAINED. Please complete the details in the table below ensuring that you identify one person from your organisation to take responsibility for management control of all revisions of the document.

<b>This document is the property of:</b>		ENTER COMPANY NAME	
<b>Control Responsibility</b>		<b>Prepared on:</b>	ENTER DATE
Name	Role	Signature	
<b>Other Contributors</b>			
Name	Role	Signature	
Name	Role	Signature	
Name	Role	Signature	

<b>Section 1: Intellectual assets:</b> Please record all the intellectual assets you can think of under each category and any relevant IP protections you have filed. If this raises an issue for you, make a note of what you will do to address it (the examples are prompts and may not be relevant to your situation).			
<i>Categories</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>IP protection</i>	<i>Action required</i>
<b>Brand(s)</b> Names, logos, phrases, colours etc. that distinguish your product or service from your competitors', in the mind of your customer.	e.g. Our company and product names.	Registered Trademarks: e.g. Our Handyoke® global trademark	e.g. Register a trademark on our company name in our target market(s).
<b>Technologies</b> Key Innovative technologies and inventions that give your product/service a performance based advantage compared to your competitors'.	e.g. Our new UV resistant food dye ID.123XYZ	Patents: e.g. US patent on dye composition.	e.g. Talk to a patent attorney about patentability of our technology before we sell the product.
		Trade secrets: e.g. our confidential dye production process.	e.g. Document our production process and implement Trade secret policy and processes.

**Section 1 Continued:**

<p><b>Aesthetics and designs.</b> Original 'look and feel' features of your products, user interfaces, brands etc that distinguish them from those of your competitors.</p>	<p>e.g. our new curved step ladder.</p>	<p>Registered designs: e.g. Step ladder community registered design</p>	<p>e.g. register design before going to trade show next month.</p>
<p><b>Copyright</b> Any original expression of ideas/concepts (e.g. software code, artwork, recordings, manuals, website, brochures, databases) that you would not like to see associated with competitor's business, products or services.</p>	<p>e.g. software code for new search engine product</p>	<p>Copyright register: e.g. Secure drive and cataloguing system on server No 2.</p>	<p>e.g. Mark all materials with: ©, Co Name, Date.</p>
<p><b>Online presence</b> Domain names, websites, google Adwords, social media handles etc owned/used by the company.</p>	<p>e.g. active company websites, facebook, twitter etc</p>	<p>e.g. All registered domain names, brands as google adwords</p>	<p>e.g. review Whois information, privacy and data policy, buy brand ad word etc.</p>

Section 2: Intellectual Asset Management Statements relating to IA management scenarios	How well does this reflect your business?					Action required?
	not at all		moderately		very well	
If an investor asked, we can clearly describe our IP strategy.	1	2	3	4	5	
We have consistent processes in place that enable our innovation team to record all research and development results (e.g. engineers note books, copyright register, version control, invention declaration forms etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	
If an employee with important know-how leaves our company, we have processes in place to ensure we retain the know-how and the employee knows they cannot share or use it with competitors. (e.g. confidential process manuals, clear employee contracts, trade secrets policy)	1	2	3	4	5	
We regularly review our innovation results to identify key innovations for IP protection (e.g. IA audits, invention declarations, filing patents).	1	2	3	4	5	
All of our employees are aware of their obligations to maintain confidentiality and assign their rights to anything they create in their job to the company.	1	2	3	4	5	
We have a budget allocated for safeguarding our IP (e.g. Legal fees, patent costs)	1	2	3	4	5	
We do not subcontract any development work without a supplier agreement that makes it clear that all IP comes back to us.	1	2	3	4	5	
We have clear confidentiality processes to cover external interactions to avoid public disclosure of confidential information. (e.g. non-disclosure agreements, data security, publication policy, marketing material etc)	1	2	3	4	5	
We have a robust brand strategy; supported by consistent brand designs, usage guidelines, competitor surveillance and registered trademarks.	1	2	3	4	5	
We have a process to encourage and reward our employees to generate new ideas and submit them to management for consideration.	1	2	3	4	5	
We actively seek to enhance our innovation potential and reduce cost by seeking license, collaboration and strategic alliance opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5	
If an employee has an IA related query. They know who in the company to contact for guidance. (e.g. IP manager, In-house counsel, CTO)	1	2	3	4	5	
We actively seek professional advice in relation to protecting our intellectual assets (e.g. legal, patent/trademark attorney)	1	2	3	4	5	
We provide IP training and awareness support to our staff.	1	2	3	4	5	
All new employees/contractors complete an entry interview to ensure they are not bringing others' trade secrets (e.g. former employers) into the firm.	1	2	3	4	5	
Our employees do not conduct/store/share ad-hoc patent searches.	1	2	3	4	5	