Kluwer Patent Blog

Wolters Kluwer partners with AI analytics company, Aistemos.

Nigel Swycher (Aistemos) · Friday, October 27th, 2017

Kluwer IP Law announced in September that it was partnering with Aistemos, to distribute Cipher Reports, the latest in AI over IP. This is the back story.

Patents date back 400 years, so nothing new. What has evolved is the importance and value of patents, and intangible assets more generally. For the vast majority of companies, intangible assets now account for more of the enterprise value than other e.g. fixed, assets. This has always been the case for pharmaceutical and biotech companies but now all companies are built on technology: media, retail, industrial automation, FinTech and automotive to name a few. Against this backdrop, it is perhaps not surprising that there are now over 80m patents owned by 1m organisations.

For these reasons, patent information has become the largest untapped repository of scientific and technical information. Surely not is the usual response. Patents are public – that's the deal; publication in exchange for a time-limited monopoly. The problem is that there is no efficient way to search patent information. It is, to put it mildly, messy. The reality is much worse than that. Patent information resides in 100 patent offices, and in almost as many languages. Last year there were more new Chinese patents than US and Europe combined. The extra twist, as patent attorneys will attest to, is that patent drafting is now a blend of art and science, which regularly obscures the underlying invention.

Now for the good news. There are many national, regional and international initiatives committed to improving the availability and accuracy of patent information (many reported on the *Five IP Offices* website). This work is not limited to just patent data, but also ownership (take a look at the Open Register of Patent Ownership, *oropo.net*), standards (ETSI have been working on a database of standard essential patents for many years) as well as litigation (PACER in the US, with the rest of the world playing catch-up).

The availability of data is necessary, but not sufficient. For information from all these sources to become a useful source of information takes three additional steps. First, aggregation. Not unlike many big data challenges, there is greater insight to be gained by combining multiple sources of data, rather than studying each in isolation. Secondly, analysis. This is where artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms are able to help. Machines can now count, sort and analyse better and faster than humans (we should all reflect on AlphaGo from Deep Mind which beat a Go Grand Master). Thirdly, visualisation. Many of the early attempts to analyse patent information assumed that all available data should be presented to the user. That is a mistake. It is well established that communication depends on presenting the right information in the right way. *Knowledge is Beautiful*, *Information is Beautiful* are recommended reading in this area.

Cipher Reports have been created with all these objectives in mind. The creators of Cipher are Nigel Swycher, who was an IP lawyer for over 25 years, and Steve Harris, formerly a Research Fellow in the field of Artificial Intelligence and analytics. This is a perfect pairing of skills to take on the challenge and in 2013 they set up Aistemos (Latin for the process of beating copper and turning it into coins). Nigel's experience meant that he knew the teams that were unable to access the information they wanted. Steve had the capability to apply data science that had never been deployed in the world of IP.

The result is a Cipher Report that combines multiple datasets (patents, litigation, standard essential patents, cost), that uses AI to analyse portfolios and then identify and compare patented technologies to similar portfolios owned by others. This opens up new markets for IP business intelligence such as competitive intelligence, risk management, reporting and benchmarking.

The partnership with Aistemos comes at a perfect time for Kluwer IP Law. Already a market leader in providing information to support the global practice across the full spectrum of intellectual property, there is a recognised demand for analytics to speed up and improve the work of IP professionals. Nigel Swycher, CEO of Aistemos sees the benefits in these terms: "While the press speculates on AI putting lawyers out of work, I see it differently. Cipher does all the heavy lifting quickly and accurately, leaving more time for highly skilled IP professionals to focus on what they do best – add value".

For more information please visit Cipher at Kluwer IP Law.

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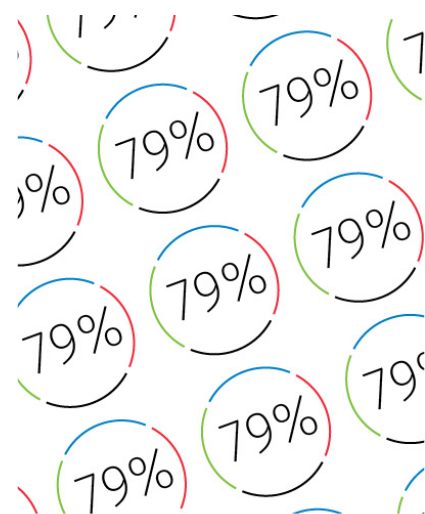
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This entry was posted on Friday, October 27th, 2017 at 10:44 am and is filed under AI, Patents
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