

Steady increase in applications along with Korea's economic recovery

Even with the struggling economy, provisional figures show an increase in Patent and Trademark applications in Korea. Also, the number of international applications for Patents and Trademarks rapidly increased last year.

According to the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), provisional figures have been released reflecting an increase in: Patents 4.3; Trademarks 4.9%; Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) 20.1%.

With the Korean market being of high interest to many countries, Japan was the greatest filer in Korea followed by United States and Germany. Taking a look at major domestic companies and the number of PCT applications filed abroad, Samsung Electronics topped the list with a total of 7,719 cases, followed by LG Electronics and Hyundai Motors.

Further to the Patent and Trademark as well as PCT applications, the number of international trademark applications under the Madrid system increased by 44.0 percent from 282 in 2009 to 406 in 2010. Requests for designations in international applications rose by 62.0 percent from 2,042 cases in 2009 to 3,308 in 2010.

Even with the final counts not made, the preliminary facts and figures shows continuous growth in IP matters in Korea. With domestic companies filing internationally and international companies showing high interest in the Korean market, professionals have high hopes for 2011.

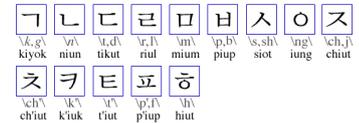
Industrial Property Applications by subject category and year in Korea

Category	2007	2008	2009	2010
Patent	172,469 (3.8)	170,632 (Δ 1.1)	163,523 (Δ 4.2)	170,600 (4.3)
Utility Model	21,084 (Δ 35.9)	17,405 (Δ 17.4)	17,144 (Δ 1.5)	13,690 (Δ 20.1)
Design	54,362 (6.5)	56,750 (4.4)	57,903 (2.0)	57,223 (Δ 1.2)
Trademark	108,071 (3.3)	99,986 (Δ 7.5)	103,433 (3.4)	108,450 (4.9)
Total	355,986 (0.3)	344,773 (Δ 3.1)	342,003 (Δ 0.8)	349,963 (2.3)

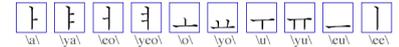
(Unit: case, %)

DID YOU KNOW?

•Consonants:



•Vowels



Before the early 1400s, official documents in Korea were written in classical Chinese characters (*Hanja*). As the idiographs were too difficult to learn for all citizens, only the educated people could read and write. King Sejong, the 4th ruler of the Joseon Dynasty set up a special committee of scholars in 1443 to create a new writing system.

As a result, *Hangul* (meaning 'the one script') was introduced. It originally contained 28 symbols, although 4 are no longer used. Currently *Hangul* has 10 vowels and 14 consonants. The consonants represent the simplified outlines of the parts of the mouth and tongue used to pronounce them.

F.Y.I.

Draft of Patent Law Reform Proposed

Proposed effective date: July 1, 2012

Origins for revision:
Combination and modification of the Korean Patent Law in accordance to the Patent Law Treaty (PLT) to unify as well as simplify the application process for applicants

Draft of Industrial Design Protection Act Revision

Proposed effective date: July 1, 2012

Origins for revision:
Amendments conformed to the Locarno Agreement & Hague

*Please look forward to our upcoming newsletters for updated information