The Good, the Bad and the Ugly of Co-creation
Some personal experiences
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Agfa-Gevaert Group
- Founded in 1867, IPO in 1999 (Brussels)
- Headquartered in Antwerp, Belgium
- Sales of about EUR 2.7 billion
- 11,000+ employees worldwide
- Sales organizations in more than 40 countries
- 21 R&D and production sites around the globe
- Global market leader in each of its divisions

Graphics 54%
HealthCare 39%
Specialty Products 7%
€2.7 billion
Agfa Graphics

Best-in-class portfolio by segment

**Commercial Printing**
- Prepress equipment, consumables, software and services

**Sign & Display**
- Wide-format UV inkjet printing equipment, consumables, software and services

**Newspapers**
- Prepress equipment, consumables, software and services; mobile and cloud solutions

**Packaging & Labels**
- Prepress and inkjet equipment, consumables, software and services

**Industrial Printing**
- Industrial inkjet inks; integration of printing into existing industrial manufacturing processes

**Security Printing**
- For high-end security printers who want to protect their designs against counterfeiters

Industrial Printing: Many applications
ABC of inkjet printing

- Digital, non-contact printing method
  - no master (plate or sleeve)
  - direct from image file
- Ink properties for jetting process
  - $N^2$ 1 = low viscosity
- Ink properties for application
  - surface tension for image quality
  - UV curable for non-absorbing substrates

Agfa: a story of transitions

**Analogue**
- 100% in-house R&D
- System approach (e.g., printing plates, plate setters and press software)
- In-house defined technical product specifications
- All IP handled in-house
- Full control, decision making

**Digital**
- Co-creation
- Part of the system
- Partly dictated product specifications
- IP work/responsibility shared
- Partnership
Co-creation

- **Definition?**
  - No solid definitions found in literature, on internet,…
  - **Open innovation** → technology acquisition in the R&D stage?
    -> everyone free to join in, no real commitment…?
  - **Co-creation** → technology development?
    -> solid partnership, contract,…?

- **Two types of co-creation** (Agfa: B2B context)
  - Co-creation with customer
  - Co-creation with user/co-developer

Example of co-creation with customer

- **Interior decoration: laminate flooring**
  Customer = laminate manufacturer
Example of co-creation with customer

Example of co-creation with user/co-developer

- Low migration inkjet printing on food packaging

User/co-developer = manufacturer of bottling line, packaging line

Customer = food/drink manufacturer
Example of co-creation with user/co-developer

State-of-the-Art

- Label printer
- Bottle manufacturer
- Drink Manufacturer
  - stock
  - logistics
  - glue
  - fill
  - ship

Delay

Innovation

- Label order design
- Drink Manufacturer
  - stock
  - inkjet
  - fill
  - ship

Value proposition = JIT + Cost effective Solution

Reverse order… to end with a positive note

- The Ugly
- The Bad
- The Good
1. Hidden agenda’s
   • more frequent for co-creation with customer
     Reason ? Different starting point: “nothing to lose”
   • but like in marriage you don’t know in advance
   • So, not much you can do?

Some suggestions
   • Don’t be naive
   • Try to profile your partner
     • Use business intelligence
       Financial data, track record, internet (Glassdoor, Facebook,…),etc
     • IP intelligence
       – Previous collaborations? Ask around in your network; joint IP ?
       – IP awareness ? e.g. company/R&D size vs. # patent filings
       – Patent grant ratio, competitor IP-size,…

2. Over-enthusiastic top level management
   • Remember !
     Co-creation: 9/10 fail or at least don’t go as planned
   • Patent attorney has to play his role
     • Convince mgmt to invest sufficient time in contract
     • Carefully write/review contract IP clauses !!!
     • Most important ones
       • IP ownership
         – by technical field not by inventorship
         – avoid joint patents
       • What rights especially after termination (licensing, enforcement..)
The Good, the Bad and the Ugly of Co-creation / Hans Strijckers  
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The Ugly

• By the way, a typical contract

• In Europe In USA

• Difference not only because of common law system

The Bad

1. Asymmetry of information

• inferior, incomplete patents

• poor claim drafting

• poor decisions

Solution is simple

• try decreasing the distance

• meet your IP colleague in person → amazingly effective
The Bad

2. Poor team spirit

- IP strategy
- Freedom to operate
- Conflict of interest

Solution is case dependent
- Depart from your normal attitude of maximizing benefits for your company
- Try creating not only win-win situation in business but also in IP
- Have an open mind and be a teamplayer

The Good

1. Superadditivity (1+1 > 2)
- Increased & flexible capacity (but must work in both directions)
- Joint patent writing ⇒ excellent quality patents/claims
- Partner patent attorney = sounding board
- Stronger position in third party issues
- Mutual good understanding allows to demine situations before they explode
2. Rewarding

• Meeting new interesting people, fellow patent attorneys

• Challenging IP work

• Self-development: co-creation = learning experience

• Interesting work – in-house R&D often “more of the same”

• And sometimes co-creations go really well…

• December 2014

• Agfa Graphics most Innovative Company of Belgian Chemical Industry in 2014
Thanks for your attention!
Questions?