

### **Third Survey on Business Attitudes to Intellectual Property**

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The latest “Survey on Business Attitudes to Intellectual Property” commissioned by the Intellectual Property Department (IPD) reveals that the awareness level of intellectual property (IP) rights among business establishments in Hong Kong remains very high. The survey has been conducted annually and is now in its third year.

The objectives of the survey are to examine current level of business enterprises’ awareness and attitude towards protection of IP rights; to examine businesses’ awareness and the degree of maturity in using IP as an asset for business development; and to evaluate IPD’s promotion work to the business sector. A total of 1,201 business establishments responded in the survey.

Over 98.5% of respondents were aware that IP rights include copyright, trademarks and patents. The respondents in general considered that it was necessary to protect IP rights in the business environment of Hong Kong (96.7%) and that IP is a valuable asset of a company (97.1%).

Compared with the results in 2004 and 2005 (12.5% and 22.9%), more companies (30%) have registered their trademarks, patents or design in Hong Kong and there is an increasing trend in the registration of four or more trademarks, patents or designs at present.

In addition, more and more business establishments have deployed employees specifically responsible for IP management (22.6% in 2006 versus 10.0% in 2004), and have prohibited their staff from committing IP infringement. 58% and 70.8% of respondents respectively replied their company prohibited their staff from using computers in uploading or downloading files for personal use during office hours and installing or using pirated computer software. This is significantly higher than the 49.4% and 63.1% in 2005.

“It is encouraging to see that more and more businesses are aware that protecting IP rights and registering IP are beneficial to them and are taking up the appropriate measures.” Mr Stephen Selby, the Director of Intellectual Property, said at a press conference announcing findings of the survey today (May 11).

“The survey shows that more than half (54.6%) of the business establishments would check the Trademark Registry record before using or adopting their own trademark for their goods or services. That is markedly more than 40.6% in 2004.”

“However, businessmen still get confused between about trademark registration and company registration. Only about half of respondents were correct in replying that registering a business or company name was different to registering a trademark. IPD will continue to disseminate the right message to the business community through different ways. Seminars co-organized with professional business bodies is one of them,” continued Mr Selby. IPD also published “Trademark Protection in Hong Kong” in February this year in order to promote a better knowledge of IP protection among the

business community.

"IPD has just put out a series of TV announcement featuring different scenarios in the protection of IP and bringing out the right concept, covering both business environment and daily life situations," said Mr Selby. "Survey results provide a useful benchmark for us in planning our work."

Mercado Solutions Associates Ltd was commissioned by the Intellectual Property Department to conduct the survey. The survey findings are available on the website of the Intellectual Property Department at: [www.ipd.gov.hk](http://www.ipd.gov.hk)

End/Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2006

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