

The importance of Intellectual Property in startups



If there is something that characterizes a startup, it is, in most cases, having **valuable intangible assets**: unique and disruptive technology, inventions, innovative designs, distinctive trademarks, etc. Protecting these assets is essential not only to maintain a **competitive advantage in the market**, but also to **drive growth and make it easier to attract investment**.

Key benefits of Intellectual Property (IP) for startups

Competitive advantage and differentiation

Firstly, Intellectual Property rights (trademarks, patents, utility models, designs...) allow startups to stand out in saturated markets and offer unique and legally protected goods or services, thus generating consumer confidence.

Expansion and access to new markets

The protection of Intellectual Property rights facilitates internationalization, allowing startups to operate in other countries with legal certainty and recognition of their rights. This is key to grow and compete in global markets, especially in technological and digital sectors.

Attraction of investors and access to new funding

Investors and investment funds value positively startups that protect their intangible assets: it demonstrates reliability, growth potential and lower risk of 'copying' or misappropriation by third parties. In addition, IP increases the value of the company and can be used as collateral in different financing processes.

Better economic performance and growth

According to the study 'Intellectual Property rights and firm performance', carried out by the EUIPO, companies that protect their innovation through IP rights generate, on average, 41% more revenue per employee and pay 22% higher salaries than those that do not.

Encouraging R&D and innovation

Intellectual Property greatly facilitates research and development by ensuring that the results of creativity will be recognized and rewarded, thus creating an environment conducive to continuous innovation and improved goods and services.

Facilitates strategic alliances and collaborations with other startups

Having well-defined IP rights allows you to negotiate alliances, licensing agreements and collaborations on more favorable terms, which can be critical for national, regional or international business expansion (related content of interest: [How to register and protect a trademark internationally](#)).

Strategies for startups: how to manage Intellectual Property

A first recommended step would be to conduct an intangible asset audit **to identify and determine which innovations, trademarks and processes need to be legally protected.**

This audit allows prioritizing which innovations or marks deserve immediate protection, which ones can wait, and **which IP title is the most appropriate for each specific situation.**

However, given that startups' resources are often limited, a good option is for the startup to focus on protecting those innovations or marks that really provide a competitive advantage and are fundamental to the business model. In this way, for example:

- If the advantage is in technology, 'prioritize' patents.
- If the strength is in brand identity, 'prioritize' the registration and protection of trademarks and domains.

A startup should also bear in mind that registration alone is not enough: it is also key to implement online **surveillance systems to detect potential IP infringement or misuse.** This includes monitoring patent and trademark registrations as well as competitor activity. Early detection of infringements allows you to react quickly and protect your commercial and/or business interests.

In the case of partnerships with universities, research centers or other companies, it is key **to negotiate from the outset the ownership and licensing of the IP.** This avoids future conflicts and guarantees freedom of operation and commercialization.

Proactive and strategic management of Intellectual Property is a **differential factor for startups**. Implementing these strategies makes it possible to protect innovations, strengthen market position, avoid legal conflicts and increase the company's valuation in the eyes of investors and partners.

IP is not an expense, but a key investment for the growth and sustainability of any startup.

Intellectual Property for startups

At **UNGRIA** we have a team of experts in Intellectual Property who can handle the registration, prosecution and defense of trademarks and trade names, patents, utility models, designs, domain names, copyrights and any information considered to be trade secrets.

Contact us for more information.

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