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# First Annual Patenting Trends Study Provides Decision Makers With Clear and Actionable Information for 12 Economically Significant Industries

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** (May 1) – **Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton** and **GreyB Services** released today their findings from **The First Annual Kilpatrick Townsend & GreyB Services Patenting Trends Study** (Study). The Study provides clear and actionable information that assists decision makers in envisioning the technological future of their respective industries and setting their companies' strategies over the coming years and decades in an increasingly globalized economy.

Patent activity provides an important signal that is helpful in identifying and forecasting industry trends including the development of new products and services. It can predict the future focus of individual competitors within an industry, foresee the entry of new players into a particular market, identify potential acquisition or joint venture targets, identify geographic innovation clusters, and recognize competitors that may be gearing up for litigation by how they amass patents in a specific niche.

Key **overall trends** from the Study include:

- patent filing trends vary dramatically across industries and within different sectors of individual industries;
- the share of U.S. patent filings originating from foreign entities is growing;
- despite the buzz generated by disruptors and startups, our data shows that when it comes to patents, entrenched incumbents are the dominant players in each of the industries we surveyed;
- software-related inventions continue to face patenting challenges; and,
- innovation hot spots are spread across the United States.

In the Study, Kilpatrick Townsend and GreyB analyzed a proprietary dataset of U.S. patenting activity that extends through 2018. Automated and manual review allowed this study to be conducted at the industry level, with focus on the following 12 industry areas.

- Artificial Intelligence ("A.I.")
- Automotive
- Blockchain
- Building Materials
- Cleantech
- Computational Biology & Bioinformatics
- FinTech

- Industrial Design
- Internet of Things (“IoT”)
- Medical Devices
- Therapeutic & Diagnostic Molecules
- Wireless Phones

Key industry-specific trends from the Study that Corporate America should pay close attention to, include:

- A.I. filings by foreign applicants are increasing at a faster rate than the rate at which U.S.-applicant A.I. filings increased -- so domestically we are falling behind;
- Despite the fact that filings have been falling across many FinTech areas, cryptocurrency patents – which hold promise for increasing the security and speed of financial transactions – are on the rise;
- IoT filings are skyrocketing, with heavy emphasis on smart cities, automotive, and healthcare;
- the steepest innovation trend in the automotive industry is around the Vehicle Control Systems cluster (i.e., fuel efficiency, cybersecurity, safety, and emissions control) with battery technology seeing a fall-off and electric vehicle plateauing; and,
- there is significant and increasing patenting activity around blockchain with the most heated patenting race involving innovative applications for blockchain.

Because of the rapid pace of innovation in these industries, this study and the dataset on which it is based will be updated annually.
Lead authors of the Patenting Trends Study include Kilpatrick Townsend partners **Tom Franklin** and **Kate Gaudry** and a team of research experts from **GreyB Services**.
To obtain a copy of **The First Annual Kilpatrick Townsend & GreyB Services Patenting Trends Study**, please click here.