

Insights: News

New Patenting Trends Study Helps Corporate America Forecast the Future of Technology

May 1, 2019

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

ATLANTA (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](#).

About Kilpatrick Townsend

Kilpatrick Townsend is entrusted with the protection of knowledge assets for many of the world’s leading companies. Seven of the 10 leading digital media and entertainment enterprises look to us to help them connect consumers to content. Five of the top 7 Fortune 50 Future Leaders work with us to grow and protect their businesses. Seven of the 10 most innovative companies in the world look to us to protect their most prized assets. Five of the top 10 world’s most valuable brands turn to us to grow and defend the value of their products and businesses.

For more information about the firm, please click [here](#). For more information about the firm’s Intellectual Property Department, please click [here](#).

About GreyB Services

GreyB is global consulting firm committed to improving decisions. We are a community of researchers, who are combining technology with human intelligence to read patent data patterns. From helping attorneys win high stake patent litigations to advancing the use of patent data for business decisions, GreyB sources information (prior art, evidence of use, clustering, etc.) about technology through research. In our work, we saved millions of dollars in licensing fees by killing troublesome patents for fast growing companies.

For more information, please click [here](#).
