EPO SME case studies

Introduction
SMEs accounted for 28% of applications at the EPO in 2016.
The EPO SME case studies

- Demonstrate that European SMEs
  - can create **strategic value** from patents
  - need to know **when and how to use patents** to support their business
  - will benefit from the Unitary Patent and Unified Patent Court

- Facilitate the **transfer of know-how about IP strategy and IP management** by
  - showing concrete business examples
  - creating a pool of IP experts and SMEs for dissemination activities
European Patent Office

Geographical distribution

- PICOTE
- SKELETON TECHNOLOGIES
- EKSPLA
- Voltea
- Aerogen
- WEBDYN
- orcan
- LITHOZ
- marincor med
- fractus
- COSMED
- Medical Devices

38 European member states
Two European extension states
Two validation states
## Industries represented

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industries</th>
<th>SMEs</th>
<th>Main products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medical technology</strong></td>
<td>Aerogen&lt;br&gt;Cosmed&lt;br&gt;Micrel</td>
<td>Nebulisers&lt;br&gt;Biomedical measuring devices&lt;br&gt;Infusion pump systems</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Biotechnology</strong></td>
<td>Marinomed</td>
<td>Anti-viral technology</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Information and communication technologies</strong></td>
<td>Fractus&lt;br&gt;Webdyn</td>
<td>Fractal antennae&lt;br&gt;IP gateways</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Energy</strong></td>
<td>Orcan&lt;br&gt;Skeleton</td>
<td>Waste heat power generators&lt;br&gt;Ultracapacitors</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Environment</strong></td>
<td>Voltea</td>
<td>Water deionisation modules</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Optics</strong></td>
<td>Ekspla</td>
<td>Lasers</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Machinery</strong></td>
<td>Lithoz&lt;br&gt;Picote</td>
<td>Machines for manufacturing 3D ceramics&lt;br&gt;Tools for cleaning and repairing pipes</td>
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</tbody>
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Categories represented

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mature company</th>
<th>Product-oriented</th>
<th>Licensing/platform-oriented</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COSMED</td>
<td>fractus</td>
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<tr>
<td>EKSPLA</td>
<td>Picote</td>
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<tr>
<td>Micrel Medical Devices</td>
<td>WEQDN</td>
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<tr>
<td>POCITTE</td>
<td>Aerogen</td>
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<td>SKELETON TECHNOLOGIES</td>
<td>LITHOZ</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORCAN</td>
<td>Volta</td>
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<th>Start-up Spin-off</th>
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Patents and SMEs: some takeaways

SMEs can use patents to:

- protect their products
- support freedom to operate
- license out
- attract investors
- establish/facilitate collaborations
IP strategy – Some takeaways

It is essential to create an **IP strategy** which is:

- **pro-active** and **aligned** with your business case (and not just an expensive insurance policy)
- streamlined with R&D
- implemented at senior management level and regularly refined by experts
- never fully outsourced
IP management: some takeaways

It is vital to take a holistic approach to IP management, including:

- involving IP specialists and other stakeholders
- starting technology and competitor watch process
- adapting your filing strategy to your real business needs
- creating a financial plan, taking IP into consideration