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News



Today's headlines

**Global patent search service launched in Singapore**

*The Rhom IP Group now offers a suite of products and services covering the entire spectrum of intellectual property requirements, as Amit Roy Choudhury finds out*

**Business Times**  
18 Apr 2003

SINGAPORE-BASED Rhom Intellectual Property Group has launched a worldwide patent search service from Singapore. It will offer a global patent database, a set of analytical software tools, and validation technology.

Rhom has tied up with US-based MCam Inc and will use MCam's 'Doors' operating system to provide patent search facilities, IP (intellectual property) consultancy in R&D and financial investments. 'The Singapore government is extremely aware of the need to create, own and manage IP,' Rhom's director, M Ravindran, told BizIT. 'That is why we have introduced our services here first. We believe the market here is ready for it.'

Doors uses state-of-the-art automated search algorithms, including its proprietary Latent Semantic Filtering (LSF) methodology. The LSF checks patent documents by individual words, patterns and relationships in a number of different languages. It can help answer many key questions - from basic ones such as how many patents there are in a particular tech sector, to the possible number of parties which could be likely candidates for licensing the technology.

'The Doors operating system and tech platform incorporate about 98 per cent of the patent documents electronically published by the various patent issuing authorities worldwide, including the US Patent and Trade Mark office,' Mr Ravindran said. 'The text and data associated with this vast array of documents - numbering in the millions - is standardised to a global protocol to ensure that the database can be efficiently searched.'

## Software

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Rhom was set up by lawyers from Ravindran Associates, patent attorneys, patent search experts and investment research specialists from Australia. It has offices in Australia; Singapore is its Asia-Pacific headquarters. 'We are convinced in the mid- and long-term prospects of the market for such services,' he said. 'There is a growing need to validate IP before making investment decisions, whether the investment on time, effort and money on R&D is worth the effort.'

Rhom is offering a suite of IP products and services covering the entire spectrum of IP requirements. This allows the company to help manage both the threat and the opportunities associated with IP investment. It has five directors based in Sydney and two, including Mr Ravindran, in Singapore.

The explosion in patent filings worldwide makes it very difficult to manually search for 'prior art' (the previous level of technology available in the area where the patent is being filed). There is thus a growing acceptance of computerised patent search services. 'The key, however, is a validated database as well as sophisticated analytical tools that can pick up relevant 'prior art' and sieve out irrelevant technology,' Mr Ravindran said. 'Once the computerised search is done, there is still a need to analyse and evaluate the data.'

Rhom's solution provides both an analytical base from which to track the technical aspects of claims over technology, and the market behaviour of companies across and within industries.

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