

Barker Brettell

Intellectual Property

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Barker
Brettell

Intellectual
Property



Protecting your innovation: Protecting your business

Guide to IP for automotive supply chain
SMEs during technology commercialisation



Concept to commercialisation

If you, as the seller, don't protect the Intellectual Property (IP) in your product before pitching it (or even talking about it) to a prospective buyer, then you run the risk of someone else copying your idea. You can eliminate this risk by putting the right IP protection in place first.

A Tier 1/MM buyer is likely to ask if your product has 'IP protection'. Make sure you can answer "yes". Securing IP rights will protect your product, your business and your chance of making a sale, without risking loss of revenue if someone else steals your idea – and potentially your market share.

Put simply, IP rights can help you clinch that sale, licensing agreement or other strategic business transaction.



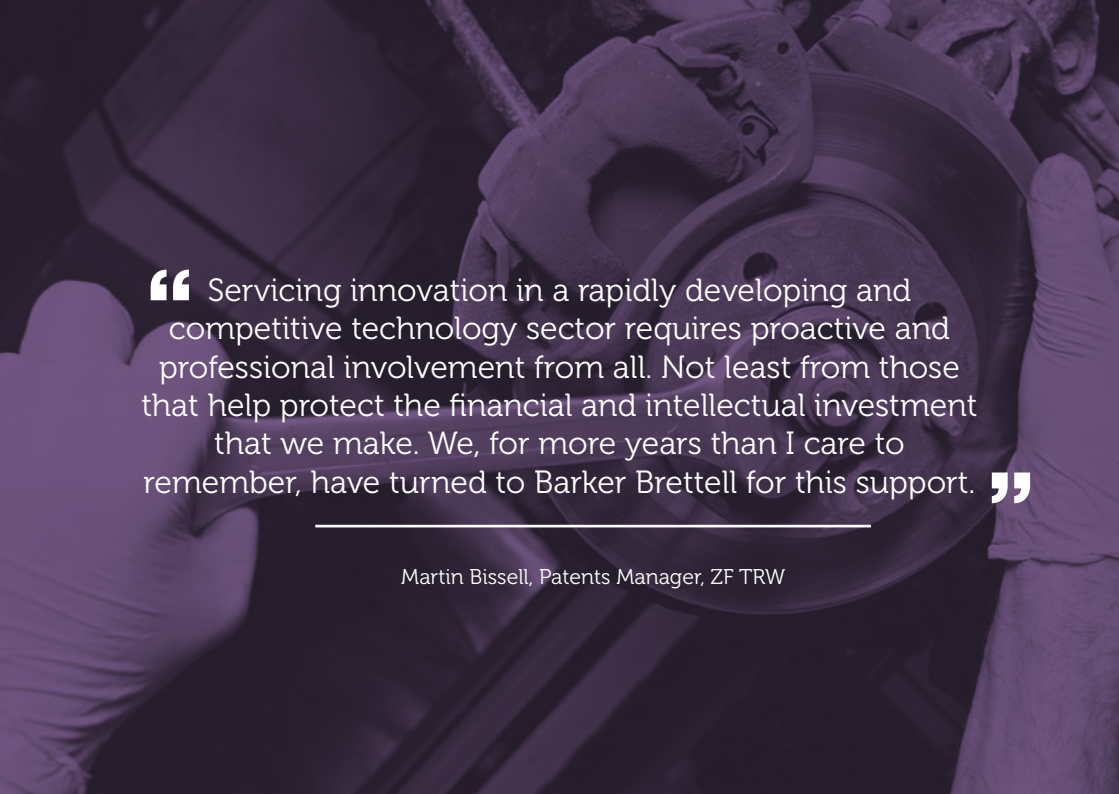
As easy as A, B, C

Before selling a product to Tier 1s/VMs or other buyers, you need to be sure that you:

- a) Own your idea/product
- b) Establish how innovative your idea/product really is
- c) Have the right Intellectual Property protection in place

Ensuring your product is 'market ready' gives your product credibility.

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“ Servicing innovation in a rapidly developing and competitive technology sector requires proactive and professional involvement from all. Not least from those that help protect the financial and intellectual investment that we make. We, for more years than I care to remember, have turned to Barker Brettell for this support. ”

Martin Bissell, Patents Manager, ZF TRW



Owning your idea

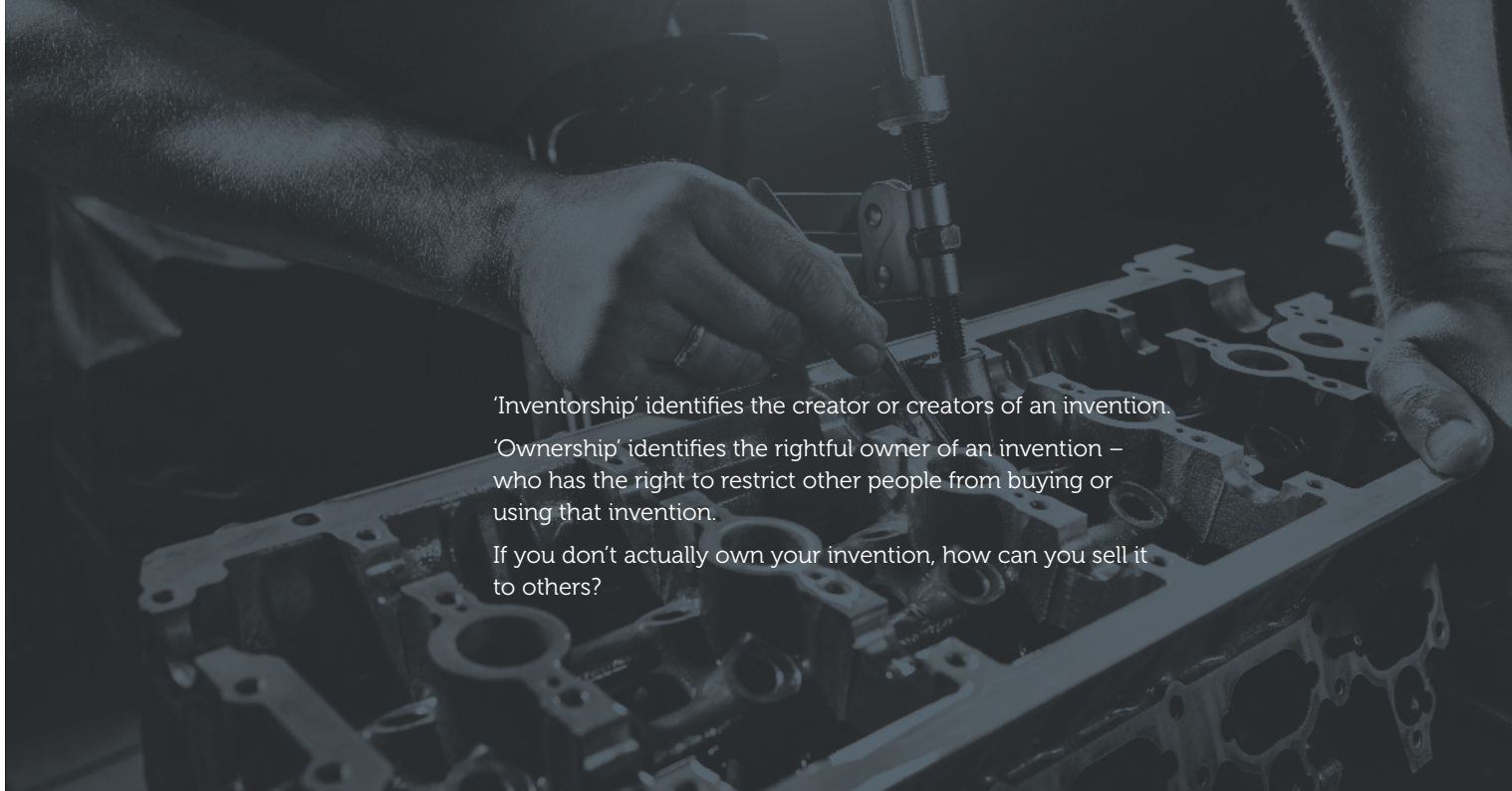
'Inventing' and 'owning' your idea are quite different. Understanding the difference is critical in determining who owns an invention which, in turn, determines who can apply for IP rights...and if commercialised, who can make money from that invention.



'Inventorship' identifies the creator or creators of an invention.

'Ownership' identifies the rightful owner of an invention – who has the right to restrict other people from buying or using that invention.

If you don't actually own your invention, how can you sell it to others?





Establish how innovative it really is

Some searching is essential before an idea reaches the market to establish how innovative the technology really is.

A 'landscape search' can help you identify whether there are any existing competing products which could impact on your ability to patent your product and/or take it to market.



Have the right Intellectual Property protection in place

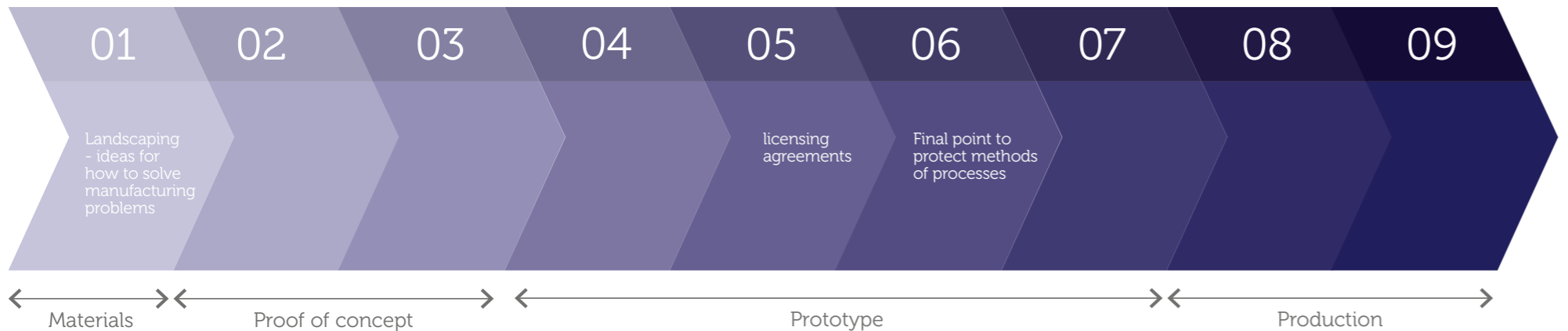
When it comes to your product (or products), do you know what IP exists? If not, you may wish to run an IP audit to give you a clear overview of existing IP rights and to assess whether they are fit for purpose.

An IP audit enables you to:

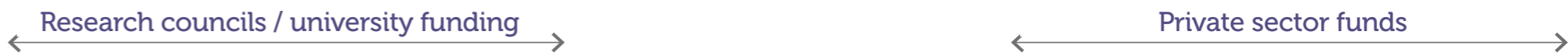
- Identify existing assets
- Highlight gaps in protection
- Create value by spotting opportunities
- Manage your IP portfolio



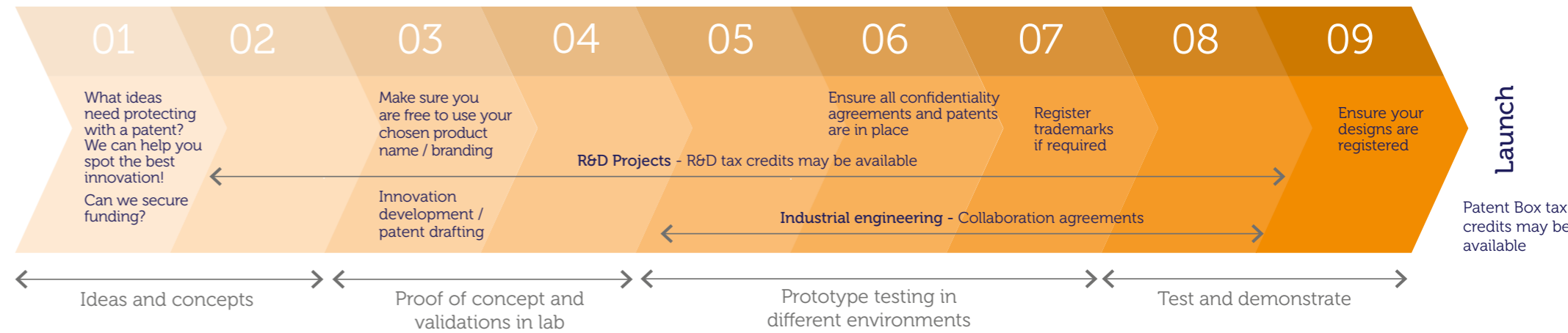
Manufacturing Readiness Level (MRL)



Commercialisation



Technology Readiness Level (TRL)





An introduction to IP rights



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Patents

Patent rights protect innovation, demonstrate creativity and can give you a head start in the market



Trade Marks

Trade mark rights protect anything that helps identify your product or service i.e. names, logos, colours and sounds. They can also protect your reputation.



Designs

Design rights protect the appearance of a product.



Copyright

Protects creative and aesthetic rights such as technical drawings.



Trade Secrets

Protect the secret things that give your business an advantage such as client lists, pricing information and new research.

A few key patents + a strong brand + some design registrations
= a low cost, low risk, high value IP portfolio



Why use patents?

Patents can be:

- A key requirement by VMs when deciding whether to buy your product or not
- Used strategically to help you secure higher revenue
- Helpful in preventing reverse engineering by competitors
- An early indicator in the new product development lifecycle that the product is innovative (or not)
- A source of competitive intelligence, providing insight into the strategy of potential competitors and technology trends
- Used to help you secure R&D tax credits & Patent Box tax relief
- Protection for your business during collaboration, joint ventures, strategic alliances, licensing agreements or mergers & acquisitions
- Play a crucial role in facilitating access



Automotive expertise

Barker Brettell's specialist automotive team comprises engineers, scientists and branding experts who are all qualified patent or trade mark attorneys with many years' experience advising businesses in the automotive sector.

From SMEs to VMs, our team will provide you with IP expertise applied commercially using insight and knowledge of the issues and challenges particular to this industry.



If you are an SME looking to protect your innovation before sale, please contact us and ask for a member of our automotive team.

**Call us now on:
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