



World IP Today

A Thomson Scientific Report on Global
Technology Innovations from 1997-2006

In recognition of World Intellectual Property Day on April 26, 2007, Thomson Scientific reviews the massive increase in technology innovations developed globally over the past ten years (1997-2006), highlighting tri-lateral inventions or inventions that have been filed in the U.S., Europe and Japan.

Examining the patent landscape is an excellent way to measure the evolution of global technology innovations. As our research shows, there has been a noticeable rise in innovations in many areas of technology, though Japan seems to dominate overall by holding the majority share of inventions across all technologies.

Key Study Findings

- Inventions relating to semiconductors, telecommunications and computing experience huge growth rates of 75%, 86% and 172% respectively since 1997
- Japan can be credited with the current state of today's high-tech market, holding the majority share of tri-lateral inventions across all technologies in 2006
- Samsung is the top patent assignee in tri-lateral inventions for 2006
- Samsung and Denso lead the way in diversified multinationals in terms of tri-lateral inventions in 2006

Observations

Digital Patents Landscape Evolves

Today's electrical patents landscape is dominated by the consumer electronics market, where manufacturers are racing to provide the next generation of devices that will win customers. Figure 1 shows number of inventions in three important areas of technology: cellular, media and wireless.

Keyword	No. of Inventions
Cellular	93,329
Media	138,529
Wireless	121,003

Figure 1

Figure 2 illustrates a more in-depth analysis of all inventions with electrical content grouped by publication year and technology. These results begin to paint a picture of the kinds of technology being patented.

Electrical Patent Analysis

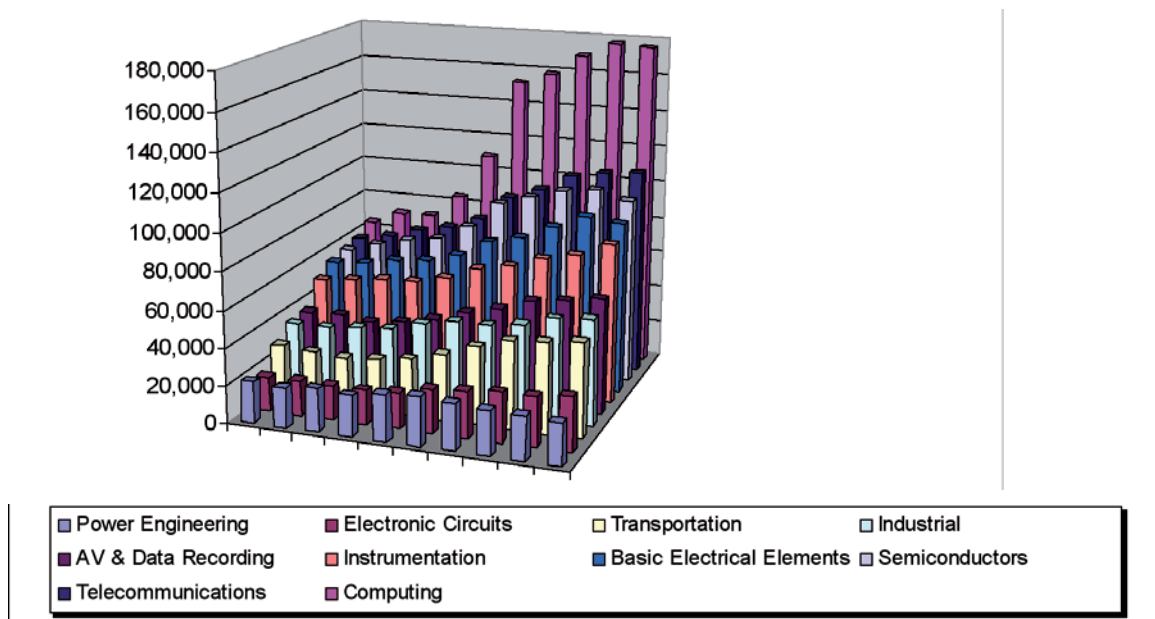


Figure 2

Overall, there was a steady growth of nine percent in patenting all inventions with electrical content from 1997 to 2000. This number then soared to 35 percent from 2000 to 2003 and slowed again to 13 percent from 2003 to 2006. There has been significant growth across all individual technology areas apart from inventions relating to power engineering. The graph above shows that inventions relating to computing dominate with a growth rate of 172 percent since 1997. Semiconductors and telecommunications show impressive growth rates of 75 percent and 86 percent, respectively.

Japan Leads Way in Development of High-tech Market

Figure 3 analyzes all tri-lateral inventions (inventions filed in Japan, the U.S. and Europe) for 2006 grouped by priority country, or inventions from a particular country where the invention is first filed and therefore where it is invented.

2006 Tri-lateral Geographic Distribution

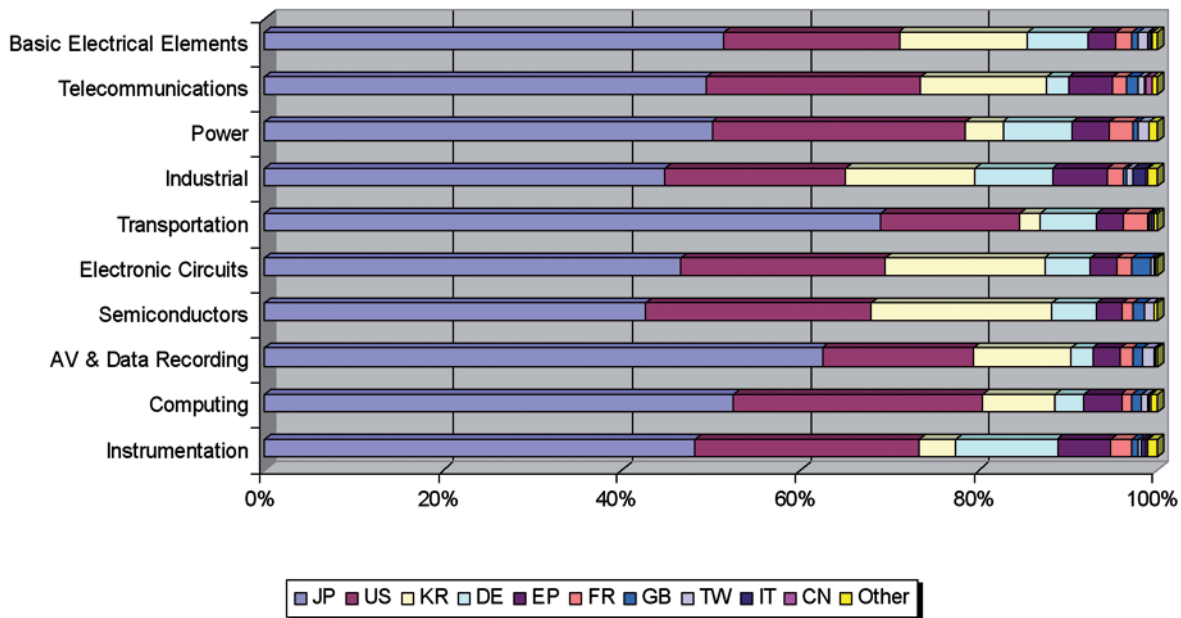


Figure 3

This analysis highlights the breadth of innovation coming out of Japan as they enjoy the majority market share across all technologies for tri-lateral inventions in 2006. South Korea is in fierce competition with the U.S. in the areas of telecommunications, audio/video and data recording, and semiconductors.

Multinationals & Multi-technologists

Multinational corporations dominate the intellectual property arena and many of them are involved in the development of multi-technology fields. Figure 4 below takes a look at top patent assignees in 2006 with tri-lateral inventions.

Tri-lateral Assignees - All Technologies

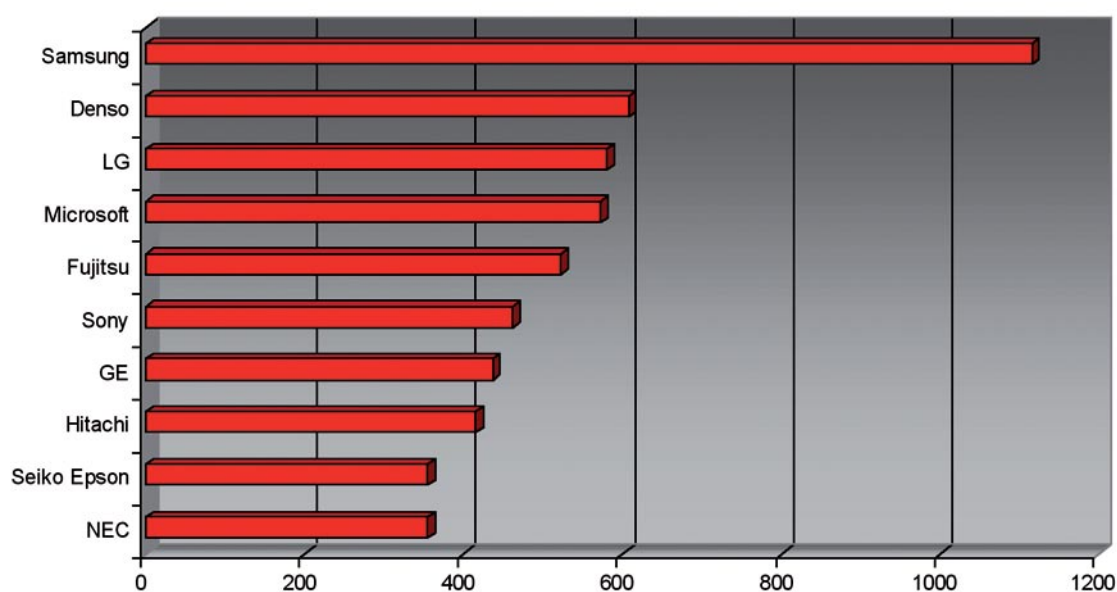


Figure 4

This analysis reveals that two of the top three positions belong to South Korean companies. Six Japanese and two American companies round out the top ten.

Figure 5 below shows the number of inventions across all technologies from the top ten patent assignees for tri-lateral patents in 2006.

	Instrumentation	Computing	AV & Data Recording	Semiconductors	Electronic Circuits	Transportation	Industrial	Power	Telecomms	Basic Electrical Elements
Samsung	62	368	171	607	132	25	101	4	408	276
Denso	175	125	10	104	56	445	35	41	51	140
LG	10	144	46	183	86	14	123	24	241	253
Microsoft	2	611	69	3	11	0	0	0	152	6
Fujitsu	40	272	54	176	85	16	5	1	339	49
Sony	32	290	236	68	42	20	3	0	186	71
GE	272	101	7	40	9	14	46	70	11	77
Hitachi	105	167	26	37	29	172	25	50	65	64
NEC	17	164	40	51	50	17	0	3	321	44
Seiko Epson	41	306	29	175	39	25	11	2	95	84

Figure 5

This table highlights the diversified nature of multinational corporations, and specifically, the technology areas where a company holds more than one hundred inventions. Samsung and Denso lead the group with more than one hundred inventions in six and five technology areas respectively.

Conclusion

Thomson Scientific analysis shows how the technology landscape has shaped global patent activity over the past decade. Japan leads the pack in today's innovative high-tech market by holding the majority share of tri-lateral inventions across all technologies in 2006. There are also signs that the landscape will continue to change in the future. Chinese companies will undoubtedly face strong competition from companies such as Samsung and LG that try to tighten their grip on high growth multi-technology areas, so China would do well to follow South Korea's lead and make the break into the global patent market.

Methodology

All records on Thomson Scientific's *Derwent World Patent Index*[®] (DWPI) from 1997 to 2006 were analyzed. Inventions were grouped into technology areas based on Derwent Classes and tri-lateral analysis was derived through the searching of all inventions that have been filed in Japan, the U.S. and Europe in 2006.

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