

Case study

Helping Pure Storage® tap the full power of IP data

Data company deploys IPfolio and Innography to transform IP portfolio management and drive defensive strategies

Pure Storage delivers a modern data experience that empowers organizations to run their operations as a true, automated, storage as-a-service model seamlessly across multiple clouds. The company is focused on helping customers put data to use while reducing the complexity and expense of managing the infrastructure behind it. That means leveraging the full potential of the company's patent portfolio to vigorously defend its innovations—and its market position.

Leading that effort for Pure Storage is Joe Kucera, Director of IP Strategy and Tarisa Baker, Lead Patent Operations Manager. They rely on several outside counsel firms to scale as needed to meet changing needs. Key to their strategy is emphasizing patent quality, rather than quantity, with a focus on crafting claims to maximize their business value as a competitive deterrent.



Industry

Data storage



IP Portfolio

1,597 active grants

13 registered trademarks



Challenge

Improve and streamline IP management, and uncover business insights to inform strategies for patent prosecution and defense.

Patent management limitations

Maintaining a detailed understanding of Pure Storage's patent portfolio is a critical priority for the company's IP management team. Unfortunately, their previous IP management solution (IPMS) didn't make this easy.

"Our IPMS was very rigid, making it difficult to create new fields for tracking particular classifications," Baker explains. "It was such an ordeal to add a new property so we could generate a report."

Tracking this information required the Pure Storage IP team to use spreadsheets in addition to their IPMS. "It's hard enough managing one database, much less two. They were always out of sync," Kucera explains, noting that as soon as the data was entered in the spreadsheet, it was out of date.

The inflexibility of their IPMS extended to its feature set. "The solution was expensive, but there were a lot of included features that we didn't care about. We needed a solution that was more customizable, giving us better value for money."

The Pure Storage team was also seeking market insights to guide its patent prosecution and defense strategies. "We don't build patents in a vacuum. We are all about capturing business intelligence," Kucera says. "We need to know which patents are relevant to which companies and products, which licensing campaign is involved, which way these patents are going. That's all critical information."

Searching for something better

Deciding it was time to find a better IP management solution, Kucera and Baker reached out to IP professionals at other companies to see what tools they were using. They heard many of the same complaints about their current system—and good things about IPfolio, a Clarivate™ IP lifecycle management solution.

After thorough evaluation, they decided to go with IPfolio. "Part of the attraction was that it was so customizable. We could easily create exactly the fields we wanted and do it ourselves. And those fields are immediately reportable," Baker says. "IPfolio made it easy to focus on details that matter to us, but are not typically tracked by other companies."

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Data quality, workflow efficiency

Once deployed, IPfolio enabled some significant workflow benefits. Baker points to the IPsync feature, which automates the process of entering due dates and office actions, eliminates time-consuming and error-prone data entry, and identifies discrepancies between IPfolio and PTO data, helping improve data quality.

"I know my data is good because it either comes in from IPsync or I put it in. I don't have to worry that someone else forgot to enter something. I feel more in control of my data," she says, noting that by improving data quality, IPfolio helps improve budget forecasting. "We can see exactly how many office actions we have coming out in the next quarter, both final and non-final, and we can associate that with our fixed fee schedule and get a really good idea of what our prosecution costs are going to be. We're consistently within a few percent of our financial targets."

IPfolio's flexible integration with third-party applications for e-billing and other administrative functions allow further efficiency benefits, Baker notes. "I no longer have to enter matters twice. I create a matter once, and it appears in our legal billing application with an overnight sync, which really reduces my workload."

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The power of connected patent intelligence

IPfolio also opened the door to valuable sources of intelligence. Pure Storage was already using Innography® patent intelligence software from Clarivate for patent research and analysis. Soon after they adopted IPfolio, the capability to connect it with Innography became available, enabling data exchange between the solutions. This allows Kucera to easily compare the company's private patent data with public data using Innography's AI-powered, natural language processing (NLP) semantic search engine and PortfoliolQ™ feature.

"The semantic search tool makes me look like a genius," Kucera says, explaining that it enables him to take a description from a new competitive product and, in minutes, see if the description matches any of Pure Storage's internal claims charts. "It's an easy way to quickly discern whether there is an intersection between another company's products and our portfolio, including patents we are actively prosecuting that are not yet published. I could never make those connections without the connectivity between Innography and IPfolio."

This insight enables Pure Storage to better protect their innovation by optimizing their claims to address competitive threats. With continuations and the USPTO's Track One, or fast-track examination, Pure Storage can have an allowed claims set that addresses a specific competitive threat in just three or four months—while benefiting from the patent family's earliest priority date. For in-flight applications, Kucera can modify claims to address specific competitive threats revealed by the Innography analysis.

Linking data across IPfolio and Innography provides other valuable advantages. For example, when evaluating a matter in IPfolio, the Pure Storage team can easily access Innography's prosecution metrics, including grant rates by examiner and by office action type. This information helps them better evaluate their next steps in prosecution.

Focusing on patents with a purpose

The Pure Storage team is laser-focused on creating and maintaining "patents with a purpose" and maximizing the value of its patent portfolio. That's true for patents they file and for those they acquire.

"For a portfolio we are considering acquiring, we'll run a semantic search against potential threats, looking for potential hits," Kucera explains. "This helps determine whether or not it's a valuable portfolio from a defensive perspective."

A key strength of IPfolio and Innography is the team that stands behind them. "The support has been excellent. If a minor issue arises, I will usually get a response from the support team within an hour," Baker says, noting that support has also implemented changes to the system in response to her requests. "I definitely feel heard."

Demonstrating patent ROI

The Pure Storage team has realized a number of critical advantages through the combination of Innography and IPfolio. They have been able to manage and defend an expanding patent portfolio in a complex and competitive marketplace without adding to their lean IP team. They are able to support the innovators in Pure Storage's R&D organization effectively and efficiently, with greater confidence in patent data. They have the business intelligence needed to respond to competitive threats faster and more effectively. But perhaps the greatest benefit is the ability to demonstrate to company leadership the return on investment that Pure Storage's patent portfolio can deliver.

"Patents are expensive and their value can be difficult to measure. The marriage of Innography and IPfolio allows us to demonstrate the business case."

"We can quickly produce reports that demonstrate what our defensive posture is and what patent assets we've created to protect our competitive advantage. That helps us tell a business intelligence story to justify our patent investments. I don't know how we would do that without Innography and IPfolio."

Joe Kucera, Director of IP Strategy, Pure Storage

Clarivate Solutions:

IPfolio IP management software

Innography® IP Intelligence Software

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