



IP leverage through strategic partnerships of SME with industry players



BMWA, Berlin – June 30, 2005

t-blade is a superior ice blade technology



previous



current



next



**EP 0 663 843 B1:
Skating Appliance or
Vehicle with Exchangeable
Running Blade**

OEM partners:



Source: t'blade



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t-blade situation and business model



High Tech

- fiber blade holder and composite replaceable blade runner
- only 1 mm of steel
- high tech product and high tech, lean production

Superior Performance

- huge advantage in weight, glide, elasticity, consistency, simplicity, and design

Business Model

- **strategic partnership(s) with brand manufacturers (distributors)**
- **Replacement business (like Gillette shaver or HP printer cartridges)**
- **non-exclusive OEM partners**
 - piggyback market penetration
 - open technology approach
- **integrate additional market (sharpening business)**

Protection

- worldwide patents on concept/technology
- IP on brand name and trademark
- high tech production and materials know-how

Entry Barriers

- key markets „owned“ by 5 biggest skate manufacturers
 - exclusive distribution networks
 - brand recognition
 - growth only through market share growth

Source: t'blade



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Lessons learned



- Make IP a part of your business (plan) strategy!
- It's the perceived value of your IP
- Protect yourself in more than one way!
- **Beware! A patent can be a barrier to your success!**
- It pays to involve IP professionals!

Source: t'blade



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lessons learned

Make IP a part of your business (plan) strategy!

lesson #1

actively manage your IP assets as a part of your overall business plan and strategy, considering its relevance for

- ✓ product spectrum /portfolio
- ✓ core competence (license, supply, build, sell,...)
- ✓ markets (countries, market segments)
- ✓ marketing & branding
- ✓ partnerships (R&D, manufacturing, distribution, marketing)
- ✓ financing and exit strategy (risk assessment and valuation)

It's the perceived value of your IP!



lesson #2

- realize, that your IP has only **perceived** value (go check its balance sheet value)
- such value can be perceived by:
 - ✓ competitors
 - ✓ partners
 - ✓ investors / shareholders
 - ✓ bankers
- constantly evaluate their perception / position

Source: t'blade



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Protect yourself in more than one way!



lesson #3

- to protect your market position and perspectives, make sure that your competitors (and partners!) have
 - ✓ no idea! (they don't know the essentials)
 - ✓ no clue! (if they knew what, they wouldn't know how to)
 - ✓ no way! * (if they did, they'd face legal trouble)
- be generic in your IP approach, but be specific and focused in your core competences

* in German: „Nicht wissen, nicht können, nicht dürfen!“

Source: t'blade



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Beware! A patent can be a barrier to your success!



lesson #4

- IP is generally considered to provide barriers against competitors / copycats.
- But if your competitors „own“ the market in terms of distribution channels or brand recognition, you might find yourself being blocked from market entry by them ...
 - use your IP as a means to get market entry: share it, license out, make distribution joint ventures, become supplier, sell it, sell company shares, ...
 - get a foot in the door, then share the upside potential

Source: t'blade



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It pays to involve IP professionals!



lesson #5

manage your IP together with patent attorneys:

- ✓ patent database research
- ✓ go/no go-decision
- ✓ translation into patent „speak“
- ✓ cost/benefit analysis of individual patents
- ✓ formalism and procedures
- ✓ your watchdog for deadlines, payments, ...
- ✓✓ foremost: consultant role

Source: t'blade



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performance: t'blade is superior to any other technology 

Value Propositions to Customer

Performance

- ✓ 30% less weight
- ✓ 40% better glide
- ✓ tighter turns
- ✓ consistent runner edge and shape

Price

- ✓ operating cost to customer down (3-6 * edge lifetime)
- ✓ Higher dealer margin (without fixed cost)

Convenience

- ✓ quick and
- ✓ simple change of runner
- ✓ 100% recycling

Design

- ✓ free choice of colours
- ✓ unique and acclaimed design

Source: t'blade



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market entry through OEM skate partnerships



★ in preparation



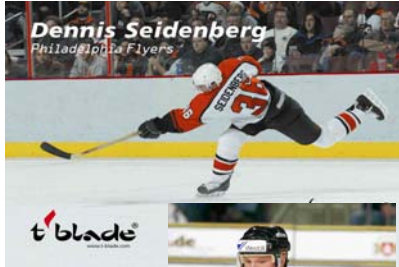
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t'blade has been accepted by NHL players



Dennis Seidenberg,
Philadelphia Flyers



Jochen Hecht,
Buffalo Sabres



Patrik Elias,
New Jersey Devils
(no longer)



Christian Ehrhoff
San Jose Sharks

Source: t'blade



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