



RWS CrowdSearch success stories

Harnessing the power of the Crowd for faster, more effective intellectual property research results.



Introduction

RWS helps firms to protect their ideas and unlock the full value of their patent portfolio. From R&D to licensing, we enable our clients to develop, defend and monetize their IP with our complete range of intellectual property research solutions.

Our unique approach, which combines the expertise of our in-house analysts with the world's largest network of specialist researchers, enables us to provide actionable data quickly and efficiently.

Our research network, known as the Crowd, consists of over 40,000 members operating in more than 170 countries. With expertise in a broad range of disciplines and proficiency in more than 140 languages, our network is as diverse as our customers' needs.

Members of the Crowd are compensated based on the results they produce, meaning you could have dozens, even hundreds of researchers working on your project without compromising your budget.

This crowd sourced approach is a novel and highly effective method for prior art searching. Effective use of the Crowd is an efficient means of gathering information that can inform strategic decisions and help focus resources in the most profitable areas.

To illustrate the benefits of this approach, we have gathered just a few of the many success stories that have arisen from the use of CrowdSearching. Covering a range of industries and outcomes, these case studies shed light on the many ways in which crowd sourcing can produce highly desirable results.

Summary of key successes

From significant financial savings to successful litigation outcomes, our Crowd studies have resulted in a wide range of benefits for our clients.

In this selection of case studies, the benefits to our clients include:

- ✓ Recovery of millions of dollars in additional licensing revenues.
- ✓ Insights to enable informed decision making.
- ✓ Identification of obscure prior art in invalidity proceedings.
- ✓ Removal of litigation threats.
- ✓ Identification of new business partners through landscaping.
- ✓ Delivery of physical products no longer available on the market for the purpose of testing.

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1. Going the extra mile- Chemistry customer

The challenge

A client approached RWS with an unusual request for a rare form of animal food chemistry search. They required a prior art study on a livestock food supplement. While we have chemistry experts among our researchers, animal nutrition is an extremely niche area of study. Undeterred by the unusual nature of the request, the RWS team was willing to go the extra mile to get the best search results.

The outcome

Eager to ensure we could provide the best possible service, our study manager approached the farming community for advice. She learnt about how livestock is raised, their dietary requirements, what sorts of diseases and health issues they have, and how they're treated.

Simultaneously, our Client Services team identified that the veterinary school at the University of California at Davis had a center of research dedicated to the health of pigs, which was our client's specific area of interest.

Armed with this information, our study manager spent a day at UC Davis conducting further research and discovering prior art. This collective information helped her assess the art we had found, and enabled her to guide the Crowd to provide even better insights and leads relative to the patent. This included insights on where they might find the prior art the client needed.







This resulted in a successful study and a very happy client. The client reported that these extra steps helped immensely in providing firsthand guidance to the participating researchers.

About RWS IP Research

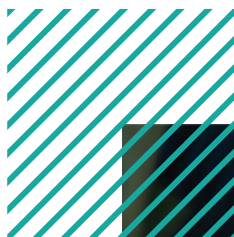
For over 60 years, RWS has led the industry and helped more than 10,000 clients protect and enforce their IP rights.

Our many decades of experience have positioned us to provide an unparalleled range of IP services and resources, underpinned by stringent quality standards.

A selection of our search types

-  Novelty/Patentability
-  Invalidity
-  Freedom-to-Operate
-  Landscape
-  IP Monitor
-  Evidence of Use

Don't see the search you are looking for? Just ask.



2. Stress testing patents before going to market - Multinational conglomerate

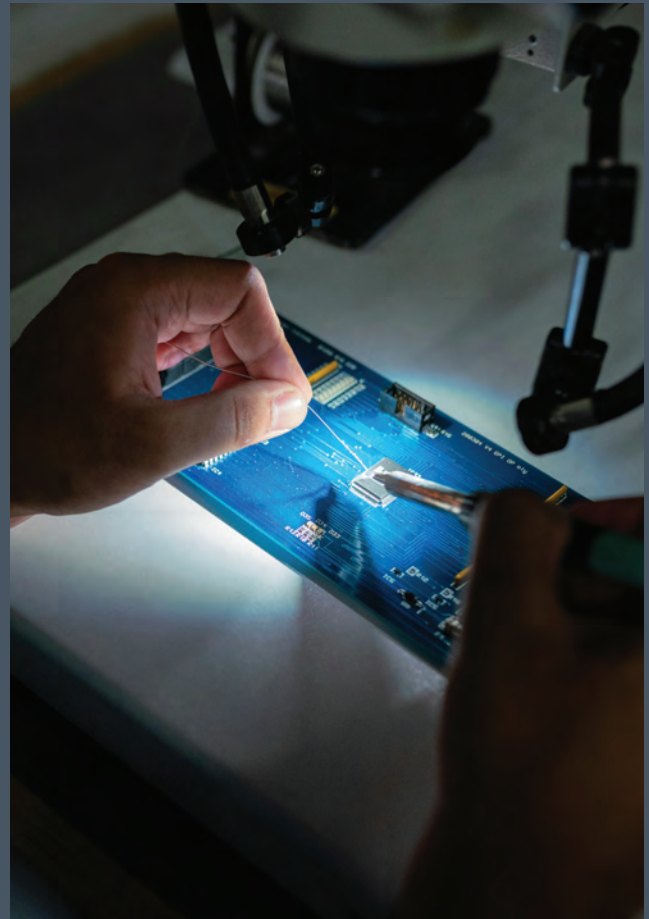
The challenge

A client had a proactive monetization program and wanted to make sure their patents were high quality before taking them to market. The client did not want to gain a reputation for introducing poor quality patents, nor did they want to spend money engaging and litigating on such patents.

Additionally, they did not want to be surprised by the purchasing party finding obvious prior art that could cast doubt on the validity of the patent.

The outcome

The client engaged RWS to perform prior art searches that would uncover any prior art that their customers would be likely to find. We conducted a set of studies that helped the client develop confidence in the quality and validity of their patents, and to prepare for any discussion regarding prior art that was found. This gave the client confidence in explaining the invention in light of the art.



3. Physical product acquisition - Multiple clients

The challenge

We have helped multiple clients locate physical products for lawsuits. In each of these cases, the physical product was a necessary form of prior art. Gaining possession of the item was essential for physical testing and reverse engineering. Many of these products were, however, decades old and had not been on the market for some time.

The outcome

Examples of these hard-to-find products include a drill, cat litter in its original packaging and television sets. In each of these cases, RWS was able to find the necessary product, including a very specific model as determined by markings on the packaging and product. We arranged for the researcher to purchase the products on the client's behalf.

In one case we delivered multiple products of the same model, as physical testing would destroy the products.

4. License compliance and enforcement – Home electronics

The challenge

A client had a set of valuable patents that were required for Blu-ray players. The company is a non-practicing entity created by equipment manufacturers who own the collective patent rights. The entity was created to establish licensing arrangements with all manufacturers, and to collect and distribute those fees to the participants in the patent pool. Although they felt they had a good understanding of the manufacturers globally, they asked RWS to help them assess the quality of their licensing program, to ensure they were being paid by all manufacturers of products that required their patents.

The outcome

In our discussions with the client, we established that all properly licensed products required a special label on the retail box to indicate it was legitimate. Using our Crowd, we set about identifying any Blu-ray players in retail locations that did not display the required label. In each case, we provided photographs of all sides of the box to demonstrate the label was not present. We also provided the name and location of the store and the date of any photographs.

As a result of our extensive search, we were able to identify:

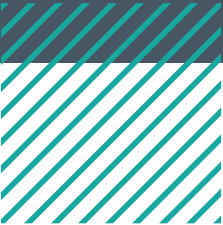
- Products from every entity that was licensing the relevant technology.
- Products from every suspected infringing entity.
- Multiple additional infringers that the client was not aware of.
- The fact that one infringer was selling the product in Walmart in the US. Prior to the search, the client was aware of this infringer, but had not brought them to our attention as they were thought to be an extremely small player in the Asian market. The client was surprised to learn that they were in fact selling the product in a major US chain.

Enforcement and Controls Discoveries:

- We discovered that some manufacturers were inadvertently failing to report all the products that had the appropriate labels, indicating a need to change control procedures.
- We found that some legitimate licensors were not putting labels on all of their products, further indicating a control issue that needed to be addressed.
- We found contract manufacturers producing both legitimately licensed and illegitimate products from the same factory.
- We discovered that the consortium needed to make some changes to better control the distribution and reporting of the special labels.

The client reported that we had helped them recover “millions of dollars” of additional licensing revenues as a result of the study. The quantity of information that we were able to obtain instilled in the client a great deal of confidence in our service.

“The client reported that we had helped them recover millions of dollars of additional licensing revenues as a result of the study.”



5. Scavenger hunt - Product documentation

The challenge

A client was trying to locate a very specific manual for an electronic device from the 1970s. This manual had particular value to a lawsuit.

The outcome

We challenged the Crowd to find the manual. For a member of the Crowd to win the study, they were required to have personal possession of the manual.

Multiple researchers found the desired manual, but some of them also acquired all the literature and packaging that was shipped with the product when new. This included the manual, fast start guide and registration/warranty card.



6. Unique prior art - Leaving no stone unturned

The challenge

A client was looking for prior art to invalidate a patent. They had performed numerous searches and felt it unlikely that the prior art existed. However, their situation demanded they investigate every avenue, so they came to RWS to be sure the art was not out there.

The outcome

We launched a Crowd study and, as expected, we were not initially able to locate the necessary art. However, after an extensive search, one of our most prolific researchers submitted a photograph depicting a teacher standing in front of a whiteboard. It transpired that the researcher had located a vital lead in the text on the whiteboard, demonstrating the lengths our researchers go to in order to locate the necessary information.

7. Product mapping - Evidence of use

The challenge

The client, a global telecommunications retailer, had an aggressive monetization program for their valuable patent collection. They wanted to identify products in the marketplace that were potentially using their technology so they could approach them with a licensing or sale opportunity. They preferred not to adopt a litigious approach, but instead wanted to pursue mutually beneficial relationships. To that end, any leads were to be directed to a sales team within the client organization.

The client approached RWS in the hope that our Crowd could improve on the cost/results.

The outcome

RWS developed Evidence of Use and Standards Mapping studies in response to this need. As a result of the study:

- The client started to launch batches of 30-50 patents at a time.
- The client made significant cost savings and attained greater opportunities and value from their portfolio. The client commented that the results from the study were three times better than those they were seeing with their third-party consultants.
- The client successfully developed their monetization process.

RWS integrated the results of the mapping work into the client's Salesforce system, ensuring efficient 24/7 access for their salespeople.



8. Large scale projects – Rapid scaling of researcher resources

The challenge

A major international law firm specializing in complex disputes was engaged in a major litigation with a large Asian client. They had a high priority need to perform 200 invalidity studies to stress test a set of patents. The studies had to be completed in eight weeks. The results had to be easy to analyze and digest so they could draw useful conclusions to inform their litigation direction.

The client had experience with RWS, including our platforms and our delivery process, all of which developed their confidence and trust in us as a provider. The project required a large group of skilled researchers in order to deliver high quality results in a short period of time. The client felt this would overwhelm any other firm, and therefore selected RWS as their research provider.

We agreed a fixed price for the project, delivering results on a list of patents on a rolling basis spanning the eight-week project.

The outcome

RWS embedded a project manager on site two days per week to work in-person with the client's legal team. We worked hand-in-hand with the client to perform additional work in some instances based on the patent, prior art and strategy development over the course of the project. This was all conducted within the fixed price for the entire project.

RWS delivered the results within the agreed timescale. The client valued RWS as a true partner and has brought several other projects to us as a result. We are now their preferred partner who helps them achieve successful case outcomes, and ultimately win more business.

“The client valued RWS as a true partner and has brought several other projects to us as a result.”



9. Drug side effects

The challenge

The client approached RWS with a need to find a publicly documented conversation. They wanted to locate a discussion between two patients regarding the side effects they had personally experienced when moving from one regimen of a specific multiple sclerosis drug to a second specific regimen.

They did not know whether such documentary evidence existed, and they had attempted unsuccessfully to find material before approaching RWS.

The outcome

The specific nature of the request was uncommon, so before launching the study, our in-house team attempted to locate the prior art at no cost to the client. This did not immediately produce results, but on balance we felt it was worth engaging the Crowd given their ability to uncover even the most obscure information. With the client's approval we launched a CrowdSearch.

To the client's amazement, the Crowd found the exact conversation the client was looking for, located on a support group forum which was not discoverable via normal search engines. The successful researcher was familiar with multiple sclerosis and its various support groups and resources, which led them to the discovery.

This study demonstrates the diverse nature of the information the Crowd can locate. Crowd researchers bring a vast range of life experiences, educational credentials and personal interests, giving us unprecedented access to data sources and enabling us to deliver the unexpected.

About our researchers



2,500
patent searches
performed every year.



40,000
researchers in our
international network.



140
languages spoken by
our researchers.



43%
of our researchers hold
postgraduate degrees.



10. Removing a litigation threat – Kitchen appliance

The challenge

A client faced a lawsuit with damaging implications if they lost. The client needed to invalidate a patent on a kitchen appliance.

The outcome

RWS conducted a Crowd study according to our proven methodology. It immediately attracted a rapid and precise response. The Crowd found an excellent selection of patent prior art that the client felt could invalidate the patent.

However, the biggest surprise was that the Crowd also found that the exact device (using the patented technology) had been for sale on a website in another country before the priority date of the patent. The assignee had essentially invalidated their own patent. This demonstrates the creativity of the Crowd in their pursuit of the required information.



11. Removing a litigation threat – Materials science

The challenge

A client faced a lawsuit with damaging implications if they lost. The client needed to invalidate a patent in the materials science area.

The outcome

By the time the client approached RWS they had already performed a number of searches and had not found any helpful documents. As a result, the client was becoming convinced that there were no novelty destroying documents out there. Further, the client had been unsuccessful in finding any documents that could be used in any type of obviousness argument.

Given the risks to the business, the client finally approached RWS to see if we could help. This was a clear-cut case for a Crowd search. The Crowd process proved highly effective. The RWS Crowd found documents that the client had not seen in any of the searches they had conducted using other third parties. From these initial documents, the management team and client were able to explore new ideas for obviousness.

This led to more refined search instructions to fill out the obviousness strategy with additional, precise documents. The RWS Crowd found these new documents to help complete the argument. This led the client to not one, but two new theories of obviousness.

“The RWS Crowd found documents that the client had not seen in any of the searches they had conducted using other third parties.”



12. Finding business partners - Landscaping

The challenge

A client was looking for a company in the robotics industry with whom they could partner. Robotics was new territory for them and thus they needed to determine exactly what kind of expertise this potential partner should have. They asked RWS to provide insights to help them narrow the search and suggest some partners.

The outcome

The Crowd produced a corpus of documents illustrating various types of robotics and the companies producing them. RWS was able to organize the results into some key technology areas. The Crowd also identified 17 companies from 9 different countries doing the type of work in which client was interested.

Armed with this insight, the client was able to narrow the focus to warehouse robotics companies with particular functional capabilities that would be advantageous to their specific business needs.



13. A machine in time

The challenge

A client wanted to know which companies manufactured a specific type of medical device, with specific functions, during a specific time period.

Working with the client to understand the goals of the project and the specific threat, our study management team was able to narrow the field to a particular set of companies of interest. This enabled us to refine the focus to some specific models which we determined to be produced by those companies.

The outcome

We then asked the Crowd to track down photos of these various models and gather additional details as specified by the client.

The Crowd submitted over 1000 documents, from which our study management team curated a selection of the 300 submissions that best matched the client's requirements.

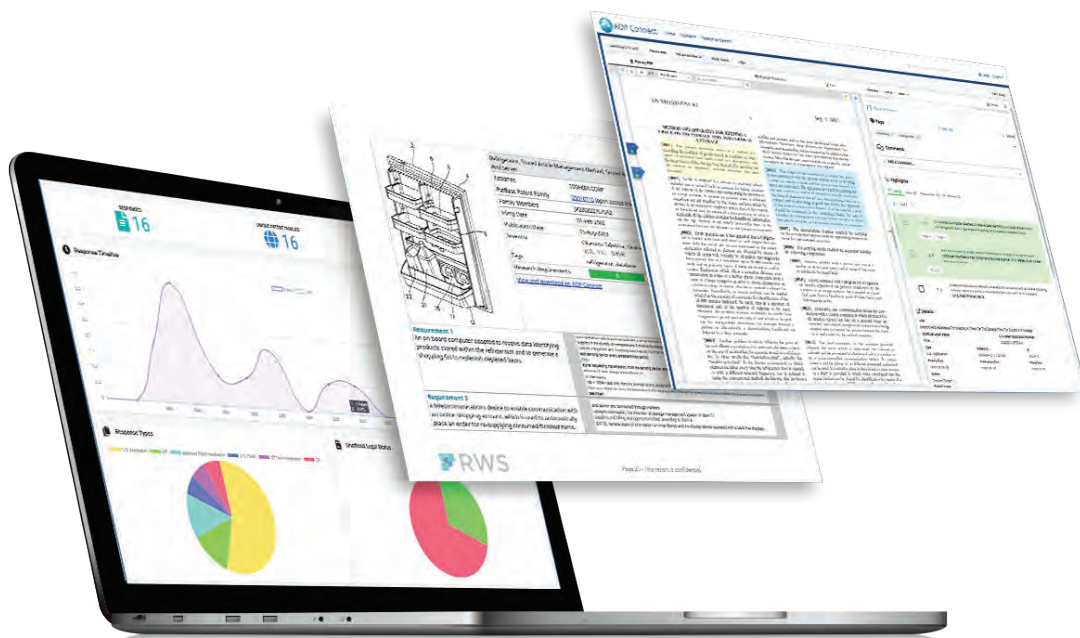
This led to a list of 13 companies in five different countries that fit the three-part criteria. Using the tagging, highlighting and annotation functions of the RWS AOP Connect platform, the client was able to easily filter and sort the submissions by company, year and/or model number, in order to facilitate collaborative analysis with their internal project team.

About AOP Connect

AOP Connect is the leading intellectual property platform for organizing, storing and controlling the flow of references and 'prior art' related to IP searches. It supports both traditional and crowd-based searching.

What does AOP Connect do?

- Centralizes your research efforts in one location
- Provides you with access controls for in-house and outside counsel
- Serves as a searchable repository of intellectual property assets
- Automatically uploads search results in near real time
- Presents the best references matching your requirements quickly and efficiently
- Provides reports in your format of choice
- Helps you quickly assess and annotate references



14. Invalidating a troublesome patent – Filling out the obviousness argument

The challenge

A client approached RWS having already conducted their own research in an attempt to invalidate a troublesome patent. Their prior search had yielded a primary document for use in an obviousness argument. At this point, they were searching for a particular element that was lacking in the primary document.

The outcome

RWS launched a Crowd search to find this additional feature (if not a novelty document). The ingenuity of the Crowd provided results that the client had not located via their previous in-house and third-party searches. The results included the crucial missing element, as well as some motivational language regarding the benefits of that element. This significantly improved the client's position.



15. Invalidating a troublesome patent – complex claim language

The challenge

A client came to RWS to find invalidating art for a complicated telecom patent with long and difficult claim language.

The outcome

We helped the client to distill the language down to a few key elements that would produce the body of the art they were seeking. While this did not reduce the complexity of the technology, it narrowed the requirements in a way that would deliver a body of art that was likely to include the best invalidating art.

One Crowd researcher found a document highlighting the same concept using terms the client had not previously considered. We worked with the client to adjust the search instructions, expanding the language and providing the Crowd with more creative ideas on how to present the technology.

This approach produced a larger and more relevant body of art than the client had expected and provided the data they needed to form their arguments.





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