

# Understanding Patent Preparation and Prosecution

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## **Introduction**

A patent can be a useful tool for protecting intellectual property. A well-written patent can keep competitors from copying successful products and can also help lure potential investors. At the same time, rattling the proverbial patent saber may lead to royalty income from licensing agreements. Successfully litigating a claim for patent infringement can cripple a competitor, solidify your market position, bring in significant awards from damages, and even lead to further licensing agreements.

It is important for those seeking patent protection to understand what goes into a well-written patent application. Of particular importance is the tension between the standards for patentability and the desirability of maintaining a range of coverage that is adaptive to meet future needs. While it may be relatively easy to produce a patent application that scrupulously complies with statutory and judicial guidelines, following these guidelines while, at the same time, building in interpretative adaptability and breadth may be a far less trivial matter.