



Managing intangible assets: the INRIA case

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INRIA at a glance

- Basic and applied research
- Building experimental systems, developing the results
- Knowledge diffusion, international scientific exchanges, contribution to collaboration programs
- Scientific appraisals, contribution to standardization initiatives

In the field of information and communication science and technology (ICST)

Resources in 2006

- A budget of 162 M€, 20% of which comes from contracts, software licenses, etc.
- 8 research centers in all french regions
- Around 3,700 persons including
 - 1,500 INRIA budgetary positions
 - staff from partner institutions
 - personnel of different skills and statutes, from France and abroad.
- Equipment connected by computer networks: high performance computers, virtual reality platforms, but also robots, experimental vehicles, etc.

- Scientific renown
 - 3,600 scientific publications
- Technology transfer
 - 83 companies, 40 of which are still active
 - 3 companies founded in 2005
 - 730 ongoing contracts, 230 active patents
- 70 freely available software packages and software marketing licenses
- International visibility
 - 24 international conferences in 2006
- Training through research
 - Over 1,000 doctoral candidates

The organisational model

- Research project-teams
 - The key link in the organization (143 project-teams)
- Research centres
 - Decentralized, self-supporting structure with strong connections with the regional environment
- Functional department
 - Coordination and organization role
- Evaluation bodies
 - Research project-teams committee in the research centres, evaluation committee at the national level
- Steering bodies
 - Research centres management teams, national management committee

Technology transfer: an economic ambition

- Research with an eye on business
- An essential element of the Institute's culture
- Objectives
 - Lower the transfer time between an idea and its marketing
 - Optimizing the economic impact on the short, medium and long terms
 - Creating standards to achieve technological breakthroughs

This transfer policy is asserted in INRIA's strategic plan: "Building strong partnerships with major French and foreign companies that are leaders on their market"

Working and talking with companies

- A long standing experience in terms of relations with the economic sector
 - Over 730 ongoing research contracts (Jan. 1st, 2007)
 - Participation in over 120 European projects (6th Framework Program), mainly with industry
 - Software distribution (contracts and open source)
- Continuous exchanges
 - INRIA-Industry meetings
 - Technologique partnership clubs with small and medium-sized companies
 - Welcoming engineers from industry
 - Industrial post-docs

Some findings

Among the enormous knowledge produced:

- Some assets which we do **not know** the existence
- **Sleeping** assets without any return on the initial investment
- Assets which **future potential** needs to be clarified
- Assets that turn **out of control**, not well-contained
- **Complex** assets (in technological and legal terms) composed of a large number of components

What we would like to obtain ?

Structuring tools to:

- Qualify the identified assets. Evaluate them ?
- Assets management: drop out, keep, rewriting, reuse
- Assets evolution (maturation process), fructification (being coherent with the distribution intentions)

Generating new ones

Allow the researchers to build a well-reasoned set of intangible assets

Give the INRIA management bodies a coherent view of the assets

To increase the number of success stories while improving the time /energy to produce them

How to proceed ?

- Document the success stories to raise researchers demands
 - Typology of the stories
 - Identification of interesting cases (complex situations)
- Audit of the methods used in the cycle « research, maturation, transfer » according to:
 - Typology of the research teams
 - Typology of the process used
- A challenge: understand the behaviour of the assets production/use networks: impact of the collaborative work

Researchers: first beneficiaries

- To give them tools to self-evaluate their assets in support of their maturation/transfer strategy and to help the decisions making
- A well reasoned process of the « production, maturation, transfer »
- A coherent view of their production
- To build a solid evidence when asking for more resources

Management benefits

- Understand and improve the global cycle of assets production/maturation/transfer
- To maximize the production impact (assets visibility, success stories reproduction)
- Obtain « qualitative » indicators
- A better knowledge of the assets, being able to indentify strong assets vs weak ones
- To orient the investments accordingly

As a conclusion

All is still to be done

Find the right way to do it: pilot projects

A long term project

Thank you !