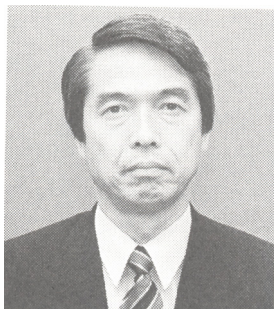


Striving for Intellectual Property Protection and Use Worthy of Today's "Borderless" Era

Takashi SAWAI*



The present "Journal of JIPA" is a journal newly published by the Japan Intellectual Property Association (JIPA), and is especially intended for overseas readers. JIPA is a Japanese non-profit organization established in 1938, with the goals of contributing to the advancement of technology and the development of industry, by striving for the appropriate and active use of all systems related to intellectual property, and also by working towards improvements thereof. The unique characteristic of JIPA is the fact that its members are Japanese companies that are actual users of intellectual property systems. The total number of patent applications made by JIPA member companies account for around 90% of all patent applications to the Japanese Patent Office (JPO), and member company applications also account for approximately 20% of patent applications in Europe and the United States.

JIPA performs a number of different activities, including "surveys and other research regarding various systems concerning intellectual property, and regarding intellectual property management and strategies," "reports expressing opinions regarding intellectual property, and exchange activities with various groups and organizations," and "mutual enlightenment and educational activities, including training and related research, concerning intellectual property." For example, for our survey-based and other research, we have established as many as 15 standing expert committees; here, around 500 specialists perform research on a variety of issues concerning intellectual property. The results of their research are published in "Intellectual Property", the magazine for JIPA members, and these results are further actively used in actual IP management at private companies. Committee research results are also incorporated within reports made to the Japan Patent Office and other key organizations, etc. Then, these results are often reflected within actual improvements of the IP system and its operation.

Within our new 21st century, there is increasing globalization of economic activities and issues. And, as symbolized by today's frequent use of the term "IT (information technology) revolution," we are living in an era that surely demands from us major innovations in our traditional social structures. Since our world is becoming more "borderless" in numerous aspects, including in economics, technology, legal systems, human resources, etc., there will be much questioning concerning the types of IP protection and use which are best suited to this changing environment. JIPA seeks to be an organization that is actively involved in the search for the establishment of IP management that is worthy of our "borderless" era. For example, JIPA plans to perform research, together with both domestic and foreign users of IP systems, regarding IP management methods that are superior in terms of cost performance. JIPA will also strive to convince IP-related organizations to establish and operate more "user-friendly" IP systems both in Japan and abroad, through simplifications, greater convenience, efficiency improvements, and increased trust and reliability.

* President of JIPA

To achieve these goals, we at JIPA will continue to communicate with IP experts, persons who are fully aware of the issues outlined above, and who work diligently, day and night, to resolve the many problems that they face. To serve as a medium for exchanging the various ideas that emerge from the work of such IP experts, JIPA has determined to publish this “Journal of JIPA”. As is well known, the intellectual property system of each nation and region has been established, and is operated, under the guiding principle of territoriality, and each system is directly linked to the industrial policies of that individual country. For this reason, it is not easy to find system-based “wonder cures” (namely, solution policies) that can directly respond to the needs of our borderless era. Nevertheless, one thing is crystal clear: if all of us who are, in fact, users of foreign and domestic IP systems continue to perform in-depth research, strive for realistic and concrete policies, and perform vigorous related activities, then we can indeed create and stimulate the major currents for such solution-engendering policies. It is JIPA’s strongest desire that this Journal, through the publication of new visions and concepts concerning IP protection and use in our borderless era, through the exchange of ideas within our pages, and through the proposal of concrete policies, can be enjoyed and utilized by many users in the IP world.

