COMPETITIVE TECHNOLOGY PROFILING

John C. Blackburn, Ph.D.
TECHFISH, LLC

Presented at American Chemical Society
New York, NY
September 7, 2003
OUTLINE

• Competitive Intelligence
• Technology Assessment and Profiling
• Types of Information
• How to Analyze the Data
COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE

• What is the competition?
• What is the competition doing?

• What does that mean to us and what are we going to do about it?
INTELLIGENCE CYCLE

Plan

Design

Gather

Organize

Analyze

Distribute

ACT!
COMPETITION

- Who are they?
- Hidden or Latent Competitors
  - Focus on technology
COMPETITOR PROFILE

- Background Information
- Products and Services
- Manufacturing
- Technology
- Management
- Customers
- Financials
COMPETITIVE PROFILING

• How do your competitors do it?
  – Manufacturing
  – Patented technology
  – Raw materials
  – Alliance

• How else might you do it?
BE AWARE

• **Strengths**
  – Keeping pulse of industry
  – Guide strategy
  – Identify weaknesses in competitor

• **Weaknesses**
  – Become a follower
  – Miss a new arrival
FOCUS ON THE CUSTOMER

• What does the customer want?
• How much will they pay?
• How can it be made?
• How much does it cost?
• What are the alternatives?
MARKET ASSESSMENT

• What needs to be changed/improved?
• How important is it?
• What is it worth?
• What are others doing?
TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

• Why is the product the way it is?
• How can the performance deficiency be remedied?
• What choices are there?
• What is the best choice?
CRUCIAL QUESTIONS

• Which solution:
  – Fits with our existing raw material base?
  – Fits with our existing manufacturing process?
  – Maintains other needed product properties?
  – Works most economically?
TECHNOLOGY PROFILE

• Not Necessarily Company Specific
• Pieces of the Process
• External Technology
• Monitor Progress and Trends

• Remember Your Customer
SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Patents and Technical literature
- Product brochures
- Trade Shows and Technical Meetings
- Discussions with Customers/Suppliers
- Internal or external experts
- Salesforce
- Other
GATEKEEPERS

- Nodes of Information
- Well connected
- Internal and External
- Sources of Information and Analysis
- Natural Behavior
SOME ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS

• SWOT Analysis
• Porter’s Five Forces
• S Curve – Technology Development
• Patent Analysis
PORTER’S FIVE FORCES

- Potential Entrants
- Suppliers
- The Industry & Rivalry
- Substitutes
- Customers
S-CURVE: TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

Time

Technology Development

Research

Mature
PATENT ANALYSIS

- Numbers of Patents
- Weighting of Strength
- Trends
- Citation Analysis
- Key Inventors
- Related Technologies (Classification)
CLOSING THOUGHTS

- Personal relationships – gatekeepers
- Begin with the end in mind
- Ethical and legal behavior
- Society of Competitive Intelligence Professionals (www.scip.org)
- Related technology
REFERENCES


THANK YOU

John C. Blackburn, Ph.D.
www.techfish.com
john@techfish.com
(843) 853-8765