

ASIAN LEGAL BUSINESS

ASIA IP RANKINGS 2021

Even as the COVID-19 pandemic shook up the world, the IP landscape in the Asian region remained buoyant thanks to its agility and digital-readiness. This was reflected in the best law firms for IP work, which went above and beyond when it came to servicing their clients in a difficult time.

BY MARICEL ESTAVILLO AND ASIAN LEGAL BUSINESS

Over a year into the pandemic, more accounts have emerged that detail the high costs of the global disruption. For the Asian intellectual property, 2020 was no doubt an equally challenging year, but it made the region more resilient and digital-ready.

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) reported that international patent applications filed via its Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) grew by 4 percent year-on-year to 275,900 applications in 2020. China, the first to be hit by the COVID-19 disruption, remained the largest user of the PCT system. It posted a 16.1 percent year-on-year growth in PCT filings last year. It was followed by the United States (U.S.) Japan, South Korea and Germany.

For South Korea, cited for its early success in managing the outbreak, 2020

marked the year when it reclaimed the fourth spot from Germany with the most PCT applications filed. Its PCT applications grew by 5.2 percent year-on-year in 2020, posting the third highest rate of increase following China and Switzerland.

Four of the top five filers of PCT applications were Asian companies. China-based telecoms giant Huawei Technologies led the group of top filers, followed by Samsung Electronics, Mitsubishi Electric, LG Electronics and Qualcomm. The top five fields of technology for PCT applications were computer technology, digital communication, medical technology, electrical machinery and measurement.

“Longer term trends point to the globalization of innovation, with Asia accounting for 53.7 percent of all PCT filing

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