

How Do IP Considerations Impact Your Company?

Vikram Pandit, Co-Founder and CEO, Phycus Biotechnologies Inc.

At Phycus, we make sustainable chemicals for the cosmetics industry. We do that by engineering microbes to produce certain chemicals. We rewire their metabolism. And then we take those microbes and they go through a fermentation process in the same way you might want to make a beer or wine. Except our microbes make the chemical that we've engineered them to make.

When we think about our IP strategy, there are sort of two pillars to that.

The first is through filing patents, and we typically tend to file patents around the microbe and the DNA that we modified in that microbe. And that gives us some comfort ensuring that other companies aren't able to just copy exactly what we're doing, and it helps build a moat for that business protective barrier.

Second way we go around protecting our IP is through trade secrets, and we typically tend to file trade secrets around how we grow the microbes. You know, the temperature and the pressure and the conditions in the bioreactor and then how we tend to convert or purify, I should say, the chemical that's in the fermenter to a final product. And so that tends to rely on trade secrets because those tend to be a little more easy to get around if you were to disclose that in the patent.