

Providing IP solutions to oil and gas companies

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Kuhnen & Wacker is an intellectual property (IP) law firm established more than 35 years ago in Freising, Germany, only a 10 minutes car ride from Munich airport. The firm not only offers services in patents, utility models, designs, trademarks, domains, copyrights and trade secrets but also in IP evaluation as well as IP litigation and licensing.

A team of 14 patent attorneys of various technical backgrounds like mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, chemistry and physics as well as two attorneys at law guarantee the high quality standard of the prosecution and litigation work of the firm. That has been recognised by major international companies, famous for high quality standards, who have rated the firm as being of top quality in all areas of prosecution. Kuhnen & Wacker represents large and medium-sized corporations, as well as universities and individual inventors based in Europe, Asia and the Americas.

Detlef von Ahsen, patent attorney with the firm, holds a degree (Dipl.-Ing.) in mechanical engineering from the Technical University of Darmstadt. After graduating Detlef von Ahsen joined Eastman Christensen, the later Baker Hughes Inteq, as a product engineer for almost two years. Within the engineering group he was responsible for drilling motors, especially directional drilling tools. He participated in the successful field test of short radius tools. During various jobs on oil rigs Mr. von Ahsen learned how drilling works. "Literally I got baptised with mud. I know how drilling fluid tastes," he said.

With this background and now over 15 years experience as a patent attorney Detlef von Ahsen is happy to assist exploration companies as well as service companies in the oil and gas industry to achieve their IP goals. A special concern of Kuhnen & Wacker is to find IP solutions that fit the client's needs.

As Mr. von Ahsen claimed, the oil and gas exploration is an international business. He said: "Sometimes a certain tool is produced in a first country but runs for a company seated in a second country on an oil rig in a third country or in international waters. Where is the place of infringement? Which jurisdiction applies? This has an impact on which countries are to be selected to get proper protection and sometimes it is hard to find the countries where a certain invention needs to be protected.

"Nowadays where most tools are manufactured in countries with a strong system for patent enforcement like the USA, Germany, the UK or Norway that problem is not very severe. But if this changes and other countries without a strong enforcement system play a more important role that problem will occur. The challenge is to get as broad protection as possible spending as less money as possible.

"Here I can bring in not only my experience in the oil and gas exploration but also from several litigations I have done for ship owning companies and their suppliers which faced a similar problem."

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