

# Custom-built IP management software enhances marketing for Yissum

A new IP management software system called TTM (Technology Transfer Management), recently installed at Yissum, the tech transfer company of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, has made a dramatic difference in the company's marketing efforts. And those efforts are considerable. Yissum-licensed IP accounts for well over over \$1 billion in sales annually, and its own revenues topped \$60 million in 2008.

Though TTM was developed for the purpose of handling *all* IP-related operations in the company, the marketing benefits have been considerable, says marketing director **Michal Kainan-Koren**. For example, she notes, the TTM system:

- **Allows fast and effective service to stakeholders** (i.e., researchers, industry and commercial partners). "All information is at the tip of our fingers -- and in a company that manages some 6,000 patents (about 1,750 technologies) and signs over 550 agreements annually, that's a great help," she notes.

- **Saves a position in marketing/communications administration**, since all marketing materials can be automatically sent via the system, and/or are downloadable from the Yissum website.

- **Allows easily manageable CRM** (customer relationship management) and 'instantaneous' marketing analytics.

- **Makes the process of creating two (or more) different marketing approaches to the same technology that much easier**. "For example, if the same technology has applications for homeland security and for cleantech, I run two different campaigns almost just by pushing a button," Kainan-Koren observes.

## System is custom built

The technology was developed in 2006 for Yissum by the Israeli firm Taldor. "We wanted a custom-built software," explains **Tamir Huberman**, Yissum's director of IT. "We looked at U.S. tech transfer-based systems, but they only gave us 70% of the functionality we were looking for."

In terms of marketing, he asserts, TTM has functions that do not exist in other software packages. For example, he notes, "the system is completely synchronized with the website. All the people who come in through the website have a chance to become members and receive technologies from

the site." The site features a 'member' button on the main bar, Huberman explains, and if you become a member you can choose technologies of interest. "The first click gives you all the technologies on the database," he says. "If you choose a specific field or fields, you will see only those technologies, and in the future, the site will only give you new or modified technologies in the fields you have chosen." Updates are automatically sent to members on a monthly basis.

Because of the link between the TTM and the website, "we have a very sophisticated CRM model in terms of fields of interest, acquaintance dates, and so forth," Huberman says. "We have a clear indication of exactly when members logged in, what data they obtained, and what technologies they are interested in. So, if I have a specific technology I'd like to market -- say a licensing officer has one in cleantech -- you enter the website and it can display everyone who has shown interest in the topic in the past, and it automatically generates an e-mail from the website." The linkage also enables a licensing officer to send hundreds of e-mails at once directly from the website, he notes.

## Enhancing stakeholder ties

The TTM has also enabled significantly stronger ties with a number of key stakeholder groups, says Kainan-Koren. Researchers, for example, "can know where their projects stand without passing through us," she says. "They can go online and automatically see the marketing papers that have been sent and the companies that have expressed interest in their projects. This makes them very much aligned with our marketing effort."

In the past, she notes, the researcher would have to call her and ask if she had sent marketing materials out for "X" project. "I would go to the filing closet, take out a paper file, and look at our past efforts," says Kainan-Koren.

"It has helped strengthen our relationships with researchers because we are more transparent," adds Huberman. "Every researcher is given a password, which means Yissum has nothing to hide. Just today I heard from a researcher who said he did not appear on a technology with which he was connected. It was a mistake, but in the past it could have been years before anybody noticed."

Licensing officers can initiate similar searches on their own, adds Huberman. "If a licensing officer wants to see the activities on his project, he can

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enter a special 'activity' tab, he notes. The activities are populated automatically. For example, "when a licensing officer or administrator enters a specific technology they can choose to generate an activity, like sending an e-mail, and the system will automatically generate a letter related to certain fields, with specific data on the technology. When you press the send button it can go directly from the system or, if you want the functionality of Outlook, you can automatically generate a draft and review it, add other people, or add attachments. When you press 'send,' the TTM is connected and automatically saves the letter as a specific activity of the project."

The system ensures continuity as well, Huberman says. "Let's say a licensing officer worked on a project for several years and then stopped working; you'd find yourself with hundreds of e-mails all classified on a project," he notes. "We found a solution -- we classify not only on the project level but on the *activity* level, like 'marketing materials sent,' or 'company showed interest,' or 'CDA signed.' We can assign and attach anything we like on the activity, which means that specific mail could be easily tracked later on."

The system also helps strengthen industry relationships, adds Kainan-Koren. "Say you're a company in pharmaceuticals and you want to see everything new that has come out of Yissum on drug delivery since you last visited the site," she explains. "If you go to the site you can see things listed chronologically." In the past, if someone, say, from Johnson & Johnson had worked with Yissum previously and wanted to know what was new, they'd have had to call the licensing officer, who would have had to research the query and get back to them. "Today, you can see everything we've ever shown them -- at the click of a mouse."

Finally, notes Huberman, Yissum has more than 60 spin-off companies, all of which are followed up in the system. "We open a spin-off company as a project, so it is located within the marketing model," he explains.

## ***Analytics made 'easy'***

Kainan-Koren says the analytics capabilities of the system enable a wide variety of research and marketing approaches. For example, she says, "I was updating a map of the world with little dot marks on all the places in the world we're doing work. All I needed to do was go online and ask for a

list of countries where we have active contacts," she offers. "Here's another example: What if I wanted to learn more about a big company -- say Phillips, which has medical devices, consumer products, interest in manufacturing processes, and so on. If I had a meeting with someone from Phillips, I might be able to say that, yes, we've shown you medical devices in the past, but has anyone shown you about our cleantech efforts? I can go online and see all [marketing] pages ever sent to Phillips, so when I make that statement I *know* I'm correct."

In addition, the TTM enables staff to cross-market in various market spaces when a technology could be useful in numerous fields. "I may have one project that's good for homeland security but also for cleantech, in terms of water protection," she offers. "Those are two completely different targets; two clients could be looking at the same project in different ways, and a pitch would call for different buzzwords. I really want two projects, so all I have to do is create a separate project, and name each with different words. So now, every time I upload new technology in the field of water it pops up, and if a government agency wanted an update in homeland security it will pop up for them in the right area."

## ***Interconnectivity invaluable***

Huberman says the interconnectivity of the system further enhances the marketing benefits. For example, he notes, it includes a specific 'events' model. "It's a clustering entity," he explains. "For instance, when we went to AUTM we opened an event 'exhibition,' and typed in AUTM 2009. In this specific event model you can attach all the projects we have shown or exhibited at that conference, as well as activities for the events. Say I gave 'Mr. X' the marketing material for a project. You can enter that once in the event and it will show up in all projects attached to it, because we want to see it on the project side as well."

Similarly, if a Yissum representative met someone at AUTM they would be attached to the specific event, while also appearing within 'contacts.'

In a like manner, all patent-related activities are connected. "When you have to decide on 150 action items in a monthly patent committee meeting, all the information on whether to keep a technology comes from the marketing side," he notes. "This allows you to generate a huge report, which is done automatically. The licensing officer receives only his activities, and all [data] that is used to determine

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whether to continue with a technology.”

Kainan-Koren has few doubts about the value of the TTM in her licensing efforts. “There has been a surge in agreements,” she says. Since there are other variables, she concedes the increase cannot be attributed solely to the TTM, but the numbers are nonetheless compelling. “The system was introduced in mid-2006,” she notes. “In 2005, there were 233 agreements overall. In 2008, there were 559.”

Huberman needs no convincing. “I think our ROI came long ago,” he asserts, noting that the initial investment was about \$120,000 and the overall cost to date is about \$200,000. “In the past, we were in a situation where the marketing model was not connected with the patent model, or to the website,” he says. “And the website was never up to date. If you went to a licensing officer he would never know exactly what he had available to license, and he never knew about some those small patents that were still alive; we were paying for them but nobody was even trying to market them.”

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