

Technology transfer: trends and challenges

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TT: a concept in evolution

- Traditionally, technology transfer was considered a relation between firms: one possessing knowledge and IP relevant to another firm needing that knowledge
- Later industrial research opens up a new avenue: TT from the firm's lab to manufacturing (and marketing)
- Late in last century TT is considered from the perspective of universities and public research organizations
- The era of open innovation



Different approaches

- Assignment of technological intellectual property, developed and generated in one place, to another through legal means such as technology licensing or franchising (Business Dictionary).
- Process of converting scientific and technological advances into marketable goods or services (Business Dictionary)
- The term technology transfer can be defined as the process of movement of technology from one entity to another (Souder et al.1990; Ramanathan 1994). The transfer may be said to be successful if the receiving entity, the transferee, can effectively utilize the technology transferred and eventually assimilate it (Ramanathan, 1994).
- The movement may involve physical assets, know-how, and technical knowledge (Bozeman, 2000).



Traditional TT

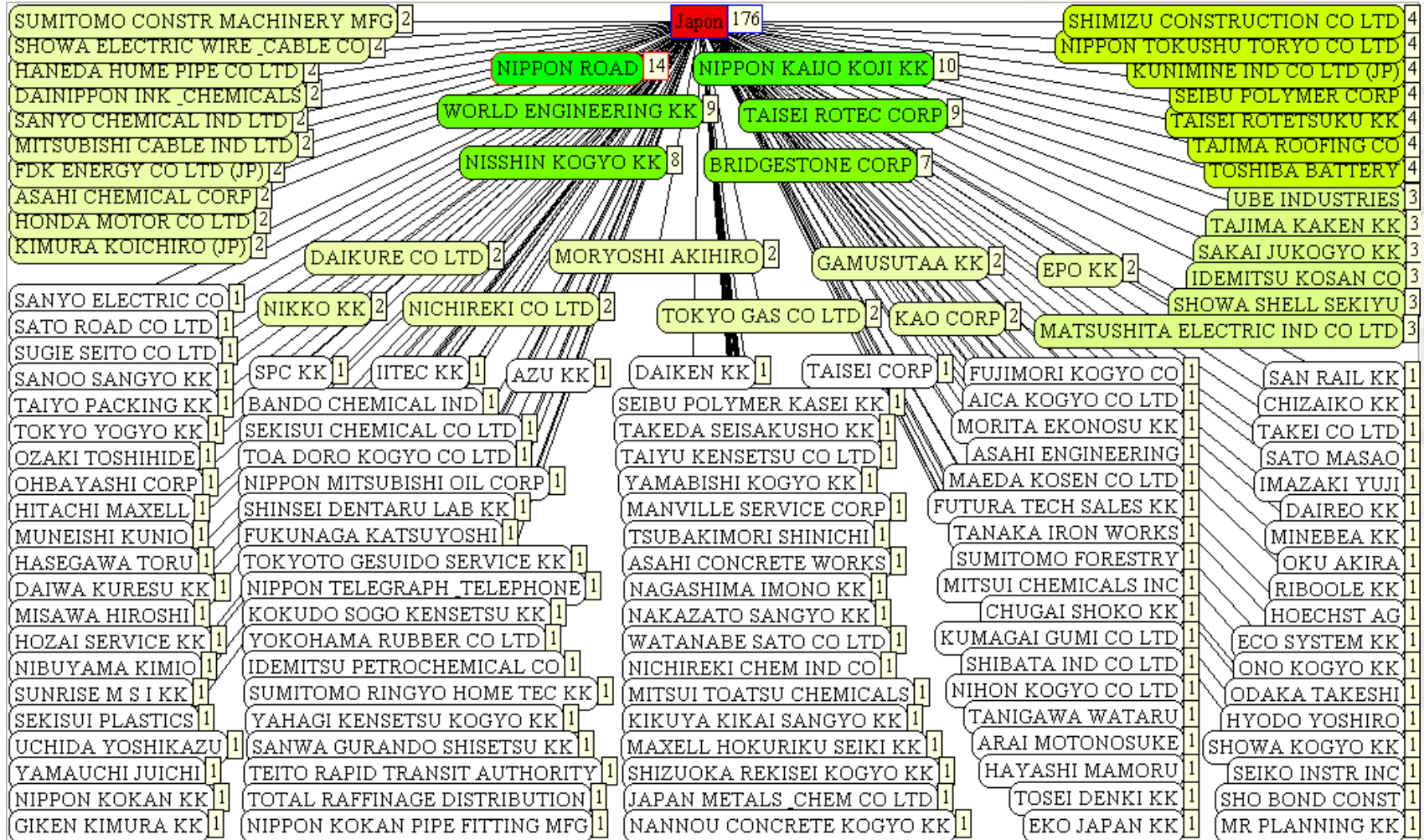
- The leading role of multinationals
- Technology transfer and direct foreign investment
- The importance of life cycle
- Technology flows depend on the attractiveness of domestic market
- Most of the time technology has been transferred in the mature stage
- Developing countries made efforts to regulate TT and to avoid inadequate practices



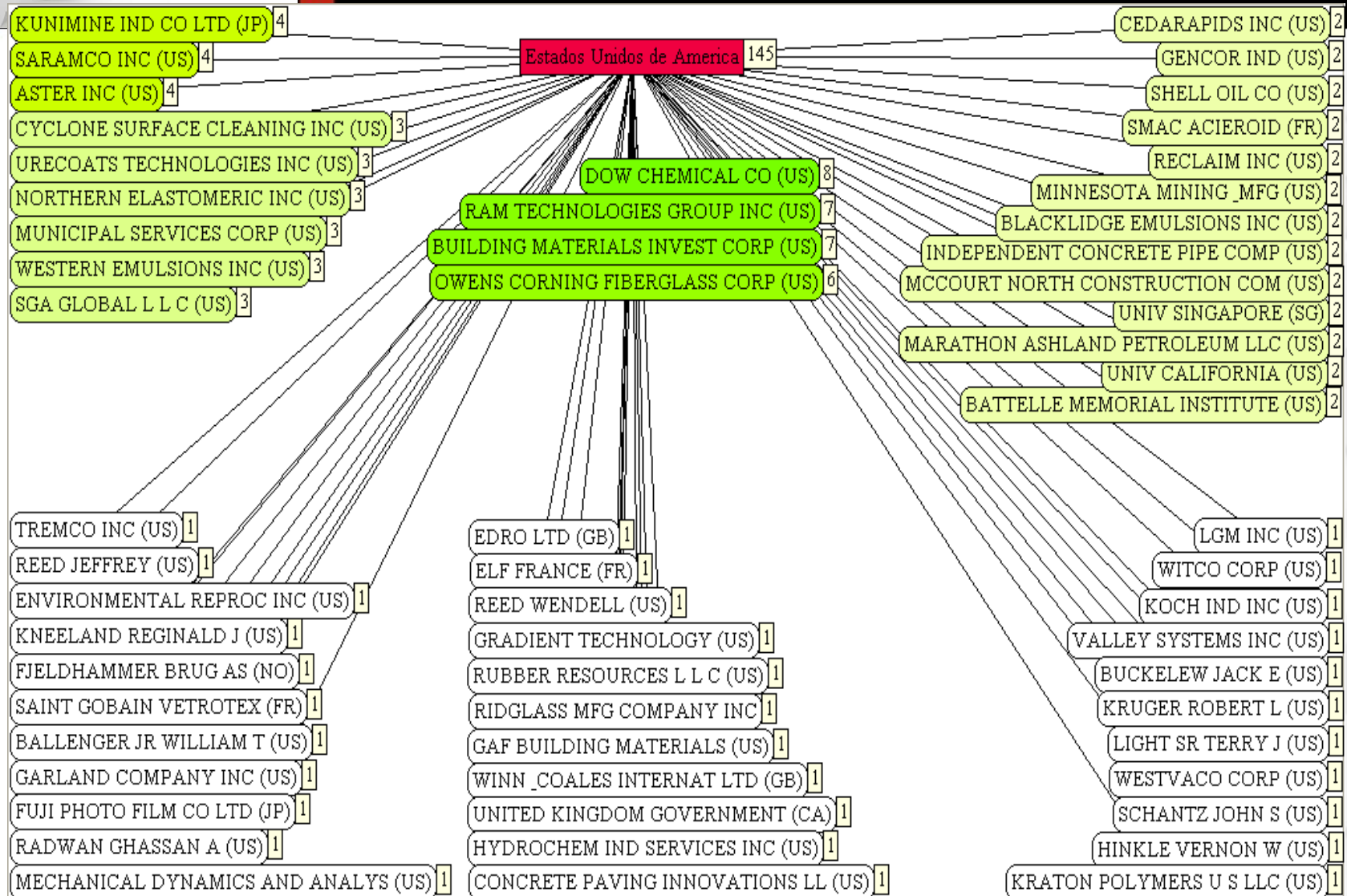
What has changed?

- More information is available and technology selection is an important part of the process
- Competitive technological intelligence
- Benchmarking
- New ways of accessing through strategic alliances, mergers and acquisitions
- But there is still a long way to go: firms in developing countries need training (particularly SMEs)

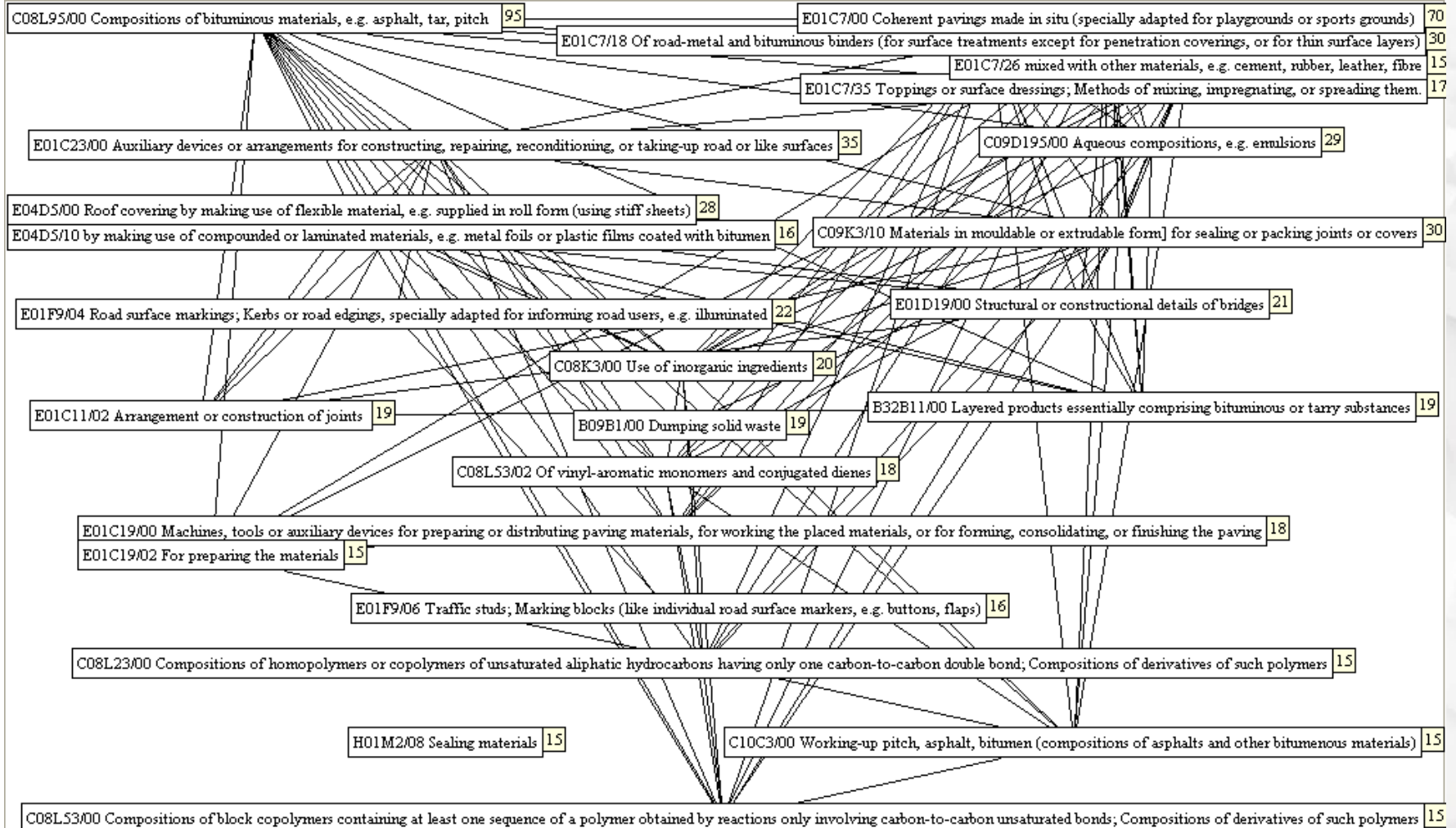
The players



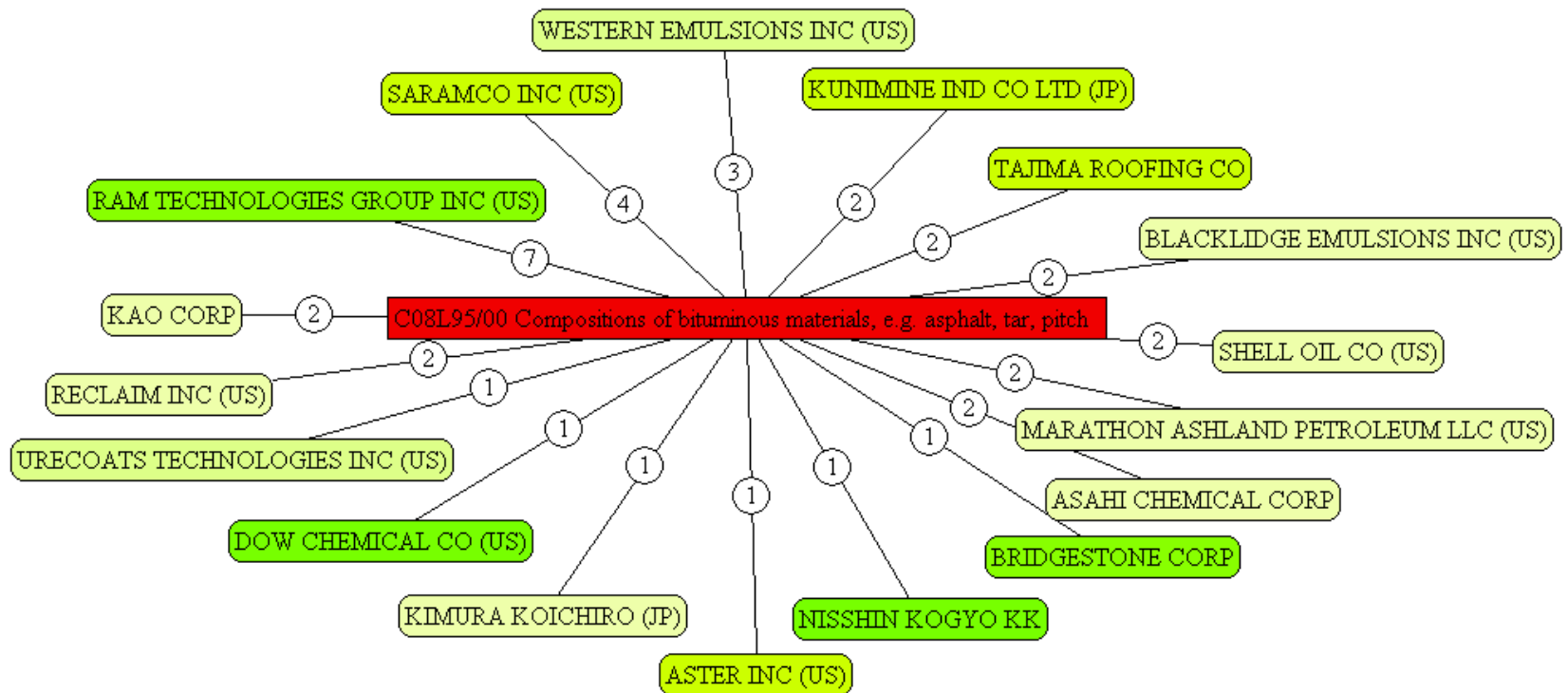
Firms owning IP in USA



Main technologies

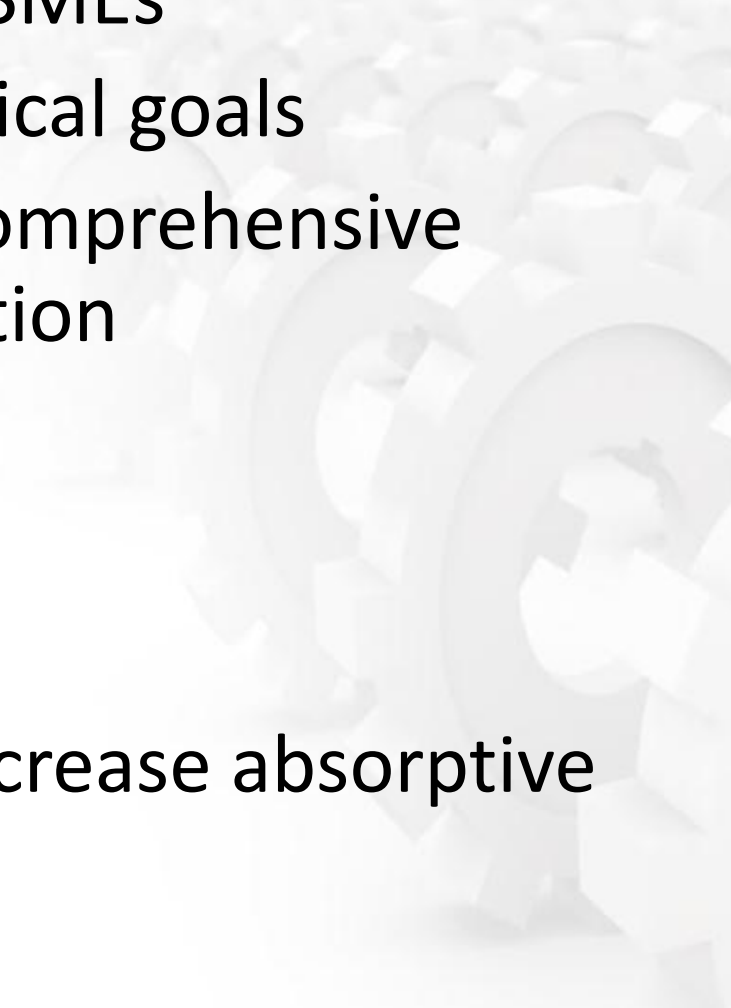


Leaders linked to specific technology





Critical needs

- Training and consultancy for SMEs
 - Clear definition of technological goals
 - A good selection based on comprehensive analysis of available information
 - Negotiation skills
 - Contract preparation
 - Assimilation of technology
 - S&T strengths are basic to increase absorptive capacities
- 



Internal TT

- A matter of firms with R&D capabilities
- Alignment of strategies
- Communication between R&D, Manufacturing, Marketing and Finance Departments
- Speed-up the process of innovation
- The worries about increasing costs
- Models of innovation management are useful tools

A well organized community



Creating Innovation
Leadership Solutions

75 years of experience
in supporting industrial
R&D
Development of good
practices
Research Technology
Management

**Effective global management and
organisation of business R&D and innovation**
Business model innovation
Working in globally distributed R&D



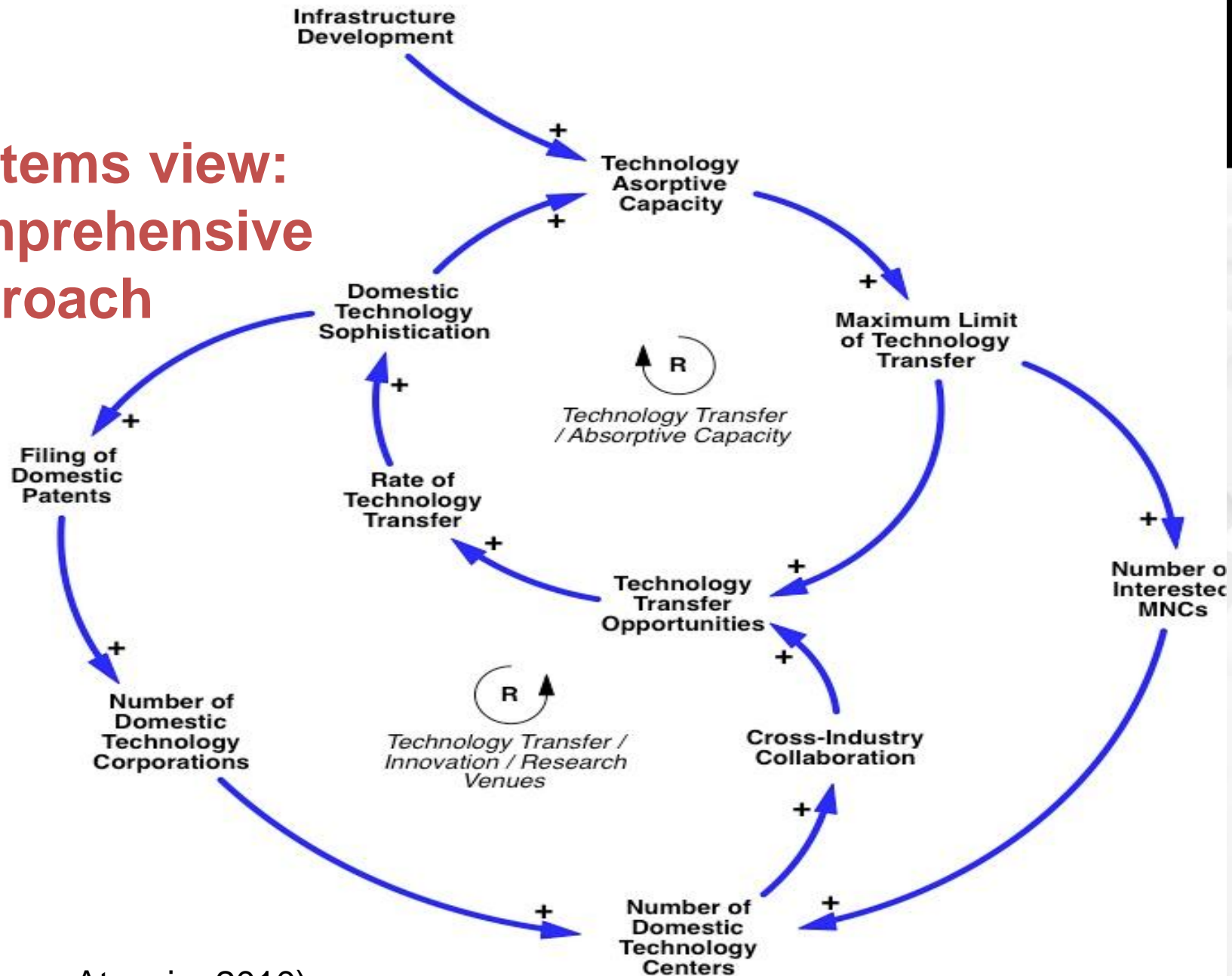


TT from universities and PROs

- Good opportunities if proper TT management is available
- Understanding the difference between research and business and the limitations of academic institutions as suppliers
- Understanding the role of IPRs
- Valorization, valuation and negotiation
- The role of Technology Transfer Offices



Systems view: comprehensive approach




Source: Atencio, 2010)

The Three Phases of Open Innovation

1. Exploration—the parties explore the possibility of working together.
2. Joint Development—the collaboration/joint development/research agreement is written and work takes place.
3. Commercialization—a product or technology is made ready to take to market and to produce financial benefits.

	Exploration		Joint (Co-)development			Commercial
			Incubation	Development		
	Initial Contact → Detailed Discussion		OPTIONAL STEPS*			Commercial
Contracts	Initial Contact Non-confidential Letter	Detailed Discussion Mutual, One-way or Two-way Confidentiality Agreements	Develop Relationship Material Transfer Agreement	Exploratory Co-Development Exploratory Research Agreement	Co-Development Detailed JDA or Alliance Agreement	Commercial License, Buy or Commercial Supply Agreement
Activity	Identification of Interest Areas, Business and Cultural Fit	Clear Understanding of What Each Party Brings, Technology Expertise & Areas of Interest	Initial Testing to Develop Joint Technical Statement of Work	Successful Laboratory Test & Proof of Concept	Successful Field Test & Valuation Model	Market Success for Both Firms
Deliverable	Open Discussion	Agreement on Vision For Success	Joint Technical Plan	Understand Value Chain	Understand Valuation Thoroughly	Equitable Division of Profits

*Depending on complexity & technology development stage



Better practices in open innovation (Mehlman et al. 2010)

Pre-work, Planning, Business Model and Strategy

- Define, align and communicate IP, technical and business strategies.
- Clarify each partner's IP strategy.
- Use value-chain analyses to identify opportunities and to determine IP ownership.
- Select partners at different positions on the value chain to define benefits and mitigate risks.
- Use gap analyses and panels of experts to determine whether needed technology is available
- Define whether the goal is to discover new knowledge or to commercialize.
- Choose a partner willing to see the process through to the end.
- Layer patent coverage to protect IP at multiple levels.

Actively Manage Your Intellectual Property

- Decide which patents to protect, license or abandon.
- Decide whether to own or merely use IP rights.
- Own IP rights if they cover core competencies.
- Own IP rights if transferring or excluding is important.
- Own IP rights if seeking partners for new technology.
- Minimize risk with access to IP without ownership



Better practices

Structure the Agreement and Negotiate Terms

- Involve business leaders of the respective partners.
- Involve the attorney internally, not with partner.
- Specify terms and conditions.
- Provide for transfer of trade secrets, know-how and IP.
- Decide who pays for filing and maintenance fees.
- Document actions and decisions to avoid misunderstanding.
- Negotiate IP rights and ownership as soon as outcomes can be visualized.
- Link royalty payments to milestones.
- Decide responsibility for product liability and infringement of third parties' IP.

Develop the Needed Documents

- Have a template for recurring agreement types.
- Have a generic template for routine collaborations, and customize where necessary.
- Use a mergers & acquisitions template if you are the “deep pockets” partner and want more protection.

Education and Training

- Raise the awareness of employees through training
- Train employees who will interface
- Train employees on antitrust issues in case potential joint development
- Train new employees on confidentiality and IPR
- Raise awareness with periodic newsletters.
- Foster an environment of teamwork, relationship-building and information-sharing.
- Make employees aware that IP includes trade secrets, knowhow and “show-how” as well as patentable art.

Attorney-Related Considerations

- Select a transaction-minded attorney.
- Drive the attorney by specifying goals and urgency.
- Negotiate terms business-to-business with legal support.
- Use attorneys when commercial/technical people agree in principle but cannot agree on wording.



Final remarks

- TT among firms will stay as the main flow
- Developing countries need better skills to negotiate
- Domestic S&T is the base for selection and assimilation
- Universities and PROs have to adjust their institutional frameworks to work with industry
- Open innovation is a challenge and an opportunity too



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THANK YOU

