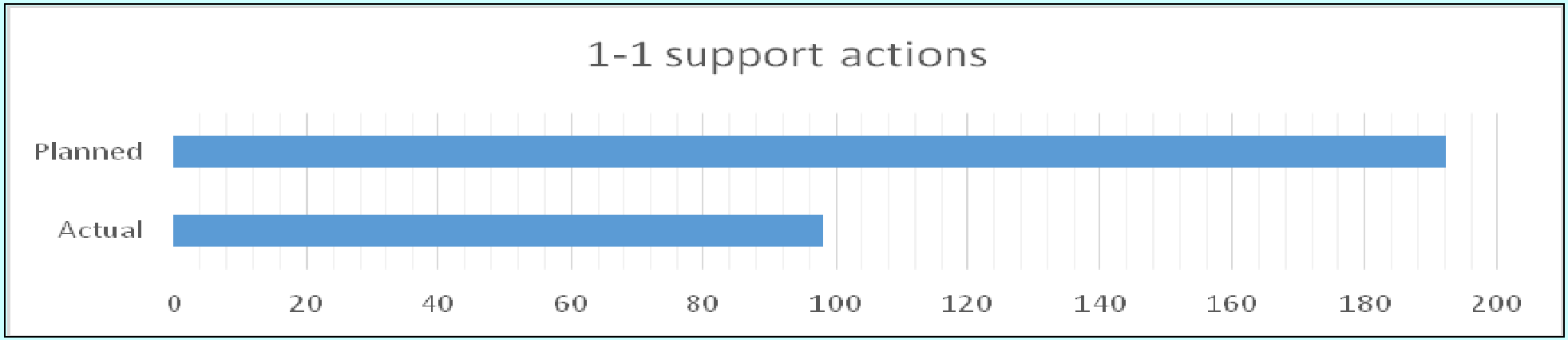
Focus on: IP support and services to SMEs

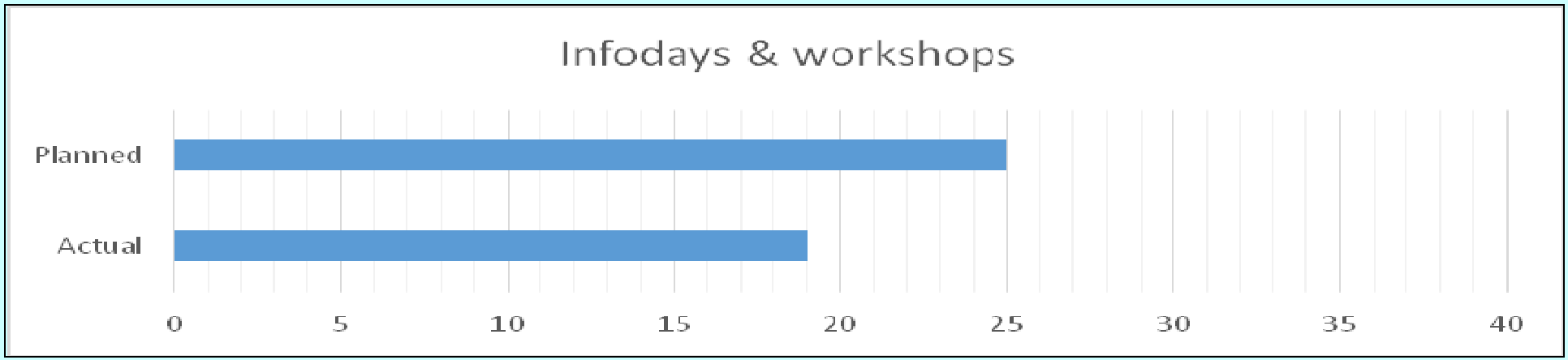
Project results as of June 2017

The implementation of the Work Package 2 started in October 2016, and went into full speed in 2017. The execution period will effectively extend to a little over 3 years in total (until the end of 2019) and to be able to manage the execution of the project smoothly we monitor and analyze the progress of the project every six months. We take the opportunity of this month's newsletter to communicate with you the results of the project as of June 2017:

1-1 support actions: One to one services are organized with interested SMEs to offer specific IP tools and added value IP related services directly to them. The aim is to offer customized support and guide SME representatives through each step of the IP process.



Infodays & workshops: IP info-days will be organized with the view to increase awareness on IP issues related to the management and exploitation of technologies as well as the business use of European Level rights. Such info-days will be targeted towards SMEs that present strong innovation backgrounds but yet do not have had experience with the management of their IP. Tools and methodologies will be presented related to IP management. For SMEs which have already achieved a substantial level of IP understanding advanced support are provided through IP workshops to allow them deeper comprehend the value of IP management. The workshops will have a thematic character offering sector specific knowledge and techniques.



Trainings for SMEs: These events address SMEs who understand IP related issues and aim at getting more acquainted with specific tools and services which will allow them perform advanced IP management strategies. Methodologies and techniques will be used to equip SMEs with the capacity to maintain and exploit their IP portfolios on their own.

Trainings for intermediaries: These events address intermediaries who will be trained on the new and upgraded tools and services, developed in this project and have the ability to act as multipliers and thus will allow for a significantly larger number of SMEs to be trained in turn. Intermediaries are considered to be business support organizations, clusters, association, chambers or other organizations that can reach out or are in direct contacts (through members - SMEs) to a large number of SMEs.

The numbers, so far, indicate that we are doing relatively well, despite being a little behind schedule. In large-scale projects such as ours, a slow start happens sometimes. However, this is not something we cannot remedy. Starting now, we have to prepare and catch up with our planning to avoid difficulties later.

Many thanks to the partners who outdid themselves and covered for others that faced their own challenges during this period.

Ideas that can boost your event's participation and overall success

OBI and the PRAXI Network organized two events jointly with two high-profile local seminars. A VIP4SME workshop was organized together with an EPO-OBI seminar targeted to SMEs and a VIP4SME intermediaries training was organized together with another EPO-OBI seminar targeting intermediaries. Both VIP4SME events were very successful and registrations exceeded more than 50% of the available seats. The companies that participated in the workshop were very satisfied especially with the VIP4SME's "hands on" exercises. The companies that were unable to attend due to seat unavailability will be the firsts to be called in a future VIP4SME event. In addition, the events proved to be an excellent opportunity to promote VIP4SME's 1 to 1 support actions. Several companies expressed their interest for 1 to 1 support by the experts of OBI and PRAXI Network.

The organization allowed the participants to select one or both events opting for a full or half day at the venue. This worked well for both events. People that wanted to attend the afternoon's session (VIP4SME event) came earlier to attend the EPO/OBI seminar and people that planned for the morning's seminar stayed on for the afternoon session as well.

Logistically, two sets of agendas were drafted, as well as, feedback, registration and participation forms. Attendees generally understood the distinction and filled out both sets of forms.

Joint events, scheduled within the same day encourage more SMEs to participate in all of them, because they save their limited time. They can attend more than two different sessions and therefore they benefit from the training and information they get without altering their daily routine for several days.

In addition, this setup gives the opportunity to save on our costs or do more with the same budget and certainly promote our events to a much greater audience.

Thanks to Costas Troulos – FORTH / PRAXI

VIP4SME
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Focus on: TRAININGS

Next scheduled Trainings:

From: http://www.innovaccess.eu/news-and-events

- *September, 19th 2017*: Training: "*Tools for advisors and SME*", PRV Stockholm - Sweden
  Organized by the Swedish Patent and Registration office, PRV.
  The seminar guides SMEs and advisors through the tools "IP Marketplace and IP Tradeportal", "Cost and Benefit Guides" and "IP Response", made by the Danish Patent and Trademark Office

- *September, 19th 2017*: VIP4SME Event: *"IP Valuation workshop and VIP4SME infoday*", Tallin Tehnopol - Estonia
  Organized by TechDevCo Lab and Estonian Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer Centre.
  The workshop aims to alert the SMEs about the importance of IP valuation in their innovation processes. During the event there is also an infoday, where VIP4SME project will be presented together with the innovaccess website and its tools.

- *September, 28th 2017*: VIP4SME Event: *"VIP4SME - Workshop*", Wien – Austria
  organized by Austrian Patent Office, Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH and Business Upper Austria – OÖ Wirtschaftsagentur GmbH.
  This knowledge-sharing and building event will provide information and expertise on the key issue "patent claims" in order to ensure business success in global competition. Additionally, we will present a modern text-mining search tool for achieving good results in a short time even with only limited search experience.

Focus on: COMMUNICATION

A usual request to the partners

1. Please do not forget to **upload news and events** (especially WP2 events!) on our website http://www.innovaccess.eu/

2. We would like to kindly invite you to share **(at least by a „like" by you and/or your institution) the VIP4SME social networks profile** / or post news:

https://www.facebook.com/VIP4SMEproject

https://twitter.com/VIP4SMEproject

Focus on: CASE STUDIES ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

From this newsletter, thanks to the IP Advantage Database of World Intellectual Property Organisation, we start to present how IP works in the real world, and how its successful exploitation can contribute to development. The case studies will involve success histories of enterprises located in project partner's Countries.

GERMANY

A Green Stone Age for the Future

Background

En route to the 2007 UN Climate Change Conference in Bali, Indonesia, Kolja Kuse leaned across the bus aisle and handed a reporter a heavy steel joist. "This is the past," he declared. "And this," he said, while unsheathing a sleek, light-weight bar, "is the future."

The future that Mr. Kuse was so enthusiastic about was the reason he and two business partners were heading to the conference. Their mission was to seek partnerships and promote their innovative construction material, which they believe can play a part in reducing global carbon emissions. Their high performance composite, known as CarbonFibreStone (CFS), consists of a slice of granite with either a fine laminate of carbon fiber on one or both sides, somewhat like a stone and carbon fiber sandwich, or granite stone combined with stabilizing carbon fibers. Developed and promoted by TechnoCarbon Technologies (TechnoCarbon), CFS is elastic, as strong as construction steel, as light as aluminum and has better vibration damping properties than any other known pressure-resistant material.

Invention

Mr. Kuse's invention began in 1995 like many other innovations: in a garage. At the time, he was an electrical engineer at Aachen University specializing in energy production. Watching his brother, a stone mason, at work one day cutting a granite slab to make a kitchen countertop, Mr. Kuse imagined a polished stone stove top with invisible induction coils hidden beneath a perfect, seamless working surface. Not one content to let his dreams remain idle, he built one.

"It looked great," he recalled, "but when the hob (the cooking surface of a stove) got above a certain temperature, the stone would always expand then crack, like an explosion." To solve this, he tried compressing the edges with huge machines, but this proved unsuccessful. "The mechanical engineers and material scientists told me, you can't stop the stone expanding. It's impossible. So I pretty much gave up on the idea."

Flying home to Munich from a meeting sometime later, Mr. Kuse picked up a brochure about carbon fiber production that happened to be left on his seat. Carbon fiber, he learned, shrinks longitudinally when heated. Intrigued, he wondered what would happen if he were to coat granite with carbon fiber. Teaming up with a carbon fiber specialist, he gave it a go. To their surprise, the experiment was successful. No matter how high they heated the new hob, the stone never fractured.

Research and Development

Unsure of the explanation for the phenomenon, Mr. Kuse submitted a prototype to engineers at the University of Applied Sciences in Munich for further research and development (R&D). Subjecting the prototype to over one million impact loads, the engineers found that it had outstanding resistance to fatigue. Through this research and testing, Mr. Kuse learned that natural granite is compressible and flexible to defined limits, assuming it is sufficiently stabilized. His innovative carbon fiber coating acted as a stabilizer, and the resulting product combines both the light weight of aluminium with the strength of steel. Its flexibility meant that it could be molded

into a variety of shapes and sizes for many different applications.
This initial carbon fiber coating was expanded on through further R&D, testing and refinement so that CFS could be used to in the production of products beyond kitchen stove tops. The result was a process that combines pressure-stable natural stone, such as granite, with extremely tension-stable carbon fiber that consists of nearly 100% pure carbon. The two materials are bound by a high stable epoxy resin, and the carbon fiber/stone bond is adjusted by hardening the resin with a specific preload. This results in a new composite material that constitutes a technologically sound way to replace (at least to some extent) metals that are carbon emission intensive. The end product is not only light and strong, but has a high resistance to corrosion and can be easily processed and handled using conventional stone industry methods and instruments.
The environmentally friendly nature of producing CFS is especially close to its inventor's heart. Over sixty percent of the Earth's mantle consists of granite, and as Mr. Kuse and his team points out, it comes out of the ground "ready baked" with no need for smelting. Initial calculations by the R&D team at TechnoCarbon suggest that producing CFS will generate less than half of the carbon emissions of steel, aluminum or pure carbon fiber production, including the energy required to quarry and process the granite. While by volume CFS would require as much energy to produce as aluminum, it has ten times more tensile strength. Mr. Kuse points out that "…even with a 5:1 ratio of stone to carbon fiber for high load bearing cases, the production energy would decrease by something approaching a factor of four in comparison to aluminum."

Patents and Trademarks

Mr. Kuse is animated when asked about intellectual property (IP) protection. "Without international IP rights, we would have no business model," he says emphatically. TechnoCarbon thus believes that international applications filed via the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) are the most efficient means to take steps for protecting its inventions in the international market, and therefore ensures that PCT applications are made in addition to national applications with the German Patent and Trademark Office (DPMA).
In 1995, he filed an international patent application with the PCT system for his first CFS based technology, the granite and carbon fiber stove top. In 2008, he filed another PCT application for his process for stabilizing granite with carbon fiber. In all, by July 2010 Mr. Kuse had filed twelve PCT applications.
In 2003, TechnoCarbon made a trademark registration for its name with the DPMA. In 2007, the company registered a trademark for the CFS name and another for the Carbonstone name with the DPMA. In 2009, the company also received trademark registration from the DPMA for the SCT name to be used with future technologies.

Commercialization

In September 2005, CFS made its first public debut at the Materialica Fair in Munich. After its debut, TechnoCarbon presented its technology at sixteen different industry fairs and conferences throughout the world over the next two years. By the time it was featured again at the 2007 Materialica Fair, in which it won a Best Product award, CFS was ready for production. TechnoCarbon decided that licensing its technology was the best way to market it and reach the most customers. CFS has the possibility to be used in many industries. From being used as a lightweight, earthquake resistant building material to use in automobile and boat construction as a light, strong material with high crashworthiness, the technology has seemingly endless future applications.

Licensing

TechnoCarbon currently has two major licensing agreements. The first is with Spring Switzerland AG, which has made the granite stove initially envisioned by Mr. Kuse a reality. The second is with Zai AG, which manufactures and sells a high-tech ski with a CFS core. It was the first ski to ever be made with a stone core. Beyond these licensing agreements, TechnoCarbon continues to work together with industrial partners and scientific institutions to find more applications for its CFS technology.

Business Results

Through innovation, IP protection and profitable licensing agreements, TechnoCarbon has turned an idea that many industry experts thought was impossible into a successful business model.

Companies within the industry have been quick to see the benefits of TechnoCarbon's CFS technology. Because of very high production costs, carbon fiber itself has tended to be used mostly in specialized applications, such as Formula One racing cars, aircraft parts, or other high end sports equipment. The use of CFS technology opens an entire range of possibilities in the manufacturing and construction sectors which would not otherwise have been thought economically viable.

Source: http://www.wipo.int/ipadvantage/en/

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Chamber of Commerce of Venice Rovigo
Via Banchina Molini, 8 Marghera
Venezia, IT 30175
Italy