

Press Release

Cruickshank Launches IP-Free60 Service to Drive €2bn R&D Investment in Ireland

- R&D investment worth €2bn to Irish economy annually, but we still lag behind the EU average when it comes to filing patents
- 'IP-Free60' offers free advice on Intellectual Property, Patents and Trade Marks to companies, entrepreneurs, and research bodies
- Culmination of a €4.5m investment programme
- Launched by Minister for Innovation Policy, Michael Ahern TD

Dublin, 28th February 2008 – Cruickshank, Ireland's leading firm of patent and Intellectual Property attorneys, has launched its new 'IP-Free60' service. IP-Free60 offers a free patents and trademarks advice in the form of a one hour free consultation to Irish based companies, entrepreneurs and research bodies who wish to maximise their return on research and development investment. The launch of the new service is the culmination of a €4.5m investment in making Cruickshank Ireland's leading technology and customer-driven Intellectual Property firm.

The service offers participating companies a free one hour consultation with a Cruickshank Intellectual Property expert, who will:

- assess patents, trademarks and other Intellectual Property held by the company;
- gauge the participant's current position;
- outline the potential pitfalls;
- and, crucially, tell users how they can profit from their Intellectual Property.

Recent studies from Forfás have shown that Irish companies and universities are investing more than €2bn in research and development (R&D) every year. Donal O'Connor, senior partner of Cruickshank Intellectual Property Attorneys, said "Every company has Intellectual Property, but not every company is exploiting it to its full advantage."

The EU's European Innovation Scorecard 2007 places Ireland in the 'innovation followers' grouping, lagging behind the best in Europe – 'innovation leaders' such as the Nordic countries and the UK. On Intellectual Property in particular, we fall behind the European average. The Scorecard shows that Ireland holds just 77.3 European Patent Office (EPO) patents per million population, compared to 121 for the UK and an EU average of 128 patents per million population. Each of the Nordic countries scores well in excess of 200 on this scale.

The service was launched by Minister for Innovation Policy Michael Ahern in a ceremony attended by some of the leading entrepreneurs and innovators in Irish industry. Speaking

at the launch, Minister Ahern said that the new service would help drive innovation in Irish business. “Innovation is a key element in Ireland’s push to be at the leading edge of technology, and indeed is vital for the future growth of our economy,” said Minister Ahern. “Cruickshank’s new IP-Free60 service will help companies get to grips with their Intellectual Property assets and ensure that they are making best use of them.”

Donal O’Connor, senior partner of Cruickshank Intellectual Property Attorneys, said “Cruickshank’s IP-Free60 is a unique service that gives users the benefit of our experience for free. Much of the €2bn investment in R&D is being wasted because of a lack of Intellectual Property knowledge, and we’re seeking to address that. Cruickshank wants to play its role in pushing Ireland up the Intellectual Property league tables. IP-Free60 helps people make money from their innovation.”

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About Cruickshank

Cruickshank is Ireland’s leading firm of patent and trademark attorneys. Its multidisciplinary team is particularly renowned for its expertise in advanced technology, including electronics, computing and telecommunications, as well as the fast growing food and life science arenas. Its clients include many of Ireland’s top 1000 companies, private inventors and entrepreneurs. Its head office is in Dublin, Ireland. Cruickshank is celebrating its 80th year in business in 2008.

For further information, see www.cruickshank.ie.