

Key Takeaways



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Round-Table
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Working Smart in Africa

Discussion Summary

Our panel examined how to build effective, business-aligned IP strategies across Africa's complex and fast-evolving landscape. While the region offers significant growth potential, it also presents practical challenges: fragmented systems, uneven enforcement, and widely varying timelines and costs. Choosing the right routes, managing expectations, and partnering with local experts to "work smart" is key to success.

Key points

Africa is not one market

Treating Africa as one market leads to misaligned expectations; working smart means understanding the differences between OAPI, ARIPO, and key national offices.

Regional systems are not always the best answer

OAPI and ARIPO can streamline filings and administration, but they are not automatically the optimal choice. For some industries targeted national filings will deliver better protection and value.

Timelines and examination quality vary widely

Clients need clear, honest guidance about how long rights are likely to take and what level of substantive examination they can expect.

Local partnerships reduce risk and friction

On-the-ground expertise can be the difference between a smooth filing and a stalled application.

Cost and value must be framed together

The real conversation is about value: where protection is commercially justified, which routes avoid duplication, and how to design a strategy that clients can sustain over time.



Ask our team

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