

Case study

The world's first data-driven invention lab

Iprova has used its data-driven invention (DDI) technology to create thousands of patentable inventions for some of the world's best-known companies. Many of these same companies now want to bring Iprova's technology in-house by setting up their own DDI labs.



This case study looks at Iprova's work with the iconic French company BIC to create the first DDI lab.

Background

BIC is a world leader in stationery, lighters and shavers. For more than 75 years, the company has honored the tradition of providing high-quality, affordable products to consumers everywhere.

However, the elegant simplicity of BIC products belies the technical achievement embodied within. Therefore, continuous innovation is key to staying ahead of ever-changing consumer demands.

Challenge

BIC recently embarked on an ambitious program to 'Invent the Future' — an internal initiative to focus the company on becoming even more agile, integrated and innovative.

The company wanted to add an extra dimension to its in-depth, focused R&D efforts with a more wide-angled view of the inventive possibilities for its product areas. Iprova's data-driven approach to invention, focusing on speed, disruption and efficiency, was identified as an ideal match for those ambitions.

Results

- ↳ Fast access to disruptive inventions for consumer products in stationery and shavers.
- ↳ Delivery of more than 40 inventions to date.
- ↳ Inauguration of the world's first customer-embedded data-driven invention lab.



Iprova invention services

BIC first retained Iprova to deliver data-driven invention creation services in early 2019 – with a brief to provide unexpected, useful and value-creating inventions in the areas of stationery and shaving products. Within months, the engagement resulted in over 40 inventions, ranging from novel physical product enhancements to new services which, for example, incorporate surprising yet relevant technological advances to reimagine the capabilities of a pen.

BIC recognised the quality of the inventions and saw that they were additive and complementary to those coming from BIC's own R&D organisation. Some of the inventions were seen as **foundational** – and in themselves can potentially be the basis of disruptive new products or services which may address, for example, the manufacturing process or product ecosystem.

Iprova has demonstrated that their technology will enhance BIC's approach to inventing products that solve the needs of our consumers.

That's why we decided to bring their technology in-house, strengthening BIC's R&D capability and creating a stream of disruptive and diverse inventions that will help us stay ahead of ever-changing consumer demands.

—— **Thomas Brette**

Insights and Innovation Officer, BIC Group

e-Iprova

As a result of the successful co-operation, BIC decided to integrate Iprova's technology and data-driven approach to invention within its own organisation.

e-Iprova is a system of invention software tools, processes, training and support to enable the replication of Iprova's proven data-driven invention capabilities within your organisation, enabling you to:

- ↳ Utilise your own team to create inventions with unprecedented speed, potential for disruption and efficiency
- ↳ Transform invention from a reactive tactical activity to a proactive strategic function
- ↳ Deliver a stream of high-value inventions that are additive and complementary to the output of traditional R&D functions of the company
- ↳ Enable invention creation working from home - anywhere in the world



Invent the future 

Setting up the Invention Lab

The set-up of the data-driven Invention Lab has seen BIC and Iprova working closely together in areas such as:

Hiring

Iprova uses its invention developer selection process to identify engineers and scientists with characteristics that are likely to make outstanding inventors. These include the ability to be creatively courageous and, at the same time, nurture an inquisitive mind that is curious about the world we live in.

Software

Iprova provides access to its data-driven invention software platform.

This platform puts the power of the world's inventive information into the hands of the customer's invention team - augmenting and enhancing the human ability to invent.

Training & Support

In creating thousands of inventions, Iprova's experienced inventors have developed and refined our data-driven approach to invention. We have used this to train the BIC invention team, and also shared invention best practice based on our experience of working with many of the world's best technology companies.

Why e-Iprova

- ↘ Commercially relevant inventions to create valuable new product & service opportunities
- ↘ Competitive advantage — capturing inventions in evolving, disruptive new business areas
- ↘ Efficient, agile, flexible invention creation on-demand

Data-Driven invention in your organisation

Our approach is not limited by industry or by current approaches to inventing.

If your organisation is driven to invent in faster, more surprising and more agile ways than your competitors, contact us to find out how our embedded data-driven invention platform can help you to stay ahead.