

FOI Release
Information released under the Freedom of Information Act

Title: Largest patent holders

Date of release: 19 April 2013

Information request

I would like to request information about the largest patent holders:

- Company Names
- Quantity of patent registered under their name
- Sectors/subject area of each patent

Information released

The IPO publishes a list of the top 10 companies who have had the most Patents Granted by the UK IPO in any particular year, with comparative figures for the previous year, and another table of the top 50 companies for the latest year.

You can find the figures for 2011 on pages 4 and 5 of our Facts & Figures for 2011 at: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/tna/20140603093547/http://www.ipo.gov.uk/about-anrep1112.pdf>

I can confirm that the Department holds similar information for 2012, but section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act exempts this information. This is because the information is intended for publication at a future date.

As the 'Top 50' companies themselves may not be aware of the data, we consider that the public interest in withholding this information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it at this time. The next issue of Facts and Figures should be published within the next two months.

We do not hold details of each patent owned by these companies, but you can search under the name of each patentee using the Espacenet database <http://worldwide.espacenet.com/>.

Your search will reveal classification codes and the code of each patent might give a clue as to sectors in which the patent is likely to be of use for some but not all types of patent, depending whether they are of narrow application e.g. pharmaceuticals or of broader application e.g. electronic components.