


WIPO: China is at the Forefront of Global Patenting Activity in Generative AI

Article By:

Aaron Wininger


In a patent landscape report released July 3, 2024, the [World Intellectual Property Organization](#) (WIPO) stated that “China is at the forefront of global patenting activity in GenAI. China was responsible for more than 38,000 patent family publications between 2014 and 2023, based on the inventor addresses published on patents. Since 2017, China has published more patent families in this field every year than all other countries combined.” The U.S. is second with around 6,300 patent families between 2014 and 2023. However, patenting activity in China may not necessarily correlate with innovation as discussed below.




Per the Report, 4 out of the top 5 patent owners are Chinese including Tencent Holdings, Ping An Insurance Group, Baidu, the Chinese Academy of Science. Note that [OpenAI](#), an acknowledged leader in generative AI, does not make the top 20 and does not appear to have any published patents until 2023 (perhaps due to its non-profit origin).



Further showing that patenting does not necessarily correlate with innovation leadership in the field, per WIPO the U.S. and China are almost tied in publication of scientific papers.



However, U.S. papers may be more groundbreaking than Chinese papers as the U.S. papers get cited significantly more.



The discrepancy between Chinese innovation and patenting may be related to China's market distorting incentives for patenting including [cash subsidies](#), lower corporate income tax rates through

the High and New Tech Enterprise (HTNE) program and patent requirements for listing on the [Shanghai Stock Exchange Science and Technology Innovation Board](#), etc.

The full Report is available [here](#).

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