

NEWS: *Press Release*

American Express Launches Intellectual Property Zone

IP Zone Designed to Promote Advancement of IP Marketplace

NEW YORK, NY, April 26, 2011 -- American Express today announced that it has created an Intellectual Property Zone (IP Zone) designed to promote the advancement of the intellectual property (IP) marketplace, including patents, trademarks, software and other IP products. The IP Zone(TM), which includes an online tool called Virtual Intellectual Property Exchange (VIPEX) and a physical office location, is a platform for buying and selling IP globally while cultivating an environment for open innovation and collaboration.

Currently launching in beta, IP Zone will work with a closed group of buyers and partners to manage deal opportunities and conduct live deals. The full launch for the IP Zone is planned for later this year, when the platform will be open to a broader number of businesses. Businesses will pay a membership fee to participate in the IP Zone, which also includes access to IP transaction courses, IP certifications and IP job training. American Express has partnered with Columbia University and The Intellectual Property and Knowledge Management Taskforce, an IP-focused research group based in Dallas, to co-produce a number of industry education courses about commercializing intellectual property.

To quickly scale the platform, IP Zone has entered into a partnership with TechNexus, a technology incubator with 700 affiliated companies including several Fortune 500 companies and top universities, to offer the platform to its affiliates.

American Express' Tracey Thomas, Chief IP Strategist and acting CEO for the IP Zone stated that, "The primary goal of the IP Zone is to facilitate IP transactions. We envision the IP Zone as the central hub for companies, universities, and entrepreneurs looking to manage, market and monetize their IP assets."

The Intellectual Property and Knowledge Management Taskforce estimates that more than \$100 billion in IP transactions take place annually in the United States with projections exceeding \$1 trillion within the decade. According to the Taskforce, historical data show that only a small fraction of commercially viable IP is being monetized. Bob Shearer, Taskforce Executive Director commented, "The IP Zone's design, its platform and complementary corporate services enable companies to create liquidity for these dormant assets and create a new source of cash flows and earnings. American Express has created a dynamic business environment for transparency, opportunity and participation in IP transactions-- a level of market maturity long overdue for such a sizable commercial market."

New York City was selected as the headquarters for IP Zone due to proximity to the participating firms and in an effort to provide economic stimulus and diversification for the local community. Additional information about the IP Zone offices and programs will be available later this year.