

[FinTech Patent Filings in Taiwan]

Nowadays patents in the field of financial technology (FinTech) become more important with the increasing use of mobiles and internet. Based on G06Q20, G06Q30 and G06Q40 of International Patent Classification (IPC), fintech patent filings in Taiwan can be classified into three major categories: payment scheme, commerce and finance/insurance. In the past, approximately 65% of fintech patents in Taiwan were related to commerce, followed by 20% of payment scheme and 15% of finance/insurance. Due to global trends and the promotion of fintech development by the government, there have been more patent filings of payment scheme and finance/insurance in recent years. Per the statistics in 2016, the patent filings of finance/insurance have tripled, such that the filing proportion of fintech patents has changed to 50% of commerce, 23% of payment scheme and 27% of finance/insurance, respectively. Then in 2017, the finance/insurance patent filings have surpassed those of commerce and payment scheme, and reached the highest filing numbers over the years. Below are the statistics of fintech patent filings according to Taiwan Intellectual Property Office (TIPO).

Taiwan fintech patent filings in the year from 2012 to 2017

Categories/Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Commerce	418	416	416	402	380	440
Payment Scheme	118	106	149	140	177	318
Finance/Insurance	68	55	62	68	200	456

Source: TIPO

Top 15 applicants of Taiwan fintech patent filings from 2012/1/1 to 2017/4/30

No.	Applicant	Invention	Utility Model
1	ALIBABA GROUP SERVICES LIMITED	136	0
2	RAKUTEN, INC.	103	0
3	CHUNGHWA TELECOM	64	6
4	SOUTHERN TAIWAN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	40	9
5	TENCENT TECHNOLOGY (SHENZHEN) COMPANY LIMITED	41	9
6	PRESIDENT CHAIN STORE	16	23

	CORP.		
7	INTEL CORPORATION	34	0
8	MITAKE INFORMATION CORPORATION	32	0
9	CHINA UNIONPAY	26	3
10	APPLE INC.	27	0
11	CATHAY LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY	9	18
12	FIRST COMMERCIAL BANK	9	17
13	MICROSOFT TECHNOLOGY LICENSING, LLC	23	0
14	TAIWAN MOBILE PAYMENT CO.	15	7
15	YAHOO! INC.	22	0

Source: TIPO

Patent types and applicants of Taiwan fintech patent filings from 2012/1/1 to 2017/4/30

Fintech Categories	Invention		Utility Model	
	Domestic Applicant	Foreign Applicant	Domestic Applicant	Foreign Applicant
Commerce	957	496	409	7
Payment Scheme	297	225	182	7
finance/insurance	269	36	164	0

Source: TIPO

As can be seen above, domestic applicants filed more finance/insurance patents than foreign applicants, while foreign applicants filed mostly commerce and payment scheme invention patents. Overall, fintech patent filings by domestic applicants have a high number of utility model applications, with about 70% dual applications of both invention and utility model (for same invention/creation filed on the same day). In Taiwan, a utility model patent application undergoes only formality examination and thus is granted a patent more quickly. The applicant can make use of the dual filing system to have a utility model patent serve as backup in case the invention application is delayed in examination or rejected. Since a utility model patent has a shorter patent term and is also likely to be invalidated when compared to an invention patent, the applicant may focus on filing fintech-related patents of invention, in order to obtain a stronger and longer-term patent protection. On the other hand, an applicant shall pay attention on the full disclosure of technical features when filing a fintech patent application, and avoid the illegibility of its claimed matter. Namely, a computer software shall combine with a hardware device when drafting a patent specification; also, the outcome of such combination must have an unexpected effect which is not obvious to a person skilled in the art.