How do I formulate an IP strategy?

By answering the following three questions, you can get a better idea of what the best strategy is for protecting your intellectual property.

1. **What do you want to protect? Ideas, innovations, logos or something else?**
   
   Remember: once an invention has been disclosed, it can no longer be protected.

2. **How do you want to protect your intellectual property?**
   
   Depending on what you want to protect, you can apply to register it as a **trade mark**, **patent**, **design** or **geographical indication of source** with the IPI. Artistic works such as texts and songs are automatically protected under **copyright**.
   
   If you want to protect an invention, **simply keeping it a secret** is a cheap and efficient way to do so (like Coca Cola does), but it’s also risky.

3. **Where do you want to protect your innovations and creations?**
   
   Patents, trade marks and other such rights are only valid in the countries in which they are registered. So think carefully about all the places where you want to register your intellectual property. Consider where your current and potential research, production and sales markets are or might be.

**Important**

Protection without enforcement is a paper tiger. Having a concept for enforcing your rights is also a necessary part of an IP strategy.

**Rule of thumb**

Only protect as much as necessary, but protect this part as well as possible.
Enforce this protection systematically – otherwise there’s no point in protecting your IP.