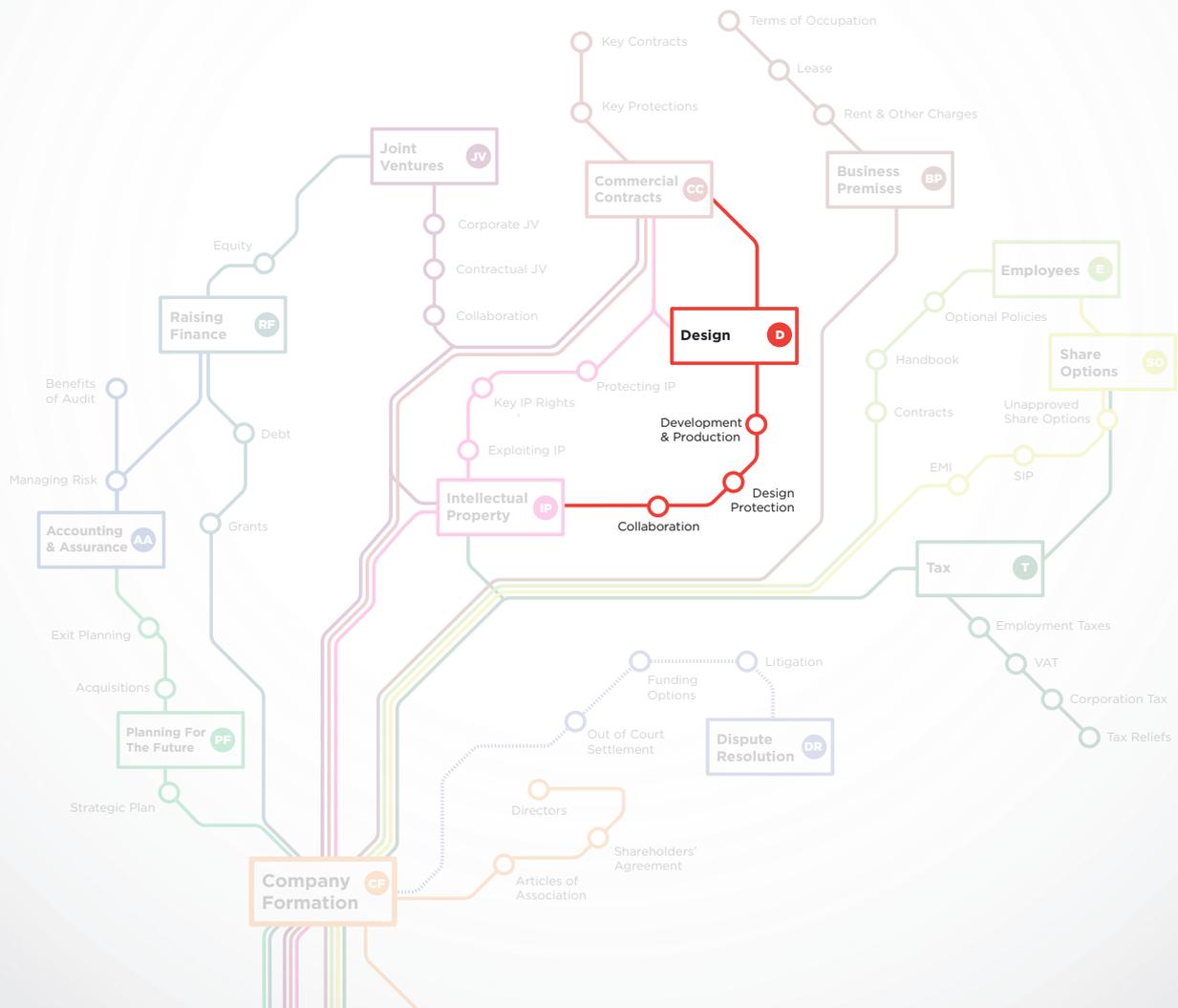




DESIGN



SCINAPSE

Geldards
law firm



DESIGN

Great inventions all started in the same way – with a bright idea! Sometimes that’s as far as it goes, but in many cases the idea proves to be genuinely useful and the inventor looks for a route to market through manufacturing. Yet before a finished product is available there’s an entire process through which the idea must go on its journey to commercial success.

TURN A BRILLIANT IDEA INTO A COMMERCIAL REALITY

The best way to get your idea off the drawing board is to use a product design consultancy with the skill set to take a concept through to production. They will have experienced designers and engineers who’ve developed and guided many products from a conceptual idea through to commercial reality. They’ll assist you through the product design process, offering advice along the way on materials, prototyping, manufacturing options and marketing.

RANGE OF INDUSTRIES AND SECTORS

Finding the right product design consultancy to breathe life into your idea can be quite difficult but is made easier by narrowing the search to companies with experience in your type of

product. Consultancies may specialise in automotive, medical or consumer products for example, but it’s wise to remember that the generalists, those with a multiple focus, can bring a wealth of experience and cross fertilised thinking to your project.

And whilst there are no universal design standards, it’s best to work with a consultancy that understands those relevant to your particular design. For example, if you are developing a product for use in the medical sector there are a number of international standards, including the ISO 13485 quality standard, to which adherence may be mandatory.

RESEARCHING AND PROTECTING YOUR DESIGN

Understanding your audience and how they might use your product is a vital part of the design process. A good product design consultancy will spend time assessing the benefits your design will bring and how these could differentiate your product.

The team will research the market for competitors before inviting the intellectual property agents to carry out an IP search to ensure that your design does not infringe another, and that it can be adequately protected. Of course a good product design consultancy will continue to add value to your idea by creating and incorporating more novelty as the development process proceeds. Once the contract is complete the consultancy will assign any additional rights attributable to the extra inventive steps to you. Some consultancies may be willing to offer reduced rates in exchange for a share in the IP but this is entirely a matter of negotiation, and not the usual modus operandi.

Please note that in order to protect both parties, a Non-disclosure Agreement should always be in place prior to any discussions regarding your idea, whether the IP is already protected or not.

Benefits of Audit

Managing Risk

Accounting & Assurance

Exit Planning

Acquisition

Strategy

COLLABORATION AND KNOWLEDGE

So we've seen how an external product design consultancy can add value through the process of product development, but they can also bring special insight from an independent perspective. A good consultancy will for instance guide you towards the best presentation of your idea for funding purposes, show you how to frame the benefits of your idea if you intend to seek confirmation through market research, or advise you on how to place the product in the most advantageous position to build brand value. They will also advise you on the latest manufacturing techniques, the most economical way to produce your product and guide you through the multitude of options for sourcing parts, assemblies and finished products from UK and overseas suppliers and partners.

A professional consultancy will always recognise your status as principal stakeholder in the project and keep you informed and engaged in every aspect of the design process. Collaboration brings the most appropriate knowledge and understanding to the process and ensures that the objectives are kept in focus and delivered upon to everyone's satisfaction.

PROTOTYPING AND TESTING

Having a prototype of your idea is when you can finally see what the finished product will look like before it reaches the manufacturing stage. Most product design consultancies can produce prototypes in house, and these can vary from quick ergonomic mock-ups to photorealistic visuals. These 'look-see' models are vehicles to

explore branding and colour options, but the more comprehensive 'looks-like-works-like' prototypes offered by the better equipped consultancies will give the nearest thing there is to the actual product before it's manufactured.

Looks-like-works-like prototypes can be used to evaluate your original design idea and, if necessary, to add refinements. They can even be used for performance and safety testing, or gaining preliminary approvals from independent test houses. This type of prototype will often be used to help secure listings with retail buyers, or to act as the basis for publicity photographs and promotional videos.

MANUFACTURING PROCESSES

If the project demands it, your consultants will continue to advise and assist you through the manufacturing phase by liaising with toolmakers and suppliers and ensuring that the manufactured parts are fit for purpose and made to the correct tolerances. They will ensure the parts function correctly as an assembled product and that the build quality is as agreed. Finally, they will assist you to sign off the product and approve full scale production.

LAUNCH

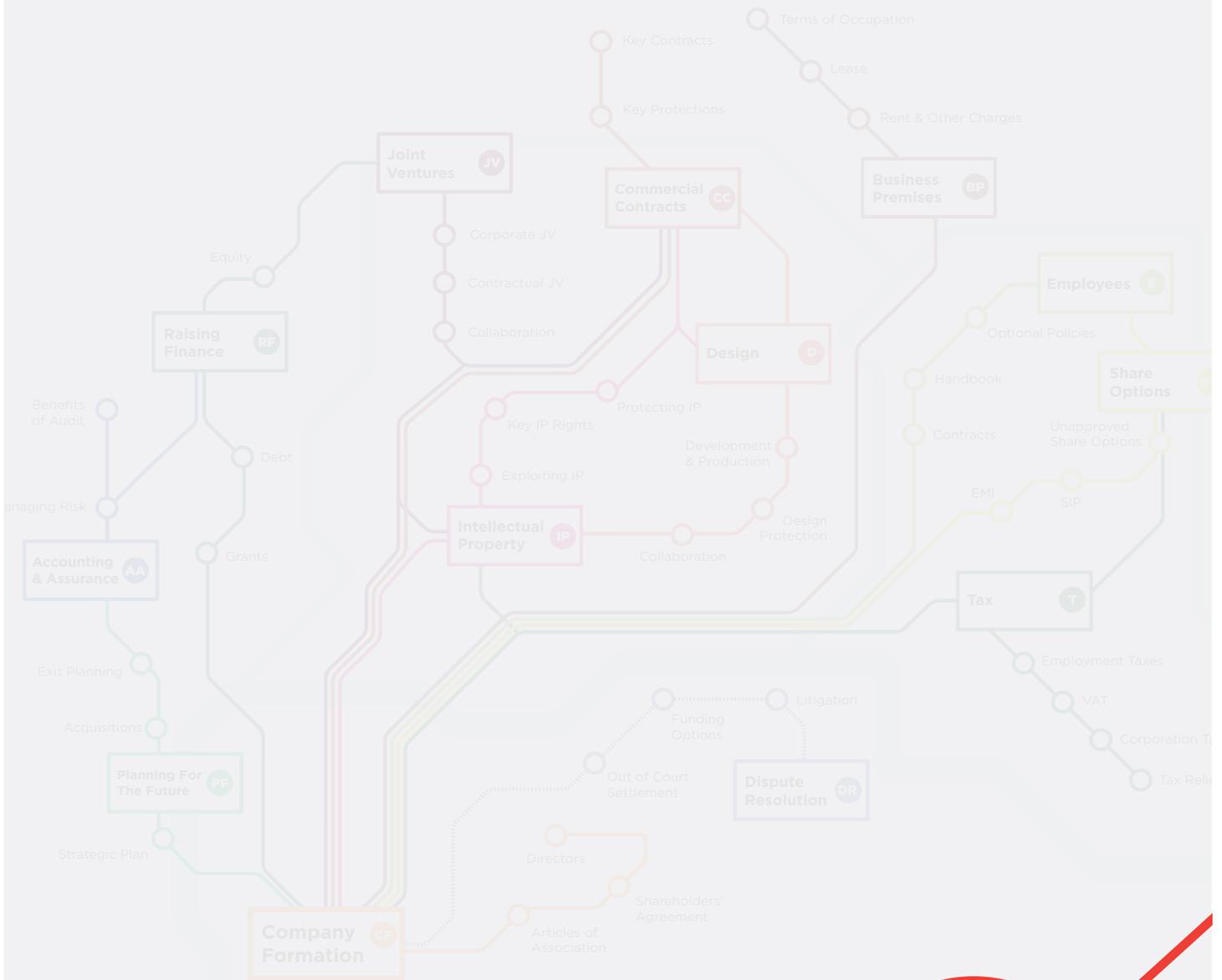
By the time your product reaches the final launch stage, it will have been thoroughly developed and rigorously tested in manufacture. You can have every confidence that your initial idea will embody the necessary credentials for commercial success. Talk to your consultant about additional help in marketing your invention.

Design **D**

Development & Production

Design Protection

Collaboration



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