

Profiling the Assistive Technology Industry

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Introduction

Methods

How can an Industry Profile Help You?

R&D efforts are most likely to result in successful new products when marketplace needs and business viability considerations are addressed early and often throughout a project.

Stages where market and business information is most critical:

Stage 2 - Scoping.

Use demographic data in grant proposals to define the population to be served and quantify a project's impact.

Stage 4 - Building Business Case.

Use competing product data to define product functionality and identify realistic price points.

Stage 7 - Production Planning.

Use test market data to create interest in licensing.

Profiling an industry segment is one way to explore the market potential of proposed products and services.

1) *Identify Industry Segment*

Select industry segment with the largest number of NIDRR funded grantees.

2) *Knowledge Value Mapping*

Interview manufacturing companies to determine their needs for new knowledge, absorptive capacity, and production capabilities.

3) *Conduct Secondary Market Research*

Compile information regarding:

- Market demographics
- Industry growth projections
- Competitive landscape
 - Available products and services
 - Ongoing and completed R&D
 - Provisional and accepted patents
- Legislation and reimbursement

4) *Produce and Distribute Industry Profiles*

Compile value mapping and secondary market research information into a comprehensive Industry Profile. Share via multi-media channels.

Industry Profiles have value to researchers, technology developers, and manufacturers:

- Learn the demographic characteristics of the populations your work intends to serve to better tailor your interventions and products to their context.
- Use market size and growth estimates to demonstrate the potential impact of your planned projects.
- Save time and effort by learning about currently available and emerging products and technologies.
- Review a snapshot of how current legislation impacts consumers' ability to buy products.

New to the upcoming profiles will be manufacturer information to help with your technology transfer efforts, including:

- Absorptive capacity for and interest in technology from outside sources.
- Manufacturing capabilities.

Between 2003 and 2009, the Rehab Engineering Research Center on Technology Transfer produced 3 profiles that are freely available today.

What's Next

Blindness and Low Vision (2003)

Educational Technologies (2006)

Wheeled Mobility (2009)

All Profiles Contain:

Impairment Descriptions and Causes
Demographics
Market Growth
Current and Emerging Technologies
Legislation
Funding Sources

TAKE ONE

Over the next 5 years, the KT4TT will conduct value mapping and create new Industry Profiles for three assistive technology industry segments.

- Currently exploring abstracts of 2013 NIDRR grantees.
 - Topic area likely to focus on cognition and memory.
- First profile to be completed in 2015.

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