Acquisition Opportunity: Tarasa


Business Description

Tarasa is a start-up, which is being developed at nolax, a Swiss incubator with a proven track record in medical products. The business idea of Tarasa is a novel patch that extracts tattoo pigments from the skin. The feasibility of the method has been demonstrated in two preliminary studies. A process patent has been granted. nolax is currently evaluating a potential sale of the patent and the know-how to a strategic buyer.

Tattooing went from a subculture to a mass phenomenon in the past decades. According to recent studies, 3 in 10 U.S. adults and 1 in 10 German adults are tattooed. With the rising numbers of tattoos, the numbers of those who regret their tattoos are also increasing. In the U.S., 23% of tattooed persons report having tattoo regret, and in Germany that proportion is 11% (GfK, 2014; Harris Interactive, 2016).

The removal methods used today are unsatisfactory from a client’s perspective. Laser removal, considered today as the gold standard, is inefficient, expensive, painful and associated with health concerns (Fritzemeier, 2007; Technavio, 2017; Serup, Hutton Carlsen & Sepehri, 2013). During the laser process, ink pigments are broken down into particles, and these remain permanently in the body (Bäumler, 2013; Sepehri et al., 2017). Chemical removal, a less established alternative, causes a wound that is associated with the risk of infection and scarring (Fritzemeier, 2007; Hoffmann, 2015; Kluger 2015). The Tarasa method allows the extraction of tattoo pigments from the skin in a safe, efficient, painless and cost-effective process.

Tattoo removal is a large and rapidly growing market. The total revenue of the global tattoo removal market was 1.37 billion dollars in 2016 and is expected to grow to 2.84 billion dollars by 2021 with a CAGR of 15.85% (Technavio, 2017). According to Tarasa’s management a revenue of 10 million dollars five years after market entry and a revenue of 100 million dollars ten years after market entry is realistic for the U.S. and the European markets.
A process patent (EP) was filed in August 2016, published in February 2018 and granted in March 2019 (Engel & Lang, EP3284505B1). This guarantees the exclusivity of Tarasa’s approach until 2036. Additionally, a PCT patent was filed in July 2017, enabling a worldwide protection.

The feasibility of Tarasa’s method has been tested and demonstrated. In two preliminary studies, a prototype of the patch was used on a piece of porcine skin that was tattooed before testing. Results showed that in all conditions, pigments could be extracted, and in some samples, even a significant amount was removed (Lehmann, Schuerch & Engel, 2017).

Historically, tattoo- and tattoo-removal-markets were not regulated by medical authorities. Many tattoo removal products on the market today are considered cosmetic products. It is expected, that reforms in the regulatory scenario will lead to the implementation of stringent rules to increase the patient’s safety (Blass Rico, 2013; FDA, 2017; Technavio, 2017).

Contact

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References


