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INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IN BLUEBEE

A STARTUP EXPERIENCE

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AGENDA

- ORIGIN AND ACTIVITIES
- IP AND AGREEMENTS
- INVESTOR INTERACTION
- GOING FORWARD
- CONCLUSIONS



ORIGIN AND ACTIVITIES

ABOUT BLUEBEE

WHAT ?

- Spinoff of the Delft University of Technology and Imperial College London
- Active at the crossroads of High Performance Computing and Genomics
- Offices in the Netherlands, Belgium and the USA



WHY ?

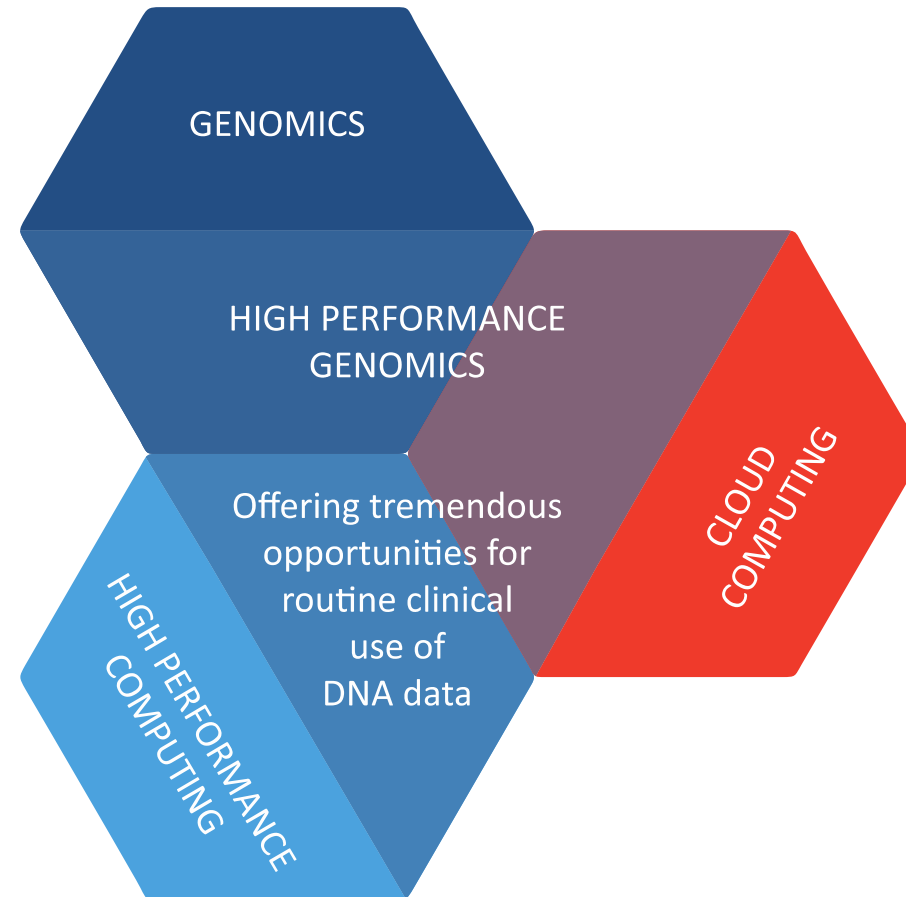
- Reduce cost and complexity of genomic analysis
- Provide the industry with a global, scalable and sustainable solution

HOW ?

- HPC + Cloud + Genomics = High Performance Genomics
- Combine ease of use with clinical grade data integrity, security and privacy

THE BLUEBEE GENOMICS PLATFORM

- Accelerated private cloud platform for genome data analysis
- A highly secured platform that
 - offers fast & affordable processing
 - provides full control for configuration
 - allows for managed sharing and collaboration
 - supports global roll-out and guarantees local data residency



SECURITY & COMPLIANCE



- Data is processed in high-security compute centers
 - Local data centers governed by local regulatory requirements
 - “Data Residency Control”: data will not leave the country or region.
- ISO 13485 certification for clinical bio-informatics pipelines (Medical Devices)
- Customer data segregation and encryption at all times (in flight and at rest)
- Bluebee does not access, use or share data or analyses with third parties



IP AND AGREEMENTS

BACKGROUND

- Strong academic background – as a spin-off from TU Delft and Imperial College
- Interest in publishing rather than on protecting IP
- Agreements on IP were considered only around the time of the founding
- Personal observations:
 - Gradual switch from “publishing” to “control and protect” – worked well
 - Involve early in discussions all parties (founders, university, etc.) – more opinions than expected
 - It is good to have limited period agreements (even if years) – we could not envision the evolution from the start and having a limited period gives opportunity for re-opening the discussion

AGREEMENTS

- TU Delft was included in company ownership
- Multiple agreements with TU Delft, will mention:
 - Initial agreement: what is included as (co)-ownership, and clear cut-off date for some of the on-going research that was co-developed
 - Framework to collaborate in future, for research of interest with clear obligations and responsibilities
- Personal observations
 - Due to the changing company direction a lot of provisions were never activated/used – normal (although it can be frustrating thinking back on the effort put into drafting the agreements)

IP IN BLUEBEE

- Lot of our IP is covered by copyright (might not apply to you!)
- Patents are always considered but they require a lot of investment (both in time and money) – for fast changing fields in which we operate (like IT and genomics), the patent cycle can mean you will get the patent on an “old” technology
- Personal observations:
 - Having good (professional) advisors to ask questions helps but the final decision on the strategy is should be internal (Do we patent ? What are benefits of a patent? Etc.)



INVESTOR INTERACTION

THE INVESTORS

- For the investment rounds (pre-seed, round A, etc.) we were required to have a clear list/assessment of the intellectual property owned by the company, and all the agreements in force
- Relevant topics for our case: publications, copyright, patents, IP agreements
- Personal observations:
 - Some effort needed to explain the IP/agreements due to the high level of technical details related to our IP
 - It is good to have a plan on how you will address/report/follow IP after an (potential) investment/on the medium term
 - Keeping people in the loop about IP is important (even though there might be few things to mention)

PATENTS

- It is important to have an overview of competition patents – freedom to operate study/analysis
- Many patent databases are available online, but innovation support companies can help with doing bulk work and providing summaries, based on guidance:
 - Advantages: professional service, can reduce the time spent on research and reporting
 - Disadvantages: costs money, there is risk some patents might be missed (nobody understands your business better than you)
- Personal observations:
 - It is important to have an overview/idea/plan, but always consider the stage of the company, resources are more scarce at first



GOING FORWARD (AND DAILY CHALLENGES)

DAILY CHALLENGES

- Keep new employees aware of the IP opportunities and issues
- Incentivize employees to contribute and be involved in the IP process
- Regular update on competition activities (patents & etc.)
- Balance media presence with keeping new features protected
- Keep shareholders/investors informed on developments – very important to have their support of your plans/for them to know the status

GLOBAL CHALLENGES

- Manage/keep track of the IP within the company (harder as well when growing beyond founders)
 - Various departments have different approaches/style of work
 - Hard to extract the IP and get people excited
- Keep track of what is IP within each region/country
 - Better work with professional services, each region has it's own particularities
 - We performed a selection from multiple companies – and picked something that suited us best (does not need to be extensive from the start)



CONCLUSIONS

BLUEBEE CONCLUSIONS

- Focus on the added value of the company
- Plan and follow up the plans depending on the environment
- Protect your intellectual property according to your situation
- Keep your options open, change is the only constant thing



THANK YOU !

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