

Faces of IP



GLOBAL
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
CENTER

Odersun AG

*One of Europe's hottest clean technology companies
and a leading innovator in solar cells*

FRANKFURT (ODER), GERMANY

Lead Innovator :	Olaf Tober, Chief Technology Officer & President
Employees:	90
Innovative Industry:	Green Technology

STORY

Between 1994 and 1998, researchers at the Institut für Solartechnologien (IST) in Frankfurt (Oder) developed an innovative semiconductor material for use in solar panels. For the first time, copper, instead of silicon, was used to produce a thin, low-weight tape for use in solar cells, modules, and applications that convert sunlight into electricity. The research, funded through both public and private grants, was patented, and a study was completed on the vast potential for commercialization of the intellectual property.

Olaf Tober and business partner Ramin Lavae Mokhtari, with the assistance of a state grant, founded solar cell manufacturer Odersun AG in 2002. After licensing the technology, Odersun's first commercial solar factory, Sun One, opened in April 2007. A second Odersun factory, Sun Two, went online in late 2008 and is expected to provide the region with up to 150 new jobs.

The low cost and flexible qualities of Odersun's copper tape application have changed the marketability of solar technology, enabling a shorter production process and lower manufacturing costs. The benefits of this innovation are being realized around the world. For example, Odersun partnered with a local Chinese company to power the Visitor's Center for the 2008 Olympic Games.

This innovative company can continue to develop critical technologies and offer cost-efficient alternatives to other renewable energy sources—but only if their intellectual property is protected.

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