24. Intellectual Property

The final chapter in the book examines matters relating to the intellectual property created and/or owned by a business. Given the value of the outputs from the intellectual creativity of persons (software programs, books, music recordings etc.), this chapter outlines the rights available to protect them and the consequences for infringement. It first identifies the law surrounding creative ideas and work (copyright) before a product’s appearance (design rights) is considered. The chapter continues by assessing the protection of a brand name and image (trademarks) and finishes the substantive issues through examination of inventive ideas and works (patents). Confusion of the public through the unlawful use of an existing business’ name or product can result in the tortious liability of ‘passing-off.’ The chapter concludes with an assessment of the intellectual property produced by employees and the consequences of employment status for the rights to exploit the property.