



## TIPSHEET

### *Term explanation*

*Where did the concept of the 'white paper' originate?*

White papers as such first appeared at the beginning of the 20th century in the form of official documents on complex political issues, particularly in relation to foreign policy. White papers on political issues are still widely used today. Their purpose is to make facts, background information and interrelationships comprehensible to the general public.

Since the 1970s, white papers have been published by the computer industry to describe technical innovations. Readers are offered benefits such as solutions to specific problems, information on a business strategy or useful expertise.

White papers are now routinely used by most of the hundred leading high-tech companies. They are seen as highly valuable and trustworthy publications. Indeed so trustworthy, that today they are even on the lists of references accompanying patent applications

Would you like to receive more information?

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