

Publications

Intellectual Property Alert: Notes from the USPTO and Patent Public Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting Part 4 of 8: IT Update

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The United States Patent and Trademark Office (the Office) and the Patent Public Advisory Committee (PPAC) recently held their Patent Public Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting to review policies, goals, performance, budget, and user fees. Topics addressed included 1) Update on Patents business units; 2) [Finance/Budget](#); 3) [IT update](#); 4) Artificial Intelligence; 5) International update; 6) Pendency and Quality; and 7) [PTAB update](#).

This is the fourth of eight alerts Vorys will be publishing to summarize topics discussed at the Quarterly Meeting. This alert summarizes the Office's comments on IT stabilization and modernization, as well as the status of Public PAIR/Private PAIR.

The Office has been a leader in information resource management since its inception as one of the first federal agencies in 1790. Patent and trademark applications, case files and results are retained forever. The Office records management dates back to Thomas Jefferson, who stored files in shoeboxes. Patents were filed in cabinets called "shoes" for more than two centuries, until electronic records replaced them in the 1990s.

From paper to electronic records, the Office addresses an important mission to stabilize its existing IT infrastructure through various strategies, such as maximizing the technical stability of and supportability for its products, integrating security into current and emerging technology and services, and maximizing the use of new technology solutions through data to solve business problems, for example.

In 2008, the Office created the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Road Map and Transformation Plan to respond to IT infrastructure issues that risked jeopardizing the Office's mission. The Office enforces a strict security protocol to ensure that only authorized personnel are able to access the data and the applications that they are authorized to view and use. The Office surveilles its network assistance year round under its C3 "Command, Control, and Communication"

system. The OCIO is implementing projects to: 1) simplify access to the Office systems while increasing the cybersecurity associated with that access; and 2) make the Office data more accessible and usable to internal and external users and the general public (e.g., a “Cloud Computing” initiative).

A multi-phased change management effort called the “IT Stabilization and Modernization Initiative” has been implemented and designed to achieve faster time-to-market product delivery and modernizes legacy infrastructure, while addressing the continuously changing threats on its cybersecurity defenses, technical and policy protection capabilities for IT systems.

The Office continues to provide data access through a combination of the [Bulk Data Storage System](#) and the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. PAIR content may be accessed via [Public PAIR](#) or [Private PAIR](#). The Office addressed the connectivity issues related to PAIR and a direct customer engagement has been implemented to verify effectiveness of remediation actions to that regard.

Further, during the migration of Public PAIR to the [Patent Examination Data System](#), Image File Wrapper (IFW) PDF images will be available via the [IFW PAIR Archives](#). As always, the USPTO also provides data via the [Global Dossier](#) and the [Open Data Developer Hub](#). Aware that the Global dossier system has not been as reliable as it should be, the Office is planning to remedy the issue by the FY2021. With its [Patent Center Beta](#) now in place, the Office has seen an increase in application filing numbers from 10 applications submitted via DocX to 240 new applications filed on its first week of opening.