

Internet tools providing professional support to the patent searcher

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This session will not examine (a) tools advertised on the Internet but not actually available there or (b) specific patent search sites or register sites. It will examine what you can achieve access to the Internet on your desktop, in order to become a more effective patent information specialist.

WHAT? - Comprehending content

Glossaries of patenting terms

It should always be borne in mind that the definitions used in any FAQ site will – sometimes without warning – carry connotations which are only relevant to the country of origin of the website constructor. Some examples:

http://www.patents.com/faq.htm	Oppedahl & Larson
http://www.patentcafe.com/	Patent Café (select 'Patent Terms Glossary')
http://www.intellectual-property.gov.uk/	FAQ site prepared by the UK Patent Office
http://www.patent.gov.uk/patent/glossary/index.htm	Glossary of terms from the UK Patent Office
http://www.derwent.co.uk/patentglossary/index.html	Derwent glossary of terms

Glossaries of technical/science terms

For the chemists and biochemists among us: Have you ever been running through a chemical patent and had a sudden mental block as to what the Paterno-Buchi reaction is? Or the Eschenmoser variant of the Claisen rearrangement? Or the Enzyme Commission number for acetylcholineesterase? General science sites abound on the Internet, and these are just a selection of the useful reference tools:

http://orgchem.chem.uconn.edu/namereact/named.html	University of Connecticut (Named Reaction list)
http://www.pmf.ukim.edu.mk/PMF/Chemistry/reactions/rindex.htm	University of Skopje, Macedonia (Reaction Index)
http://www.chem.qmw.ac.uk/iubmb/enzyme/	Queen Mary College, London - Enzyme nomenclature database
http://www.astro-med.com/knowledge/glossary1.html	Glossary of selected engineering terms
http://www.anth.org/ifgene/glossary.htm	International Forum for Genetic Engineering - Glossary of genetic engineering terms
http://www.stn-international.de/training_center/bioseq/bluff.pdf	"Bluff your way in Genetics"
http://www.boltscience.com/pages/glossary.htm	Glossary of terms related to nuts and bolts

Search tutorials and patent information basics

There are very few good sources on the overall field of patent information. Even fewer are on the Internet, or in up-to-date electronic form. Most of what there is has been prepared by the database producers or vendors, and inevitably reflect the viewpoint of just that organisation.

http://training.dialog.com/	Dialog training library
http://training.dialog.com/sem_info/courses/index.html	Dialog seminar material
http://www.stn-international.de/training_center/training.html	STN Karlsruhe training centre

http://www.cas.org/ONLINE/STN/doc.html	STN Columbus Resources page
http://www.questel.orbit.com/EN/Resource/index.htm	Questel-Orbit resource centre
http://www.apic.jiii.or.jp/facility/text.htm	Asia-Pacific Industrial Property Center (select "Text books and VTR")
http://www.european-patent-office.org/dg1/brochures/index_search_doc.htm	EPO publication "Search and Documentation at the EPO"
One very useful site, which at the time of writing is suspended, was the IPR Helpdesk funded by the EU Commission. The contract for the site has concluded and further funding is being sought, which will hopefully revive the content.	
http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org/	EU Commission IPR Helpdesk

Coding and indexing revealed

One caveat about some of these dictionary listings – they may not always give the full context of a code term. If in doubt, check further up the hierarchy before using terms located in this fashion.

http://www.derwent.com/dwpireference/classification/index.html	Derwent Class definitions
http://www.derwent.com/epi-codes/ (for EPI codes, search or browse) or http://www.derwent.com/dwpireference/index.html and select "Manual Coding and Classification Database" (for CPI code search definitions only)	Derwent Manual Code definitions
http://www.derwent.com/dwpireference/discover.html	Derwent Patentee Code lookup
http://www.ificlaims.com/searchaids_chemterms.html (subscription required)	IFI CLAIMS ® vocabularies
http://www.european-patent-office.org/inpadoc/statistics_dwld.htm (spreadsheet format for all countries) or http://www.european-patent-office.org/inpadoc/prs_description.htm (PDF format for EP, GB and DE only)	INPADOC legal status codes
http://www.european-patent-office.org/inpadoc/statistics_dwld.htm	INPADOC kind-of-document codes
http://l2.espacenet.com/espacenet/ecla/index/index.htm	ECLA listing
http://www.wipo.int/classifications/en/ipc/index.html	IPC 7 th edition
http://194.223.26.23/icn/main.asp	Free CAS RN search – select ECICS option

Machine translation of texts

Machine translation has its shortcomings, but there are some free services out there which help to some extent. Several apparently different sites in fact use the same translation engine, so you will get identical results. Many people know about Babelfish, which uses the Systran engine. Some others are:

http://www.systransoft.com/	Systran
http://www.reverso.net/textonly/default.asp	Reverso (allows input of text with diacritics)
http://www.freetranslation.com/	Free Translation (SDL International)
http://www.translate.ru/	PROject MT (allows Cyrillic input)

WHY? - Understanding how it works

Monitoring legal changes

If someone else is taking the time to summarise changes in the intellectual property scene, why do it yourself? One valuable source is the Office of the United States Trade Representative, which operates the so-called "Special 301" and "Super 301" systems under the Trade Act of 1974. In the course of monitoring trade conditions, they prepare a range of reports on the intellectual property regime of US trading partner nations, which are published:

http://www.ustr.gov/sectors/intellectual.shtml	US Trade Representative, IP Sector
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The WTO is becoming increasingly influential, and their publications in relation to the TRIPS Agreement are an important source of intelligence:

http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/trips_e/trips_e.htm	WTO, TRIPS sub-section
National patent offices are clearly a good place to monitor when concerned about changes in national laws, and some offices have special parts of their website set apart for news of this type. National governments also often have an advisory group which is able to produce summaries of current science topics for the benefit of legislators. Similarly, quasi-government organisations which administer certain conventions and treaties will have information about forthcoming changes in the field.	
http://www.patent.gov.uk/about/consultations/grace/index.htm	GB Patent Office, select “About Us”, then “Consultations”, then “Live written consultations” – consultation on grace periods in the UK.
http://www.parliament.uk/post/home.htm	UK Government Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) – see “Publications”
http://www.upov.int/eng/index.htm	International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV)
http://www.biodiv.org	Convention on Biological Diversity

Legal newsletters and periodicals / e-journals

http://ipcenter.bna.com/	Bureau of National Affairs (BNA Inc.) Intellectual Property News
http://www.ipww.com/index.html	Intellectual Property Worldwide (Magazine)
http://elj.warwick.ac.uk/Jilt/	Journal of Information, Law & Technology (JILT)
http://www.european-patent-office.org/epo/pubs/oj_index_e.htm	Official Journal of the EPO
http://www.wipla.com/index.html , then use the country index and select “studies” or “bibliographies”	WIPLA Ltd., London
http://www.agip.com/	Abu-Ghazaleh Intellectual Property (focus on Middle East)
http://www.adti.net/gw-intellprop.html	Alexis de Tocqueville Institution (focus on Latin America and FTAA issues)
http://www.cafezine.com/	Cafezine (general IP articles)
http://www.patentcafe.com/ipfrontline/	IP Frontline magazine
http://www.ipmall.fplc.edu/hosted_resources/tools_strategies.htm	IP Mall briefing papers
http://www.wipo.org/pct/en/welcome.html , then select “Newsletter” or from home page http://www.wipo.org , select “Activities & Services”, then “PCT System”	PCT Newsletter

Reading lists

The WIPO Guide to Intellectual Property Worldwide is a useful reference book with brief country profiles, including basic information such as the patent office address, the current law in force for each IP right, and sample statistics. It is available as a paper directory and also on the WIPO website. A fascinating broad introduction to the history and development of IP is found in a companion volume, WIPO’s “Intellectual Property Reading Material”, now also on their website.

http://www.wipo.org/about-ip/en/ipworldwide/index.html	Guide to Intellectual Property Worldwide
http://www.wipo.org/about-ip/en/iprm/index.htm	Intellectual Property Reading Material

Treaty and other legal texts

There are a few collections of patent laws. One of the biggest is WIPO's CLEA project, which tries to obtain an English language text wherever possible, but you will need Java enabled in order to use the system to its full extent:

http://clea.wipo.int	Collection of Laws for Electronic Access
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Other sites worth a visit are :

http://www.vagn.dk/patent/patentlaw.html	Vagn Nissen (link collection)
http://www.rechten.unimaas.nl/spinoza/	The Spinoza project (University of Maastricht)
http://www.jus.uio.no/lm/intellectual.property/toc.html	Lex Mercatoria (University of Oslo)
http://www.intelproplaw.com/	Intellectual Property Law Server (iKnight Technologies Inc.)
http://www.bl.uk/services/information/patents/othlink3.html	The British Library (section 2 of a very extensive links collection)
http://www.ipmenu.com/	IPMenu (Phillips, Ormonde & Fitzpatrick) – select 'IP Legal resources'
http://www.mayallj.freereserve.co.uk/index.htm	Mayall's IP Links (select 'Patent Laws')
http://www.european-patent-office.org/legal/national/index.htm	EPO publication "National Law relating to the EPC"

A very important site for access to European Union material is the Europa site. Part of this is the SCAD-Plus service, which includes a directory of in-force EU legislation on all aspects of IPR:

http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/s06020.htm	SCAD-Plus
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WHEN? - Time-related events

Year – number and year – series concordances

A frequent question asked on the list-server is "I have this patent number – can you tell me when it was published?" There are a few lists available, but they only cover a small number of countries, such as the US and the United Kingdom. Paper concordances do exist for other countries, but they do not appear to have made in onto the Internet yet:

http://www.bl.uk/services/information/patents/history.html	Publication number ranges (GB) (historical)
http://www.patent.gov.uk/patent/history/oldnumbers/after1979.htm	Publication number ranges (GB) (recent)
http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/ac/ido/oeip/taf/issuyear.htm	Publication number ranges (US)
http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/ac/ido/oeip/taf/filingyr.htm	Application series ranges (US)

In addition to collated concordances (which are rare), it is possible to obtain some idea of which number ranges were published in which year by consulting the official gazette of the national patent office concerned. This may be only available in PDF, but can nonetheless be a useful source. The Bulgarian Patent Office is one example:

http://www.bpo.bg/	Select the English-language portion, then go to "Publications" and "Patent Abstracts of Bulgaria" for a number listing.
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Country coverage by year listings

Many databases start their coverage of patents at different points in time for different countries. Good retrieval requires that you be aware of these inconsistencies across sources. Some information on the main databases:

http://www.derwent.com/dwpi/updates/dwpicov/countcpi.html	Derwent CPI country coverage
http://www.derwent.com/dwpi/updates/dwpicov/countepi.html	Derwent EPI country coverage
http://www.questel.orbit.com/EN/Userdoc/pluspat.htm	Select "Fact Sheet" in PDF, then go to p.2

http://www.cas.org/ONLINE/UG/patentmanual.pdf	CAS patent coverage manual – see especially Appendix I
http://gb.espacenet.com/espacenet/gb/en/help/15350.htm	Esp@cenet coverage (Worldwide database)

For INPADOC, see the statistics under the heading “**Database coverage lists and spreadsheets**” below.

Treaty ratification dates

Many of the key IP treaties are administered by WIPO, which is a primary source for current lists of ratification dates.

http://www.wipo.org/treaties/index.html	Direct URL – or from home page, select “About WIPO”, then “Treaties and Contracting Parties”
http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/org6_e.htm	WTO list of members and accession dates
http://www.european-patent-office.org/epo/members.htm	List of EPO members (current only)

Database-specific timeliness data

http://www.european-patent-office.org/inpadoc/news/index.htm	INPADOC Newsletters
http://www.derwent.com/dwpi/updates/dwpicov/	WPI update listings

Time trend tools

Patent office annual reports are a gold-mine of information, often including recent and/or historical statistics on patent filing trends. Many now include summaries in English. Examples include:

http://www.dpma.de/veroeffentlichungen/jahresbericht00/jb2000.pdf	German Patent Office annual report
http://www.patent.gov.uk/about/reports/index.htm	UK Patent Office annual report
http://www.european-patent-office.org/epo/an_rep/index.htm	EPO Annual report
http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/annual/index.html	USPTO Annual report
http://www.jpo.go.jp/tousie/1304-030.htm	JPO Annual report

In addition to retrieving basic statistics, some information providers are offering dynamic tools to analyse output from patent searches. None of these tools is entirely free and web-based; most are part of a subscription to a wider service such as Delphion or the DOLPHIN service (Current Patents, using services from Aurigin). Some of their websites provide a quick tour or facility to download an evaluation copy of the software, but you may need to register.

http://www.bizcharts.com/	BizInt Solutions Smart Charts for Patents
http://www.invention-machine.com/	Invention Machine / CoBrain
http://www.TheVantagePoint.com/	Vantage Point data mining (Search Technology Inc.)
http://www.semio.com/	Semio Corporation

HOW? - Technical aids

Web search aids – local help files

The built-in help files for many of the web-based search tools can be fairly well hidden. Some examples are:

http://ep.espacenet.com	Three distinct points for retrieving help, all JavaScript driven
http://www.depatisnet.de	DepatisNet – select “Help” from top menu
http://www.ipdl.jpo.go.jp/homepg_e.ipdl	JPO IPDL service – select service, then “Help” button at top

http://www.uspto.gov/patft/help.htm or http://appft1.uspto.gov/netahtml/PTO/help/help.html	USPTO help pages for patent search (grants or applications)
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Database producer news

http://www.jpo.go.jp/infoe/benrisie.htm	PAJ Newsletter in PDF format (from JPO homepage, select "Patent Abstracts of Japan News" under "Announcements, Notices")
http://www.european-patent-office.org/news/epidosnews/index_epidos.htm	EPIDOS News (in PDF format)
http://www.ificlaims.com/patent_news.html	IFI Patent News
http://www.micropat.com	MicroPatent News

Image handling software

Since patent offices started producing one-per-page downloads, the private sector has been writing image handling software to automate the process. These are not strictly speaking web-based tools, rather they are utilities available over the web which you can download and install to your PC.

http://www.imageapps.co.uk/	PatSee (Image Applications)
http://www.netian.com/~patmate http://member.nifty.ne.jp/sissy/	PatMate (broken link?) DIP-J (broken link?)
http://www.aurora.dti.ne.jp/~ujihara/GetIPDL/English/ http://www.patentorder.com/	GetIPDL PatentOrder

File merge and comparison utilities

There are many shareware utilities available on the web which are principally designed for software developers. Some of them can be used to compare two flat text files and highlight the differences between them. There is no reason in principal why you cannot use these tools to compare patent related material. An obvious application would be to compare the claims of an A and a corresponding B document, to indicate what had happened during examination.

http://www.araxis.com/	Araxis Merge file comparison software
http://fcu.smibe.com/	FCU File Compare Utility
http://www.grigsoft.com/	Compare It! Grig Software

WHERE? - Location

Country code listings

The basic list of 2-letter country codes used in patents is defined in WIPO standard no. ST.3, which is itself derived from the international standard ISO 3166. The latter standard includes codes for some geographical and political entities which do not grant patents, and conversely ST.3 includes a few codes which do not occur in ISO 3166, for specialised patent-granting authorities which are not countries. However, for many practical purposes, the two lists are identical. Since ISO 3166 is also used to allocate country coded top-level domains (ccTLD's) on the Internet, there are many unofficial listings of the standard available.

http://www.hcc.hawaii.edu/bdgtti/bdgtti-1.02_24.html	Honolulu Community College, Big Dummies Guide to the Internet
http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/	CIA World Factbook: select Appendix D (Cross-Reference List of Country Data Codes)
http://www.wipo.org/scit/en/standards/pdf/st_3.pdf	WIPO ST.3 official text (sorted by country name and by code)

Database coverage lists and spreadsheets

http://www.stn-international.de/training_center/patents/patente/kindcodes/kindcode.html	STN Kind Code comparison sheet
http://www.questel.orbit.com/EN/Userdoc/pluspat.htm	PlusPat publication stage concordance list
http://www.european-patent-office.org/inpadoc/statistics_dwld.htm	Select "Contents and coverage of the PFS file" in XLS format

Document suppliers

The conventional online hosts and web-based database suppliers now usually have a document delivery option linked to their files. Some of the following may help to locate more exotic documents

http://www.direct-patent.nl	Direct Patent, NL
http://www.leeds.gov.uk/library/services/patents.html	Leeds Library, UK
http://www.fiz-karlsruhe.de/autodoc/	AutoDoc (via FIZ Karlsruhe, DE)

WHO? - People and organisations

Corporate structure unravelled

The addition of the Patentee Code listing as a searchable database on the Derwent website provides a quick and dirty access to a limited amount of company structure and subsidiary information:

http://www.derwent.com/dwpireference/discover.html	WPI Patentee codes
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A useful starting point when trying to understand the structure of a company can be the company's own website. This is likely to include press releases about corporate restructuring, and can include material about the current and/or historical form of the organisation. Two examples:

http://www.wyeth.com	Wyeth company website – see "press releases"
http://www.kodak.com	Select "About Kodak"

Understanding business structures

In the course of retrieving patent documents, we often see unfamiliar abbreviations for company structures, such as GmbH, SpA or B.V. It may be important to us to understand what this says about the status of the applicant. One useful consolidated list can be found at :

http://www.corporateinformation.com/definitions.html	Corporate Information (Winthrop Corporation)
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The paper version of Derwent's Patentee Code List also included useful definitions in Appendices 3 and 5 – sadly not included in the website lookup facility.

Finding an attorney

Most patent granting authorities still require an applicant to appoint a local representative. There are several impressive listings of worldwide patent attorney practices:

http://www.piperpat.co.nz/resource/world.html	Pipers Patent and Trade Mark Attorneys
http://www.ficpi.org/ficpi/	Fédération Internationale des Conseils en Propriété Industrielle (FICPI)

For locating an attorney registered to practice before specific jurisdictions, there may be searchable databases at the corresponding patent-granting organisation, or the national attorney institute

http://www.european-patent-office.org/repes/search.html	EPO
http://www.cipa.org.uk/who_are_we/patentsearch.cfm	CIPA – The Chartered Institute of Patent Agents (GB)

http://www.patentanwaelte.de/	Patentanwaltskammer (DE) – select ‘Patentanwalts-verzeichnis’
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If you really want to know what your attorney is up to, various of the legal texts are available

http://www.patent.gov.uk/patent/reference/mpp/	UK Manual of Patent Practice
http://patents.ame.nd.edu/mpep/mpep.html	US Manual of Patent Examining Procedure
http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/mpep/mpep.htm	US Manual of Patent Examining Procedure
http://www.wipo.int/pct/guide/en/index.html	PCT Applicants Guide (in HTML and PDF formats)

Profession groupings and communication

There are a number of professional groupings which provide for the patents information professional. The best-established are the PIUG, the PATMG (GB -based), the WON (NL-based). Other groups exist in Germany and France, but are mainly liaison between searchers and the national patent office, and do not get involved in (e.g.) links with commercial database producers. As many of you will know, the PIUG list-server is an extremely active and useful forum in which to obtain advice.

http://www.piug.org	PIUG
http://www.patmg.org.uk	PATMG
http://www.won-nl.org	WON

Other list-servers and newsgroups are more set up to meet the needs of the librarian or attorney community, but can still produce useful material for the searcher.

Newsgroup misc.int-property	
List server intprop-l	Run by Axel Horns, DE attorney (mail to Horns@t-online.de)
EPO list server	See http://www.european-patent-office.org/mail.htm for instructions on joining
Intipdiscussion group	See http://groups.yahoo.com/group/intipdiscussion for instructions on joining
IP Librarians discussion group	See http://groups.yahoo.com/group/IPLibrarians for instructions on joining

PIUG mission statement

http://www.comics.com/comics/dilbert/games/career/bin/ms.cgi	Dilbert’s mission statement generator
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