

## **Q&A with John Owens, Chief Information Officer, United States Patent and Trademark Office**

**PTRC 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar, Tuesday, March 27, 2012**

### **John Owens' Opening Statements:**

- The America Invents Act Road Show was a great event;
- Fee charges are up; additional income over \$3,000,000;
- Have spoken to Director Kappos about issuing laptops to PTRCs, but funding was down so they could not issue them this year; he thinks they should be able to issue them next fiscal year starting in October.

### **Questions from Marian Armour-Gemmen, Morgantown, West Virginia:**

1) Various libraries have issues with PubWEST. Since PubWEST is the premier database, it is important that all PTRCs have easy access to this important resource.

- 1) Our first issue is the proxy server setup in Internet Explorer.
- 2) Only some versions of Internet Explorer are compatible with PubWEST
- 3) Our third issue is with the Prizm software

Conflicts with QuickTime; newer versions are available.

2) During our 2011 Roundtable with Director Kappos, he mentioned the possibility of the PTRCs receiving laptops to access PubEAST

- 1) Is this still an option you are considering?
- 2) If not, will we have other alternatives to access PubEAST?
- 3) What is the time line?

### **John Owens' responses:**

- PubWest is a Legacy system which is no longer in development; we are more focused on Patents End-to-End, which will replace EAST. Patents End-to-End is a very large system, a completely separate application based on the needs of our examiners, with searching being only one component. Examiners will have it next year and what format it will be available to public is still to be determined.
- We will not change the security settings for PubWEST, as it's my job to protect the agency. Work through the team at PTRC office regarding the security issues. Also, may be using Chrome instead of IE in the future.
- Patents in PNG format will be replacing TIFFs in the next year.
- I encourage you all to provide comments on new public user interface that's being testing.

- We cannot open up East to general public because of licensing issues. (He again talked about the laptops and getting us access to EAST starting in October.)

**Question from Dave Morrison, Salt Lake City, Utah:**

- Is there any chance of getting the U.S. backfile of pre-1976 patents – about 4.1 million U.S. patents –scanned and OCRed, or at least have the front pages (bibliographic data) from them made field-searchable? These have still not been recaptured or migrated to full-text, with fielded bibliographic information that may be searched, sorted, and studied.

**John Owens' responses:**

- Despite the considerable USPTO budget, funding for new projects is strictly weighed. From 76-80% of all fees received by the USPTO go to salaries for the people who work there. The next largest chunk of fees is for the facilities (buildings), and the final amount for information systems. As a result there are a number of information projects that are still waiting implementation during any given FY.
- It is on the list, but its way down there on it. We also have the patents collected from Germany that they need to work on. I will get to it when we can. XML based text not a good plan. The text on old patents is very challenging task, varied scripts and some hand-written.
- Because of AIA they will have to get it done in US. They have used prisoners for such data-entry projects in the past.

**Question from Jim Miller, College Park, Maryland:**

- Any chance of getting the 600,000 dead trademarks that are viewable as PDF in USPTO's site, but are NOT searchable by anything other than serial numbers—and even those you have to know what series code to put in front of them—scanned and available in TDR? Tool historian Russ Allen has scanned OCR text from the PDFs on Google, and he sent me samples that ARE searchable - maybe 10 - 20 percent of the original text. Not perfect, but FAR better than what we have now.

**John Owens' responses:**

- I was not aware of the dead trademark backfile. I will look into it but that will also be low on the list like the patent backfile.