

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
Customer Input – Patent and Trademark Customer Surveys
OMB Control Number 0651-0038
(April 2010)

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Necessity of Information Collection

This is a generic clearance for an undefined number of voluntary telephone and customer surveys and questionnaires that the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) may conduct over the next three years. These telephone and customer surveys and questionnaires are designed to obtain customer feedback regarding the products, services, and related service standards of the USPTO. The USPTO obtains feedback from corporations/businesses, law firms, educational institutions, and independent inventors.

There are no statutes or regulations requiring the USPTO to conduct these customer surveys. These voluntary surveys also support various business goals developed by the USPTO to fulfill customer service and performance goals, to assist the USPTO in strategic planning for future initiatives, to verify existing service standards, and to establish new ones. The USPTO uses these surveys to implement Executive Order 12862 of September 11, 1993, *Setting Customer Service Standards*, published in the *Federal Register* on September 14, 1993 (Volume 58, Number 176).

The USPTO cannot predict with certainty whether all of the survey methods discussed in this generic clearance will be used to gather customer feedback or how many of them will be conducted during the next three years. However, based on previous experience, the USPTO feels that the telephone and customer surveys and the questionnaires are the most likely types of surveys that will be conducted. Although the USPTO is uncertain of the number of surveys that will be conducted; the agency believes that the vast majority of surveys conducted over the next three years will be simple customer service types of surveys with similar methodologies. Because of this uncertainty and the fact that the majority of the surveys will be similar, the USPTO is requesting a generic clearance from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to cover the various types of surveys that may be conducted.

A brief description of the expected methodology for the telephone and customer surveys and the questionnaires will be provided under **Section B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods**. Please note that these descriptions are proposed examples of these surveys, based on the USPTO's experience in conducting various surveys. When the USPTO decides to conduct a survey and determines which survey vehicle will be used, the full methodology and the actual survey vehicle will be submitted to OMB for review and approval following the guidelines for generic clearances.

2. Needs and Uses

The information obtained from these telephone and customer surveys and the questionnaires will be used by the USPTO for strategic planning, allocation of resources, the establishment of performance goals, and the verification and establishment of service standards. Additionally, the USPTO will use the data from these surveys to assess customer satisfaction with the agency's products and surveys, to assess customer priorities in service characteristics, and to identify areas where service levels differ from customer expectations.

The Information Quality Guidelines from Section 515 of Public Law 106-554, Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001, apply to this information collection and comply with all applicable information quality guidelines, i.e., OMB and specific operating unit guidelines.

This proposed collection of information will result in information that will be collected, maintained, and used in a way consistent with all applicable OMB and USPTO Information Quality Guidelines. (See Ref. A, the *USPTO Information Quality Guidelines*.)

Table 1 outlines how these collections of information are used by the public and the USPTO.

Table 1: Needs and Uses of Information Collected from the Customer Input – Patent and Trademark Customer Surveys

Form and Function	Form #	Needs and Uses
Telephone Surveys	No Form Associated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Permits the customer to provide comments directly to the interviewer.• Permits the USPTO to interview the customer or attorney who handled a particular case or experienced the service in order to obtain direct impressions or comments.• Use of the telephone interview may increase response rates from the customer.
Questionnaires and Customer Surveys (Paper and Electronic)	No Form Associated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides a forum for customers to express opinions anonymously and quickly.• Allows the USPTO to survey seminar and exhibition attendees, and users of the search facilities, patent and trademark assistance centers, and other services.• Provides the USPTO with a greater opportunity for collecting responses from the customer before they leave the site.• Provides the USPTO with a smaller subset of survey questions directed towards specific items and operations within the USPTO.

3. Use of Information Technology

The USPTO does use automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques to conduct the surveys covered in this generic clearance. The telephone surveys are conducted verbally over the telephone with the use of scripts which ensure that every respondent is asked the same question in the same manner. For the questionnaires and the customer surveys, the USPTO provides respondents

with the option of either completing the survey in paper and mailing or handing in the survey to the USPTO or providing their survey responses electronically using a web-based survey instrument.

For the questionnaires and customer surveys that are mailed to the respondents, the USPTO mails the survey package containing the survey, a cover letter, and a self-addressed and stamped envelope to the respondents in the sample. The cover letter contains all of the instructions needed for the survey. In some cases, the questionnaires and customer surveys are handed out to the individuals. In these cases, the surveys are either handed back to USPTO personnel or deposited in drop-boxes.

For many of the customer surveys, the USPTO is also providing respondents with the option to respond electronically using a web-based survey instrument. The online surveys will mirror those in the paper format and will be available through the Internet. In order to keep the respondent's answers to the survey secure, the USPTO will assign each respondent a unique password and a unique user ID. In those cases where the confidentiality and security of the responses is critical, the electronic survey instrument will be hosted on a secure server. The unique password and user ID, the URL for the survey, and instructions for accessing and completing the web-based survey will be included in all of the correspondence that accompanies the paper-based surveys. Respondents who choose to complete the survey electronically are requested to discard the paper version of the survey so that it is not inadvertently submitted to the USPTO.

Although the USPTO does not believe that it is likely that online surveys will be used exclusively to collect responses to surveys, the USPTO may be able to conduct some surveys entirely over the Internet, as long as e-mail addresses are available for the entire sample. For these surveys, the respondents will receive an e-mail message announcing that the survey is being conducted. This e-mail will also contain a direct link to the web-based survey instrument, with instructions for accessing and completing the web-based survey and instructions for obtaining a paper-based survey and postage-paid return envelope from the USPTO.

While the USPTO is moving to an electronic environment and would prefer to administer the survey only via the web to coincide with other e-government initiatives, USPTO customers have expressed a desire for such surveys to also be made available in paper format. The reason for this is that the majority of USPTO customers are attorneys with significant demands on their time. Pilot tests and previous survey comments have indicated that the only time customers find to complete the surveys are during their commute, on planes, etc., where they do not have Internet access. The paper survey instrument is being used to accommodate all survey respondents and enhance response rates.

Based on customer preferences, the fact that the USPTO does not have e-mail addresses for the majority of its customers, and due to Section 508 compliance requirements, the USPTO does not believe that the online surveys will replace the

paper surveys, but rather that the online surveys will be used in conjunction with the paper surveys.

The USPTO may make some of the information obtained through the customer surveys available to the public on the USPTO website, although the identity of the respondent will be kept confidential. For example, for a survey that the USPTO released to both patent and trademark customers, the USPTO posted a letter from the Director on the USPTO website which discussed the findings from the surveys. In most instances, when applicable, the USPTO will share summarized survey findings directly with respondents that participated in the survey through direct mailings.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

There are no currently available methods to gather the types of information proposed by these surveys directly from our customers. The survey questions relate specifically to the USPTO's products, services, and related service standards. Consequently, the information is generally not available from other sources. The USPTO's philosophy is to avoid duplication. Therefore, no duplication of effort is imposed on respondents for these proposed surveys.

5. Minimizing the Burden to Small Entities

In an effort to minimize burden, sample sizes are kept small and the number of questions are limited to the minimum required to obtain useful information. All sizes of businesses and individual customers will participate in these various surveys to accurately portray customer requirements and service quality. It is important to include small businesses in these surveys because the USPTO wants to encourage their use of the patent and trademark systems.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

The information collected from these various surveys is needed for annual planning and resource allocation. Timely, valid information on customer requirements and assessment of the USPTO's performance is needed to establish program priorities and performance goals. Information collected less frequently could prevent the USPTO from responding to customer concerns in a timely manner.

7. Special Circumstances in the Conduct of Information Collection

There are no special circumstances associated with this collection of information.

8. Consultation Outside the Agency

The 60-Day Federal Register Notice was published on October 26, 2009 (74 Fed Reg. 54955). The public comment period ended on December 28, 2009. No comments from the public were received.

There have been no comments received from the corporations/businesses, law firms, educational institutions, and independent inventors frequently interviewed through these types of surveys concerning the time required to provide the information requested in the telephone and customer surveys and the questionnaires.

Once the surveys are developed, they will be tested with the representative customer groups relating to the specific topic of the survey.

Due to the relatively simple nature of these surveys, consultation outside of the agency is not expected. For significant efforts that do require outside consultation, we expect that the scope of the study would fall outside of this generic clearance and a separate clearance package would be required.

9. Payment or Gifts to Respondents

This information collection does not involve a payment or gift to any respondent. All of these surveys are voluntary, so respondents are not required to answer the questions.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

Responses will be confidential and will be used to compile summary statistical reports only. Assurances will be included on each survey form and in the cover letter, if one is provided. Responses will be destroyed following statistical analysis of the data. These surveys are voluntary and are not mandated by law. For the web-based surveys that are available through the Internet, unique passwords and user IDs are assigned to each respondent. In cases where the confidentiality and security of the responses is critical, the online survey will be hosted on a secure server.

All surveys that will be conducted under this generic clearance will be protected under the "Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002."

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

None of the required information in this collection is considered to be of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimate of Hour and Cost Burden to Respondents

The USPTO expects to conduct telephone and customer surveys and questionnaires over the next three years to collect customer comments. Respondents can mail the questionnaires and customer surveys to the USPTO or they can respond to them electronically. The exact number of different surveys, the length of each survey, and the number of respondents per survey is unknown at this time. The USPTO estimates that 400 surveys will be conducted over the telephone annually. The USPTO also estimates that 1,500 questionnaires and customer surveys will be completed annually, with half submitted in paper and the other half submitted electronically. The number of

annual burden hours requested (356) is based on the number of surveys the agency estimates will be conducted during a one-year period. Based on previous experience, the agency believes that this is a reasonable ceiling.

Table 2 calculates the anticipated burden hours and costs of this information collection to the public, based on the following calculation factors:

- **Respondent Calculation Factors**

Based on previous survey experience and projections of surveys that may be conducted during the next three years, the USPTO estimates that it will receive the following number of responses to these various types of surveys:

- 400 responses to telephone surveys
- 750 responses to paper questionnaires and customer surveys
- 750 responses to electronic questionnaires and customer surveys

- **Burden Hour Calculation Factors**

Based on results from testing the various types of surveys with the representative customer groups and with internal test groups, the USPTO estimates that it will take the public 15 minutes (0.25 hours) to complete the telephone surveys and 10 minutes (0.17 hours) to complete the questionnaires and customer surveys, whether they are completed on paper and mailed to the USPTO or completed electronically. This includes the time to gather the necessary information, respond to the survey, and submit it to the USPTO.

- **Cost Burden Calculation Factors**

The USPTO believes that both professionals and paraprofessionals will complete these surveys, at a rate of 75% of the current professional rate of \$325 per hour and 25% of the para-professional rate of \$100 per hour. The professional hourly rate used for the calculation is the median rate for attorneys in private firms as published in the 2009 report of the Committee on Economics of Legal Practice of the American Intellectual Property Law Association. This report summarized the results of a survey with data on hourly billing rates. The para-professional hourly rate comes from the 2008 National Utilization and Compensation Survey, published in March 2008 by the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA). The hourly rate for professionals, calculating 75% of \$325, totals \$244, while the hourly rate for the para-professionals, calculating 25% of \$100, totals \$25, for a combined hourly rate of \$269. The USPTO estimates that the respondent cost burden for this collection will be \$95,764 per year. These are fully loaded rates.

Table 2: Burden Hour/Burden Cost to Respondents

Item	Hours (a)	Responses (yr) (b)	Burden (hrs/yr) (c) (a) x (b)	Rate (\$/hr) (d)	Total Cost (\$/yr) (e) (c) x (d)
Telephone Surveys	0.25	400	100	\$269.00	\$26,900.00
Questionnaires and Customer Surveys (paper)	0.17	750	128	\$269.00	\$34,432.00
Electronic Questionnaires and Customer Surveys	0.17	750	128	\$269.00	\$34,432.00
Total	- - - -	1,900	356	- - - -	\$95,764.00

13. Total Annualized Cost Burden

There are no capital start-up, maintenance, operation, or recordkeeping costs associated with these various surveys. There are no filing fees associated with this information collection. Although the USPTO conducts mail surveys, the USPTO provides self-addressed and stamped envelopes for them. Respondents incur no postage costs resulting from these surveys.

14. Annual Cost to the Federal Government

The USPTO uses a variety of methods for conducting their customer satisfaction surveys. The surveys are conducted and processed by USPTO personnel. Processing costs for the surveys can vary widely depending on the methodology selected for the survey and the size of the population being surveyed.

The USPTO believes that it will take two staff members to handle all of the tasks associated with a single survey response. Staff members at a GS-7, step 1 level process survey correspondence, perform the data entry tasks (or collects the data in response to a telephone interview), and perform the survey completion administration. Staff members at a GS-13, step 1 level prepare the sampling plans, develop the survey instrument, analyze and summarize the data, and prepare reports concerning the survey findings.

In order to determine the hourly labor rate for this collection, the USPTO multiplied the hourly labor rate for the GS rating that performs the task by the total number of minutes that are allocated to that staff position to complete the task at hand. Then 30% is added to that total to account for a fully loaded hourly rate (benefits and overhead). This adjusted hourly rate is used to calculate the USPTO's total costs for conducting and processing these surveys. It is this adjusted hourly rate that is multiplied by the actual amount of time that it takes USPTO employees to process each survey response to obtain the total burden hours. Further details are provided below.

For the telephone surveys, the USPTO estimates that it takes a total of 22 minutes (0.37 hours) to process them. Out of this 22 minutes, the USPTO estimates that it takes a GS-7, step 1, approximately 12 minutes (0.20 hours) to perform their tasks and a GS-13, step 1 10 minutes (0.17 hours) to perform their tasks. The hourly rate for a GS-7, step 1 is \$20.22 and the hourly rate for a GS-13, step 1 is \$42.66. When 30% is added to both of these hourly rates to account for a fully loaded hourly rate (benefits and overhead), the combined cost per hour for the GS-7, step 1 and GS-13, step 1 is \$26.29 ($\$20.22 + \$6.07 = \26.29) and \$55.46 ($\$42.66 + \$12.80 = \55.46), respectively. When the fully loaded rate of \$26.29 for the GS-7 is multiplied by 12 minutes (0.20 hours), the USPTO estimates that the adjusted hourly rate for a GS-7, step 1 to perform their survey tasks is \$5.26. When the fully loaded rate of \$55.46 for the GS-13, step 1 is multiplied by 10 minutes (0.17 hours), the USPTO estimates that the adjusted hourly rate for a GS-13 to perform their survey tasks is \$9.43. Therefore, the USPTO

estimates the combined fully loaded hourly rate for USPTO staff members to process the telephone surveys is \$14.69.

For the mail questionnaires and customer surveys, the USPTO estimates that it takes a total of 17 minutes (0.28 hours) to process them. Out of this 17 minutes, the USPTO estimates that it takes a GS-7, step 1, approximately 7 minutes (0.12 hours) to perform their survey tasks and a GS-13, step 1 10 minutes (0.17 hours) to complete their survey tasks. The fully loaded hourly rates for the GS-7, step 1 and GS-13, step 1 are \$26.29 and \$55.46, respectively. When the fully loaded rate for the GS-7 is multiplied by 7 minutes (0.12 hours), the USPTO estimates that the adjusted hourly rate for a GS-7 to perform their survey tasks is \$3.15. When the fully loaded rate for the GS-13 is multiplied by 10 minutes (0.17 hours), the USPTO estimates that the adjusted hourly rate for a GS-13 to perform their survey tasks is \$9.43. Therefore, the USPTO estimates the combined fully loaded hourly rate for USPTO staff to process the mail questionnaires and customer surveys is \$12.58.

For the electronic questionnaires and customer surveys, the USPTO estimates that it takes a total of 13 minutes (0.22 hours) to process them. Out of this 13 minutes, the USPTO estimates that it takes a GS-7, step 1, approximately 3 minutes (0.05 hours) to complete their survey tasks, and a GS-13, step 1 10 minutes (0.17 hours) to perform their survey tasks. The fully loaded hourly rates for the GS-7, step 1 and GS-13, step 1 are \$26.29 and \$55.46, respectively. When the fully loaded rate of \$26.29 is multiplied by 3 minutes (0.05 hours), the USPTO estimates that the adjusted hourly rate for a GS-7, step 1 to perform their survey tasks is \$1.31. When the fully loaded rate of \$55.46 is multiplied by 10 minutes (0.17 hours), the USPTO estimates that the adjusted hourly rate for a GS-13, step 1 to perform their survey tasks is \$9.43. Therefore, the USPTO estimates the combined fully loaded hourly rate for USPTO staff to process the electronic questionnaires and customer surveys is \$10.74.

Table 4 calculates the processing hours and costs of this information collection to the Federal Government:

Table 4: Burden Hour/Burden Cost to the Federal Government

Item	Hours (a)	Responses (yr) (b)	Burden (hrs/yr) (c) (a) x (b)	Rate (\$/hr) (d)	Total Cost (\$/hr) (e) (c) x (d)
Telephone Surveys	0.37	400	148	\$14.69	\$2,174.00
Questionnaires and Customer Surveys – Mail	0.28	750	210	\$12.58	\$2,642.00
Questionnaires and Customer Surveys – Electronic	0.22	750	165	\$10.74	\$1,772.00
Total	-----	1,900	523	-----	\$6,588.00

Note: The USPTO processing costs estimated for this renewal are substantially reduced from those in the currently approved collection. Previously, the processing costs were estimated at \$36,574. For this renewal, the processing costs are estimated

at \$6,588, which is a reduction of \$29,986 over the previous estimates. In part, this reduction is due to the USPTO reverting to previous estimates for the electronic questionnaires and customer surveys before the burden hours were increased to accommodate the USPTO Electronic Business Center (EBC) Satisfaction Measurement Survey and the 2008 e-Commerce Satisfaction Measurement Survey. But the main impact on the processing costs is from reestimated internal processing times for the surveys.

In the previous submission, the USPTO estimated that it would take internal staff 40 minutes to process the telephone surveys, 25 minutes to process the mail questionnaires and customer surveys, and 23 minutes to process the electronic questionnaires and customer surveys. The USPTO now estimates that it takes 22 minutes to process the telephone surveys, 17 minutes to process the mail questionnaires and customer surveys, and 13 minutes to process the electronic questionnaires and customer surveys. The reduction in the processing times is the result of efficiencies developed from processing various customer surveys through the years and to the fact that the USPTO has many processes in place that were developed while conducting previous surveys.

The reductions in the processing time estimates and the estimated responses has reduced the processing burden hours by 345 hours, from 868 in the previous submission to 523 in this submission.

15. Reason for Change in Burden

Summary of Changes Since the Previous Submission

The OMB approved the renewal of this information collection on April 24, 2007 with 1,900 responses and 220 burden hours. There are no annualized (non-hour) costs for this collection.

To accommodate two customer satisfaction surveys that were not considered in the original burden request, the USPTO submitted a change worksheet to OMB on September 24, 2007. This change worksheet, approved by OMB on October 11, 2007, increased the burden by 6,000 responses and 1,156 hours, resulting in a new burden of 7,900 responses and 1,376 burden hours.

The USPTO submitted four surveys under this generic clearance during this renewal period. All four surveys were approved by OMB:

- USPTO Electronic Business Center (EBC) Satisfaction Measurement Survey, submitted on November 2, 2007 and approved on December 4, 2007 with 6,000 responses and 600 burden hours.
- 2008 e-Commerce Satisfaction Measurement Survey, submitted on January 10, 2008 and approved on June 3, 2008 with 1,018 responses and 173 burden hours.

- Global Intellectual Property Academy Program Survey, submitted on August 6, 2009 and approved on August 26, 2009 with 167 responses and 42 burden hours.
- First-Action Interview Applicant Survey, submitted on September 22, 2009 and approved on October 1, 2009, with 247 responses and 62 burden hours.

The USPTO used a total of 7,432 responses and 877 burden hours of the survey inventory, with 468 responses and 499 burden hours remaining in the survey inventory.

With this renewal, the USPTO estimates that the total burden and annualized (non-hour) costs for this collection will be 1,900 responses, 356 burden hours, and \$0 annualized costs. This is a reduction of 6,000 responses and 1,020 burden hours. This collection still does not have annualized costs. The reductions in the responses and burden hours are due to administrative adjustments.

Changes in Burden Estimates Since the 60-Day Federal Register Notice

In the 60-Day *Federal Register* Notice published on October 26, 2009 for this renewal, the USPTO estimated that this collection would have 1,900 responses, 220 burden hours, and a total annual respondent cost burden of \$57,420 per year. In the final renewal submission, the USPTO still estimates that this collection will have 1,900 responses per year, but now estimates that this collection will have 356 burden hours and \$95,764 in respondent cost burden per year. This is an increase of 136 burden hours and \$38,344 in total respondent cost burden.

In the 60-Day Notice, the estimated time reported for completing the paper and electronic questionnaires and customer surveys was 5 minutes. In actuality, the estimated time should have been 10 minutes. In the renewal approved in April 2007, it was estimated that it would take 5 minutes to complete both the paper and electronic questionnaires and customer surveys. However, the USPTO determined later that the completion time for the surveys should be increased to 10 minutes. The change worksheet submitted to OMB on September 24, 2007 changed the estimated completion time for these surveys from 5 to 10 minutes. The original completion time of 5 minutes was mistakenly used in the 60-Day Notice instead of the current completion time of 10 minutes. Using 10 minutes to calculate the burden hours for this renewal changes the burden hours for the paper and electronic questionnaires and customer surveys from 60 to 128 burden hours. This increases the overall burden estimate for this collection by 136 hours, from the 220 hours reported in the 60-Day Notice to 356 hours in this submission.

For the total estimated respondent costs, the hourly rate used in the calculations is a combination of 75% of the current professional rate and 25% of the current paraprofessional rate. In the 60-Day Notice, the professional rate of \$310, from the 2007 report of the Committee on Economics of Legal Practice of the American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA), and the paraprofessional rate of \$100, from the 2008 National Utilization and Compensation Survey by the National

Association of Legal Assistants, were used to calculate the respondent total cost burden. Using a combination of these rates, the USPTO estimated an hourly rate of \$261.

Since the publication of the 60-Day Notice, the USPTO obtained a copy of the 2009 report of the Committee on Economics of Legal Practice of the American Intellectual Property Law Association. In this report, the current professional rate is \$325. Using this updated professional rate, the USPTO now estimates that the hourly rate would be \$269 and that the total respondent cost burden for this collection will be \$95,764 per year.

Changes in Respondent Cost Burden

The respondent cost burden has increased from the costs reported in the previous submission due to increases in the professional and para-professional rates. The current collection has an estimated total respondent cost burden of \$345,376. This was calculated using the professional hourly rate of \$304 from the 2005 report of the Committee on Economics of Legal Practice of the American Intellectual Property Law Association and the para-professional rate of \$90 from the 2004 National Utilization and Compensation Survey published by the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA). Using 75% of the professional rate of \$304 and 25% of the para-professional rate of \$90, the USPTO calculated a combined hourly rate of \$251, which was then used to calculate the \$345,376 respondent cost burden.

For this renewal, the USPTO estimates the total respondent cost burden at \$95,764, which is a reduction of \$249,612 from the currently approved respondent cost burden. This reduction is due to a reestimate in the number of electronic questionnaires and customer surveys that the USPTO believes will be submitted. However, since the last renewal, new professional and para-professional hourly rates have been published. The USPTO is using the updated professional hourly rate of \$325 from the 2009 report of the Committee on Economics of Legal Practice of the American Intellectual Property Law Association and the updated para-professional hourly rate of \$100 from the 2008 National Utilization and Compensation Survey published by the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA). Using the same percentage breakdowns as previously, the USPTO calculates a combined hourly rate of \$269, which was used to calculate the \$95,764 in respondent cost burden.

Changes in Responses and Burden Hours

The USPTO estimates that the number of responses submitted annually for this collection will decrease by 6,000 responses, from 7,900 to 1,900 responses. Consequently, the USPTO estimates that the total burden hours for this collection will decrease by 1,020 hours, from 1,376 to 356 hours per year. These changes are due to administrative adjustments, as follows:

- The USPTO is adjusting the estimated annual responses for the electronic questionnaires and customer surveys because the agency does not foresee that any additional electronic surveys beyond those generally submitted under this clearance will be needed during this renewal period. The USPTO estimates that 750 electronic surveys will be submitted, which is a reduction of 6,000 from the previous estimate of 6,750. Consequently, the USPTO expects that the burden hours for this survey will decrease to 128 hours, which is a reduction of 1,020 hours from the previous estimate of 1,148 hours. This reestimate of the burden is due to an administrative change.

The USPTO estimates that a total of 1,020 burden hours will be reduced from this collection, from 1,376 to 356 burden hours per year. **Therefore, the USPTO estimates that this collection has a total burden reduction of 1,020 hours per year resulting from an administrative adjustment.**

Changes in Annual (Non-Hour) Costs

There are no capital start-up, maintenance, operation, or recordkeeping costs associated with this information collection. The surveys in this collection do not have filing fees. Although the questionnaires and customer surveys are mailed to the USPTO, the agency provides self-addressed and stamped envelopes with the survey, so this collection does not have postage costs resulting from the survey. This has not changed from the previous submission.

16. Project Schedule

The USPTO does not publish the results from every survey that is conducted by the agency. While the USPTO may reference summarized survey findings in various press releases, actual reports that address survey findings are typically limited to sharing only with survey respondents as a token of appreciation for participation.

For the miscellaneous external customer surveys and other data collection efforts conducted by the USPTO staff, the decision to publish the survey findings is dependent upon the needs and goals of the organization sponsoring the data collection effort. Enumeration periods vary based on the delivery method and customer group being surveyed. As a general rule of thumb, customer surveys are enumerated for about four weeks. On average, data are tabulated and summary reports are prepared for the sponsoring organization within six weeks of the close of data collection. Quantitative analyses are conducted using SPSS® software. Summary and analysis programs are performed in batch mode using SPSS® command syntax created prior to the close of data collection to ensure timely release of the survey data. Ad-hoc and exploratory analyses are performed as needed throughout the analysis and reporting period. The summary reports contain descriptive statistics, trend analysis, correlation and regression analysis to identify key drivers of satisfaction, and qualitative content analysis, when applicable. The data collection effort and analysis/reporting tasks generally cover a 10-week period.

17. Display of Expiration Date of OMB Approval

These surveys do not have USPTO form numbers associated with them. Once these various types of survey are approved, they will display the OMB Control Number and the expiration date.

18. Exception to the Certificate Statement

This collection of information does not include any exceptions to the certificate statement.

List of References

- A. USPTO Information Quality Guidelines