

List of Questions to be asked of external stakeholders

USPTO is collecting customer input to develop our next generation e-filing system. Our goal is to obtain text from applicants, simplify the filing process, and leverage text to provide benefits to both applicants and the Office.

1. What are your thoughts on filing applications in a word processing format.
2. What word processing product does your office use to create application documents.
3. By a show of hands, how many of you use MS Word to prepare patent application documents?
4. What are your thoughts on filing documents to USPTO in Word format? (e.g., Abstracts, Spec, Claims, and Drawings)

If no feedback, provide more info, prompt users:

- What challenges do you anticipate?
 - What benefits would you expect?
5. What are your thoughts if a web-based process would provide validation of the file and warn filers if unacceptable content were included in the file, e.g.; track changes meta data related to author, embedded fonts etc.

If no feedback, provide more info, prompt users

- What do you see at the challenges to this process?
 - What do you see at the benefits to this process?
 - What are your concerns as far as risks when using this process?
6. Let's go back and discuss the features and proposed process shown in the PPT you just viewed, we would like to better understand how you feel the features and process shown would 'work' in your environment.
 - Here we will show Screen shot slides of 'main features' such as;
 - i. Identify major parts of applications
 - ii. Identification of track changes or other unacceptable content
 - iii. Creating unique identifier to verify document has not been changed
 - iv. Amendment process of automating required mark-up language
 - v. Coversheet Generation
 - vi. Formalities check and reports, claims tree, patent family
 - vii. Paragraph Versioning
 7. What other format(s)/method(s) would you like to see USPTO accept your text application(s)?
 8. How willing would you be to switch from PDF to a text based filing format?
 - If not willing, then how would you propose/suggest the USPTO develop a system to accept text filing formats?
 - What could USPTO do to incentivize your firm to adopt text based filing?
 9. Would you be willing to participate in a Beta group (pilot) program to assist USPTO in the development of this new feature?
 10. What is the timeframe that your firm would require to implement this new process? Immediate, simple? Requires new tools, processes, etc?
 11. How would you expect PTO to support you in this new filing process (i.e., helpdesk, training, 24/7 guidance, legal/rules changes???? Etc etc??
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Additional Questions (con't time allowing)

12. We're investigating the feasibility of providing additional automated forms, similar to the ePetitions and eTerminal Disclaimers. Which forms or requests would you like to see us automate?

- *E.g, Supplement IDS, Issue Fee transmittal, provisional coversheet,*
- *Have you filed an ePetition or eTD yet?*
- *How was your filing experience and what can be improved?*
- *Do you use the fillable ADS and IDS forms?*
- *Does the PDF fillable format work for you or do you prefer the web form format?*

13. Recently some EFS-Web users were unable to login because of a Java update that automatically installed on their computer. Advisories were posted in EFS-Web and PAIR. A patent alert was also sent. How can we better communicate system requirement update which may affect EFS-Web/PAIR access?

14. We're looking for a better way to handle IDS and NPL submissions. Rather than attaching PDF copies of NPL documents, do you think your attorney would consider using a citation of the NPL if full text is viewable by applicant and examiner?

What are some ways other ways that we could improve IDS submissions?

15. What one change would you recommend to the current filing process?

16. What are the strengths of the current patent application process that you would like to keep?