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Richard Seidel

Deputy Commissioner for Patents

Searching Foreign Prior Art at the USPTO

Patent Examiner Access

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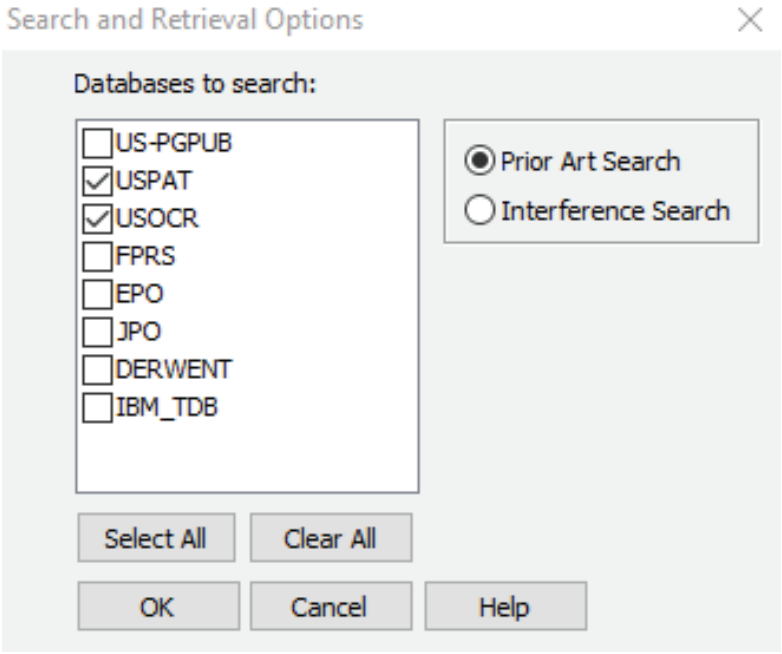
Foundations of examiner search

- Examiners' ability to locate the best available prior art at the earliest time in the examination process is paramount to optimizing patent application pendency and issuing high quality patents, key goals of the USPTO's Strategic Plan
- Patent examination, though inherently complex, is in large part a fact-finding mission with the goal of providing predictable and reliable intellectual property rights

Legacy examiner search systems

- Legacy systems EAST and WEST search tools include the following data:
  - U.S. patents
  - Pre-grant publications
  - U.S. design patents
- Current access to foreign prior art is limited in these systems, as it does not include any foreign design prior art

Legacy search and retrieval options



Examiner access to foreign prior art in legacy systems

Database	Text	Image	Approximate Number of Documents	Data Access
Derwent World Patents Index	Current through February 15, 2021 for Derwent WPI Text Data	Current through February 15, 2021 for Derwent WPI Image Data	**47M**	Stored
Chinese Patent Office Abstracts in FPRS (Foreign Patent Retrieval Service Abstracts Database)	Legacy system contains approximately 28M documents in FPRS – only abstracts and metadata	No drawings	**28M**	Stored
Japanese Patent Office Abstracts Database	Jan 6, 1975 to Mar 31, 2020 for publication dates of JPO Abstract Text Data	Jan 6, 1975 to Jan 29, 2021 for publication dates of JPO Image Data	**11.5M**	Stored
European Patent Office Abstracts Database	Jan 1, 1901 to Feb 7, 2019 for publication dates of Foreign Patent Abstract Text Data	Jan 13, 1978 to Nov 30, 2020 for publication dates of EPO Image Data	**3.6M**	Stored

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