

European Commercial Patent Services Group



PatCom

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Gert Frackenpohl

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Folie 1

Who is Who

➤ Gert Frackenpohl

- Managing Director of INCOM Information und Computer GmbH, Bonn
- President of the association PatCom

➤ INCOM PATWARE

- Hardware and Software for Patent Document Archives and Databases
- Patent Information Management and Document Delivery Services on the Internet

➤ PatCom

- 12 European Commercial Patent Information and Service Providers
- Aspen/IFI, Current Patents, Derwent, Dialog, FIZ Karlsruhe/STN, INCOM, MicroPatent, Minesoft, QuestelOrbit, Univentio, Wila-Derwent, World Patent Service

Objectives of PatCom

- Commercially fair balance of services between patent offices, private sector companies and user's interests
- Exchange information on information policies
- Fair and reasonable development in terms of competition, state of the art in IT, level and sources of investments involved and legal duties of the offices

Cooperation

➤ Associated members

- CAS, PATON

➤ Invited observers

- PDG

➤ Trilateral Alliance

- Coalition for Patent and Trademark Dissemination in the USA
- Patent Information Online Service Council in Japan

Joint Statement of Trilateral Alliance

- Healthy development of private sector patent information systems
- Balance of competition between private sector and patent offices concerning information services
- Partnership between commercials and offices encouraging the core strength of each
- Continuous coordination by periodical meetings of the management of all parties involved

Patent Information for the Public

Tasks and roles of offices and commercials

- Raw data available from the offices for inspection
- From paper to electronic media for dissemination
- Added value by retrieval functionality, linked data units and inspection services
- Offering value for free of charge by the offices in competition to selling value created by commercial investment

Subjects having impact on the commercial sector

- Publication formats and information products
- Costs for production paid by whom
- Costs charged from whom
- Added value becomes free of charge
- Principle of equal treatment
- Legal duty of the offices to make available which amount of patent data, software functions and services

Subjects of Discussion and Consideration

➤ Data

- Correctness and up-to-date status of data
- Additional data links (ECLA, Citations, Non Patent Literature, INPADOC family and legal status)
- Extension of data collections and its documentation

➤ Software Functionality

- Search: truncation, complexity of queries
- Access: Downloading complete documents, direct links between data collections, interface via Open Patent Services and XML

➤ Services

- SDI, profile, watching and alert services

Suggested Principals of Information Policy

- Principles suggested by Joe Ebersole at PIUG 2002
 - Maximizing competition among commercials
 - Diversity of sources for patent information
 - Functionality is value that costs
 - Policy should be aware of competition and antitrust law
 - Funding allocation for improving quality and efficiency of internal operation
 - Keep away from software business for the public
 - Different levels of functionality and added value for special user groups like SMEs, patent libraries, commercials

Epilogue: The future

For the future let us all hope that the cooperation of Patent Offices and commercial patent service providers will lead to a mutual supplement of development to gain more high quality services for the users of patent information. We can expect that the recent inquiry of the European Patent Office called 'Patent Information Survey' may show additional services requested by the users. Let us see whether the Office will develop and offer solutions by itself or whether it will offer to the commercial companies a secure platform to invest in the development of new services.

Thank you very much for your attention

➤ Further information

- at the INCOM booth in the exhibition area
- at www.PatCom.org
- Article published in World Patent Information 24 (2002)
- Proceedings of the PIUG Annual Meeting 2003, Chicago