

Documentation for Patent Utility v1.2

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Disclaimer

PatentUtility 1.2 was developed by and is available free of charge from Conception LLC.

This software is provided without warranty of any kind. Any and all liability and risk associated with the installation or use of this utility is assumed by the end user.

Please ensure that your computer has up-to-date internet security installed and enabled whenever using this or any software that accesses the internet.

Description

PatentUtility is a spreadsheet prepared using Microsoft Excel and designed to assist the user in locating patent information in publicly accessible databases on the internet. The databases accessed are provided by national or international patent authorities ("primary" on-line databases). Please respect the bandwidth limits of these databases. PatentUtility does not assist the user in bulk-downloading documents.

This utility includes Macros. Macros must be enabled for PatentUtility to function.

PatentUtility can be opened and closed as is done for any Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

Also available from Conception is PatentPrism, a software system that provides an extensive set of tools and a user-friendly interface for efficiently handling a wide variety of patent searching, analysis, report publishing, presentation and record-keeping activities.

System Requirements and Compatibility

Operating system: Microsoft Windows XP or Windows 2000. Other software: Microsoft Excel [Microsoft Office 2000 - 2003, corresponding to Microsoft Excel v9-v11] [not tested with intermediate version Excel v.10 in Office XP, but likely to work with that version]. PatentUtility was developed using Microsoft Office 2003 (Excel v.11). Browser: Microsoft Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. PatentUtility is not currently Apple Macintosh OS compatible.

Text documents at Patent Office websites should be directly viewable with your browser. A .pdf viewer is needed for viewing of many on-line patent image documents. A .tif viewer is needed to view patent and publication images at the USPTO website. Here is a USPTO web address for a page describing compatible .tif viewers: www.uspto.gov/patft/help/images.htm

Instructions

PatentUtility provides a text entry field (field) into which can be entered a document reference number for lookup in public intellectual property databases on the internet. Entries can also be used as Boolean search strings in some of these databases. The field is white on a yellow background.

When the field is empty, all the hyperlinks currently available in the utility are displayed. Clearing the field restores the presentation of the full set of links. Clicking in the right end of the field clears an entry (you can also use a delete or similar key on your keyboard to clear an entry). Links to international and US patent classifications databases are provided for convenience, and are not associated with a specific document number.

To look up a document, enter a document reference number in the field, then click Return or Enter, or click elsewhere in the display, other than on one of the hyperlinks. The display of hyperlinks may change when you make an entry, so please inspect the button labels before making a hyperlink selection.

PatentUtility attempts to identify the format of your entry, makes adjustments as needed, and, if a document type is identified, presents the reformatted document number and hyperlinks to one or more relevant web page. Note that the hyperlinks are NOT directly to documents, but to web pages into which a document number can be pasted for lookup.

In the current version of PatentUtility, the following types of document references may be identified: US application numbers, US publication numbers, US patent numbers (including RE, D, H), WIPO publication numbers, EP publication numbers, Canadian patent numbers, Australian patent numbers.

Several entry formats are recognized. Spaces, commas, periods and unrecognized forward slashes are removed. dashes are recognized only as they assist interpreting some US publication number entry formats. Other non-alphameric characters are not recognized.

If an entry is not recognized as a document number, it still can be used as a search string. Click the desired link: the string is automatically copied into the clipboard for pasting at the destination web page. Note that search syntax differs among different search sites.

When you select a hyperlink associated with an identified document number, the number is automatically copied into the clipboard for pasting at the destination website. There is no need to use a Copy command. If the field is empty, you can Copy text into the clipboard from another document or application, then use a link in PatentUtility to go to a desired site and Paste your data at the site to look up the document.

You can bypass the entry identification process by selecting a link directly after making an entry in the field, without first clicking Return/Enter or selecting elsewhere in PatentUtility. In this manner, the raw entry in the text field, rather than an interpreted document number, is copied to the clipboard and brought to the requested web page.

At a selected web page, click in an appropriate text entry window or field (there may be several to choose among) and select Paste, or use a mouse or keyboard shortcut to paste the number into the window or field.

Then follow the instructions at the website to look up the document or perform a search, typically by selecting "Search" or "Go" or a similarly labeled button. In some instances, you will also have to select the type of lookup you require. For example, in US Public PAIR, you must select the type of entry data: an application number, a patent number, or a publication number (in this particular case, a US Application Number is currently the default selection).

You can return to PatentUtility from a website by using back arrows in your browser, by closing the browser, etc.

Notes

PatentUtility attempts to identify and adjust document number FORMATS for lookup in public databases. It does not ascertain the validity of any document number.

You must select the text field to change its contents. If you try to type over an existing entry in the text field without selecting or clearing it first, Excel may display a message that the cell or worksheet is protected. If you see this message, click OK and select or clear the text field to continue.

When you are finished viewing a full text version of a US patent or a published application at the USPTO website, you may have to click the back arrow in your browser twice in quick succession (sort-of double-clicking) to back out of that view. This is a feature of the USPTO website, not of this utility.

Increased convenience in using PatentUtility can be realized by using a mouse, trackball or other input device having auxiliary user-assignable buttons, for example, by assigning a button to provide single-click pasting.

If more than one copy of this utility is open on your computer at the same time, your browser may not distinguish between the copies upon returning from a website.

PatentUtility will open and function only if the file name includes "PatentUtility" and "cpv" Additions to the filename are accepted, e.g. "My copy of PatentUtility cpv"

Update history from previous versions

12. [1.2] Increased field width to accommodate longer search strings.
11. [1.2] Added explicit handling of search strings.
10. [1.2] Improved interpretation of dashes for US Publication Numbers.
9. [1.2] The right-hand end of the text field is now a Clear button.
8. [1.2] Preserve Copy from other documents for use with hyperlinks.
7. [1.2] Added "zoom" button, cycles among sizes, saves new size.
6. [1.1] Bypass entry ID routine by selecting a link directly after entry.
5. [1.1] Autorecover formats following Paste into the text field.
4. [1.1] Backward compatibility with Excel 2000 improved.
3. [1.1] Lookup by US application number added.
2. [1.1] Recognizes and removes periods "." in entries.
1. [1.1] Additional directions for use displayed.