The Right Time for a Greater Focus on Quality

- America Invents Act (AIA) provides a stable budget to pursue quality initiatives
- USPTO continues to reduce patent application inventory and pendency
- IT and other resource improvement initiatives support our employees
- Enhancing patent quality is a priority
Internal Steps to Improve Patent Quality

- Fall 2014 - Gathered valuable ideas from USPTO
  - focus groups made up of a cross section of employees

- Issued updated examiner guidance following court rulings

- Increase in training

- Patent Quality Forums held with Patents employees
  - March 11 and March 24, 2015
• Increased resources to improve patent examination quality

• Compare best practices and collaborate with foreign counterpart offices to improve quality

• Research and consider leveraging data analytics to improve the examination process
External Steps Toward Improving Patent Quality

• Understanding Our Stakeholder’s Perspective
  – What does quality mean to IP stakeholders?
• Discuss current quality measure
  – Collect and analyze feedback
  – Re-evaluate current measures
• Public comments requested through Federal Register notice
Patent Quality Summit

- Held March 25 – 26, 2015
- Alexandria, VA Headquarters
- Excellent attendance and participation for both days of the Summit
- Stakeholder Discussion on the Importance of Quality
  • Speakers from various Intellectual Property Industries
  • All audience discussion
- Discussed Proposals to Enhance Patent Quality
I. Excellence in work products
   1. Applicant requests prosecution review of selected applications
   2. Automated pre-examination search
   3. Clarity of the record

II. Excellence in measuring patent quality
   1. Review/improvements to quality metrics

III. Excellence in customer service
   1. Review of current compact prosecution model and effect on quality
   2. In-person interview capability with all examiners
Emerging themes among the participants included:

- Providing a clear record throughout prosecution
- Differentiating between the measures of the patent process and the patent product
- The usefulness (necessity) of face-to-face interviews
PROPOSAL 1
Applicant Requests for Prosecution Review of Selected Applications
PROPOSAL 2
Automated Pre-Examination Search
PROPOSAL 3
Clarity of Record
PROPOSAL 4
Review of and Improvements to Quality Metrics
PROPOSAL 5
Review of the Compact Prosecution Model and the Effect on Quality
PROPOSAL 6
In-Person Interview Capability with All Examiners
Next Steps

As we move ahead over the next several months we have several next steps planned:

- Posting a video of the Summit on the web for you to access and review
- Federal Register notice comment period runs through May 6, 2015
- Submit your comments and ideas responsive to the FR Notice to WorldClassPatentQuality@uspto.gov email box
- Road shows later in the summer

United States Patent and Trademark Office