



AI Innovation: What Companies Need to Know About How the USPTO is Implementing AI Technologies to Modernize its Workflows

Client Alert | 3 min read | 07.22.25

Key Takeaway

The USPTO is actively implementing and seeking out technologies to enhance the speed, accuracy, and consistency of the examination of patent applications.

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is undertaking a significant transformation of its internal systems and processes through the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and related technologies. These efforts are intended to improve the quality, speed, and consistency of the patent application examination process.

For companies that regularly file with the USPTO, these developments may influence how applications are reviewed, how prior art is assessed, and how examiners find relevant information.

Strategic Approach to AI Implementation

In January 2025, the USPTO released a comprehensive **Artificial Intelligence Strategy** outlining its goals AI adoption. The agency committed to five priorities: advancing IP policies for inclusive AI innovation, enhancing AI capabilities through infrastructure and resources, promoting responsible AI use, developing AI expertise within the workforce, and collaborating with other governmental and international partners.

Last month, the USPTO released a **Request for Information (RFI)** inviting vendors to propose solutions for AI-enhanced tools to assist in tasks such as generating comprehensive search reports, analyzing prior art, and drafting office actions. The request emphasizes the use of machine learning, neural networks, and other AI methodologies to streamline patent examination and ensure consistency. Key constraints include maintaining sole rights to proprietary data, ensuring security compliance, and integrating with existing systems.

On July 7, the **USPTO published questions raised by the public to the RFI**. These questions and answers provide insight as to how the USPTO envisions utilizing and integrating AI technologies, including: improve examination efficiency and reduce application backlogs to allow inventors to gain protection faster; and requirement that the technology integrate with USPTO's existing infrastructure. At this stage, the USPTO is seeking a partner willing to receive "non-monetary" compensation, but the opportunity for the vendor to "display and market its capabilities, and the ability to fulfill a critical US Government technology gap on the world stage."

Partnerships with Private Companies

In addition to future engagement and home-grown solutions, in 2024 the USPTO partnered with **Clarivate Plc** to enhance the USPTO's design patent examination workflow. This new tool, called "**DesignVision**," is an AI-based image search tool that has been trained on tens of millions of images from design patent applications. According to the USPTO, DesignVision provides examiners access to over 80 global registers, ability for examiners to search up to seven images, with user-controlled weighting and ability to focus on specific visual features, and enhanced search and classification features to refine searches based on image similarity. Details of the examiner's search query (e.g., search notes and history) and results are communicated to the applicant.

Generative AI Already in Use

In parallel with its external vendor partnerships, the USPTO has developed an internal generative AI tool called **SCOUT (Searching, Consolidating, Outlining, and Understanding Tool)**. SCOUT began as an internal project that now has over 200 users within the USPTO. SCOUT is a GenAI web application and chatbot assistant built from a large language model designed to help detect improper filings, support code development and advance cybersecurity threat detection efforts, among other tasks. The USPTO has also developed its "Patents End-to-End Search Tool" that integrates with various databases to retrieve data on filed U.S. patents, pre-grant publications, and foreign patents. Although this technology is still being tested within the USPTO, it serves as an example of the ways in which the agency is attempting to improve its examination processes.

Conclusion

The USPTO's integration of AI and efforts to implement new technologies are important developments for all stakeholders in the patent system, including applicants. By understanding how these tools function and anticipating how they may influence examination, companies can better prepare filings, respond to office actions, and ultimately improve prosecution outcomes.

Crowell attorneys are monitoring AI developments in all phases of patent drafting, prosecution, enforcement, and invalidation and counseling clients on the same. If you are interested in learning about these efforts, please reach out.

Contacts

Jacob C. Bachman

Senior Counsel

Chicago D | +1.312.840.3261

jbachman@crowell.com

James Reed

Counsel

He/Him/His

New York D | +1.212.803.4021

jreed@crowell.com