

☒ Preliminary note

On November 1, 1998, the German Patent Office was renamed **German Patent and Trade Mark Office (GPTO) (Deutsches Patent- und Markenamt (DPMA))**.

I. Evolution of patent activities

In 1998, 83 338 patent applications were registered at the German Patent and Trade Mark Office. 55 165 of these were filed directly with the GPTO and 28 173 as international applications under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT). 2 201 international applications entered the national phase at the GPTO. This marks the continuation of the clearly positive development of the number of applications, observable in the past few years (see the GPTO's "Annual Report 1998").

This applies also to applications from Germany. The fact that 47 633 domestic applications were filed in 1998, i.e. 2 288 more applications than in the previous year, has proved that the German patent system is highly valued by the national industry. After all, patent applicants in Germany filed 185 applications per working day in 1998, and altogether 58 applications per 100 000 inhabitants.

II. Matters concerning the generation, reproduction, distribution and use of primary and secondary sources of patent information

II.1. Publishing, printing, copying

The following numbers of documents were published in 1998:

36 868 Offenlegungsschriften
(Unexamined patent applications, A1)

16 846 Patentschriften
(Patent specifications, C1, C2, C3, C4)

19 025 Gebrauchsmuster
(Utility models, U1)

25 407 Translations of European patent specifications (T2, T3, T4).
These documents are available in paper form on request. Since January 1995 the German translations of European patent specifications (T2) have been published weekly on CD-ROM.

- 471 Translations of claims of European applications (T1)
- 597 Translations of international applications (T1)
- 49 Patent specifications relating to applications filed before October 3, 1990 with the former DD-Office (first and second publications). For these documents the range of publication numbers of the former DD-Office is continued. The number is preceded by the letters "DD" in the sense of a distinctive feature.

II.2. Main types of announcements of the Office in the field of patent information

a) Patent Gazette ("Patentblatt")

On the basis of the German Patent Law, the GPTO announces the following in the Patent Gazette:

- First publications of patent applications
- Granted patents
- Registered utility models
- Published EP patent applications with Germany as a designated state
- Published German translations of claims of EP patent applications
- Granted EP patents with Germany as a designated state
- PCT applications published in German
- German translations of PCT applications published by the GPTO
- Applications, grants and rejected applications of supplementary protection certificates (SPCs)
- Publications based on patent applications filed with the patent office of the former German Democratic Republic
- Topographies of microelectronic semiconductor devices

Apart from that, all major changes of the legal status and all major procedural steps of national patent and utility model applications, EP patent applications and granted EP patents which take effect in Germany are published in the Patent Gazette.

b) Patent Register ("Patentrolle")

Bibliographic data, changes of the legal status and information about procedural steps of national patent applications, national and EP patents, SPCs and utility models are available in the Patent Register on the basis of both the Patent and the Utility Model Law. Certain data of EP patent applications with DE as a designated state and of WO patent applications with DE as a designated state and published in the German language are contained in the Register, too. The Patent Register is an externally accessible electronic database. (See also paragraph III.5.)

c) Patent and utility model documents

On the basis of the Patent Law, the GPTO publishes the kinds of patent documents described in paragraph II.1. above.

d) The German patent database PATDPA

Bibliographic data, abstracts, main claims and main drawings of German patent and utility model documents are available to the public in the database PATDPA, which is produced by the GPTO and hosted by STN International. With a short delay after the entry in the Patent Register, also legal status data and certain procedural steps are contained in PATDPA. (For details see paragraph III.5.)

II.3. Mass storage media used (paper, microforms, optical storage)

a) Conventional carriers

Customers may subscribe to DE patent documents in the form of paper. The production of aperture cards has been terminated in 1998.

By continuing the practice of the Patent Office of the former German Democratic Republic, DD documents are submitted also on microfiche to former subscribers and exchange partners.

b) Current CD-ROM publication practice

The publication of the German CD-ROM series DEPAROM as commercial products was continued. This CD-ROM series was developed in cooperation with Bundesdruckerei GmbH in 1994 and continued with full compatibility with the earlier product ESPACE-DE, which was first issued in July 1991.

The retrieval software for DEPAROM is permanently being improved, suggestions by the customers are being taken into account. The two points of utmost importance, which are in process now, are: development of a 32bit software and last solutions for the problems caused by the change to Year 2000.

At present, the DEPAROM series consists of the following CD-ROM products (all except DEPAROM-CLASS are commercially distributed by Bundesdruckerei GmbH for the purpose of exchange and commercial use):

- **DEPAROM-ACT** Facsimile CD-ROM containing first publications and patent specifications (A and C documents) of the GPTO as well as the claims of European patent applications in German translation and international applications in German translation (T1); published weekly; starting with the 13th publication week of 1996, the CD-ROM also includes the full texts of first publications and patent specifications in character coded form.
- **DEPAROM-U** Facsimile CD-ROM with utility models (U1) of the GPTO; published every three weeks.
- **DEPAROM-T2** Facsimile CD-ROM with the German translations of European patent specifications (T2-T4); published weekly; the CD-ROM also includes the full text in searchable form.
- **DEPAROM-CLASS** Facsimile CD-ROM containing all patent and utility model publications with effect in Germany (DE, EP, WO), as well as all first publications of WIPO, EPO and GPTO (A1, A2, C1, T1 and U1 documents); divided into 46 sub-editions based on the units of the International Patent Classification; published at irregular intervals depending on the volume of new information, updates at least every five months.
- **DEPAROM-KOMPAKT** Index CD-ROM containing published unexamined applications (A1), patent specifications (C1-C4) and utility models (U1) of the GPO as well as claims of European patent applications in German translation (T1), international applications in German translation (T1) and translations of European patent specifications designated for Germany (T2-T4); comprises bibliographic data and abstracts (as far as available) in searchable form; published every two months; starting with the 27th publication week in 1994.
- **DEPAROM-PROFIL** Facsimile CD-ROM containing bibliographic data and complete patent documents, tailored to the customer's specific profile (IPC symbols); published at customer-specified intervals. DEPAROM-PROFIL CD-ROMs may contain DE, EP and WO documents according to the demands of the customers.

A uniform user interface is provided for all the CD-ROMs of the series.

III. Matters concerning abstracting, classifying, reclassifying and indexing of technical information contained in patent documents

III.1. Abstracting, reviewing, translating

Patent applicants have to provide an abstract drafted according to national rules similar to WIPO Standard ST.12/A. This abstract is subject to the examination as to formalities. The abstracts are published on first publications (DE-A1 and DE-C1 documents). If no abstract was submitted by the applicant, the main claim (together with a drawing) will be published on the first page of the first publication. Title pages of second publications contain main claims instead of abstracts. In the Patent Register the abstracts are displayed. In the database PATDPA they are searchable and displayable.

German patent documents are reviewed by Derwent Publications Limited (London). These abstracts are available through the Derwent World Patent Index databases.

The GPTO publishes, as patent documents, German translations of PCT applications filed in languages other than German after having entered the national phase (DE-T1).

On request of the applicants, the GPTO publishes as patent documents German translations, provided by the applicants, of the claims of EP patent applications filed in English or French (DE/EP-T1).

Translations of granted EP patents originally published in English or French must be provided by the holders before the patents take effect in Germany. These translations are published by the GPTO as patent documents (DE-T2, T3, T4).

III.2. Classification and reclassification activities

About 80 000 patent and utility model applications have been classified according to IPC⁶ at the German Patent and Trade Mark Office in 1998. For the search file, the classification of about 900 000 German and foreign newly published documents or abstracts have been checked by the examiners and, if necessary, completed with classification symbols relating to the internal subdivisions of the GPTO, which are further subdivisions of the IPC. At the end of 1998 the number of the internal subdivisions was about 40 700.

The reclassification of the documents affected by the IPC⁶ revision was also continued in 1998.

About 18 500 documents in total were reclassified, about 7 630 of these belong to IPC⁶, about 4 350 to IPC⁵, about 4 990 to IPC⁴ and about 1 580 to IPC³. An additional number of documents, which were originally classified according to the previous editions of the IPC, cannot yet be reclassified because there are not accessible on paper but stored on rollfilm.

The GPTO is continuously participating in the revision activities of the IPC.

III.3. Coordinate indexing

The mechanized search systems of the ICIREPAT type are operational as reported in previous years. The four databases for Cosmetics, Detergents, Glass Compositions and Metallic Materials contained, at the end of 1998, a total of about 130 000 material compositions from more than 110 000 patent documents. They were accessible to each examiner within a self-guided search mode and used for about 1 000 searches in 1998.

III.4. Hybrid system indexing

For all German patent applications, the use of Hybrid Classification is obligatory, i.e. classification symbols in association with indexing codes are allotted to the DE documents. The indexing codes allotted are contained and searchable in the online database PATDPA.

Indexing codes have been assigned to about 4% of the 36 868 patent applications published in 1998.

III.5. Bibliographic data and full-text processing for search purposes

The German Patent and Trade Mark Office is the producer of three different databases available to the public:

- a) PATDPA
- b) PATDD
- c) German Industrial Property Register (called DPINFO)

The databases a) and b) are distributed by the host STN (Scientific and Technical Information Network); the database c) is supplied by the GPTO.

PATDPA, available to the public since June 1986, has been reloaded on February 1, 1999. It now contains the bibliographic data of all kinds of patent documents and utility models published by the GPTO since 1968, as well as all kinds of patent documents published by the EPO and WIPO since 1978 and designated for Germany. The German serial numbers for granted European patents as well as the German translations of the European patent specifications are included since June 1992.

The records of PATDPA contain the application and publication data along with legal status information, updated by any information published in the German Patent Gazette as well as in the European Bulletin and in the PCT Gazette. The abstracts of DE patent documents are included since 1981, the patent drawings of the first page since 1983 (originally contained in the separate database PATGRAPH), and the main claims of the German translations of European Patents since June 1992, of granted DE patents since January 1996, abstracts and main claims of European patents as well as abstracts of WIPO publications, all since July 1998. The supplementary protection certificates (SPC) are included since July 1998.

Originally PATDPA included only citations of patent and non-patent literature published on a printed patent publication. Now it is continuously recording all citations ascertained during the entire procedure including opposition procedure since September 8, 1994. The language of the database is German.

By the end of 1998, PATDPA contained 2 878 440 records (2 399 136 patents and 479 304 utility models); 321 935 of the records include graphical information.

The database PATDD, introduced in June 1992, covers the patent publications based on applications which have been filed with the Patent Office of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR). It contains the bibliographic data, titles, abstracts and intellectually allotted catchwords of patent documents published by the former GDR Patent Office from 1981 until October 2, 1990 and published by the German Patent and Trade Mark Office since October 3, 1990. PATDD consists of 121 797 records.

The German Industrial Property Register (DPINFO) comprises the following subfiles:

- a.) The Patent and Utility Model Register, Protection certificates
- b.) The Patent Register for DD-Applications and Patents
- c.) The Industrial Designs Register
- d.) The Trade Mark Register:
 - File MNA (registered national trade marks)
 - File MZU (rejected national trade marks)

The German Patent and Utility Model Register comprises the bibliographic data and legal status of patent and utility model applications filed with the German Patent and Trade Mark Office and published since 1981 as well as the bibliographic data and legal status of the European patents designated for Germany and granted since 1981. The Register includes as well the PCT applications published in German language and designated for Germany since 1981. Abstracts and citations of patent and non-patent literature of the patent applications filed with the GPTO and the declaration of the willingness of the patent applicant to grant licenses are included. The search is limited to publication number, publication date, symbols of the IPC, kind of document and declaration of the willingness for granting licenses. Since July 28, 1995, queries for file numbers of supplementary protection certificates (SPCs) for medicinal products are possible. In addition, the search for file numbers of protection certificates for plant protection products has been provided since June 23, 1997. The register contains about 2.4 million records accessible to the public.

The Register for DD-Applications and Patents comprises about 134 500 applications and patents filed with the Patent Office of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) since January 1, 1980, as well as patents in force on January 1, 1991 and based on applications filed before January 1, 1980 with the Patent Office of the former GDR. The register includes bibliographic data as well as abstracts of applications published for the first time since January 1, 1981. In addition the query for the file number of SPCs ihas been available since April 1998.

The German Industrial Designs Register comprises 79 669 industrial design registrations covering 667 347 different design models based on applications filed since July 1, 1988, the date on which the new German Designs Law entered into force. The register allows a search for registration numbers and displays the bibliographic data including title and class. Figurative elements are not stored in the electronic register and consequently may not be displayed online. (Figurative elements are represented in the official German Industrial Design Gazette). Since the introduction of version III of the DPINFO information system on August 10, 1995, it has been possible to search in the Industrial Designs Register for names of applicants and applicants' numbers. Former and actual names of applicants and representatives have been indicated since 1998. Furthermore the obtained list of applicants now includes a sign indicating common applicants.

The German Trade Mark Register:

- File MNA - National Trade Marks Registered:

Since the introduction of version III of the DPINFO information system, it is also possible to access national registered trade marks. The new German Trade Mark Law has already been taken into account here. Queries for file numbers or for the texts of trade marks are possible as well as for other search criteria such as classes of goods or dates. There is no transmission of image data. (These are reproduced in the Trade Mark Journal and on the CD-ROM DEMAS, distributed by Wila Verlag). The register contains 586 466 national registered trade marks. Since September 4, 1997, a full display of all information relating to a trade mark has been available, including all collateral procedures (oppositions, divisions, etc.). Since July 01, 1998 filed trade marks are displayed as well. The system contained 62 095 filed trade marks in the end of 1998.

- File MZU - National Trade Mark Applications Rejected:

This new partial database has been provided to the public since October 24, 1997. It consists of the national trade marks rejected due to the lack of eligibility of protection. These trade mark applications are not stored under a certain file number but under an internal serial number. As additional search criteria, "text of sign", "main class" as well as "further class" are admissible. This database contains 59 427 rejected trade mark applications.

The further development of the DPINFO information system is being continued. Many ideas and suggestions for improvement are being put into effect.

The following developments are planned for 1999:

- Internet access at the end of the year 1999
- development of a new, more comfortable user interface (web-style)
- transmission of image data from the trade mark register (only File MNA)
- Interconnection to European projects (MIPEX)
- New user leaflet

IV. Search file establishment and upkeep

The search file used by the patent examiners at the headquarters of the GPTO in Munich is arranged according to the IPC and to additional internal subdivisions of the IPC (DEKLA-groups) created by the examiners (see paragraph III.2). It contains a total of 25 million patent documents (Japanese abstracts included) and 2 million documents of non-patent literature, with an increase of about 900 000 patent documents in 1998. 2.3 million documents of this file are stored on rollfilm. The paper file is decentrally stored in the examiners' rooms or in rooms nearby. 87 000 changes of the files, especially in connection with the creation of additional internal subdivisions were performed.

Details of the search file holdings and accessions may be seen from the following table as registered in our electronic search file administration system, the so-called "Sub 2".

Typ of Doc.	Holdings 1998	Accessions 1998
DE-A	4 506 642	36 712
DE-C1	132 172	5 142
DE-U	1 183 237	19 115
AT	469 717	2 524
BE	249 787	----
CH	786 296	640
DD	342 260	----
FR	2 384 920	12 677
GB	2 156 533	12 325
US	6 085 468	154 780
EP-A	987 442	44 969
WO	503 731	70 761
DE-Sec.-Filing	included	107 949
Foreign Sec.-Filing	included	59 071
Subtotal	19 788 205	526 665
JP-Abstracts	3 885 464	373 710
Sum 1	23 673 669	900 375
<i>Second Publications:</i>		
DE-B, -C2, -T1	1 459 990	12 034
EP-B	61 724	----
DE-T2 (EP-B)	1 934	2 905
Sum 2	1 523 648	14 939
Total	25 197 317	915 314

For the transition from the conventional search file on paper to an electronic file, see paragraph V.1.

V. Activities in the field of computerized and other mechanized search systems

V.1. In-house systems: The electronic Patent Information System DEPATIS

At present, the GPTO administers more than 39 million documents for the examining work of patent examiners or for providing information to the public, which is one of the statutory tasks of the GPTO. The enormous amount of information is growing each year by about 1 million documents. In order to be able to keep it in a form that can be used with a reasonable effort an electronic patent information system, named DEPATIS, was planned at the end of the 80s. In order to reduce the risks, this big project was implemented in several stages. In the years 1989 to 1994 the feasibility from the technical and operational point of view was tested by means of a pilot project, followed by the first stage of the production system - the basic stage - in the years 1995 to 1998.

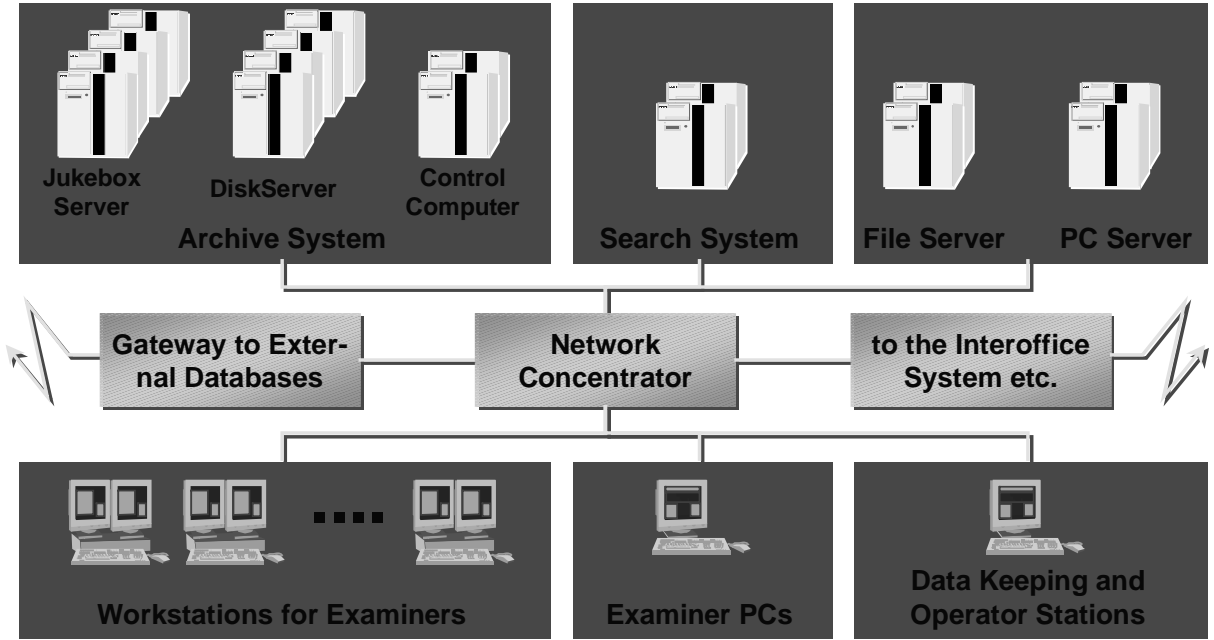
For operating the DEPATIS patent information system and the Internet-based Patentamt Online service, a new division "DEPATIS Operation" (2.4) has been established.

This division is mainly responsible for preparing the data of the documents received at the GPTO for integration into an electronic archive. The document input amounts to roughly 600 000 per year. Division 2.4 is also in charge of updating the system while taking into account the ever-increasing volume of data, the rising numbers of users and the fast change in information technology. Furthermore, since the vast amount of the paper search file can hardly be handled any longer, Division 2.4 is to organize the replacement of paper documents by electronically accessible documents. When this process will be concluded the examiners will no longer work with paper documents. Another task of this division is the preparation of the training for users at the GPTO, above all, examiners.

Since operation started at the end of 1998, the system has been at the disposal of 120 examiners for full use via 60 workstations. These examiners can perform their searches entirely with the system. For this purpose, two examiners share a workstation and an examiner PC - the best way to amortize the very high acquisition cost of the workstations. The other 430 examiners, too, benefit already from the new system. They rapidly print out necessary documents with high-performance printers installed next to their offices. Access has been equally provided for the public with the installation of 12 workstations at the public search room of the GPTO in Munich.

The core of DEPATIS is the archive with a capacity of approx. 16 terabytes. In this archive, more than 18 million patent documents of the most important countries for examination are stored in form of facsimile data in low resolution (150 dpi) for screen display and high resolution (300 dpi) for printing and zooming. The data for high resolution are stored on optical disks (WORM), for low resolution on magnetic disks. Especially with consideration to the high requirements as to response times, the archive system has a modular structure; if necessary, its performance can rapidly be adapted to new requirements. These measures were necessary to provide the required short flipping rate of less than 0.6 sec for the change from one facsimile page to the next.

In addition, the full text database allows searching the patent documents of the GPTO published since 1987. Together with other data files such as technical dictionaries, IPC indexes, catchword indexes and external databases and due to the specially developed standardized query language for the access to all these data stocks, an integrated access to all patent documents relevant for examination is ensured. Without changing of media, the results of different searches can thus be summarized, duplicates can be removed and the documents can be displayed on the screen without delay.



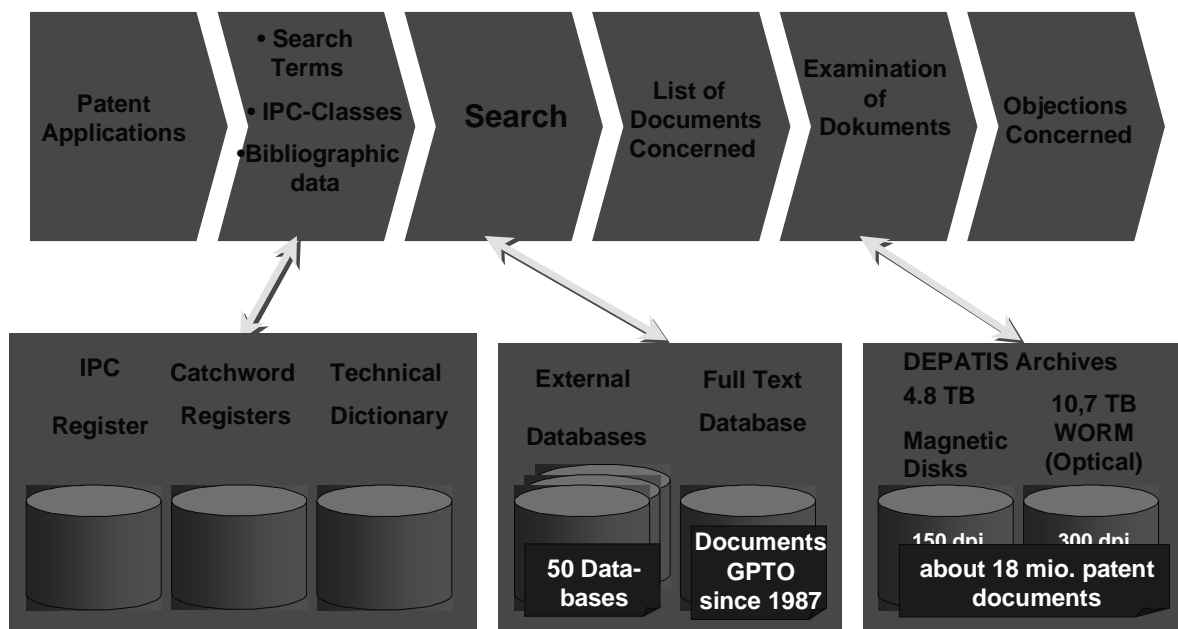
DEPATIS has an open client-server architecture. The server components such as

- the archive system containing the document data,
- the search system with tools for efficient full text search and
- the file server with the user-specific data

are linked to the clients via a high-speed net on the basis of optical fibres.

Clients are

- the 60 workstations of the basic stage (with two size A4 screens for the display of two complete document pages),
- the approx. 300 PCs for the patent examiners,
- the twelve workstations at the public search room of the GPTO,
- several data collection and operator stations.



The implementation in stages was decisive for the success of the DEPATIS project. Interim objectives were set up and monitored continually, a necessary measure for planning and ensuring the transparency of such a large and complex project. Moreover, due to the implementation in stages, the technical progress could be taken into account for the respective subsequent stages. Thus the latest hardware components could be integrated in the servers as well as in the clients with the start of the operating stage in 1998.

After completion of the basic stage, the following stages of DEPATIS are now being prepared. It is envisaged to install more workstations for examiners as well as further workstations in the public search room of the GPTO in Munich and at the Technical Information Centre in Berlin.

With the implementation of DEPATIS the GPTO successfully initiated a challenging infrastructure project. Especially due to DEPATIS the GPTO succeeded in taking an

important part in the international cooperation of the major examining patent offices and is well prepared to meet the requirements of an exchange of information taking place increasingly by electronic means.

V.2. External databases

For state-of-the-art searches and the examination of patent applications, the GPTO uses the services of the following external hosts:

DATA STAR:	}	The Dialog Corporation (Mountain View, California, USA)
DIALOG:		
DIMDI:		Deutsches Institut für Medizinische Dokumentation und Information (Köln, Germany)
EPIDOS:		European Patent Office (Vienna, Austria)
FIZ Technik:		Fachinformationszentrum Technik (Frankfurt a.M., Germany)
LEXIS-NEXIS:		Reed Elsevier Inc. (Dayton, Ohio, USA)
ORBIT:	}	Questel•Orbit, France Telecom Group (Nanterre, France)
QUESTEL:		
STN:		STN International, c/o FIZ Karlsruhe (Karlsruhe, Germany).

In 1998, the examiners of the GPTO accessed these hosts for a total of about 7 500 connect hours and used more than 300 different databases. Details about these online search activities, such as the distribution of the total connect time to the different hosts and to the most important databases, may be seen from the following table.

The online search in external databases is a very effective and valuable supplement to the search in the in-house databases of the DEPATIS system (see paragraph V.1.) and to the traditional search in the paper file.

In addition to the databases with technological and scientific information provided by the hosts listed above, the German Patent and Trade Mark Office has access to the legal information databases of the Juris host (Saarbrücken, Germany).

Connect hours in external databases in 1998:

	STN	EPIDOS	ORBIT	QUESTEL	FIZ Tech.	Others	Total
PATDPA	2596.9	-	-	-	-	-	2596.9
WPI (Derwent)	1344.5	68.9	354.1	65.1	-	0.6	1833.2
EPOQUE	-	759.2	-	-	-	-	759.2
CAS-Files	477.0	-	22.2	7.2	-	-	506.4
PATOS	349.7	-	-	-	2.0	-	351.7
USPATFULL	295.4	-	-	-	-	-	295.4
JAPIO	99.3	66.5	58.3	1.6	-	-	225.8
INPADOC	27.8	180.2	2.6	-	-	-	210.6
INSPEC	68.4	-	2.7	-	17.5	-	88.6
IFIPAT/CLAIMS	46.6	-	12.2	0.5	-	-	59.2
EPAT	-	-	0.2	58.8	-	-	59.0
DOMA	-	-	-	-	35.4	-	35.4
MEDLINE	33.2	-	-	0.6	-	-	33.8
PATDD	26.1	-	-	-	-	-	26.1
BIOSIS	24.3	-	-	-	-	-	24.3
DKI	-	-	-	-	18.7	-	18.7
USP-Files	-	-	18.7	-	-	-	18.7
EUROPATFULL	17.3	-	-	-	-	-	17.3
ZDE	-	-	-	-	12.6	-	12.6
DECHEMA	-	-	-	-	9.0	-	9.0
FPAT	-	-	-	8.7	-	-	8.7
EPO Register	-	6.2	-	-	-	-	6.2
Others	124.0	1.9	33.4	41.0	67.3	7.4	275.1
Total	5530.5	1082.9	504.3	183.5	162.5	8.0	7471.7

V.3. Administrative management systems

The patent procedure administration system (Sub1) and the search file management system (Sub2) have been in operation as in the years before. Meanwhile the on-going reorganization program „DPMA2000“ („GPTO2000“) has reached nearly the end of the second phase, especially concerning patents and utility models.

Patent and utility model automation project:

The current manual/paper-intensive process has been optimized over the years. It produces high quality and is very effective, but too expensive because of the staff involved.

The main goals for the defined Patent and Utility Model Automation System are the following :

- a) To continue delivering high quality services, but at the lowest possible cost for the applicants. As this is not possible with a system based on paper, the GPTO will implement a system for the electronic filing, processing and exchange of both structured data and complex documents, as well as for electronic publishing and data dissemination.
- b) To be able to cope efficiently with the processing of continuously increasing amounts of patent applications while maintaining the quality of the service.
- c) To fulfill the worldwide growing requirements of external partners for the exchange of electronic data and documents.
- d) Migration from the existing mainframe infrastructure to a client-server environment, workflow engines, state-of-the-art document management technologies etc..

Presently business process re-engineering in the patents and utility models area has been finished, and specifications for the planned IT-support systems are in preparation.

During the 3rd quarter of 1999, the GPTO will issue an Expression of Interest for the above mentioned systems for the pre-qualification of potential systems integrators. During the 4th quarter of 1999, a Request for Proposal to the pre-qualified systems integrators will follow.

General services:

Re-engineering activities for parts of the service area have been completed in 1998. As a result of this analysis, the GPTO has decided to implement an integrated standard application software (SAP R/3) for the processing of fees and payments. Furthermore, it was decided to establish a controlling department which is responsible for the entire GPTO. The controlling department also will use the above-mentioned standard software.

V.4. Equipment used, carriers used

In the area of patent and utility model administration, the hardware basis has been extended and modernized in order to meet higher standards. Planning is concerned with the development and adaptation of a number of programs for the central administration mainframe computer, depending on the results of the DPMA2000 project (see preceding paragraph). In combination with the replacement of PLANET, the former GPTO network, with the popular ETHERNET network with TCP/IP protocol, there is a gradual substitution of personal computers for the presently used VT100 terminals in the administration area.

By the end of 1997, there were 1 310 PCs in use for different tasks, including PCs for search purposes for the patent examiners.

V.5. Existing online thesauri

The fulltext of IPC⁵ and of IPC⁶ including the internal subdivisions can be searched online within the Office. By an additional file the adapted results of the IPC⁷ revision are also online accessible to the examiners.

The German/English version of the German Key- and Catchword Index (the so-called "Stich- und Schlagwörterverzeichnis") to IPC⁶ is also available within the Office as online database, which has a direct link to the fulltext of the IPC in German or English. This data has also been included in the CD-ROM "IPC:CLASS".

In connection with the IPC revision new catchwords were added and the backfile was checked and corrected. Above all, in many cases the redundancy in the formulation of the text of the subcatchwords was eliminated. The visibility at a glance was improved.

VI. Administration of the industrial property office library and services available to the public

VI.1. The library

The catalogue of the library, the acquisition of monographs and periodicals and the lending out of these media to the examiners or the public are administered by electronic data processing.

The following details relate to the library stock and its characteristic data in the year 1998.

The total stock of bound volumes now comprises 1 070 942 volumes; the number of patent documents (without multiple copies) including paper copies, microforms and CD-ROM has reached 39 200 109 documents.

Use of library:

There were 1 895 internal users and 62 397 users from among the public; 810 531 bibliographic units were lent out (self-service not regarded).

At present 60 different CD-ROM series concerning patent documents (24) and patent information (36) are available for the public by self-service in the public search room of the GPTO.

The library budget:

Acquisition budget and cover binding	DEM 2 324 823
International exchange of patent documents	DEM 5 641 870
Staff employed	123

VI.2. Interlibrary lending, resource sharing, networks of patent libraries in the country

Besides the two patent depository libraries of the German Patent and Trade Mark Office in Munich and Berlin, there were 19 regional patent information centers (patent libraries) with six branch agencies in the territory of the Federal Republic in 1998. These 25 centers are maintained by the individual states ("Bundesländer") of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The relationship between the GPTO and the regional patent information centers is determined by an agreement concluded in 1994. The patent information centers receive patent documents from the GPTO on CD-ROM (DEPAROM). With the CD-ROM product DEPAROM-CLASS the visitors of a patent information center are able to search in specific technical fields based on the International Patent Classification.

Within the framework of the projects in the field of national patent information, funded by the European Patent Organisation, a project improving the efficiency of the German patent information centers was initiated in 1997. Aim of the project is to disseminate patent information and to improve the access to patent information for the public. The project, divided into the two sub-projects "Building up networks of work-stations in the patent information centers" and "Providing the patent information centers with backlogs of patent documents on CD-ROM", was finished at the end of 1998. The costs amounted to approximately 1.5 million DEM; 720 000 DEM were invested by the EPO.

VI.3. Information services available to the public

- a) The General Information Service at the GPTO has the task to answer the questions of interested persons from the public concerning the application procedures of the various industrial property rights, the course of the procedures, costs, right of appeal, priorities, term of validity, etc. First free-of-charge consultations with a patent attorney are being organized for inventors upon appointment by telephone as well. In 1998 a Call Center was installed, in which 520 calls were received daily on the average. The staff members of the General Information Service answered 54 682 inquiries in writing. In addition to the inquiries in writing and by telephone, on the average 80 visitors per day sought advice from the General Information Service.
- b) Apart from the classified search files maintained for the examiners, the Munich library of the GPTO maintains classified search files for the use of the public, comprising the documents of eight patent offices (AT, the former DD-office, DE, EP, FR, GB, US and WO). The public has free access to these collections. In addition, patent documents of 46 countries and international organizations are available in numerical order.
- c) In autumn 1998 the patent information system DEPATIS (see paragraph V.1.) was introduced in the public search room of the GPTO with twelve workstations. Up to the year 2001, 42 stations are planned for the public use. This system is going to continually replace the conventional files of patent documents in paper form and CD-ROM.
- d) The databases of the German Industrial Property Register (see paragraph III.5) are available to the public in the search room using the new user surface DPINFO. External access is offered via the public packet switching network of German Telekom (DATEX-P). Access via ISDN and Internet is planned.
- e) With the assistance of an operator of the GPTO, searches in the German patent database PATDPA can be carried out by the public in the public search room against payment. Access to the European Patent Register and to the EPIDOS INPADOC files PFS and PRS is available also against payment.

VI.4. The German Patent and Trade Mark Office on the Internet

Since November 1996, the GPTO has provided extensive information to all Internet users. Since November 1, 1998, the service has been available on the Internet at <http://www.patent-und-markenamt.de>.

Access statistics reveal that the service is being accepted and more and more frequently used. 75% of the visitors are from German-speaking countries, while the others are from all over the world.

The online pages of the GPTO offer a large variety of extensive information on industrial property rights. Applicants can place direct orders for the necessary application forms in the Internet. In addition, the relevant information leaflets are available for assistance. New users will find information on the various technical fields. The most important addresses, E-mail addresses and telephone numbers are listed on a separate page. In the future, the search tools on the webpages of the GPTO will provide fast access to the desired information.

DEPANet, the patent server of the German Patent and Trade Mark Office, can also be accessed within the framework of esp@cenet via the GPTO homepage.

DEPANet - Patent Server of the German Patent and Trade Mark Office within the scope of esp@cenet

DEPANet is the new Internet-based information service of the German Patent and Trade Mark Office. It offers free of charge patent specifications and patent applications published (C1, A1) in the preceding 24 months on the Internet at <http://www.patent-und-markenamt.de> and at <http://www.depanet.de>.

DEPANet is part of the esp@cenet European patent information system. The decision to install this system - at first, called DIPS = Distributed Internet Patent Services - was adopted at the Administrative Council Session of the European Patent Organisation (EPO) at the end of 1997.

The structure of the esp@cenet European patent information system consists of two levels. At level 1, "the national level", each EPO member state can provide national data. At level 2, "the European level", the EPO offers a worldwide database corresponding to the EPOQUE data stock with its more than 30 million documents.

The database can be searched via search masks with several search fields. Based on the bibliographical data of a document it is possible to search for the publication number, the application number, the priority number, the publication date, the applicant's name, the inventor's name, the classification symbol (IPC) and the text in the title. Of each page of the documents found, a facsimile image can be displayed.

From the initial page of DEPANet, access is possible to databases of other national offices, to one database for EPO data, one for WO data and one for Japanese abstracts as well as a database with worldwide publications. For more detailed information users may refer to the GPTO homepage.

The DEPA net information service was officially started October 20, 1998.

In the initial phase daily access has levelled off at roughly 4 000 pages requested per day and roughly 140 MB of data transmitted per day.

VII. Matters concerning mutual exchange of patent documentation and information

VII.1. International or regional cooperation in the exchange of machine-readable information

The German Patent and Trade Mark Office continues to submit regularly to EPO (The Hague) and EPIDOS-INPADOC (Vienna) magnetic tapes with publication data on the basis of mutual exchange agreements.

VII.2. Medium used for exchange of priority documents

The German Patent and Trade Mark Office receives priority documents in paper form.

VII.3. International exchange of patent literature

The GPTO endeavours to meet the requirements necessary for the exchange of patent documents between the GPTO and its foreign exchange partners by electronical means exclusively, from the year 2000. The international exchange of patent literature was extended to countries in Eastern Europe and Asia in the last years. German patent and utility model documents were sent, mainly on CD-ROM, to 51 foreign patent offices; the patent gazette, trade mark gazette, annual reports, etc., were sent to 63 recipients. The CD-ROMs DEPAROM-ACT and -U were dispatched to 60 foreign patent offices. At present the GPTO needs foreign documents in paper form of US, EP, GB, FR for the classified collections and frequently used numerical collections.

Within the framework of the international exchange, the patent offices receiving the DEPAROM CD-ROMs may, if interested, download the bibliographic data and/or facsimile data and/or fulltext data. The GPTO is prepared to supply a secret software code required in order to do so. The data thus obtained may be used for internal purposes of the offices as provided for in WIPO Document PCIP/EXEC/XV/8 Annex VII.

VII.4. Medium allowed for filing applications

In cooperation with Bundesdruckerei GmbH the GPTO distributed the version 1.2 of DEPAEASY software. This software is, above all, used to capture the text parts of patent applications (i.e. description and claims) in electronic form and store them on disks. The data on the disk are utilized in the publication process for producing documents in order to avoid the time-consuming and error-prone OCR conversion of text manuscripts. The software and further information are available at <http://www.bundesdruckerei.de/ep/depaeasy.htm> and <http://www.mipex.de> via the Internet.

In 1998, 240 electronic filings according to DEPAEASY were submitted to the GPTO. It is planned to increase this number by using marketing strategies and by training the users in 1999. The intended possibility to submit electronic applications online will improve the situation as well. The MIPEX network initiated by the European Union may be one of the possible ways to submit electronic patent applications online.

Concerning the bibliographic data to be communicated to the office by the applicant when filing the application, the German Patent Office observes with great interest the developments within the EASY project initiated by the EPO, the USPTO and WIPO and the epline program of the EPO.

VIII. Other relevant matters concerning education and training in, and promotion of, the use of patent information, including technical assistance to developing countries

VIII.1. Training courses for national participants

In November 1998, as in previous years, a three days' training course with emphasis on patent documentation was held for staff members of the regional patent information centers (see paragraph VI.2.). The course was especially planned for newly recruited staff of the patent information centers in order to give basic information about the different kinds of industrial property rights of the GPTO, the International Patent Classification and about the structure of German and European patent documents.

VIII.2. International Cooperation

In 1998, the progressing world-wide integration required again an increased presence of the GPTO in European and international forums as well as within the framework of the technical cooperation with foreign patent offices. The Office took part in particular in the negotiations on the Patent Law Treaty, the Standing Committee on Information Technologies and the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Proposed Amendments of the PCT Regulations.

On the European level, the discussions of the Administrative Council focused on the revision of the European Patent Convention and the extension of the European Patent Organisation to Eastern Europe. Staff members of the GPTO took an active part in the Working parties on Technical Information and Statistics, in the Committee on Patent Law and in the Budget and Finance Committee.

The technical cooperation with foreign patent offices once again has been intensified. Numerous training activities were organized for foreign experts, e.g. from Poland, Ukraine, Russia, India, China, the Republic of Korea and Kenya, who were particularly interested in the patent and trade mark examination procedures as well as in patent information. Additionally, as in the previous years, a three weeks' seminar was held for civil servants from developing countries. Moreover, a seminar on streamlining search and examination procedures was organized by the GPTO jointly with the EPO and WIPO. It was attended by twenty examiners from different African, Asian and Latin American countries. Other visitors came from Finland, France and Great Britain. Among the visitors of the GPTO were also students from the USA and three Japanese delegations; a Japanese patent examiner stayed in Munich for a three weeks' study visit.

Highlights of 1998 were the visits of the Commissioners of the US Patent and Trade Mark Office and the Japanese Patent Office, who have both shown interest in intensifying the cooperation with the German Patent and Trade Mark Office and gathered information on the electronic patent information system DEPATIS (see paragraph V.1.).

Project “Financial Cooperation with the People’s Republic of China-Patent Information System“ (starting 1997):

This project - funded by Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and initiated in 1995 - will help to establish a modern Patent Information System all over China and contribute to perpetuate the excellent relationships with the State Intellectual Property Office of the People’s Republic of China (SIPO).

Four training measures took place in Germany in the year 1998. Experts from the SIPO were instructed in the fields of “General Administration”, “Utility Models and Industrial Design”, and “Automation”. Furthermore experts from China had the opportunity to partake on the working process at the Federal Patent Court.

Besides that both the President of SIPO, Mrs. Jiang Ying, and her delegation visited the GPTO in November and also the President of the GPTO, Mr. Haugg, was in Beijing to inform about the development of the project.

Project “Modernisation of the intellectual property system in the Republic of Croatia“ (1997 to present):

The GTZ-funded project started officially in January 1997. In the second year of this very successful co-operation, ten training measures in the fields of “Industrial Design”, “Trademarks”, “Nullity procedures in the field of Patents, Trademarks and Industrial Design”, “Information Technologies supporting Full Examination Procedure”, “Industrial Property Information Resources used at GPTO”, “Information Technology in the patent working process”, “Chemistry and Biotechnology”, “Full Examination Procedure”, “Physics, semiconductor layout design”, and “Mechanical/Electrical Engineering” could be realised in Berlin and Munich.

A very notable event was the visit of the Vice-Minister of economy of the Republic of Croatia and of the President of the State Intellectual Property Office.

In addition several well-known experts from Germany gave support by holding lectures at the seminar “The Role of Authors, Performers, Producers of Phonograms, Broadcasting Organisations and Collecting Societies in Intellectual Property Enforcement” in Zagreb. The “Training for Agents/Attorneys” was the second measure offered by a German expert in Croatia in the year 1998.

Project “Strengthening of the intellectual property system in the Kingdom of Thailand“ (1997 to present):

The project is also GTZ-funded. Three training measures for experts from the Department of Intellectual Property were held in Munich in the fields of “Library System”, “Collective Administration” and “General Administration”.

The short time missions of the GPTO were extended in 1998. Altogether six measures took place in Thailand. Technical and legal experts from the GPTO covered the fields of “The German Trademark System”, “Utility Model Administration”, “Information System”, “Patent Examination Procedure”, “Chemistry/Mechanics” and “Biotechnology Patent Examination”.

Project “Modernisation of the intellectual property system in the Republic of Turkey“ (1995 to present):

The GTZ-funded project - initiated in 1995 - was successfully continued. Three training measures for experts from the Turkish Patent Institute were held in Munich in the fields of “Chemistry”, “Patent Examination” and “Trademarks”.

Besides that, technical and legal experts from the GPO stayed in Ankara at the Turkish Patent Institute on eight expert missions covering the fields of “Patent Examination”, “Judgement of the patent-ability of patent applications”, “Service Marks”, “Training for Senior Examiners”, “Trademark Examination”, “Introduction Training of the procedure of International Trademarks for Senior Examiners” and “International Trademark Symposium”.

VIII.3. Search assistance for developing countries

In 1998, the German Patent and Trade Mark Office has performed 81 state-of-the-art searches for developing countries within the framework of WIPO's search assistance programs. The search requests had been received from the following countries:

Chile:	71
Jamaika	1
Kuba:	1
Mexico:	8
	====
	81

VIII.4. Promotional Activities

In 1998, the German Patent and Trade Mark Office was represented at the following fairs with a stand:

COMTEC, Dresden
IENA, Nuremberg
Industrie-Messe, Hanover
Innovationsmesse, Leipzig
INTERTEC, St. Gallen
Systems, Munich
Electronica, Munich

VIII.5. Studies to identify trends in the new technology, e.g. by the use of patent statistics, preparation of monographs, etc.

Studies relating to technological trends are performed continuously in the German Patent Office. The GPTO's Annual Report regularly publishes statistical patent analyses concerning various special topics as well as brief monographies on selected technical areas (see chapter "Patents - Statistics and Analyses" in the GPTO's Annual Report).

Because of the particular significance of patent data as indicators for

- research and development activity
- economic and technological structures and developments
- international economic and technological relations

the German Patent and Trade Mark Office has a Section "Statistics", which is in particular concerned with the investigation of these functions.

The following statistical and economic patent analyses elaborated here were published in 1998:

- Patentatlas Deutschland. Die räumliche Struktur der Erfindungstätigkeit, München 1998
- Der Stuttgarter Raum im Patentgeschehen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, in: Statistik und Informationsmanagement 1998, Nr. 3
- Strukturen und Entwicklungen im Patentgeschehen, in: Greif/Laitko/Parthey (Hrsg), Wissenschaftsforschung. Jahrbuch 1996/97, Marburg 1998

Talks and lectures on the results of investigations, e.g. on the technological development in selected technical areas and the use of patent data as indicators for research and development activities, were given on national and international conferences.

The sector "Statistics" is involved in research projects of German research institutes, e.g. in the fields of investigation of regional innovative potential and of joining patent data and data for research and development activity.