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News on patent, trade mark and design databases on the Internet

van Dulkens S.

This column came from announcements and discussions at the October 2002 Epidos Conference in Copenhagen.


It is hoped to add during November 2002 the British B specifications to Espacenet for those published from the June 2002 onwards. In the Spring of 2003 it is hoped to make this occur on the actual day of publication for both A and for the A specifications.

Canada has launched DesignPlus, an electronic filing procedure which will incorporate a database. This is explained at http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/sc_mrksv/cipo/id/designplus-e.html. Canadian designs have long been a problem area and by the time this column is read there will, hopefully, be a searchable database available.

China’s patents can now be downloaded on the Internet from a site. My thanks to Nanne Kampstra for putting it out on the FIUG-L bulletin board. The site itself is http://www.jiansuo.com but as it is entirely in Chinese users will prefer to consult the illustrated instructions for using it at the Mayall IP Links page, http://www.mayallfreeserve.co.uk/china.htm. All their patent specifications (A, C, U and Y), apparently, can be downloaded.

Denmark has launched a new database at the (Danish) version of its patent office web site. The URL is http://onlinesweb.dkpto.dk/pvsonline. Hopefully an English version of the site will later appear at its http://www.dkpto.dk/en/ site but an English language file explains that it holds legal information and, it seems, file inventors on published applications as well as data on patent applications from 1982 and for utility models from 1993. Data on supplementary protection certificates from 1993 is also available.

I should have said in my last column, when extolling the virtues of the ECLA classification, as used on the European Patent Office’s Espacenet site at http://ep.espacenet.com/, that it can also be used to reduce the hit list to actual families rather than to all equivalents. A problem with Espacenet is that searches produce equivalents and not families so that a search may retrieve several patents for the same invention in different countries, although all the hits if clicked on lead to the same bibliographic record which lists all the equivalents known, with a single patent number at the top of the record. The record for this same specification number at the top of the record, rather than all the equivalents as well, can be reached by, when entering an ECLA search, adding <not n> at the end. The ECLA classification itself is at http://i2.espacenet.com/eclasrch.

During November/ December 2002 it is planned that Espacenet will have new features. This will run along the existing database in parallel until they are sure that it works well. There will be a new display format; the possibility of clicking on a tab to obtain Inpadoc patent families (which are bigger than Espacenet families as they include all relevant priorities) and Inpadoc legal status for specific patents within the families. The Inpadoc data will only be retrievable if the publication number is known. The display changes will mean that the default display will include company name, publication date, IPC and ECLA. It will be possible instead of using this format to look through a display of abstracts and front page drawings (if available), or through the first page of the drawings, or the description, or the claims. It will also be possible to display as thumbnails the drawings pages. All this is very exciting and will make the database much more attractive.

In Spring 2003, Espacenet will introduce the ability to search by drawing the chemical structure. This is astonishingly advanced for a free database.

The Eurasian Patent Organisation now has a Russian-language database at http://www.eapo.org/ru/sestr/ with an English language version expected soon. I was unable to get anything out of it even with numbers and dates but I suspect that it is a prototype as it claims to hold a single week’s worth.

France has launched a “Boutique” at http://www.boutique.inpi.fr/inpiboutic/ which includes among other things priced copies of patents (not just French patents).

Indonesia is starting to get its gazettes on the web at http://www.dgip.go.id/indonesia/BRP_BRM_BPHC.htm. The site is in Indonesian. The patent material is from 1993
and consists of front page details. Some design gazette issues are available as well.

A prototype Patents Cooperation Treaty (PCT) full text database has appeared at http://ipdl.wipo.int/en/. It covers publications from January 1999 onwards. Not all features are available yet, but the site explains that it is intended after modifications to replace the PCT Electronic Gazette. Comments are welcomed. This is only the third such free database (after the official US site and the German language DEPATISnet site for German specifications). Searches can be made through coded text and the highlighted words appear in blue. Images alone are available for Russian, Chinese or Japanese language specifications.

The various Russian databases at http://www.fips.ru/ensite/ now all seem to be priced.


All these databases and gazettes are listed on the British Library’s patents links pages running off the www.bl.uk/patents site.

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