



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

SEARCH AND INFORMATION RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION

Hello –

My name is Terri Raines, and I'm the Project Manager for the Electronic Filing System (EFS) at the USPTO. I met many of you at the e-Filing Forum held at the USPTO on September 28th, 2004. You recently received an e-mail from John Doll, Deputy Commissioner for Patent Resources and Planning, informing you of the direction that the USPTO is taking towards developing a new web-based electronic filing system for patents and thanking you all for your assistance in helping define this new approach to electronic filing of patent applications.

Based on your comments at the September e-Filing Forum, the EFS team at the USPTO began to explore what a web-based e-Filing system would look like, how it would function, and how this new e-Filing process would fit with both USPTO and our e-Filing community's business processes. In this important design phase we are interested in your viewpoints and perspectives on a number of issues. As mentioned at the e-Filing Forum, we want to establish a regular dialogue with you throughout the process of building a web-based electronic filing tool.

I will be contacting you periodically over the next few months with information related to the EFS Web development and implementation. Your comments related to my e-mails will be used to further define the EFS Web system. As we develop a high level concept for how EFS Web will look and function, we would like to review our plans with you. Towards that end, we are planning for a follow-up e-Filing Forum in March.

Some of the issues I will discuss in my correspondence with you are technical in nature. If you would like to have an information technology point of contact at your organization copied on these e-mails, please let me know and I will send my e-mails to those individuals as well.

In this first exchange, we would like to find out more about the use of Portable Document Format (PDF) files in your office. Your comments and responses to the information on the following pages will be appreciated and will help us build an EFS Web that meets your business needs.

Please send any comments you have to me either by e-mail (Terri.Raines@USPTO.gov) or phone at 571-272-3393. At our meeting in March, we will review the comments we have received and discuss with you the design decisions that are predicated on your input.

Thank you for your investment of time and creativity. Working together, we can create the best possible system for patent electronic filing.

Sincerely,

Terri R. Raines
EFS Project Manager



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PDF Feedback

The following questions will help us gain a better understanding of how PDF files are used in your office. Your comments will provide us the information needed to establish a USPTO enterprise-wide set of PDF standards (known as “PDF profiles”). To define PDF profiles within the USPTO, it is necessary to identify the characteristics (known as “attributes”) of each potential PDF file.

1.1. Background

The enterprise-wide use of standard PDF profiles at the USPTO will promote the development, deployment, and support of web-based USPTO systems for customers throughout the Intellectual Property Community. It will also assist in the selection of tools and the definition of policies to effectively govern the creation, receipt, distribution, and archival of PDF files.

1.2. PDF Attributes

PDF files have attributes, or properties, that provide information related to the format of the file, how and when it was created, etc. One way to learn about the attributes of a PDF file is to open it in Acrobat, and select **File > Document Properties** from the menu.

1.2.1. Some of the attributes that can be viewed from the properties menu

- Type of PDF (Image; Text/Image; Form Based);
- Version of PDF (e.g. Adobe version 1.3); page size, color/black & white;
- Image quality;
- Embedded objects (sound, videos, etc.);
- Fonts (embedded fonts and/or non-licensed fonts);
- Security (password protected/encrypted/digitally Signed);
- XMP (eXtensible Metadata Platform).



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1.3. Receipt of PDF Files

We heard at the e-Filing Forum that PDF files are commonly exchanged between offices. Your comments related to this would be appreciated.

1. PDF transmission method
 - a. Most common method used for receipt of PDFs from outside sources - e-mail, Diskette, CD, FTP, etc.
 - b. Most common method for inter-office sharing of PDFs
 - c. Are any security features used – encryption, digital signatures – particularly if the file leaves the office?
2. Size limitations
 - a. Have you found that PDFs of a certain size are too large to work with?
 - b. Can you define a specific file size that is too large to work with?
 - c. Do you have limitations on file sizes that can be received electronically at your organization, via e-mail or otherwise? If so, can you provide details?
3. Re-use
 - a. Do you use PDFs for input to word processors?
 - b. Do you use any of the annotation or review features in Acrobat?

1.4. Opening/Viewing/Rendering PDF Files

We are also aware PDF documents that are created in one office do not always display or print in other offices exactly as they were created. Sometimes displaying and printing can vary from one computer to another in the same office. Your comments regarding your experience with these issues would be greatly appreciated since this could have significant impact on our ability to process PDFs.

1. Have you experienced PDFs that have missing or incorrect characters once printed or displayed?
 - a. Do you know if font embedding was used?
 - b. How was the problem discovered?
 - c. How was the problem resolved (re-saved with a different tool or different settings)?
 - d. What was the original file authored with (MS Word, WordPerfect etc.)?
 - e. How was the PDF generated (Adobe product or 3rd party tool)?
2. How do you typically view PDFs (Acrobat or 3rd party tool)?
3. How do you typically print PDFs?



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1.5. Creation of PDF Files

We heard at the e-Filing Forum that PDF files are created by offices using a variety of software products. Your comments related to PDF creation/reading/writing tools would be appreciated.

1. What are the sources/authoring tools used that PDFs are created with?
 - a. Word Processing (Word, WordPerfect, Open Office)
 - b. Graphics / Drawing / CAD (AutoCAD, ChemDraw, etc.)
 - c. Scanning
2. How are the PDFs generated?
 - a. With Adobe products (Word plug-in, Print Driver or Distiller)
 - b. 3rd party tool acting as a print driver
 - c. Is there more than one PDF generator used to create PDF files? Why?
 - d. Have any specific challenges been observed related to the creation of PDF files in your office? For example, does any data loss occur from the source document to the PDF file? Please be as specific as possible in describing the problems encountered and the resolution of the issues.

1.6. Processing PDF Forms

The USPTO is in the process of making all patent forms fill-able and will post new forms as they become available. We heard from some e-Filing Forum participants that many of these forms are used, and that they provide benefits related to their business processes. Your comments regarding the use of PDF fill-able forms would be appreciated.

1. Are USPTO PDF forms used in your current business environment? Why or why not?
2. How are PDF fill-able forms utilized in your current business environment? For example, are forms filled out online and saved to office computers?
 - a. What is the software tool used to save these files?
 - b. Are there challenges in the reuse of the data contained in the PDF forms?
 - c. Does your office use any automation to fill out PDF forms? For example, is information in a docketing system automatically uploaded into a PDF form?
 - d. Are there challenges related to this process?
3. Does your office use any automation to retrieve data from PDF fill-able forms? For example, is information taken from a form and automatically inserted into a database or other document?
 - a. Are there challenges related to this process?



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4. General comments regarding the use of PDF fill-able forms and related software tools would be appreciated. For example, what are the software tools used to insert or extract data into or from these forms. Is the software tool a commercially purchased product or did your office develop the tool?

1.7. Archiving/Storing PDF Files

During the e-Filing Forum we learned that many offices routinely use PDF files to store or archive documents. The size of the archived file is related to the manner in which it was created and saved. Your comments regarding how PDF files are archived and any challenges or successes related to the archival or storage of the PDF files would be appreciated.

1. Comments regarding archiving PDF files.
2. Comments regarding the attributes (see above) of the archived PDF files.

1.8. Future PDF File Requirements

It is our understanding that PDF files are the format of choice for offices for the creation, storage, transmission, and sharing of documents. Comments regarding the future use of PDF files in your office environment would be appreciated.

1. Comments regarding future plans related to receiving, creating, or processing PDF files.
2. Comments regarding any other PDF requirements.

1.9. Sample PDF Files

In the coming months the USPTO hopes to test various pieces of software to see how they receive, view, print, convert, process, and archive, various PDF files. It would be helpful to the USPTO to have a collection of PDF files that can be used for testing. To that end, I am asking that you contribute several PDF files for possible inclusion in this collection.

Your assistance in ensuring that any PDF files submitted for testing purposes are non-confidential and contain only information that is a matter of public record is requested and will be appreciated.



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1.9.1. Common PDF files

First, and perhaps most important, PDF files that comprise a typical *sample* patent filing would be appreciated. Please include a PDF form (downloaded from our website), PDF text (authored in a word processor), and a PDF image/drawing. Use the authoring tools and fonts you would normally use for a real filing in the creation of these PDFs.

The goal is to allow the USPTO to explore the attributes and properties of various PDF files.

If your patent application authoring process originates with word processing files from various clients, it would be helpful to see those files as well. This will help us to learn more about the various fonts that authors use and more about the images that authors sometimes embed in their word processing files. Please convert these word processing files to PDFs.

1.9.2. Uncommon (problem) PDF files

A second category of PDF files that we would like to receive are those files that have caused problems in your environment due to fonts, size, inability to print, etc. Of particular interest are files that rendered or printed differently from one machine to the next.

Please send any comments you have to me either by e-mail (Terri.Raines@USPTO.gov) or phone at 571-272-3393, and again, thank you for your investment of time and creativity. Working together we can create the best possible system for patent electronic filing.