

Handy Tips from the Intellectual Property (IP) Management Desk

Do A Prior Art Search Before Filing Your Patent

What is Prior Art?

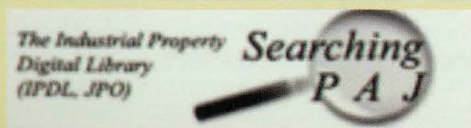
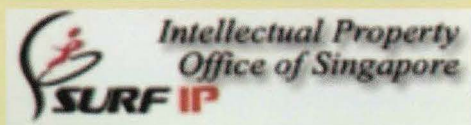
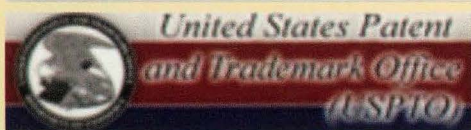
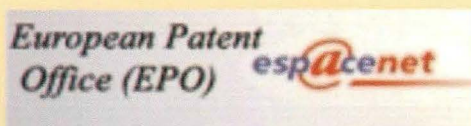
Prior Art refers to scientific and technical information that exists before the effective date of a given patent application.

Prior art may include;

- Previous patents
- Trade journal articles
- Publications (including data books and catalogs)
- Trade shows
- Brochures
- Public discussions (conference and seminar)
- Products, devices & equipments

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Why search for Prior Art?

Prior Art will help you to:

- Understand your competition
- Avoid patent infringement
- Write your patent application
- Learn more about your field of invention
- Save the cost of patenting process

Where to search for Prior Art?

1. United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)
<http://www.uspto.gov/patft/index.html>
 - Covers issued and published U.S. patents from 1970
2. European Patent Office (EPO)
<http://ep.espacenet.com/>
 - Contains patents from all over the world
3. Intellectual Property Office of Singapore
www.surfip.gov.sg
4. The Industrial Property Digital Library (Japan Patent Office)
http://www.ipdl.inpit.go.jp/homepg_e.ipdl
5. Patent Cooperation Treaty Application (PCT)
<http://www.wipo.int/pctdb/en/search-adv.jsp>
 - Contains published PCT applications dating back to 1978

How to Search for Prior Art?

An on-line prior art search can be done by a keyword search

Keyword search

- List the keywords that you would use to describe the invention
- Think of all possible aspects of the invention and choose keyword that describe each aspect
- The quality of a keyword search will depend on the appropriateness of keywords selected