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ANNUAL TECHNICAL REPORT

1999

ON INDUSTRIAL DESIGN INFORMATION ACTIVITIES*

submitted by

JAPAN

An annual series of reports on the industrial design information activities
of members of the Standing Committee on Information Technologies

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- The expression “industrial design” covers designs and models.
- Information related to design patent activities reported by industrial property offices issuing design patents is included in this series of documents.

JAPAN
Annual Technical Reports on Industrial Design Information
Activities
(1999 Edition)

I. Evolution of registration activities

-Changes caused concerning the procedures in application filings and grants (registration) in the year reported. In 1999, application filings and registrations totaled 37,368 and 41,355, respectively.

-Trends or areas experiencing rapid changes in the year reported. Nothing particular to report..

II. Matters concerning the generation, reproduction, and distribution of industrial design documents and of secondary sources of industrial design information (i.e., official gazettes):

-Publication of gazettes and documents by printing, reproduction and electronic printing:

The Japanese Patent Office (JPO) published design documents are printed offset. Plates for printing design gazettes are photoengraved. Plates for printing appeal and trial decisions gazettes are made using a direct process.

-Major public notices by the Industrial Property Office in the industrial design field. The design gazettes and documents published in 1999 are:

Design gazettes:	37,100
Appeal and trial decisions gazettes:	50

-Mass data storage media and microfilms being used:
Since 1989, the JPO has been storing design gazette image data in optical discs, with the total reaching about 1.26 million documents by fiscal 1998.

-Database and office automation:
Nothing particular to report.

III. Matters concerning classifying, reclassifying and indexing of industrial design information according to the present classification systems:

-Classification and reclassification works: Currently used classification systems, e.g., International Design Classification (Locarno Classification) and the like (State

your internal classification, if used.):

The JPO operates the design classification, which is the domestic design classification system revised in 1983. The design classification based primarily on the concept of usage consists of four stages of classification: group, major classification, minor classification and morphological classification as a "sub-minor" classification as required, totaling about 5,100 classification branches.

In 1999, design classifications were assigned to 37,368 applications filed and to about 180,000 items of publicly known data including journals, catalogues, and the like, used as criteria for determining the novelty of design.

-Bibliographic search data and data processing:

Bibliographic data used for search purposes include application number, application data, registration number, registration date, design classification, D-terms (classification symbols of an architecture differing from design classification), and the like. This data is stored in the computer database by document and used for retrieval.

IV. Establishment and upkeep of search file:

-File compilation:

a) For manual-based search:

The drawings of registered design applications are filed by registration number by design classification. Those of pending or refused design applications are filed by application number and design classification.

As to publicly known materials, a single photo is generated for each picture carried on the journal and the like, and stored in the cabinet by specific design classification.

b) For computer-aided search:

By 1999, the JPO had stored 2 million pieces of application data, and 2 million pieces of publicly known data involving image data, bibliographic data, design classification and D-terms in search files.

-Updating;

a) For manual-based search:

The JPO added the drawings of 37,368 pieces of application data to the files.

b) For computer-aided search:

The JPO added 37,368 application data, about 180,000 pieces of publicly known data involving image data and bibliographic data to files.

-Forms of storage for mass storage media and microfilms:
Optical disc and hard disc

-Foreign documentation maintained and/or considered to be

a part of the available search file:

Foreign design gazettes, journals and catalogues

V. Activities in the field of computerized search systems for industrial designs:

-In-house system (online/offline):

The JPO has been processing application data for design examination, such designs (publicly known data) as carried in domestic and overseas journals, catalogues, and the like, into electronic image data (including colored image data). Other than Japanese design classification, the JPO has also generated search key lists (D-term lists) for multi-viewpoint classification for about 330 themes, assigning D-terms (search keys) to application data and publicly known data contained in respective themes in accordance with the relevant list.

The design retrieval system allows online searches of application data and publicly known data using the aforementioned design classification and D-terms as search keys. Retrieved document image data is displayed on a terminal screen from the image file server (color image data are displayed in color) and the high-speed screening can be made.

On the other hand, the system has been downsized and been shifted to a client-server type system since January, 2000, operating without a host computer to achieve faster and more reliable retrieval and screening.

-External database:

Nothing particular to report

-Administrative management systems (e.g., registration, legal status, statistics, administrative support and the like):

The JPO operates the following major administrative management systems:

a) The application processing system processes data on design applications and can inquire online about the legal status regarding the processing of design applications. When an examiner or an administrative officer inputs a design application number from the terminal, the system displays processing details about the application concerned and prints out the results. In addition, in the case of non-response from applicants against notifications of reason for refusal by the examiner within a specified period from the date, in which the notification of reason for refusal was dispatched, the system automatically lists them and outputs the notification of refusal decisions.

The application processing system also automatically drafts various notifications and actions with respect to refusal decisions in the case of non-response from applicants

and decisions of registration in the event no opposition is filed. In case applicants fail to respond the notifications of reason for refusal within a specified period from the date on which the notification of reason for refusal was dispatched, after they were served with regard to given applications, these applications are listed and refusal decisions are automatically drafted according to list entries. In this instance, file-wrappers applicable to the listed application numbers are singled out and combined with printed-out documents.

b) The dispatch processing system records numeric data (e.g. application number, date drafted, examiner's code, and the like) entered on the notification of reason for refusal, refusal decision, and the like, by the examiner as code data with the aid of OCR. In addition, portions written in Japanese, such as attorney's name and the like, are recorded as facsimile image data. This system prints out the patent office's notifications and actions taken by the applicant or attorney and sorts them in order. Finally, this system places these printout in envelopes, weighs them and generates mail slips for dispatch. This system also compiles statistic data on dispatch.

c) The registration system processes registration data and generates notifications and reproduces register entries.

d) The appeals and trial system processes data on appeals and trials, and collects numeric data on appeal and trial number, categorizes the notification, examiner's code and the like, using OCR, and prints out appeal and trial notifications.

e) The file-wrapper control system, (a system that manages file-wrappers of design application for which final action was taken) enables survey on the existence of applicable file-wrappers or whether desired file-wrappers have been reviewed or scrapped.

-Equipment used (hardware including terminals, network and the like, and software):

The JPO operates a comprehensive, integrated system, which incorporates the design processing system and the search system as subsystems. (Refer to "Annual Technical Reports on Patent Information Activities".)

VI. Administration of industrial design services available to the public (e.g., assistance to clients with respect to applications, design registrations, and search procedures, and facilities for obtaining official publications and extracts of registers):

-Planning, management, automation and safety:

The National Center for Industrial Property Information (NCIPI) collects design gazettes, and the like, from 41 foreign patent offices (including 2 international organizations) through the international exchange program. In addition to JPO-published design gazettes, it offers them for public inspection.

The Intellectual Property Centers are established at 8 Regional Bureaus of International Trade and Industry and 55 places in all prefecture across the country and continuously offer, free-of-charge, a public inspection service for design gazettes. The JPO also provides guidance and supervision to these public inspection facilities relating to sorting, preservation the use of gazettes and associated documents.

- Collection, management and preservation:

JPO-published design gazettes are sorted by Japanese design classification and bound into book form for long-term preservation. Also, routine checks are made for breakage, spoilage and missing pages or books including repair. Foreign design gazettes are sorted by date issued or document number and bound into book form for optimum preservation.

-Public information services (including computer service):

a) On public information inspection services, an inspection of paper gazettes can be made at NCIPI and through 8 Regional Bureaus of International Trade and Industry and 55 Intellectual Property Centers in all prefectures across the country. In addition, NCIPI and regional bureaus of International Trade and Industry provide an online public inspection service using the comprehensive document database.

The following online public inspection services are offered by NCIPI (33 terminals), Kinki Regional Bureau (6 terminals), Chubu Regional Bureau (2 terminals), Hokkaido Regional Bureau (1 terminal), Tohoku Regional Bureau (1 terminal), Chugoku Regional Bureau (1 terminal), Shikoku Regional Bureau (1 terminal) and Kyushu Regional Bureau (1 terminal) of International Trade and Industry, and Okinawa General Office (1 terminal):

1) Inquiry by design registration number.

2) Number indexing and inquiry service which checks other relevant numbers from application number, registration number, or appeal and trial number.

3) Class search and inquiry by Japanese Design Classification.

4) Document photocopying (at cost).

b) Offer of industrial property information by the internet

The JPO has been providing patent electronics library service which enables retrieval of about 40 million cases of industrial property information through document numbers or various classifications on the internet since March, 1999.

Major services on the design information to be offered are as follows:

(1) Retrieval of design gazettes database

The design gazettes published since 1889 can be referred by document number.

(2) Retrieval of Japanese design classification and D terms

The quick report information and design gazettes of established and registered designs can be referred as a form of document through the retrieval using D terms.

(3) Classification list

Japanese design classification, Locarno-Japan design classification cross-reference table and D term list can be referred. In addition, the inquiry of appeal/trial gazettes since 1940 is possible. The JPO also offers appeal/trial decision information, transitional information on application, registration, and appeals and trials, court decision or law guide information and the like as related information.

VII. Matters concerning mutual exchange of industrial design documentation and information:

-International or regional cooperation in exchange of design information by the forms of gazettes:

The JPO exchanges design gazettes with 80 countries, sending design gazettes to 26 countries and receiving design gazettes and the others from 43 countries (including two international organizations).

-Exchange of machine-readable information (e.g., CD-ROM, magnetic tape type data):

None.

VIII. Matters concerning Education and Training including Technical Assistance to Developing Countries:

a) Activities and cooperation through Japanese voluntary contribution to WIPO: WIPO Funds-in-Trust/Japan

- One JPO official was dispatched to the Department of Intellectual Property, the Science Technology and

Environment Agency of Lao People's Democratic Republic as a WIPO expert to provide advice and training relating to industrial design examination procedures.

- The JPO accepted a total of 60 trainees from Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the Philippines and Viet Nam to provide education and training on administration, enforcement and examination of industrial property right as well as IP information and office automation in IP Office with the cooperation of the Japan Institute of Invention and Innovation (JIII).

b) Cooperation to developing countries utilizing other schemes

- Dispatch of experts

Under a scheme of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), one JPO official was dispatched respectively to the Department of Intellectual Property of Thailand and the Directorate General of Intellectual Property Rights, Ministry of Law and Legal Affairs of Indonesia as JICA experts to provide advice and training relating to industrial design examination procedures.

- Education and Training for government officials

With the cooperation of JICA, the JPO provided intellectual property administration JICA training courses for administrative work related to industrial property in non-APEC developing countries. The 10 participants were officials from Brazil, Columbia, Cuba, Egypt, India, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Paraguay, Slovakia and Turkey. The APEC industrial property course was provided for government officials who were working in industrial property administration and examination in the APEC region. The 21 participants were officials from China, Indonesia, Korea, Mexico, Peru, Thailand, the Philippines and Viet Nam. As part of the training courses, the JPO provided lectures and patent information search training.

The JPO invited one to three trainees each from Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia and Viet Nam as counterparts of the experts dispatched to these countries to provide training in specialized fields which included lectures and training on computer technology. The JPO also held the fourth APEC/PFP training course on management of industrial property rights in Thailand. The 47 participants came from 10 APEC member countries and 2 regions, and there were 22 lecturers from 7 countries and one international organization.

In Singapore, JPO held a Seminar on Intellectual Property Rights for IP Enforcement Staff Members which

was attended by 43 officials from 8 Asian countries including the host nation.

- Training for the private sector

With the cooperation of the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship (AOTS) and JIII, the JPO lectured on the subject of industrial property as a whole including industrial property information searches, in the Industrial Property Training Course, which was held a total of eight times. The courses were attended by 135 trainees from Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, the Philippines and the Viet Nam.

c) Publication of intellectual property laws on CD-ROM

The Japan Patent Agency translated the intellectual property laws of major industrial nations and developing countries into English to assist the intellectual property offices of developing countries who were revising their domestic intellectual property laws for the WTO/TRIPS Agreement by January 1st, 2000, and required the "Cooperative Work of Information Arrangement of Foreign Industrial Property Systems" in CD-ROM form. The 1999 version of the CD-ROM includes industrial property right laws and ordinances of 22 countries, one region and one organization including: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Britain, Canada, China, EU, France, Germany, Holland, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain, Singapore, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines, the United States and Viet Nam. The JPO then distributed the CD-ROMS to developing APEC economies in free of charge. In the future, the Agency is planning to summarize IP laws of certain nations

IX. Other relevant matters:

a) Locarno-Japan design classification cross-reference table (concordance data):

The JPO produces the Locarno-Japan design classification cross-reference table (concordance data) to assure effective use of Japanese design gazettes in foreign countries as examination data.

b) English version of Japanese design classification:

The JPO is working on an English version of the Japanese design classification to assure effective use of Japanese design gazettes and concordance data abroad.