

[1] E-government pioneer

The JPO started acceptance of online applications for patents and utility models in December 1990, becoming the pioneer in the field of electronic government which is the mainstay of the e-Japan priority plan (decided by the IT Strategy Headquarters on March 29, 2001).

Furthermore, since April 1998 applications can be filed through general-use personal computers using free software for filing applications from PCs. In January 2000, acceptance of online procedures began for designs, trademarks, the national phase of PCT applications, and appeals. As of March 2001, the online application rate for patents and utility models was 97%.

The electronic data accepted with online applications is useful for enhancing the efficiency of general office administration in the JPO through comprehensive computerization of administrative processing of applications, examinations, and appeals & trials. Furthermore, it is effectively used for such purpose as CD-ROM publication, industrial property rights information presentation service, data exchange with foreign countries, and search system.

Electronic Settlements

History of the Paperless System



Start of electronic inspection of comprehensive document databases



January

Start of publication of official gazettes on CD-ROM



New registration system inauguration

Start of online application from PCs

January

Start of electronic data exchange of priority documents with the European Patent Office

March

Establishment of the industrial Property Digital Library

June
1984

Paperless project inauguration

March
1985

Inauguration of the patent document search system(F term)

October
1986



December
1990

Start of acceptance of online application for patents and utility models

1993

July Start of peripheral procedures (electronic drafting), online demand / inspection



October
1996

Inauguration of cash payment system

April
1997

April
1998

1999

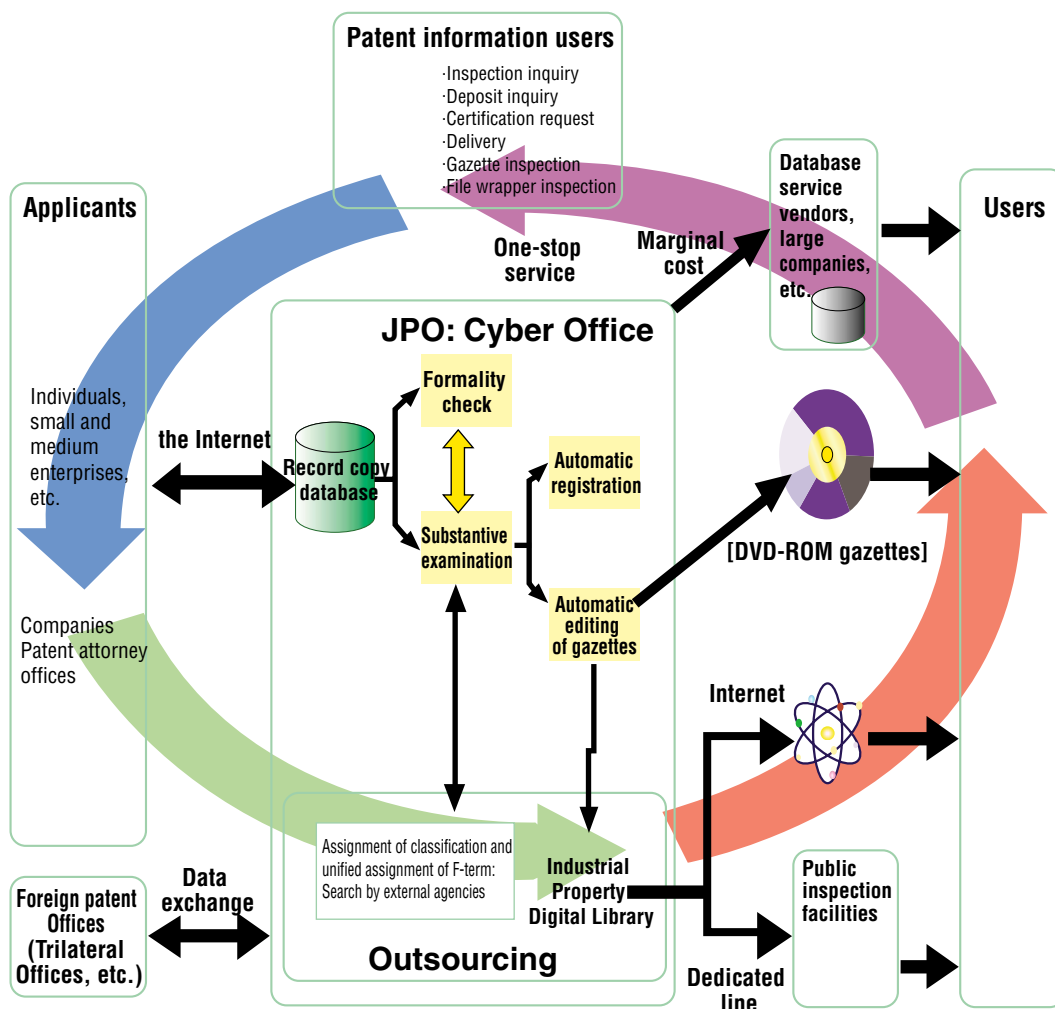
January
2000

Inauguration of the Paperless System for designs, trademarks, PCT(national phase) and appeals

[2] Efforts regarding Internet applications

With the rapid growth of digital networks and the employment of broadband in the Internet infrastructure, various restrictions (line speed, cost, ease of operation, convenience, etc.) of present ISDN applications are emerging. Furthermore, demand from users for Internet patent applications is mounting.

The JPO is putting forth the utmost effort toward realizing Internet applications, with a view to establishing an international technical standard at the WIPO for Internet-based patent applications.



[3] Electronic payment

The JPO either withdraws online application the fees from pre-opened deposit accounts or accepts cash payment by the use of national fund payment statements. However, in view of the recent progress in e-commerce technology such as e-banking, the JPO is studying the introduction of an instant electronic fee payment system.