



Name: Anna-Marie Pearse

Profession: Patent Attorney

Role: Application prosecution and search

Patent Filing Frequency: Frequent

Patent Knowledge: Thorough

Computer Skills: Fully computer literate and has all the necessary skills to manually complete USPTO patent applications. Does not use XML or scripting in her work-flows.

“USPTO’s systems are designed to help themselves, not people like me. I could do twice as much work with just a few tweaks to these pages”

Bio:

Anne-Marie Pearse has been a patent attorney for the last 8 years of her career. She works for a mid-sized firm that focuses mainly on patent law, and her main day-to-day duties consist primarily of managing multiple patent applications and making sure they get prosecuted correctly. She also shares a team of paralegals with some of the other attorneys in the office, and she often uses them to complete most of the manual labor involved in filing the applications. She also assists with the prior art searches when clients are initially exploring whether their idea is patentable or not.

Anna-Marie files multiple patents a day, but spends most of her time filing follow-on actions, and reviewing documentation. Her main point of contention with the current process is how many steps she has to repeatedly go through when completing even the most simple of actions on any patent application. She is convinced that a few slight edits to the USPTO’s web pages and processes would lead to huge gains in efficiency for her and her staff.

Goals:

- Oversee and finalize submission of multiple patent applications daily
- Manage prosecution of patent applications assigned to her
- Easily make edits to documentation on patent applications
- Effortlessly manage the current cases docketed to herself and her colleagues
- Reduce redundant and outdated process steps

Frustrations:

- Heavy UI interactions and work-flows heavily influenced by tradition make managing patent applications tedious and sluggish
- Difficult to make edits to information and documentation
- Adding customer numbers and personnel to FQT certificates is time consuming and difficult
- Lack of interactions that would allow Anna-Marie to apply actions to several applications at once

Ideal Work-flow:

1. Allow paralegals to create and prepare a patent application, where Anna-Marie could then review and submit the documents
2. A notification center alerts Anna-Marie or her team when an application requires action from them
3. Changes to documents and bibliographic information can be requested and approved from one interaction on the website
4. Similar actions can be applied to multiple applications at one time, so that Anna-Marie and her staff don't have to manually make edits across several applications
5. All application submission and follow-on actions have entirely digital work-flows, with automatic approval at time of submission (when applicable)

Persona Document - eMOD



Name: Carl Zimmer

Profession: Patent Attorney

Role: Partner

Patent Filing Frequency: Rarely

Patent Knowledge: Complete

Computer Skills: High computer skills. Moderate understanding of technical side, with a strong grasp on the systems management. Knows what technology can do for him but not how to do it.

“Every second we save processing applications translates to thousands of dollars saved on our end.”

Bio:

Carl Zimmer is a 58 year-old partner for Stern Zimmer & Walters LLC, a large law firm specializing in IP and patent law. Because of his position, he no longer individually deals with patent filing, but rather is focused on managing his firm's work-flows and policies, and occasionally with high profile patent litigation. He knows that every increase in efficiency for his firm's internal processes can translate to reduced labor costs saved and a competitive edge over other law firms.

Although Carl's knowledge on development is limited, he has a strong understanding of a systems management, and knows that technology is the key to optimizing his firm's processes. He has several developers on staff to improve internal systems and scrape data, and also often explores IT solutions from third party vendors. He is frustrated by the USPTO's focus on manual data entry and is an avid crusader for the modernization effort for EFS-web and related systems. He has a blog that highlights issues and suggestions for USPTO's systems, and as well is a frequent contributor to USPTO user outreach groups.

Goals:

- Fully optimize patent processes
- Automate as much of the patent process as possible
- Help drive updates to USPTO work-flow processes to match modern technology and meet user needs
- Increase speed of patent application processing

Frustrations:

- USPTO work-flows supports manual processes moderately well, but not automation
- Lack of API means that Carl's firm must be more creative with the way they gather data
- Lack of standardization for submitting application 'packets' prevent his firm from automating processes
- USPTO does not encourage submitting data in ways other than pdf - which take the longest to process from a technical standpoint
- Slow turnaround on office actions, petitions, and data changes makes application processing slow. This also encourages law firms to make sure applications are well prepared before sending them in, which can lead to high stress on his staff and later filing dates in some cases
- Lack of automation for PKID authentication means that a lot of time is lost on his staff getting the correct permissions set

Ideal Work-flow:

1. USPTO releases a filing option to take a standardized 'data template'
2. Carl's law firm's system formats data automatically and prepares it for submission to the USPTO
3. Application is submitted to USPTO and immediately entered in Private PAIR
4. Any edits or changes can be made immediately from the web service
5. His staff is notified when applications require attention
6. Fees are automatically billed from his firm's account. This produces invoices that his accounting can then forward to clients
7. API provides access to the data for the firm's internal systems to do reporting and metrics



Name: Bill Waterson

Profession: Senior Software Engineer

Role: Experienced Inventor

Patent Filing Frequency: Intermittent

Patent Knowledge: Moderate

Computer Skills: Extremely high level of computer skills and domain knowledge.

“I don’t really have to do too much when submitting a patent, because our company’s lawyers take care of most of it.”

Bio:

Bill Waterson is a very high-level software engineer for a large multi-national corporation. He has a wide array of technical skills that make him invaluable for exploring new projects. He is often the head of development for his corporation’s prototype products, and is normally listed as first inventor on the resulting patents. Bill generally works with his company’s legal team to supply them with whatever documents and subject matter they need, but is more than happy to let the professionals handle all the legal paperwork. Regardless, after years of being involved in patent prosecution, he knows a fair amount about the process and how the USPTO does business.

Bill generally likes his job, and loves spending time actually doing the coding and programing that he is supposed to. He quickly gets bored doing bureaucratic activities, and will often take the time to attempt to automate as much of the ‘business arm, of his job so that he can spend more time working on software. He currently has several of his own processes in place that help him generate the documents he needs when submitting a patent.

Goals:

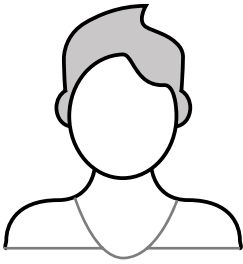
- Do as little paperwork as possible
- Quickly ‘hand off’ required documents to the legal team and let them take care of the rest
- Designate his employer as the assignee for his patent

Frustrations:

- Large amount of formatting rules and outdated practices for document preparation slows down efficiency
- Lack of standardization for application processing documents makes it hard to automate the processes. Bill is a strong believer that if there was more of a standard, the whole process could be scripted without having to manually prepare all the documentation

Ideal Work-flow:

1. Bill types his information and documentation in one document
2. Bill uploads his contributions to the application submissions
3. Parts are automatically formatted and inserted into the appropriate place
4. When all parts are submitted by all parties, the attorneys review the document and submit it
5. When edits need to be made, attorneys email a link that would open the application parts and allow Bill to make edits on-the-fly



Name: Jonah Lehrer

Profession: Auto Mechanic

Role: Pro Se Inventor

Patent Filing Frequency: None

Patent Knowledge: None

Computer Skills: Computer literate and frequently uses the web, but lacks technical skills. Primarily uses Microsoft Word for documents and Gmail for communication.

"I have this great idea for a patent... but how do I turn it into a payday for me and my family?"

Bio:

Jonah Lehrer is an auto mechanic at a local gas station in Parkville, MO. During his free time, he has been working a new style of brake pads that are significantly more durable than the current leading technology. Convinced that this idea would become the new standard for years to come, Jonah has decided to file for a patent application. However, since his design is fairly simple once the concept has been seen, he is worried that any company he show it to will steal the idea. Therefore he has resolved to try to get a patent granted himself before turning to another company to sell the idea. He does this process on his personal computer at home, using slow and moderately unreliable satellite internet.

Goals:

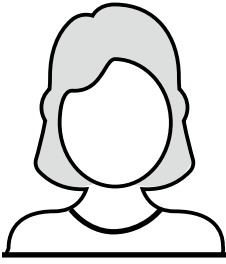
- Submit an application for a new patent (actually wants to submit a provisional application but is unaware of this option)
- Receive a filing receipt
- 'Sell patent' - assign an assignee

Frustrations:

- Being unsure of the patent application process, Jonah must often research how to complete a certain document. However, because he does not have a PKID certificate, every time he exits the application process, he has to start all over again.
- His unreliable internet makes the application and researching process slow and tedious. He often has to take cigarette breaks to calm down and stay focused.
- After learning how long it can take to get a patent application to be processed, as well as how involved it is, Jonah is starting to realize that he needs an attorney to be effective in his endeavors. However, he is wary about sharing his invention with any other group until there he has some 'proof' that this idea was his.
- Jonah has no idea how to effectively calculate the fees he will potentially have to pay. Money is tight around his house, and he is torn by his desire to get his patent application processed immediately and his fear of overpaying for his application and not getting that money back.

Ideal Work-flow:

1. Create an account for USPTO where he can save his work and access his resources
2. Watch a video on the patent application process which gives a summary of the USPTO work-flow and answers FAQs
3. Walk through a step-by-step process when submitting the patent application/provisional application
4. Hypothetically calculate his fees so he can gauge how expensive the patent application process is
5. Receive a filing receipt as proof of his claim
6. Designate an assignee after he has sold his idea to the highest bidder



Name: Yun Woo Sik

Profession: Paralegal

Role: Patent legal worker

Patent Filing Frequency: Daily

Patent Knowledge: High/Specific

Computer Skills: Moderate computer skills and web literate. Most of Yun's skills come from personal web usage and on-the-job experience. No advanced skills.

"I hate private PAIR's search page! I have to click like, 7 times to get to the right screen. It's annoying!"

Bio:

Yun is a 34 year-old mother of 2, and works as a paralegal at a large law firm specializing in Intellectual property during the week while her kids are at school. Her primary role is to file new patent applications. She uses the work-flows and special software purchased for use by her lawfirm, but still manually uploads the information and documents up to EFS-Web. She also handles a lot of the data corrections and fees for applications when it needs to be done, only submitting the work for review to the attorneys before submitting.

Yun more or less likes her job, and is not overly concerned with increasing efficiency. She works hard, but since she is paid hourly, she really doesn't feel the incentive to go out of her way to renovate the submission process. What she does hate is some of the UI issues that make EFS-web and the PAIRs pages feel "like they were made in the early 90s". If there were any changes that she would make, it would be to update the look and feel of the online system to match some of the more modern web conventions.

Goals:

- Update the visual design of the UI so that it is more pleasant to use
- Modernize page interactions so they are more user friendly
- Don't change the overall process to the point where Yun's law firm would have to redo their internal process

Frustrations:

- Bulky interactions slow down what should be trivial tasks
- Visual design of the pages slowly wears on Yun throughout the day
- Captcha interaction is disruptive to work flow
- Automatic timeout interaction is disruptive to Yun's daily work-flow
- Upload documents interaction has several problematic hurdles

Ideal Workflow:

1. System remembers Yun's credentials all day, for every action she takes (she would only need to login in the morning and after her lunch hour)
2. Yun enters application data and saves the application
3. She sends the application to the managing attorney for review
4. Both the attorney and Yun are notified when an application she worked on has new correspondence/eOffice action
5. On attorney's advisement, Yun will make necessary edits and send the document to the attorney for review before submitting
6. Yun is automatically notified when fees when they are approaching their due dates