

Plenary “The Future belongs to those who prepare for it today”

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Some approaches recently adopted and increasingly spreading to IPOs are a combination of digital data, electronic workflow, internationally interconnected platforms, web-based search tools, and machine-readable and searchable databases.

All elements are interconnected and interoperable thanks to international standards of good practices and technical formats. IPOs share a common vision that services to users of IP registration systems should be more timely, accurate, coherent, predictable and valuable.

The driving forces behind this trend include global trade, commercial and innovation activities as well as the advent of user-friendly web-based applications and utilization of big data. The business needs of IPOs require the use of the recent ICT applications and platforms, whereas new technologies have opened up new business solutions for IPOs and users of IP systems.

Recent examples of WIPO platforms and databases such as WIPO CASE and PATENTSCOPE will be briefly explained to give a better understanding of their value and implications for the future. IPOs have started to understand signs of profound changes in global IP registration services that may be brought in by general agreement between IPOs and users of IP systems on the advantages of using digital data, electronic procedures and global databases.

Convergence of practices among participating IPOs in global projects using WIPO CASE will bring more benefits to users, while IPOs and users not following these trends may be left behind. Small but proactive users and IPOs should be able to leapfrog large but conservative users and IPOs.

WIPO CASE has started to integrate all the relevant tools and data on a global seamless platform, creating a critical mass and sustainable synergy among IPOs and users seeking global IP registration. WIPO's global protection systems under treaties such as PCT, Madrid and The Hague, support the use of global platforms like WIPO CASE because those treaties are being relentlessly improved and updated by incorporating electronic procedures and digital data in their annual revisions of regulations.

Could we see a virtual network of examiners for patent, trademark and design applications? Could we overcome the language barrier by machine translation technologies? Could attorneys and applicants not only save costs but also extract additional value from new procedures? Could we see more international collaboration and competition among IPOs? WIPO considers that IPOs and users will benefit from much more knowledge-intensive interactions in future IP prosecution if this trend continues on global platforms and databases. The speed of change is fast and accelerating so that IPOs and users need to catch up with it by improving practices and services with an open mind and smarter thinking. A brief roadmap for WIPO will be discussed to assist stakeholders in developing global infrastructure and platforms to allow this new paradigm to bring you more benefits.