Records Management
Big Buckets Scheduling Project Review
August 2012

United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)

Overview

- Inception and Groundwork
- Grouping Record Series into Buckets
- MS Access Database
- Implementation of Schedules
- Conclusion
- Q&A

Inception and Groundwork

Inception: The Scheduling Environment

•Comprehensive Records Schedule published for USPTO staff

•Retention policies are based on both federal retention schedules (known as General Records Schedules) and agency-unique retention schedules

•Reliance upon business owners to request updates or inclusion of new record types to schedules

•Retention schedule platform/software environment: Microsoft Office 2010; scheduling data managed in Access

•Scheduling project started before media neutrality, with schedules not reflecting GRS 24 and 27 updates, and before ERA replaced paper SF115s

Inception: Need & Basic Structure

- Need arose due to fast-paced IT system development
  - Could not schedule systems fast enough
  - Need to seek media-neutral schedules
  - Eliminate scheduling of electronic systems

- Decided to schedule according to *function*; used current trend of Lines of Business
  - Identified 5 functional business areas
    - *Patent Granting*
    - *Trademark Registration*
    - *Dissemination*
   - *Agency Administrative*
    - *IP Program Policy*

Groundwork: Buy-in

- Obtained initial approval from office director
  - Used existing resources; no additional funding

- Prepared briefing for USPTO agency executives May 2003
  - Assurance of the need
  - Explained the resources

- Informed the General Counsel

- Reached MOU with NARA for participation in the pilot scheduling initiative in 2003
  - open-ended completion date

- Announced project and objectives to records coordinators

Groundwork: Preliminary Steps

•Conducted records inventory
- Developed inventory kit to assist with inventory
- Set up meetings with records liaisons in business areas
- Discovered both new and obsolete series

•Set-up standing weekly status meetings
- Provided structure when other workload became priority
- Allowed for NARA staff to attend as needed or when available
- Allowed for tracking of "to-do" lists

•Held quarterly meetings with NARA Appraisal Archivist, Records Officer and key business area liaisons and subject matter experts

•Set up capabilities in the existing Access database:
- Track inventory data
- Reports used to analyze trends and groupings
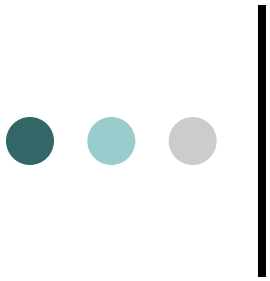
Grouping Records Series into Buckets
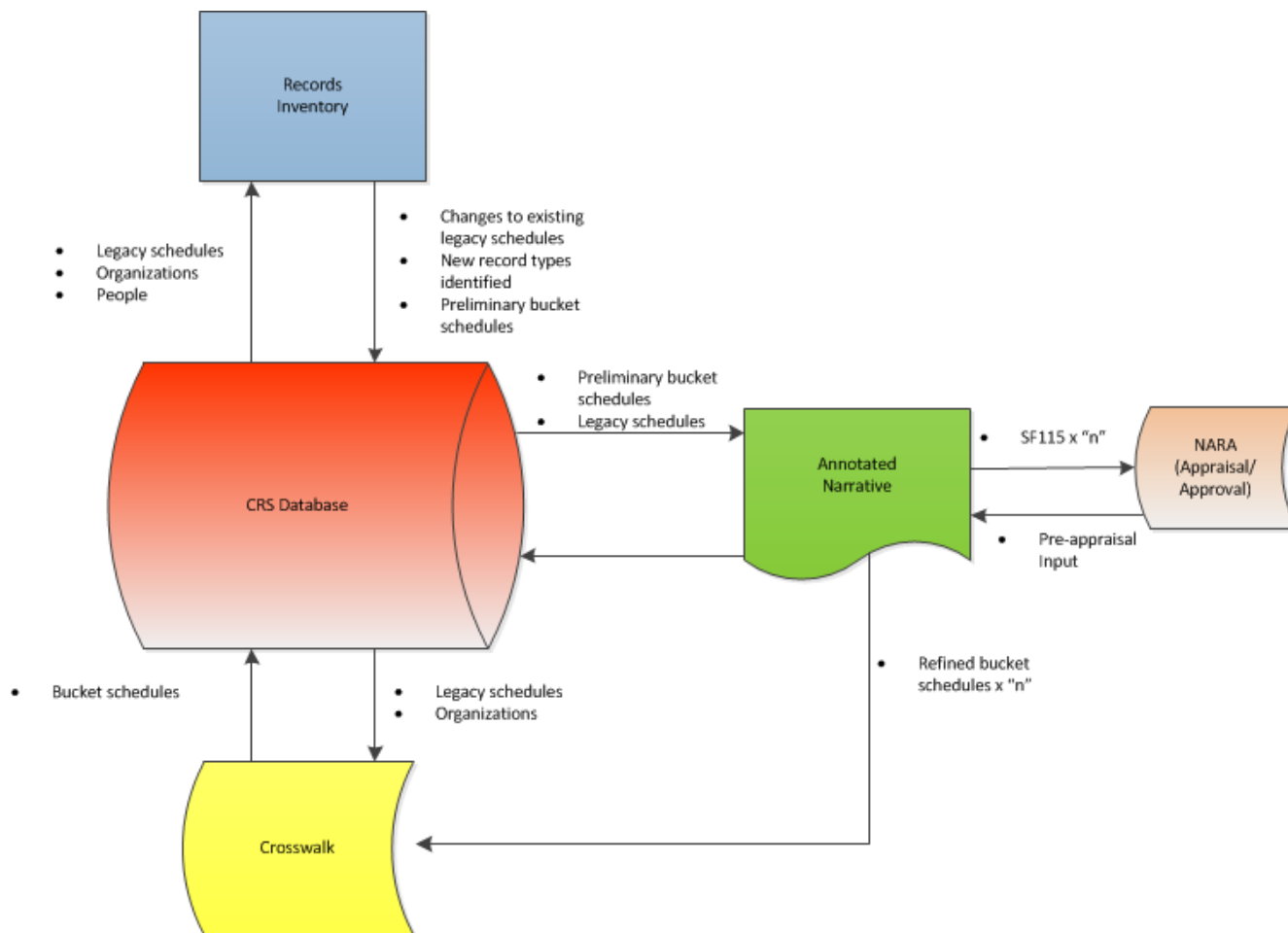
Buckets: Evolution

- Buckets evolved to include sub-buckets
  - Developed narratives and crosswalk for each bucket schedule
    - Record-type grouping provided means for categorization
    - Crosswalk ensured legacy schedules accounted for
    - Assisted with internal analysis and appraisal
  - Buckets tied to business process - not electronic systems
  - Negotiated changes in retention to facilitate grouping
  - Annotated narrative included legacy and new series

- After sorting and grouping was complete, prepared SF115 materials and sent to records coordinator then to the business executives
  - Imposed approval deadline
  - No response equivalent to approval of schedule
  - Schedules forwarded to NARA for appraisal

- Began inventory of subsequent bucket while NARA appraisal of prior bucket was ongoing

Buckets: Narrative

"Narrative" was the name for the MS Word document that provided the list of record series for the new SF115.

- Established outline of new record series

- Established "sub-buckets" when needed

- Sorted by permanent (long term) to temporary (short term)

- "Dropped" existing "legacy" and new record series into sub-buckets

- Annotated narrative was later stripped of the annotations and became the final attachment for the SF 115

Buckets: Annotated Narrative Example

4 - Trademark Case File Feeder Records and Related Indexes
This series consists of source records and records generated by various Trademark automated information systems that are then loaded into the official case file record. They are considered a feeder to the official case file. The permanent records are held in the official case file and/or official repository, and the feeder systems hold records and information on a temporary basis. Extra paper copies or papers that are scanned into the systems are considered feeder records and are not permanent.

RETENTION:
Temporary: Destroy or delete when transfer to official Trademark Case File has been verified and the feeder documentation is no longer needed for current agency business.

Abandoned Trademark Applications	N1-241-96-6 #46b (1)(2)
Trademark Applications As Filed	N1-241-96-6 #7
Trademark Image Capture Retrieval System (TICRS)	N1-241-01-1 #3d,e,f
Trademark Petitions	N1-241-96-6 #44b
Published Trademarks Index	N1-241-96-6 #42b
TEAS	N1-241-01-01 #4c,d,e
TARR	N1-241-01-01 #5c,d
TRADEUPS	N1-241-01-2 #3c.d.e.f
TIPS	N1-241-01-02 #4c,d,e
TRAM II Updates	N1-241-96-5 #64b
TTABIS	N1-241-01-02 #1d
RAM	N1-241-98-2 #5b
Global Correspondence Updates	N1-241-96-6 #12a,b
Copies of Petition Decisions From the Commissioner	N1-241-96-6 #44b
Applicant's Index, 1922-1979 - Microfilm	N1-241-96-4 #31b

Buckets: Crosswalk

Microsoft Excel "Crosswalk" provided a breakout view of new bucket series.

- Sorted identically to narrative, data added to facilitate analysis

- New and existing (legacy) retentions

- Mapped to old series citation

- Illustrated major or minor changes from legacy to new retentions
    - assisted in appraisal
    - highlighted when there was no material change

- Included existing office of record

- Tracked notes and columns

Crosswalk Example

OD SF115 Item	SF115 Item	subBucket	Main Retention	New Retention Period	Current Series Title	Current Citation	Current Office of Record
		Trademarks Registration and Maintenance					
	BRM:	Service for Citizens - Economic Development - Intellectual Property Protection					
4.3	**4.4 - Trademark Case File Feeder Records and Related Indexes**						
	This series consists of source records and records generated by various Trademark automated information systems that are then loaded into the official case file record. They are considered a feeder to the official case file. The permanent records are held in the official case file and/or official repository, and the feeder systems hold records and information on a temporary basis. Extra paper copies or papers that are scanned into the systems are considered feeder records and are not permanent.						
	4	Trademark Case File Feeder Records and Related Indexes	Temporary	Temporary: Destroy or delete when transfer to official Trademark Case File has been verified and the feeder documentation is no longer needed for current agency business.	Abandoned Trademark Applications	N1-241-96-6 #46b (1) (2)	Trademark Law Offices
	4	Trademark Case File Feeder Records and Related Indexes	Temporary	Temporary: Destroy or delete when transfer to official Trademark Case File has been verified and the feeder documentation is no longer needed for current agency business.	Applicant's Index, 1922-1979 - MICROFILM	N1-241-96-4 #31b	Trademark Search Facilities Branch
	4	Trademark Case File Feeder Records and Related Indexes	Temporary	Temporary: Destroy or delete when transfer to official Trademark Case File has been verified and the feeder documentation is no longer needed for current agency business.	Global Correspondence Updates	N1-241-96-6 #12a,b	Trademark Program Control
	4	Trademark Case File Feeder Records and Related Indexes	Temporary	Temporary: Destroy or delete when transfer to official Trademark Case File has been verified and the feeder documentation is no longer needed for current agency business.	Published Trademarks-MICROFILM	N1-241-96-6 #42b	DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR TRADEMARK EXAMINATION POLICY

TICRS Schedule (Before)

Trademark Image Capture and Retrieval System (TICRS)

The Trademark (TM) Office receives and processes large volumes of correspondence. Currently paper versions of these documents are routed and stored in conventional file systems. The Trademark Image Capture and Retrieval System (TICRS) project will provide the capabilities necessary to manage these documents in electronic form by capturing and retrieving both incoming and outgoing correspondence. The scanning of incoming paper trademark documents will enable the implementation of re-engineered business processes, which will reduce processing cycle times and improve operating efficiency. Scanning technologies are focused on providing image records of new applications, with expansion planned to capture other TM application documents. These image records will be used for a number of purposes, including updating the database of cropped trademark images; providing copies of applications to the search library and to the Certification Branch for copy sales; and for internal TM use during examination. Use of Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology to convert scanned documents to text allows elimination of manual data entry and will improve quality. The system's index provides a link between scanned documents and the original trademark application using the application serial number:

a. System software and updates
b. Life Cycle Management Documentation
c. Inputs (paper):
  1) Paper, Applications.
  2) Paper, Application-related correspondence.
d. Outputs (paper or electronic):
  1) Images to retrieval database.
  2) Electronic image of drawing page.
  3) Drawing page printout.
  4) OCR Image in Portable Document Format (PDF).
  5) Index data.
e. Error Logs.
f. Staging Files.
g. Backups.
h. Electronic Mail and Word Processing System Copies:
  1) Copies that have no further administrative value after the recordkeeping copy is made. Include copies maintained by individuals in personal files, personal electronic mail directories, or other personal directories on hard disk or network drives, and copies on shared network drives that are used only to produce recordkeeping copy.
  2) Copies used for dissemination, revision, or updating that are maintained in addition to the recordkeeping copy.

N1-241-01-01 #3

a. Transfer to the configuration management tool prior to unit testing (N1-241-96-5 #71).
b. Transfer electronic copy to the configuration management tool prior to Technical Review Board meeting for each phase as required in the Quality Assurance Plan and the Configuration Management Plan (N1-241-96-5 #71).
c. Inputs (paper):
  1) Permanent. After scanning into TICRS, send to the Law Offices. Follow disposition instructions for related records. See Comprehensive Records Schedules (CRS) Section 5/18 (N1-241-96-6 #46).
  2) Permanent. After scanning into TICRS, send to the Law Offices. Follow disposition instructions for related records. See Comprehensive Records Schedules (CRS) Section 5/18 (N1-241-96-6 #46).
d. Outputs:
  1) Transfer to retrieval database. Destroy or Delete when transfer has been verified and data is no longer needed.
  2) Store on Trademark Cropped Image Server. Destroy or Delete when transfer has been verified and data is no longer needed.
  3) Destroy or Delete when transfer to the Trademark Case Files has been verified and data is no longer needed.
  4) Transfer to TRADEUPS. Destroy or Delete when transfer has been verified and data is no longer needed.
  5) Delete after the information is no longer needed to support the reconstruction of, or to serve as the backup to, the master file.
e. Delete after error correction.
f. Delete after staging completion.
g. Back up daily and delete when replaced by a subsequent comprehensive backup file. Backup tape will be used as vital record copy.
h. Electronic Mail and Word Processing System Copies:
  1) Destroy/delete after the recordkeeping copy has been produced.
  2) Destroy/delete when dissemination, revision, or updating is completed.

TICRS Schedule (In Process)

Trademark Image Capture and Retrieval System (TICRS)
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e. Error Logs.
f. Staging Files.
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h. Electronic Mail and Word Processing System Copies:
   1) Copies that have no further administrative value after the recordkeeping copy is made. Include copies maintained by individuals in personal files, personal electronic mail directories, or other personal directories on hard disk or network drives, and copies on shared network drives that are used only to produce recordkeeping copy.
   2) Copies used for dissemination, revision, or updating that are maintained in addition to the recordkeeping copy.

N1-241-01-01:3
a. See GRS 24, 3b(1)
b. See GRS 24, 3b(1)
c. See N1-241-06-2:2
d. See N1-241-06-2:4
e. See N1-241-06-2:4
f. See N1-241-06-2:4
g. See GRS 24, 4a(1)
h. Electronic Mail and Word Processing System Copies:
   1) See GRS 20
   2) See GRS 20

Legacy electronic system sub-parts accounted for in new bucket and GRS schedules

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TICRS Schedule (After)

Trademark Case Files (Selected)

This series consists of selected Trademark application and case files, as well as any related index or finding aids for the case files. Documents include records of intake, examination, prosecution, assignment, registration and post-registration activity that constitute the record of a case file.

Selection Criteria:

-Trademarks of Federal agencies
-Trademarks of State entities
-Trademarks that held an active registration of more than 30 years
-Native American Tribal Insignia
-Marks having met selective industry distinction
-Marks having set distinction in appeal

Includes, but not limited to, the following USPTO records:

-Abandoned Trademark Applications
-Applicant's Index
-Corrected and Amended Trademark Registrations
-Examiners Registrations/Trademark Operations
-Trademark Assignments and Indexes
-Trademark Image Capture and Retrieval System
-Trademark Oppositions
-Trademark Petitions and Petition Decisions

N1-241-06-2:2 (Previously N1-241-96-6:46a(1), b(1))
Permanent: Transfer selected files to NARA 6 years after trademark registrations are cancelled or expired or go abandoned.

TICRS Schedule (After)

Trademark Image Capture and Retrieval System (TICRS) Feeder Records

TICRS is designed to capture store retrieve and print digital images of Trademark application documents. TICRS has the following logical components: (1) the capture components encompass the input of digital images by scanning paper and the capture of index data; (2) the storage component manages the physical storage of images and provides access control to maintain security; and (3) the retrieval component provides query and output capabilities for applications within the system.

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N1-241-06-2:4 (Previously N1-241-01-01:3d,e,f)
Temporary: Destroy or delete when transfer to official Trademark Case File has been verified and the feeder documentation is no longer needed for current agency business.
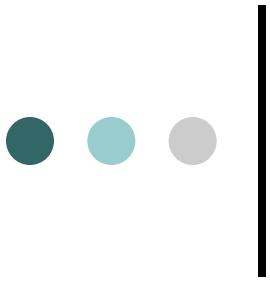
MS Access Database

Database Benefits

- Maintain "live" and legacy record schedules together in a single repository

- Track Inventory data for pending record schedules

- Track re-alignment and re-naming of USPTO organizations

- Utilize database queries to publish USPTO records schedules in Adobe PDF

- Execute database queries to isolate records of interest
  - Query by bucket schedule
  - Query by USPTO organization

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Database Structure – Tables

The Comprehensive Records Schedule (CRS) database contains two "primary" tables:

- tblCRSLive – contains Record Scheduling data. Primary fields include the following:

  -Citation
  -Series Title
  -Addenda
  -Series Contents
  -Disposition

- tblHiSortLive – contains Organizational data. Primary fields include the following:

  -HiSort3
  -Org

CRS Database Structure – tblHiSortLive

One record exists for each Organization

TitlePg attribute used for Comprehensive Records Schedule generation

Defines Parent/Child relationship

Links to tblCRSLive via the HiSort3 field

CRS Database Structure – tblCRSLive

Contains both Organizational data

...and Record Series data

Section Number and HS3 fields used in CRS generation

CRS – Data Entry and Query Forms

Fields used to track Inventories

Form contains combination of Data and Parameter Controls

CRS – Data Entry and Query Forms (Edit Organization Data)

Edit Organization (HiSort) Data

CRS - Crosswalk Generation

Access and Excel enabled tracking of new and legacy data simultaneously via additional table and queries

Legacy Data

Scheduling Initiative Data

CRS Database Structure – Data Entry and Query Forms (Filtering Capability)

Filter by bucket

CRS Database Structure – Data Entry and Query Forms (Filtering Capability)

Filter by USPTO Org

CRS Generation – Access Report

Other reports generate the disseminated Comprehensive Records Schedule – which saves to PDF

Implementation

Implementation

- Determine how this would be displayed in our current Comprehensive Records Schedule (CRS) document
  - At first we simply updated series entries with the new schedule (new N1) in each section
  - Later we added appendices that had the entire SF115 to be more inclusive

- Determine how schedules are used by offices
  - Some offices use the CRS to find retention policies
  - Some others use the SF115s to find retention policies

Implementation: CRS Simplified Entry

Series Title

Series Contents

Trademarks Program and Policy Subject Files

These records document the overall direction, operation, programs of the Trademark Organization and official policy actions of the Commissioner for Trademarks. Includes the official record copy of manuals, reports, studies, memoranda, committee papers, minutes of meetings, notes, and similar records that pertain to overall high-level management, oversight, and direction of Trademark policies, internal training programs for examination and registration of trademarks, briefing books prepared for the Commissioner, issue papers and reports to higher levels on USPTO programs and plans; and strategic and long-range planning files.

N1-241-06-2:1 ← Citation
Permanent: Transfer to NARA 20 years after closure or when superseded.

Disposition

Implementation: CRS Derived Entry with Addenda

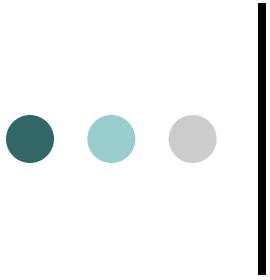Series Title

Series Contents

Trademark Case File Feeder Records and Related Indexes

Including but not limited to:

Published Trademarks-MICROFILM (Reference Copies)
Trademark Applications As Filed - MICROFILM
Trademark Petitions (Non-original copies)

Addenda

This series consists of source records and records generated by various Trademark automated information systems that are then loaded into the official case file record. They are considered a feeder to the official case file. The permanent records are held in the official case file and/or official repository, and the feeder systems hold records and information on a temporary basis. Extra paper copies or papers that are scanned into the systems are considered feeder records and are not permanent.
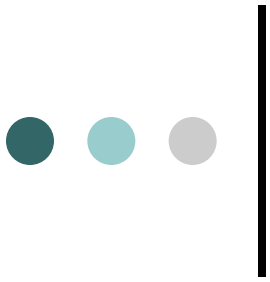
N1-241-06-2:4

Citation

Temporary: Destroy or delete when transfer to official Trademark Case File has been verified and the feeder documentation is no longer needed for current agency business.

Disposition

Conclusion

USPTO Records Scheduling Recap

- Groundwork
  - Established low or no-cost methodology and use existing resources
  - Presented to executives before start - Received buy-in

- Conducted Scheduling
  - Created a preliminary bucket structure based on function
  - Inventory as much as possible
  - Used a crosswalk & annotated narrative
  - Used MS Access
  - Adjusted, reviewed, and repeated until it came close to perfect
  - Informed business areas formally - used a memo
  - Worked closely with NARA Appraisal Archivist

- Implemented the Schedules
  - Annotated Narrative useful to present known record series names and tracking that all records are scheduled
  - Use both SF115 and CRS when discussing retentions
  - New record series are now simply "dropped" into proper existing series (or "bucket")

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Buckets – Lessons Learned

- Identify all major agency or department business functions prior to scheduling

- The "feeder record" concept is advantageous

- Isolate legacy series sub-parts from IT system schedules

- Scheduling processes differed from bucket to bucket

- Finding correct business contact to verify and validate schedules is an ongoing task

- Could not force banding of unique record schedules

- Creation of "Addenda" field reduced redundancy in published retention policies

Contact Information

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USPTO Records
Management Program

Questions & Answers