The PIUG Wiki - A New Medium for PIUG Collaboration and Discussion

Tom Wolff's presentation at the PIUG 2008 Northeast Conference in New Brunswick, NJ is attached hereon.

Abstract:

The new PIUG wiki is designed to further the PIUG mission "to support, assist, improve and enhance the success of patent information professionals through leadership, education, communication, advocacy and networking."

It is also a Web 2.0 development. According to the Wikipedia entry, "Web 2.0 is a living term describing changing trends in the use of World Wide Web technology and web design that aims to enhance creativity, information sharing, collaboration and functionality of the web. Web 2.0 concepts have led to the development and evolution of web-based communities and hosted services, such as social-networking sites, video sharing sites, wikis, blogs, and folksonomies."

The PIUG wiki has information sharing, social networking, and discussion forum functionality. It is designed to complement the current PIUG website, which will be reserved for generally static and official content, and the current PIUG Discussion List. The primary PIUG wiki space is open to all patent information professionals worldwide, either in view-only access without logging in or with create and edit access through a simple signup procedure. Some content and features are limited to current PIUG members. For example, only PIUG members are able to create and maintain "Personal Spaces" that allow members to share information about themselves. These personal spaces are accessible to all wiki registrants and are analogous to profiles posted on LinkedIn and other social networking sites. The PIUG Board of Directors and PIUG committees, task forces, and teams have wiki spaces open to their members only. Each wiki space has one or more discussion forums to eliminate the need for sending mass email to participants.

Wiki spaces and forums have many powerful features including easy content creation and editing, easy application of links to other wiki and web content, submission of collaborative comments to any entry, optional attachment of documents with checkout/check-in control, and complete user control over whether the user is notified by email of new contributions ("watches"). Forums are fully integrated within the wiki and are open or closed in parallel with the wiki space in which they are hosted. Forum entries have clear topic thread format, full email push of new or edited content to all who are "watching" the forum, and no of out-of-office messages. The wiki discussion forum may be viewed in time as superior to the email discussion list due to these advantageous features.

This presentation introduces the wiki and cover basic usage, including viewing, creating, editing and watching wiki content. The presentation is designed to stimulate discussion at the PIUG Wiki workshop, "PIUG Wiki: Tutorial and Open Discussion on Usage and Issues," on the following day, to encourage active community usage and participation, and promote providing input towards further wiki features improvement.

Thomas E. Wolff, Ph. D.
Wolff Information Consulting LLC
Web: www.wolffinfo.com