PIUG History

Brief History

PIUG was founded in the United States in 1988 by an ad hoc group of patent information scientists working in the chemical, pharmaceutical, petroleum, and technology industries. (Lambert, 1993; Berks, 1993; Davis, 2009) The impetus was to develop open communication among individual patent searchers and database producers in order to supplement existing conversations generally limited to database producers and customer companies’ managers at subscriber meetings and intercompany managers conferences. It was envisioned as “a coalition of North American patent professionals whose charter is to monitor and discuss issues and developments of concern to the patent users community, and to work with database producers and vendors and the USPTO to make (or unmake) changes to benefit that [patent users] community.” (Lambert, 1991) PIUG had 17 founding members at its first meeting in 1988 and was led initially by Mike Feider (Chair), Nancy Lambert (Recording Secretary) and Pat Dorler (Treasurer) (PIUG Past Officers and Directors). The organization began by establishing annual business meetings, usually in association with other database producers' user meetings, committees tasked with advocacy of improved availability and tools for patent information, a printed newsletter, and an online message board.

PIUG was incorporated as a non-profit organization in the state of Michigan in 1999. The Board of Directors was established by the original bylaws of 1999. Revised bylaws were approved in 2009 to remove the distinction made between “full” members and “associate” members that are employed by database producers or publishers and to deal with potential conflicts of interest. The first multi-day PIUG Annual Conference was held in 1998, the same year that PIUG Service Awards were established. The first Northeast and Biotechnology Meetings were held in 1992 and 2007, respectively. Membership reached 400 in 2000 and expanded by 2008 to more than 700 members from over two dozen countries, many from Europe and Asia. A cooperative memorandum of understanding was signed in 2008 with the Confederacy of European Patent Information User Groups (CEPIUG). The annual Brian Stockdale Memorial Award was first presented in 2002 to provide support to new members to attend an Annual Conference. The annual Stu Kaback Business Impact Award was first presented in 2013 to recognize the achievements of an individual or a team of individuals who, in performing as patent information professionals, have made a distinct impact on an organization. A full list of PIUG Milestones is available.

One of PIUG's first actions was to establish a Bulletin Board on the Dialog search service's DialMail system. Communications were improved after the Internet became available to corporate employees by establishment of the Discussion List (PIUG-L; archives) in 1995, upgraded in 2006, and replaced by the wiki-based PIUG Discussion Forum (PIUG-DF) in 2009 (Wolff, 2009, 2010)

Bibliography


Abstract: PIUG, the International Society for Patent Information, is a not-for-profit organization for individuals having a professional, scientific or technical interest in patent information. With the ever increasing volume of patents and related technical documents, the effective retrieval and analysis of patent information has become an essential skill in business. The mission of PIUG is to encourage the development of patent information research and analysis systems, to further develop members’ patent research and analysis skills, and to provide appropriate recognition for its members excelling in the field. Through this international forum and discussion, PIUG promotes and improves the retrieval, analysis and dissemination of patent information.


Abstract: In early 1988 a number of patent searchers in the U.S.A. set up the Patent Information Users Group (PIUG) with the aim of monitoring and discussing issues and developments of concern to the patent users' community and to work with database producers and vendors to ensure that changes are of benefit to patent users. The article describes the activities of the Group to date.

Nancy E. Lambert: The PIUG Pen. Database Searcher, 9(1), p. 36+ (1993). This is Nancy's first article in her regular column that was renamed shortly thereafter to "The Better Mousetrap" when the magazine was renamed Searcher. This article includes some history of the PIUG, but mostly introduces the concept of virtual file merging according to Nancy.


Abstract: PIUG developed its new social networking medium, the PIUG wiki and Discussion Forum (PIUG-DF), to move beyond the limitations of its static web site and former email discussion list. The organization met seven key objectives, which ranged from making the wiki easy to contribute to, navigate, search and maintain to promoting community interaction and participation among PIUG members and others interested in patent information.


Abstract: PIUG changed its principal way of facilitating interaction among its member and other interested individuals at the end of 2008. A wiki was created to promote sharing of information and collaboration. The PIUG space home page that users see initially and most of the wiki content is accessible to all, as is the discussion forum (PIUG-DF), which replaced the PIUG discussion list. The wiki has consistent design and functionality throughout, allowing simple participation through page creation and commenting by members of the global patent information community.

Thoughts on PIUG - A collection of remembrances from early members of PIUG on the occasion of the ten-year anniversary celebration (from the September 1998 issue of the PIUG Newsletter)...Some of the early PIUG members reflect on the formation of PIUG.

Find additional references by searching for PIUG in either Scirus or ScienceDirect.

Useful Links

- Brian Stockdale Memorial Award Recipients
- PIUG Milestones
- PIUG Past Officers and Directors
- PIUG Service Award Recipients
- Stu Kaback Business Impact Award Recipients