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The USPTO recently changed its software for assignments, and it is problematic.

The new software lacks functionality of the old software. The main problem is that it no longer allows an assistant to prepare an assignment recordation and then save the unsubmitted form for an attorney to review and submit. This continues to interfere with workflow, especially for the growing number of people who work remotely or in different offices from other people at a law firm. This is very burdensome and a drain on attorney time. The method of data collection has changed substantially and imposes a heavy burden on applicants who must now pay for more attorney time.

Also, the USPTO seems to be requiring new information. Specifically, it seems the new system now requires an email address for owners. The USPTO already maintains contact information for correspondence and for maintenance fees. Any further collection of contact information should be optional. Requiring emails that are entered piecemeal, rather than those associated with a customer number that can be centrally managed, is burdensome and adds to overhead in keeping things current and adds to risk from data scammers who may obtain and spoof more emails.

Another big problem is that many of the look-up functions in the new software are not currently working properly (or broken or missing). Ownership interests, including not only assignments, but also things like security interests, need to be searchable for published patents and applications with reasonable search queries (by any one of: application #, publication number, PCT number, patent number, assignor, assignee, and by reel/frame #). This is a really important feature for the public and for businesses. Transparency fosters healthy competition, collaboration, and investment. Failure to provide the information hampers market efficiency and the essential notice function of recording an assignment.

The USPTO has imposed considerable burdens on the public by replacing functional software with less-useable software.