

**UNITED STATES  
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**



# Director's update

Tariq Hafiz  
April 2, 2019

UNITED STATES  
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



# Patents Customer Partnership Meetings

Patents Customer Partnership Meetings (CPM) are built upon the engagement of both internal and external stakeholders to provide enhanced communication channels. This provides a valuable opportunity for our external stakeholders to meet directly with USPTO representatives in a collaborative forum.



# Patents Customer Partnership Meetings

For further information concerning Customer Partnership Meetings including upcoming meetings visit the Patents Customer Meetings homepage.

[www.uspto.gov/patent/cpm](http://www.uspto.gov/patent/cpm)



## Upcoming Meetings

[Attend the Technology Center 2600 Customer Partnership Meeting](#)  
Mar 5, 2019 08:30 AM ET  
Alexandria, VA

[Attend the TC 2800 Customer Partnership Meeting](#)  
Mar 12, 2019 12:00 PM ET  
Alexandria, VA

[2019 Business Methods Partnership Meeting](#)  
Apr 2, 2019 10:00 AM ET  
Alexandria, VA

[See the full events calendar](#)

## Patents Customer Partnership Meetings



"Communication and transparency are key tenants of a successful IP system. These customer partnership meetings are a collaborative effort to give the IP community and the USPTO a forum to discuss items of mutual interest, share USPTO plans and operational efforts, and discuss ideas and solutions to address issues."  
- Commissioner for Patents Drew Hirschfeld

Patents Customer Partnership Meetings (CPM) are built upon the engagement of both internal and external stakeholders to provide enhanced communication channels. This provides a valuable opportunity for our external stakeholders to meet directly with USPTO representatives in a collaborative forum.

CPM allows the USPTO to share plans and operational efforts to better educate and inform our stakeholders. These meetings also enable the patent community to share ideas, experiences, and insights as well as discuss examination policies and procedures, mutual concerns and solutions to common problems.

### Attend a partnership meeting

To register and attend, please visit our [Patents Customer Partnership Meetings event page](#).

For a full listing of past and upcoming events, please visit our [Patents Customer Partnership Meetings event page](#). To receive email notifications about Patents-related events, including partnership meetings, please select "Patents Alerts" on [USPTO Subscription Center](#) <sup>CP</sup>.

### Stakeholder experiences

CPM have been positively received by the community:

- The one to one contact is important. I enjoy getting to know the supervisors, directors, and examiners. They are a great resource and it makes it easier to work together going forward.
- The variety of the perspective you get at a CPM is greater than you would at any other conference because we have people from different industries in addition to the examiner's perspective on top of that.
- The interaction with the patent examiners and letting them know how important their job is to the work that we do and the country as a whole, in terms of the economy and company creation is very valuable. I also like to hear from the USPTO what are the things that practitioners could do better that helps examiners do their jobs.



# Business methods overview

- Incentive programs, coupons, and advertisement
- Operations research and analysis
- E-shopping
- Healthcare
- Business processing, Electronic negotiation (miscellaneous)
- Point of sale, inventory, accounting
- Cost/price, reservations, shipping, transportation
- Business cryptography and voting
- Insurance, banking, and finance



# Business methods art units and SPEs

Jim Trammell, Director					
FY19					
Finance		PTA	to Hire	Total	
3691	Alexander Kalinowski	14	1	1	16
3692	Sarah Monfeldt (H)	13	1	2	16
3693	Shahid Merchant	13	1	2	16
3694	Bennett Sigmund (Den)	10	1	5	16
3695	Ryan Donlon	13	0	3	16
3696	Pinky Boveja (H)	12	1	2	15
3697	Jerry O'Connor	10	0	6	16
3698*	proposed-vacant				
					111
Crypto		PTA	FY19	total	
3685A	Calvin Hewitt	12	2	2	16
3685B	vacant - SPE on detail	11	1	6	18
3685C	Neha Petal	10	3	4	17
3685D*	proposed-vacant				
					51
E-Shopping		PTA	FY19	total	
3625A	Jeffrey Smith	15	0	0	15
3625B	Marissa Thein	12	0	0	12
3684	Jason Dunham	13	0	1	14
					41
Healthcare		PTA	FY19	total	
3626A	Robert Morgan (H)	10	0	2	12
3626B	Janice Mooneyham	10	0	2	12
3626C	Fonya Long (H)	11	0	2	13
3686A	Elaine Gort (H)	11	0	2	13
3686B	Victoria Augustine (Det)	11	0	2	13
					63
SPEs		current exrs	PTA	FY19 to Hire	Total
18	Totals (Trammell)	211	11	44	266

QAS Shop
Beth Boswell (MQAS)
Bob Weinhardt (TQAS) - on detail
Jami Plucinski (TQAS)
Marc Jimenez (TQAS)
vacant (TQAS)
proposed-vacant (TQAS)

TCOM
John Hayes
Ilana Spar

### ALL Business Methods

current FY19				
SPEs	exrs	PTA	to Hire	Total
33	449	12	68	529

SPE to examiner ratio (ALL BM)  
13.6 16

Total Art Units: 39

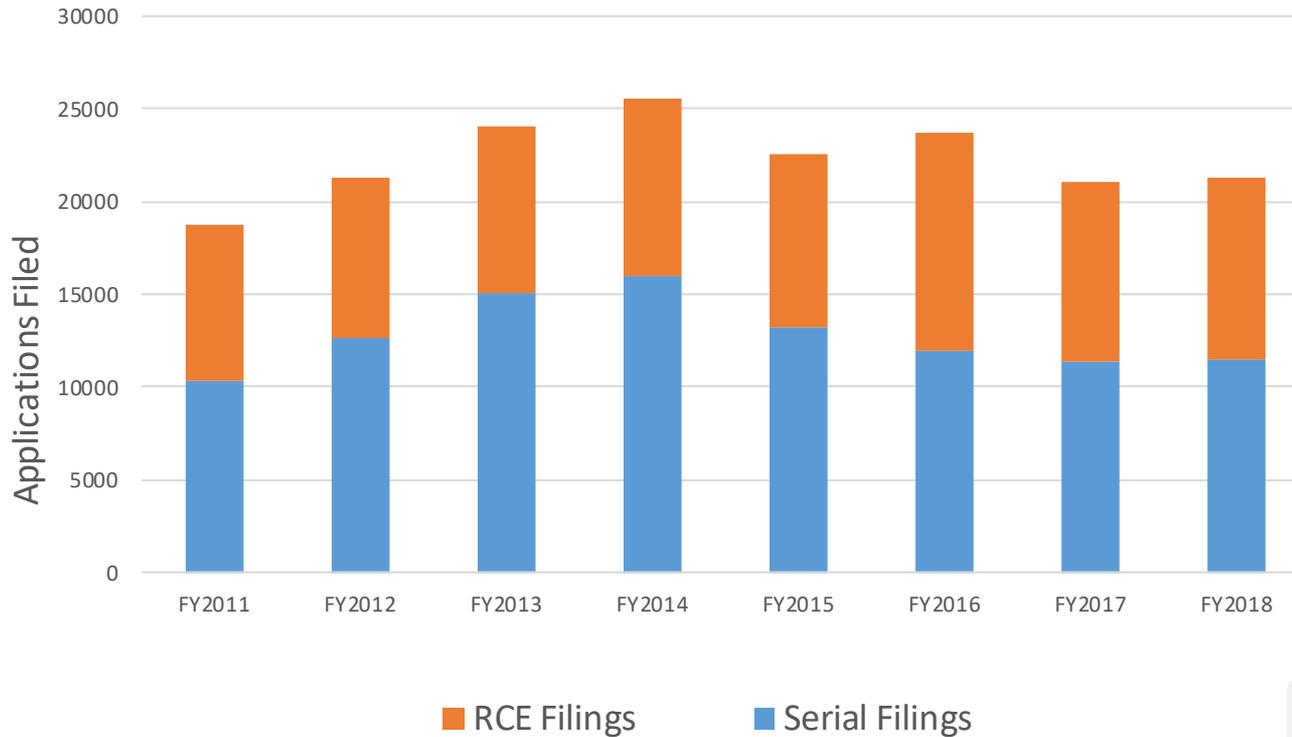
Tariq Hafiz, Director					
FY19					
Advertising		PTA	to Hire	Total	
3621	vacant	14	0	0	14
3622	Peter Choi (Dal)	13	0	0	13
3681	vacant	14	0	0	14
3682	vacant - SPE on detail	14	0	1	15
3688	Kambiz Abdi	14	0	1	15
					71
OR		PTA	FY19	total	
3623A	vacant	13	0	2	15
3623B	Matthew Gart	15	0	0	15
3624A	Anita Coupe	15	0	0	15
3624B	Christine Behncke	13	0	2	15
3683A	vacant	11	0	3	14
3683B	Eric Stamber	14	0	2	16
					90
Transportation		PTA	FY19	total	
3628A	Shannon Campbell (H)	13	0	3	16
3628B	Kevin Flynn	13	0	4	17
3628C*	proposed-vacant				
					33
Inventory		PTA	FY19	total	
3627	Ryan Zeender (H)	14	0	0	14
3687A	Fahd Obeid	9	0	2	11
3687B	Nathan Uber	10	0	2	12
					37
Miscellaneous		PTA	FY19	total	
3629	Lynda Jasmin (H)	13	1	2	16
3689	Minnah Seoh	16	0	0	16
					32
SPEs		current exrs	PTA	FY19 to Hire	Total
15	Total (Hafiz)	238	1	24	263



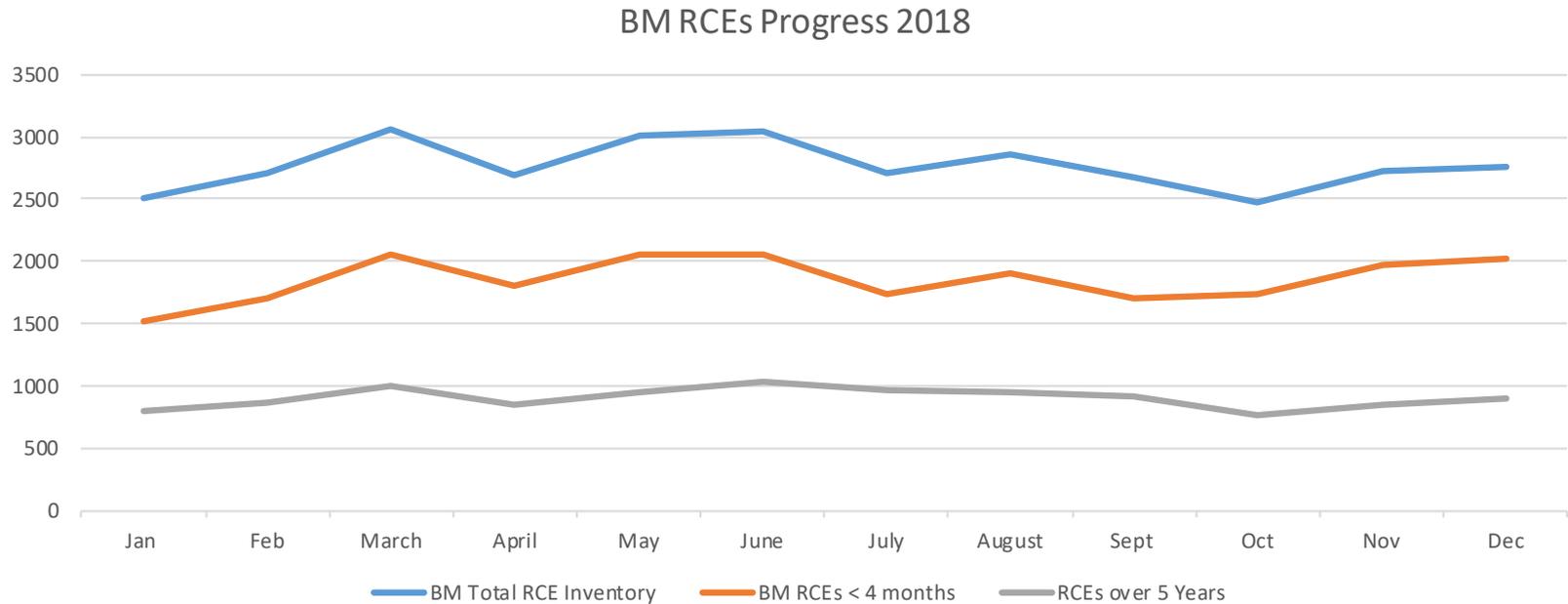
# Top assignees for patent grants in class 705 (USPC)

Top Assignees (FY2017 - FY2018)			
1	INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MACHINES CORPORATION	11	GOOGLE LLC
2	MASTERCARD INTERNATIONAL INCORPORATED	12	SQUARE, INC.
3	WALMART APOLLO, LLC	13	BANK OF AMERICA CORPORATION
4	MICROSOFT TECHNOLOGY LICENSING, LLC	14	VISA INTERNATIONAL SERVICE ASSOCIATION
5	WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.	15	EBAY INC.
6	STATE FARM MUTUAL AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE COMPANY	16	UIPCO, LLC
7	AMAZON TECHNOLOGIES, INC.	17	INTUIT INC.
8	FACEBOOK, INC.	18	TOSHIBA TEC KABUSHIKI KAISHA
9	CAPITAL ONE SERVICES, LLC	19	FUJITSU LIMITED
10	PAYPAL, INC.	20	TRADING TECHNOLOGIES INTERNATIONAL, INC.

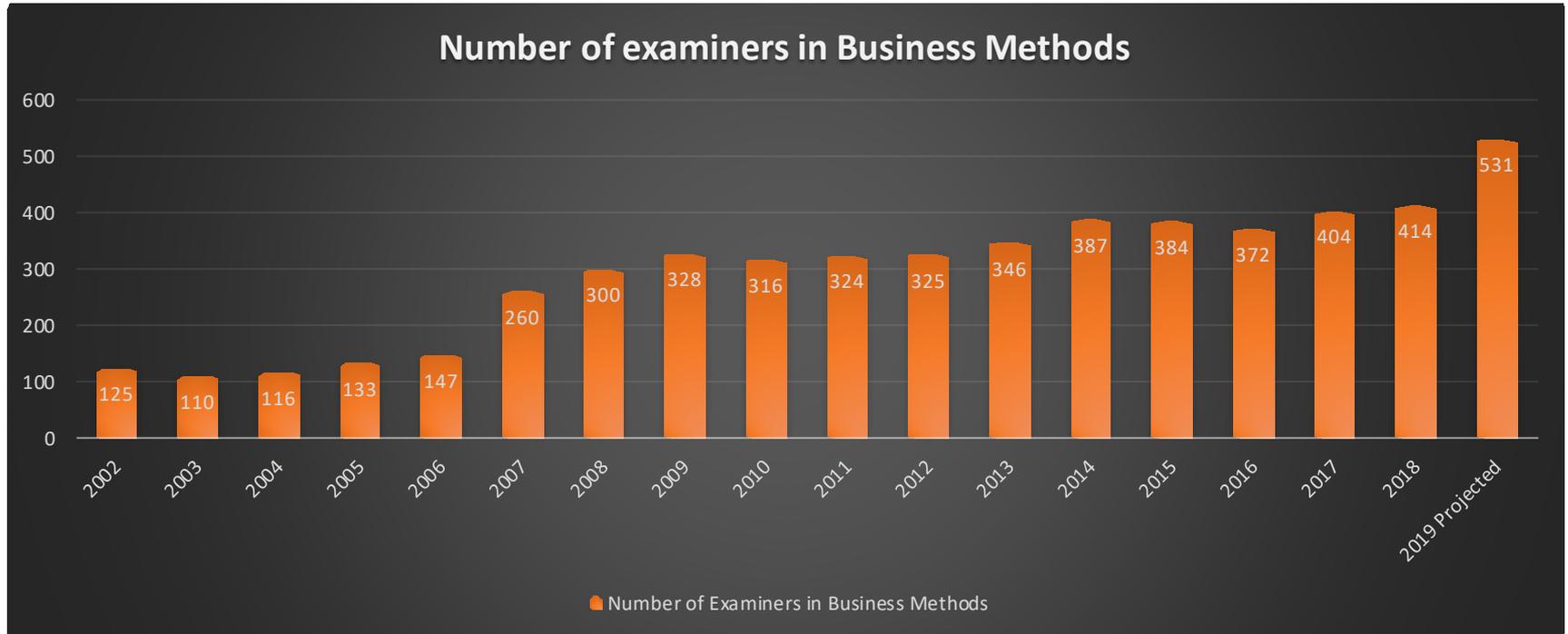
# Filing trends in business methods



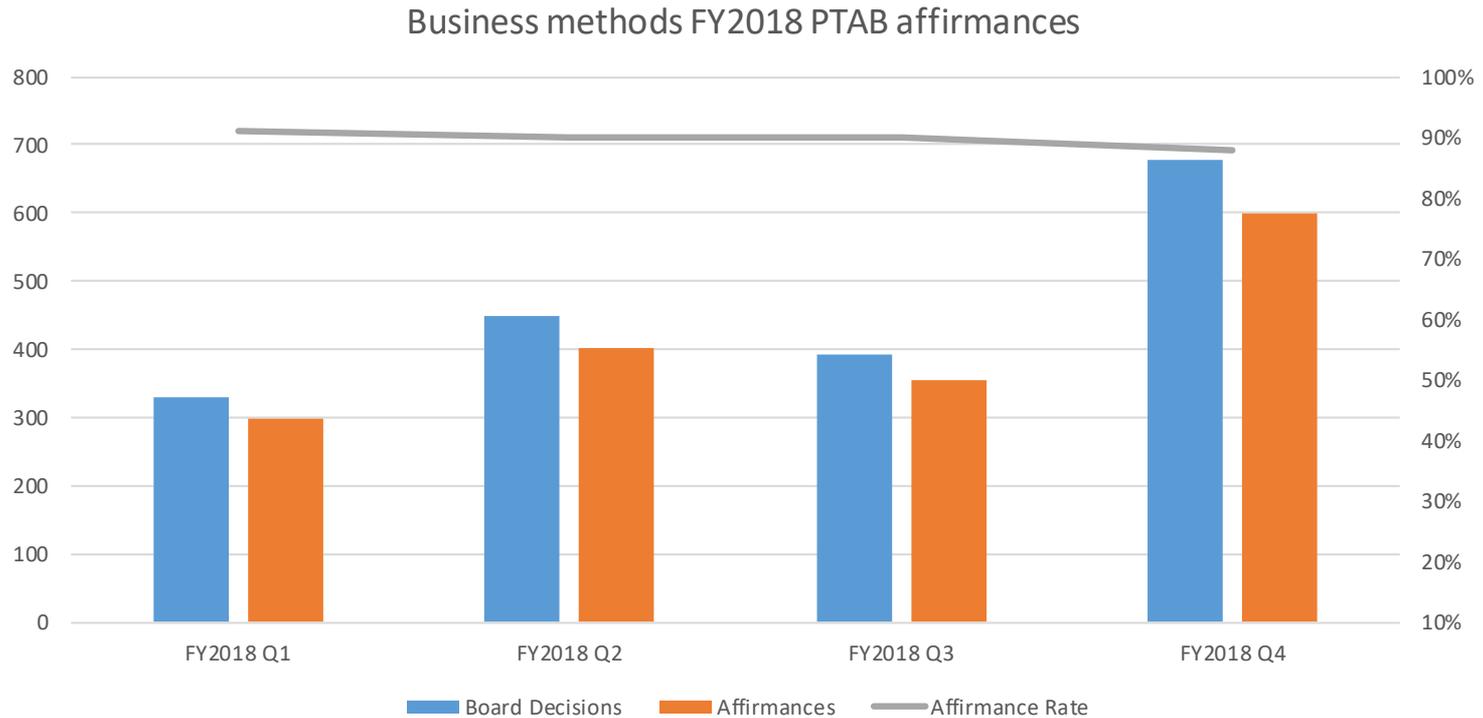
# Business methods RCE inventory progress



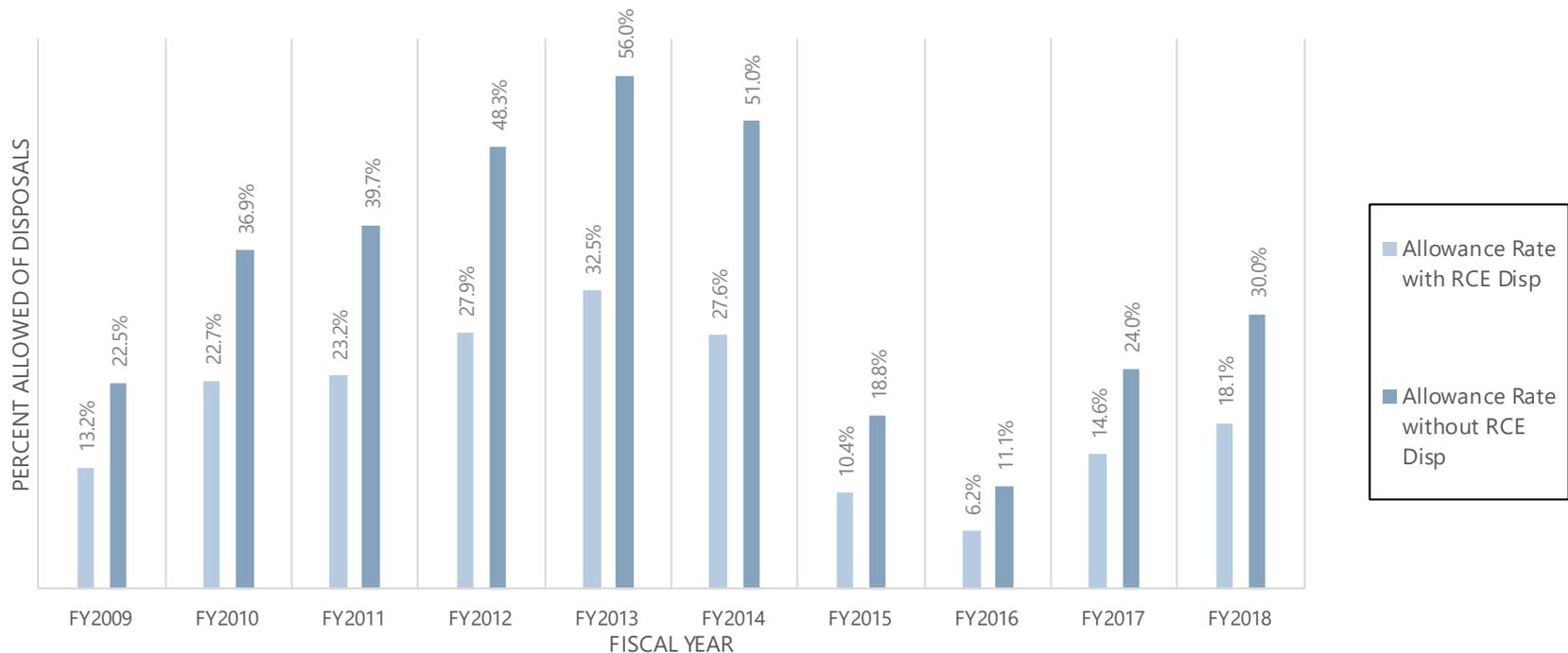
# Hiring and staff



# PTAB affirmances

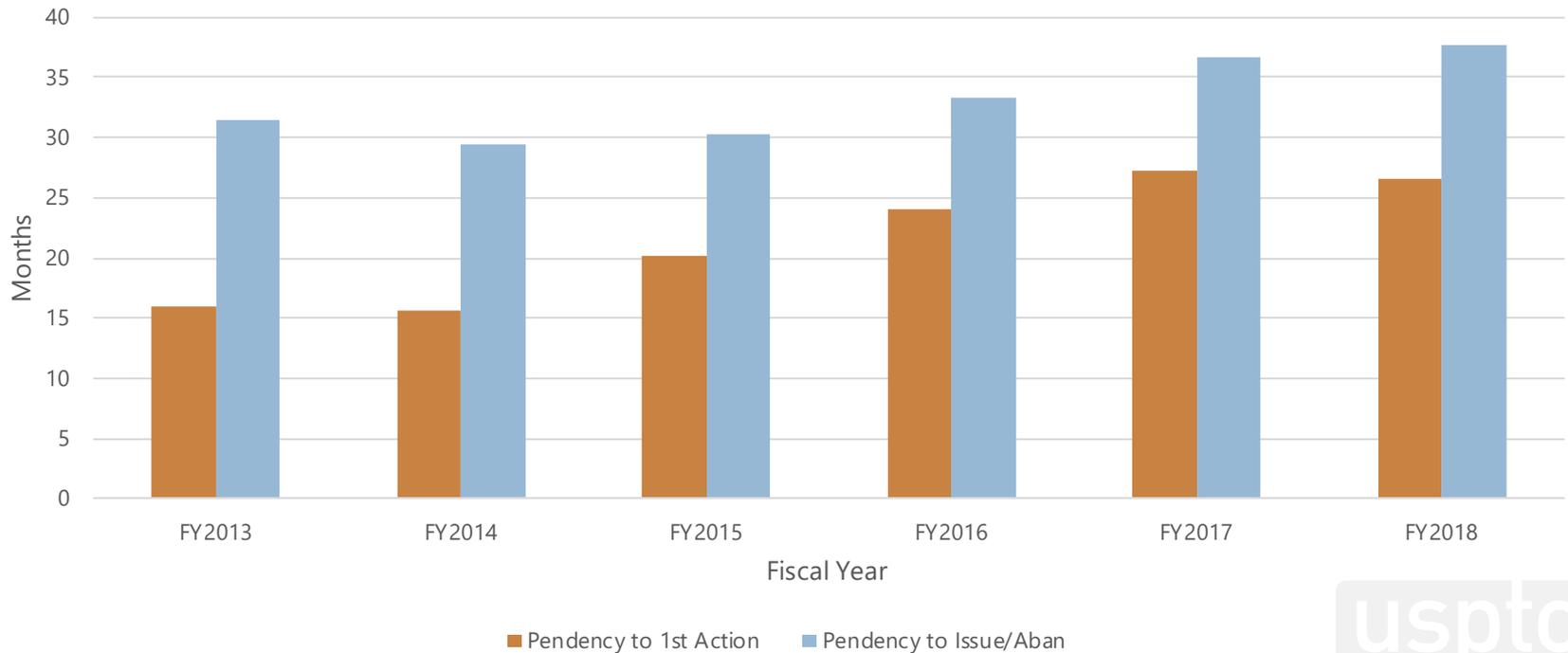


# Business methods allowance rates



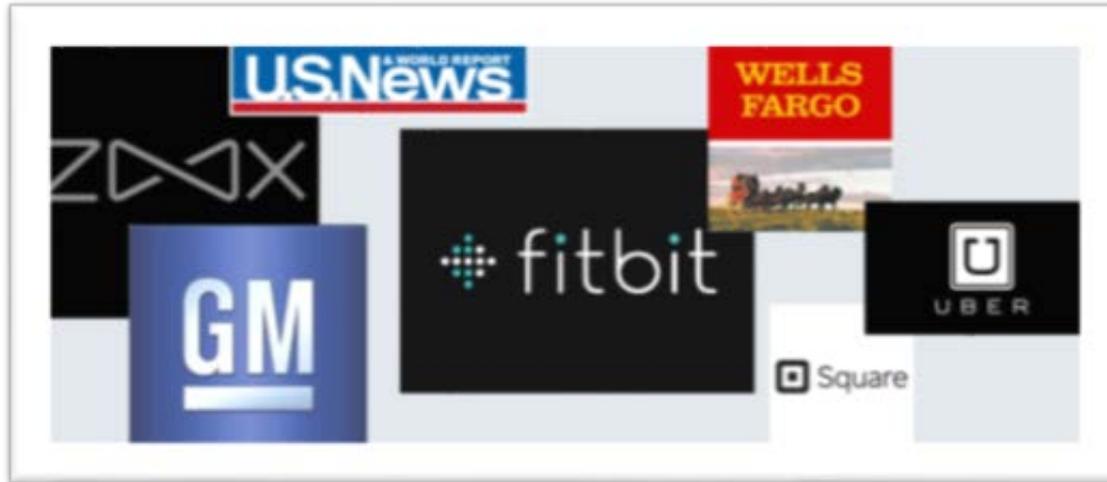
# Business methods pendency in class 705 (USPC)

Pendency in Class 705 (USPC)



# Patent Examiner Technical Training Program (PETTP)

Business Methods has hosted various large and small technology leaders across diverse industry sectors. Recently:



# Patent Examiner Technical Training Program (PETTP)

Interested participants should contact the USPTO and identify their area of expertise by filling out the online form available at:

- [www.uspto.gov/PatentExaminerTechTraining](http://www.uspto.gov/PatentExaminerTechTraining), or
- By sending an email to [Examiner\\_Technical\\_Training@uspto.gov](mailto:Examiner_Technical_Training@uspto.gov)

In an effort to allow for more flexibility in delivering training for those who elect not to travel, training can be delivered using webinars (web-based seminars) in this program.



# Business methods webpage

The screenshot shows the top portion of the USPTO website. The header includes the USPTO logo and the text "UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE". Navigation links for "About Us", "Jobs", "Contact Us", and "MyUSPTO" are present. A search bar with the placeholder "Search uspto.gov" is located on the right. Below the header is a navigation menu with tabs for "Patents", "Trademarks", "IP Policy", and "Learning and Resources", along with a "Find It Fast" button. The breadcrumb trail reads: "Home / Patents/Getting Started / Patent Basics / Types of Patent Applications / Utility Patent / Business Methods".

The main content area of the webpage features a sidebar on the left with a table of contents:

- 1 Overview
- 2 Highlights
- 3 Statistics
- 4 Guidance and training materials
- 5 Outreach opportunities and presentations
- 6 Examiner decision making process
- 7 Contact us

## Overview

The Business Methods Practice Area is part of Technology Center 3600 that handles Business Methods applications. The Business Methods Practice Area is comprised of three workgroups that include 3620, 3680, and 3690. The 3620 and the 3680 workgroups examine applications pertaining to incentive programs, coupons; operations research; electronic shopping; health care; point of sale, inventory, accounting; cost/price, reservations, shipping, and transportation; and business processing. The 3690 workgroup examines applications pertaining to finance/banking/insurance.

## Highlights

### TC 3600 Business Methods Partnership Meeting (BMPM)

The next BMPM will jointly be held at the USPTO's Alexandria, Virginia Headquarters and the Dallas Texas Regional Office on April 2, 2019. Members of the public are invited to attend in person at either location. WebEx will also be available to allow individuals to participate remotely ([announcement](#)).

[Register here to attend the next BMPM](#)

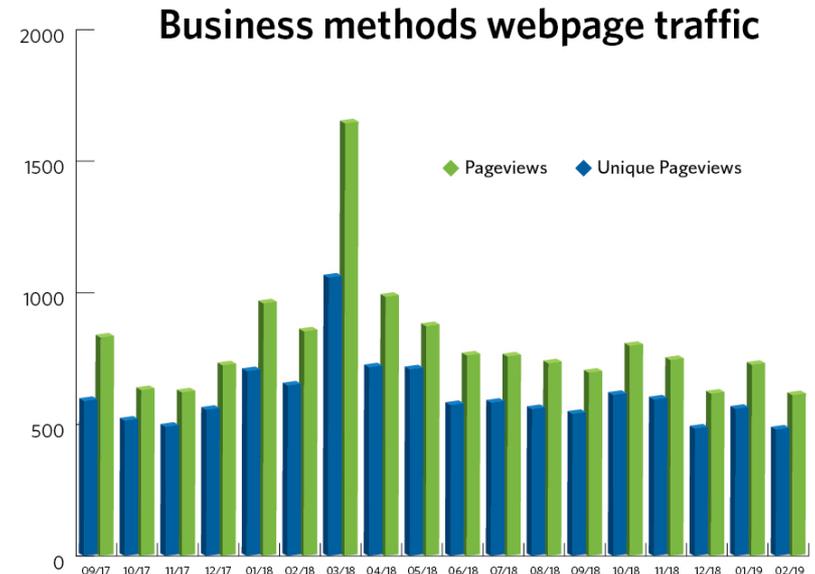
[Expand all](#) | [Collapse all](#)

> [Prior partnership meetings](#)



# Business methods webpage

- Consistent, good traffic on the webpage
  - 15,144 total pageviews since launch
  - 11,397 unique pageviews since launch
  - 841 average pageviews per month
  - 633 unique pageviews per month
- 3 minutes spent on webpage on average
- 920 visitors accessed the Guidance and training materials section for subject matter eligibility information, indicating usefulness
- Heightened webpage access in March 2018 to download materials for the Customer Partnership Meeting



# Patent Ombudsman program

The patents ombudsman program enhances the USPTO's ability to assist applicants or their representatives with issues that arise during patent application prosecution.

Contact info:

- Email: [OmbudsmanProgram@uspto.gov](mailto:OmbudsmanProgram@uspto.gov)
- Website: [www.uspto.gov/patents/ombudsman/jsp](http://www.uspto.gov/patents/ombudsman/jsp)
- Phone: 571-272-5555 or 1-855-559-8589 (toll free)



# Interview specialist

Interview specialists are subject matter experts in each Technology Center (TC) on interview practice and policy. They are available to assist both applicants and examiners.

Contact info:

- Email: [ExaminerInterviewPractice@uspto.gov](mailto:ExaminerInterviewPractice@uspto.gov)



# Inventors Assistance Center (IAC)

The IAC provides patent information and services to the public. The IAC is staffed by former supervisory patent examiners and primary examiners who answer general questions concerning patent examining policy and procedure.

Contact info:

- Phone: 571-272-1000 or 1-800-786-9199 (toll free)



# Questions?

**UNITED STATES  
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# Director's update

James (Jim) Trammell  
April 2, 2019

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# Patent quality

Our goal is to conduct high quality and timely patent examination through collaboration with internal and external stakeholders of the intellectual property community.



# FY2018 initiatives and results

- **Goal:** Quality enhancement meetings (QEMs)
- **How:** SPEs empower primary examiners to organize and execute quality enhancement meetings. All examiners are encouraged to attend these informal discussions.
- **Results:** QEMs have been given in AUs based on 101, 112a, 112b, response to arguments, Case Law, 103 motivation, and election/restriction. A total of 5074 hours have been attended by examiners.



# FY2018 initiatives and results

- **Goal:** Oldest pending cases
- **How:** Managers reviewed the prosecution history of the oldest pending cases in their workgroups to resolve any outstanding issues and advance prosecution.
- **Results:** This initiative resulted in a proactive approach that improved pendency and customer satisfaction. In FY2018 36% of cases considered in this initiative were disposed. Examiners received the assistance, when necessary, to advance prosecution.



# FY2018 initiatives and results

- **Goal:** Lower overall RCE inventory
- **How:** SPEs monitored the RCE inventory and reviewed RCEs pending more than 5 years with the examiners.
- **Results:**
  - In March 2017, the total RCE inventory was 4235 with 1960 over 4 months from filing date and 1493 of those cases being pending for over 5 years.
  - As of Jan 2019 the total RCE inventory was 2624 with 1873 over 4 months from filing date and 816 of those pending over 5 years.



# FY2019 quality initiatives

For FY2019, Business methods is focusing on initiatives in key areas to improve overall quality

- Increase quality through compact prosecution
- Increase consistency in work products
- Increase quality by building strong partnerships and opening lines of communication
- Emphasizing quality and promoting a culture of quality



# FY2019 quality initiatives

## Quality action plans

- Each workgroup/art unit prepares a tailored training action plan for their area.
- These action plans are developed based on workgroup / art unit quality metrics.
- Managers revise their action plans as part of a continual quality focus.

# FY2019 quality initiatives

## Bank of hours

In the Business methods area, additional training time has been provided to allow examiners to learn and apply methods from the 35 U.S.C. 101 resources. The intention is to allow examiners to:

- Effectively respond to written applicant arguments.
- Effectively respond to applicant arguments during interviews.
- Discuss additional 35 U.S.C. 101 guidance with a SPE and/or QAS.
- Apply the training materials from prior training and documents.
- Review the specification for statutory subject matter.



# FY2019 quality initiatives

## Structured Search Program

- Examiners submit search requests
- A search team discusses and diagnoses the search
- Results will focus on search strategies and best practices
- Feedback will be collected to build and communicate best practices

## Goals

- To improve quality of office action in TC 3600
- To evaluate patent examination related issues on an art unit level
- To help individual examiners meet goals
- Identify outlier art units



# Examiner training overview

Each examiner is allotted up to 25 hours in FY 2019 to attend trainings that falls within the categories below:

- Legal, policy and procedure training
  - Examiner refresher training
  - Examiner master classes
  - Patent corps examination training
- Technical training

# Examiner training overview

## Upcoming and current corps-wide training topics

- 2019 Revised Patent Subject Matter Eligibility Guidance
- Examiner Computer-Implemented Functional Claim Limitations for Compliance with 35 U.S.C. 112

## All corps-wide examiner training is publically available

- [www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/examiner-training-materials](http://www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/examiner-training-materials)



# Call for topics, presenters and panelist

If you are interested in participating in a future partnership meeting or have ideas for future topics please email us your contact information along with potential discussion topics.

Email: [BusinessMethods@uspto.gov](mailto:BusinessMethods@uspto.gov) or fill out the speaker interest form on the Business Methods website



# Questions?



