



EPO and Google break the language barrier for Europe's innovators

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European companies, inventors and scientists to benefit from free, real-time translation from and to 32 languages, enabling faster and more cost-effective patent research

Following the announcement of their intention to collaborate in November 2010, the European Patent Office (EPO) and Google have today signed a long term agreement to collaborate on machine translation of patents into multiple European, Slavonic and Asian languages.

Under the partnership, the EPO will use Google Translate technology to offer translation of patents on its website into 28 European languages, as well as into Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Russian. The EPO will provide Google access to its entire corpus of translated patents to enable Google to optimise its machine translation technology for the specific language used in patent registrations. The agreement is non-exclusive, and there is no financial component involved.

From this year onwards, companies, inventors, scientists and the interested public will be able - for information and research purposes - to search for patents on the EPO website in English, French and German (the EPO's official languages), and translate between them on the fly. The other European languages, as well as Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Russian, will be made available in phases, and the project is expected to be completed by the end of 2014.

The partnership between the EPO and Google will enable free, real-time translation of millions of patents granted in European countries, China, Japan, Korea and Russia. This facility will be of great benefit to European innovators in their research and development, allowing them to reduce costs and save time by searching for patents relevant to their inventions across all EPO languages simultaneously.

"Machine translation helps to overcome language barriers and make information contained in patents globally accessible and available. The new translation tool is a further stepping stone to improving innovation in Europe, and enabling European businesses to play level with their competitors in other regions. Moreover, I am convinced that it will facilitate the development of the unitary patent," says EPO President Benoît Battistelli.

"This project will be of huge benefit to inventors, scientists and innovators across Europe - enabling them to speed up R+D efforts with searches in their own language, across the entire EPO corpus of European, Asian and Russian patents," says Antoine Aubert, head of public policy at Google Brussels. "Google Translate was created to help break down language barriers, and this collaboration with the EPO will do exactly that, for all Europeans in all languages."

The broad geographical scope of the agreement underlines the role of the EPO as leading provider of technical information disclosed in patents. Since 1998 the Office pursues an open policy in disseminating technical data in its search collection. In cooperation with the member states, the EPO also publishes national patent collections.



EPO President Benoît Battistelli with Antoine Aubert, head of public policy at Google Brussels