



Intellectual
Property
Office

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Customer Satisfaction Survey 2013/14

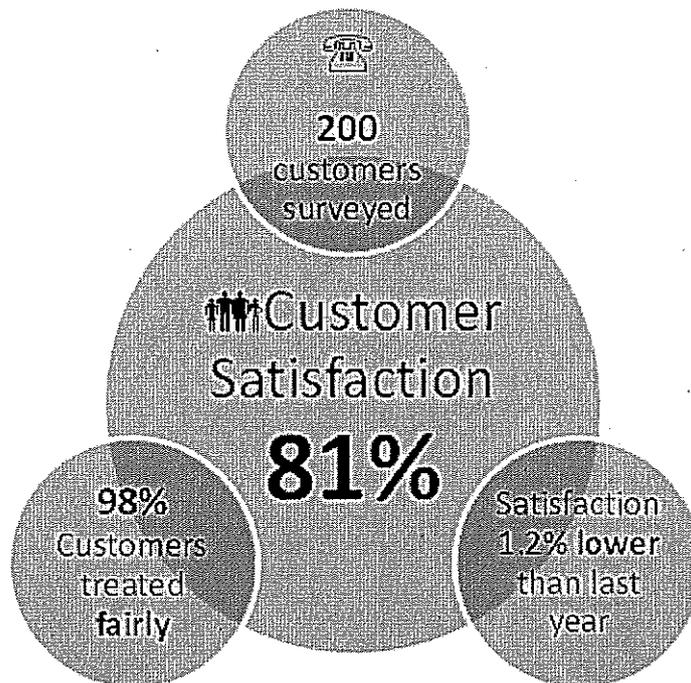


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1 SUMMARY FINDINGS

The key findings from the 2013/14 customer satisfaction survey (conducted September 2013 and March 2014) are:

- Overall customer satisfaction exceeds the Ministerial target, with an average score of 81% (target 80%).
- Satisfaction levels have seen a year-on-year decline, down 1.2% on 2012/13 and 3.5% on 2011/12.
- 6% of respondents (12 customers) were dissatisfied overall, scoring below 6.
- 2.5% of respondents (5 customers) said that they had been treated unfairly when dealing with the IPO.

2 BACKGROUND

The IPO has the customer satisfaction target "Ensure customer satisfaction is at least 80%". The Customer Insight Team measures performance against the target via a telephone survey, this report covers the combined results of the two survey samples undertaken September 2013 and March 2014.

3 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Customer satisfaction is measured using a telephone survey of a **random sample** of 200 customers (split evenly over two points in the year). The ORACLE finance database provided the survey sample frame comprising all transactions where Patents Forms 9 and 10, Trade Marks Form 3, and Designs Form 2 had been filed over a preceding 12 month period (i.e. between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2013 for the September 2013 sample, and 1 December 2012 and 31 November 2013 for the March 2014 sample). Two separate samples was chosen (over a single sample) as this reduces the possibility of the final score being skewed by an unexpected one-off event.

A random sample was achieved by applying a sort key to the entire sample frame, ensuring that the likelihood of customers appearing in the final sample reflected actual filing volumes. To avoid response bias, a de-duplication process was then undertaken, ensuring that customers were not surveyed twice in the same year. Individuals, and customers who had previously opted out of future survey contact, were also excluded for data protection reasons. The random samples were cleared by the IPO Information Security Officer prior to use.

Capturing satisfaction data during the survey fieldwork was restricted to one collection method for consistency and comparability of results. Customers were surveyed by telephone with the researchers using a SharePoint template questionnaire (*Annex A*). Introductory letters were issued in advance of the fieldwork to maximise response rates (*Annex B*).

4 SURVEY FINDINGS

4.1 Fieldwork

The fieldwork telephone interviews were carried out by Customer Insight and Information Centre staff. The first half of the survey (100 customers) was undertaken between 9th and 26th September 2013, and the second half (100 customers) between 4th and 31st March 2014.

4.2 Findings

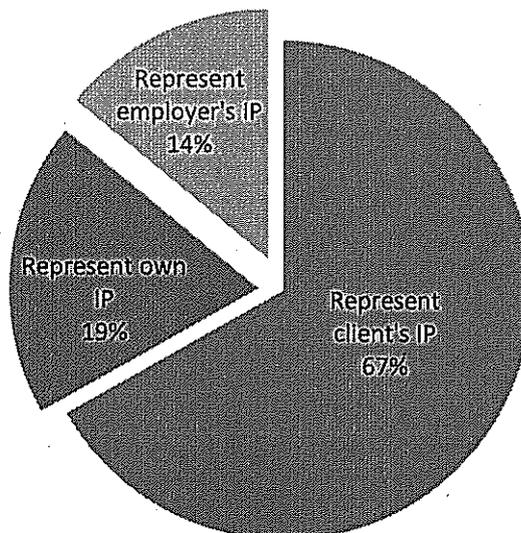
4.2.1 IPO services used

Customers were asked to state which IPO services they have used. Unsurprisingly, trade marks and patents are the most commonly used transactional services, with some customers experiencing multiple services, as shown in the table below:

Service Type	Total
Trade Marks	94 (47%)
Patents	35 (18%)
Trade Marks, Patents, Designs	33 (17%)
Trade Marks and Patents	25 (13%)
Trade Marks and Designs	10 (5%)
Designs	2 (1%)
Patents and Designs	1 (0.5%)
Total responses	200

4.2.2 Customer type

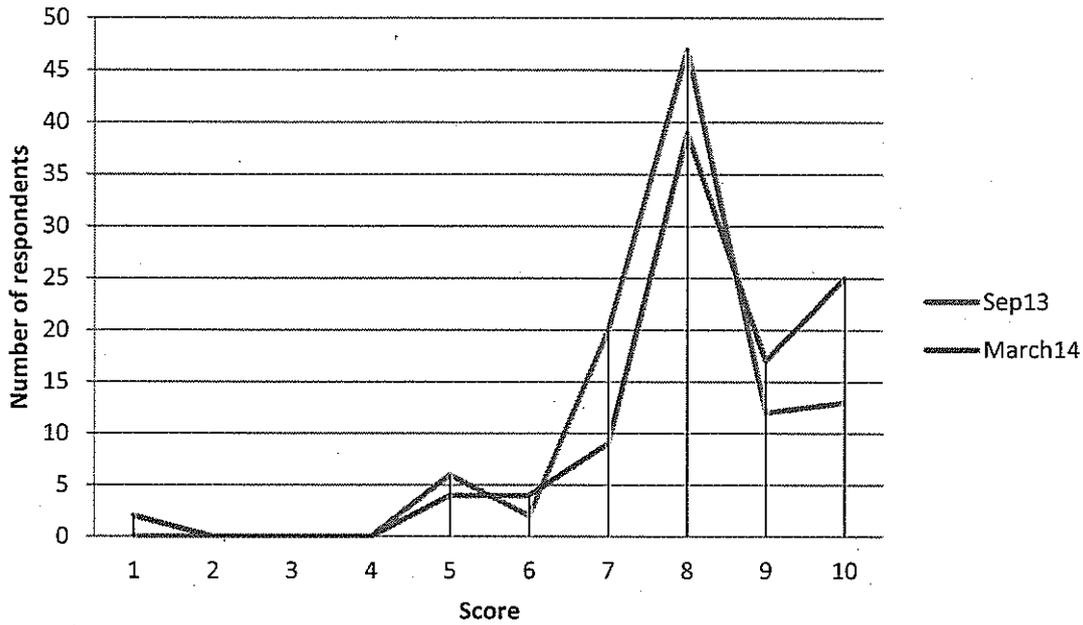
The chart below shows that two thirds of those surveyed interact with IPO on behalf of a client, and these are predominantly qualified IP professionals:



4.2.3 Satisfaction scores

Customers were asked to rate their level of overall satisfaction with IPO service on a scale of 1 to 10. The average score was 8.1 out of 10, equating to 81%. 12 customers (6%) gave a score below 6 signifying overall dissatisfaction. For comparison, the latest OHIM User Satisfaction Survey (published May13) found that 8% of users were dissatisfied overall with OHIM’s services. The breakdown of scores for the Sep13 and March14 samples is shown in the chart below:

Score distribution 2013/14



The survey did not ask customers to score individual business areas. However, where individual business areas were stated, the breakdown of scores is shown below:

Scores by area of IP:

	Sep13	Mar14	2013/14 Result
Patents	8.04 (23 responses)	8.42 (12 responses)	8.17 (35 responses)
Trade Marks	7.64 (33 responses)	8.23 (61 responses)	8.02 (94 responses)

The breakdown of scores by customer type is also shown in the table below, with satisfaction highest amongst customers who represent their employer’s IP:

Scores by customer type:

	Sep13	Mar14	2013/14 Result
Client’s IP	7.95 (96 responses)	8.32 (38 responses)	8.05 (134 responses)
Own IP	No responses	8.0 (38 responses)	8.0 (38 responses)
Employer’s IP	8.25 (4 responses)	8.5 (24 responses)	8.46 (28 responses)

4.2.4 Reliability of results

The reliability of the survey score, as represented by its margin of error, was calculated at the recommended¹ 95% level of confidence for business research as +/- 5.7%. Put another way, 95% of the time, average customer satisfaction would not be lower than 75.3% or higher than 86.7%. If the less demanding confidence level of 90% is calculated, the margin of error falls to +/- 4.8%

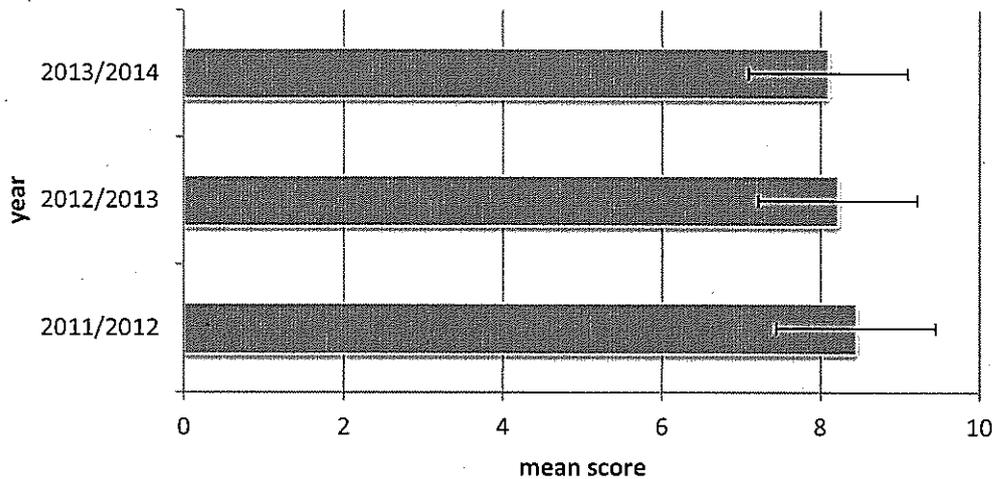
Analysis of the distribution of individual survey scores, as defined by their standard deviations, reveals a wider distribution in 2013/14 compared to previous years as shown in the table below:

Standard Deviations of survey samples:

Year	September sample	March sample	Sample combined
2011/12	1.1	1.2	1.1
2012/13	1.0	1.0	1.0
2013/14	1.2	1.7	1.5

The wider distribution of scores is the underlying reason for the margin of error at +/- 5.7% (at 95% confidence) being higher than in previous years, where it was found to be just below +/-5%, as shown by the error bars in the chart below:

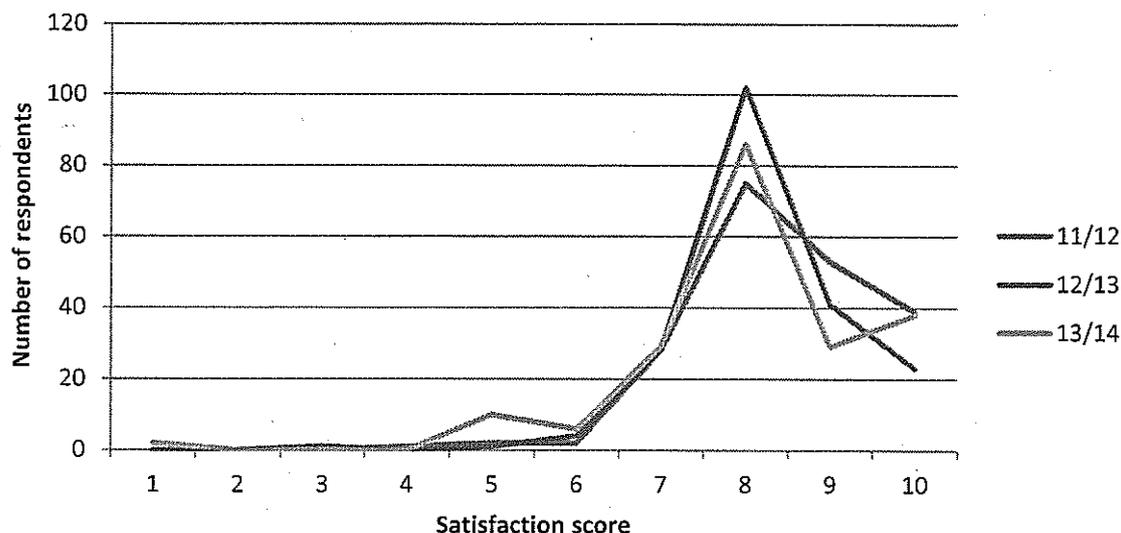
**Satisfaction survey results
95% confidence interval**



Comparing the breakdown of survey scores over 3 years, the wider distribution in 2013/14 is seen in the chart below. More scores of 5 were given than in either of the previous two years, and more scores of 10 than the year before:

¹ Hill, Roche and Allen (2007) "Customer Satisfaction" Cogent Publishing, London

Satisfaction score distribution - last 3 years



4.3 Customer comments

A score of 5 or below is in the lower half of the score range and will normally indicate that the customer is dissatisfied with their overall experience of IPO. The comments given were:

Sep 13 sample

"The office has gone downhill in the last 3 to 4 years. Can't get a general question answered through the Information Centre and get put through to 5 different people before getting the answer. Patent searches noticeably worse than other IP Offices. Post grant procedures shaky" (ID & PD, represent client's IP)

"I know you have had some IT changes and we were designated a champion from our office to feedback, since that meeting things are improving" (TM, represent client's IP)

"The new trade mark forms are unclear. We don't like the fact that you can only use them in PDF format. No references or trade mark numbers on correspondence" (TM, represent client's IP)

"Consultation periods not long enough. Private applicants treated differently to attorneys. Examinations not consistent, one application with one term gets accepted then a different application same term refused. There is a general lack of consistency with citations." (TM, represent client's IP)

"Faxed a design application and followed it up with a confirmation copy, but the examiner said they could not accept the representations and we would have to accept a new filing date, even though we sent a hard copy as well, which the office said they could not find, even though we had proof that other documents sent in with the application were received" (Designs, represent client's IP)

"Had a patent exam report received 25 days from its compliance date. We had to apply for extension of time that we got refunded, but it was a lot of work for nothing. Electronic services are hit and miss with patents and trade marks. I think with your systems you should ask more opinions of agents and think how agents systems actually work" (PD & TM, represent client's IP)

Annex A

Start of call



Good morning/afternoon, my name is (state name) and I'm calling from the Intellectual Property Office.

We wrote to you/your company recently to ask for your assistance with a short survey about customer satisfaction with the IPO.

Can you please connect me with the person with responsibility for dealing with the IPO?

If the current person - Can you please spare 10 minutes to help with this research?

If transferred, repeat first 2 sentences of introduction then - Can you please spare 10 minutes to help with this research?

If no - Not a problem, if this isn't a convenient time, would you mind if I called back at a later date? (agree date & time and log for call-back).

If no again - That's ok, I'm sorry to have disturbed you today (record non-participation).

If yes - Thank you, your participation will help us to establish what is important to you when dealing with the IPO, and how you rate the service received. We may disclose the results of this survey publicly, but I can assure you that no comments will be linked to you personally and your details will be held in strict confidence. The information you supply will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1988) and the Freedom of Information Act (2000), and our Information management Charter.

01

Contact name?

02

- Patents
- Trade Marks
- Designs

Which services have you used when dealing with the IPO? (You can pick multiple ones here)

04

- Treated fairly
- Treated unfairly

During your dealings with the IPO, how do you feel that you have been treated overall?

If unfairly, why?

06

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 is very dissatisfied and 10 is very satisfied) how would you rate the service you have received from the IPO? (If the customer explains that their experience has been mixed, explain that we are after an overall score taking everything into account)

Annex B

Address

Date as postmark

Dear Sir or Madam

As a user of the Intellectual Property Office's services, I am writing to you in advance of some customer research that will take place during the next few weeks. The research is to help us determine if our customers are satisfied with the service that they have received.

A member of our Customer Insight team may contact your firm within the next few weeks to ask if you are willing to complete a short survey over the telephone. The survey will take no longer than 5 minutes and confidentiality will be strictly observed in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Your feedback is very important and I hope that you will be willing to take part and help us to achieve our aim of serving you better.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Yours faithfully

NAME REDACTED (S.40(2) FOI ACT)
Customer Research Manager

Annex C – Individual customer comments

Trade mark related comments – Representing their client's IP

Score	Comment	Survey date
8	Found the process fairly easy.	Sep13
7	Search engine is down a lot, have contacted you about this before.	Sep13
8	Records of change of name and assignments are slow taking 3 weeks. Certified copies are being processed quickly.	Sep13
5	I know you have had some IT changes and we were designated a champion from our office to feedback and since that meeting things are improving.	Sep13
6	Not having a person on the ITMA committee is not helpful when it came to TM10. OHIM and WIPO systems are better. Systems and procedures could be better, I feel you have missed some opportunities with the recent changes. Staff are always excellent and helpful.	Sep13
9	Service very good.	Sep13
5	The new Trade mark forms are unclear. We don't like the fact that you can only use them in PDF format. No references or trade mark numbers on correspondence.	Sep13
10	The new emails reply service is good, cooling off good. I still like to use the fax reply. Examiners are always approachable and the Information Centre very helpful.	Sep13
7	It can be unfair that the outcome of trade marks comes down to 1 person's opinion. When you send out the exam report by email there is nothing in the title to identify what case it relates to.	Sep13
7	Problems with the online opposition forms, they keep crashing, as this was an urgent last minute opposition we had to send an email and still didn't get any acknowledgement of that.	Sep13
5	Consultation periods not long enough. Private applicants treated differently to attorneys. Examinations not consistent, one application with one term gets accepted then a different application same term refused. There is a general lack of consistency with citations.	Sep13
8	Staff are always very helpful. Exam reports are sometimes slow.	Sep13
8	When we reply to exam reports by email we can't attach items to the email.	Sep13
8	More e-filing forms. Being able to view trade mark files online. Sometimes can't get hold of staff after 4:30.	Sep13
8	Speed of responses good. I like the fact you can speak with examiners. Overall things are a bit slicker.	Sep13

8	The new system is not sending us all the correspondence via email like today we had received an exam report with issues over deadlines, but we haven't heard anything on the case since May.	Sep13
8	Had a few problems when sending a fax with a covering letter and different forms and the covering letter gets disregarded and the forms split up and things then go wrong. The applicant search on the website for trade marks since the change causes problems with the ID records.	Sep13
8	The recent changes in trade marks have made some of the processes slower. There are some issues with publication. The benefits are more electronic communications. Whenever I phone the IPO the people are responsive and able to deal with any questions I have.	Sep13
8	The recent electronic changes in opposition doesn't make it straightforward when dealing with our clients.	Sep13
9	I think private applicants are treated better than attorneys. The extension of time requests in trade marks are not always fair and half the time is lost before you get the request. Didn't inform our office of all the new TM forms. The survey you sent out for the new Fast Track Opposition was not very good. Generally your office is filled with hard working people.	Sep13
8	The recent changes in the International section for trade marks have caused problems with fees not being taken and issues with the Forms.	Sep13
8	Overall been happy.	March14
8	More electronic services.	March14
7	The implementation of a paper free office was done very badly, there was not enough recognition on how work was dealt with at the other end, a lot of things had not been thought through. It was almost forced upon us. This has now improved, but it was not handled well.	March14
9	System is very slick, also the new search facility is far better. Small point, we don't have a credit account within the UK but what is irritating is when filing three or four trade marks you have to input your credit or debit card each time, what would be useful is if you only had to do this once.	March14
8	I feel there is a them and us attitude, (I am a patent attorney) I have attended the Intellectual Assets Centre in Glasgow, it seems they (maybe not IPO) at the centre do things behind attorneys back, by saying we can help you (inventors) for free so as to avoid attorneys costs, which doesn't seem fair. With regard to the IP Audits there seems to be a lack of transparency as to how the money is distributed in Scotland. Other than that, the way the examination process is handled at the IPO is very good, better than the EPO and WIPO. Issues are sorted out well, and if there is an issue with the examination process then someone will ring directly to sort it out.	March14
10	The IPO has always operated in a fair and friendly manor, joy to deal with no cause to complain.	March14

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8	Good if there were more online forms, save completing forms and faxing.	March14
10	Whenever I have had any classification issues I have been able to call through/email and had a response. Very happy. On-line system is very good.	March14
9	Online forms are a bit chaotic, disappointed that the word version of oppositions has been removed. I liked TM7 single pages, this was very helpful.	March14

Trade Mark related comments – Representing their employer's IP

Score	Comment	Survey date
10	Everyone helpful, polite and accommodating.	March14
8	Overall went very well, does exactly what it says on the tin. All responses on time.	March14
10	Efficient, great service - I wish all government were like it.	March14
10	Found it easy to apply as the information is set out well so we didn't need the help of professionals.	March14
10	The only hick up we sometimes have is uploading an image (on TM3), it takes a few attempts to get it on but other than that everything is fine.	March14
7	Confusing on the classification information, needs to be more information to help novices decide.	March14
8	Concern over the amount of misleading invoices received, the first one received was almost paid.	March14
10	Marvellous service.	March14
1	Registered several trade marks, each time not very good service, difficult communication in every which way when asking for advice, very unhappy with the service provided by the IPO, guidance is very limited, ended up spending more on applications, even registered a trade mark that didn't need to be registered. Advice given was very text book. Lack of letter & email communication. When speaking to someone you could never get the same person or didn't have people call me back. Classes very confusing. Greater clarity and support needed, giving more tailored support. More help and guidance on classes needed.	March14
8	All worked very seamlessly, all went very well which says a lot for the process.	March14
9	Legal side of things can be difficult to understand, but I don't think this is something that you can control.	March14

Trade mark related comments – Representing their own IP

Score	Comment	Survey date
8	More email communication, when registered not sure what happened to the certificate as did not receive it and had to make a number of requests.	March14
9	The only thing is the length of time it takes to register a trade mark, not sure you can do anything about that.	March14
10	Everything ran smoothly.	March14
8	What I found very helpful was talking it through with someone first before registering a trade mark.	March14
8	Communication can sometimes be a bit long winded. Otherwise very happy with the services that have been provided.	March14
7	Difficulty with trade mark image conversion, it took 2 days to sort and still had trouble uploading it, but overall everything was fine.	March14
6	Communication issues, had a delay recently with registering a trade mark, someone was off sick which put this back by some time, this should have been passed on to someone else. A delay in registering a trade mark can be very costly indeed.	March14
10	Everything went very smoothly.	March14
9	All very good.	March14
8	Fairy easy to deal with, using the internet.	March14
9	The system is clear, understandable and we have always been kept well informed.	March14
10	I use the online interface, it has proven to be excellent, no problems and very quick.	March14
8	I originally had an agent that dealt with my trade mark application but I finished the process myself. I felt that it was unclear that I could have applied myself at the start, it's cheaper as the agent's costs are a lot higher for not much work.	March14
5	Just filed our 3rd trade mark, advised it is not linked to my other two trade marks, address is slightly different, same company, same road, same postcode - been advised that I need to complete a form, feel it's jobs worth and this should be something the IPO should be able to do. Lost faith in the IPO. Also, at the end of registration period, I had to contact you to confirm if everything was ok, which it was, nothing was sent out, then had to make a 2nd request for certificate as I didn't receive the 1st one which took two weeks to arrive and the costs are not cheap. On an individual basis the service is good and I appreciate the help I get	March14

	with this complicated process. I would score this an 8 but overall service is a 5.	
1	Such a hard process, nightmare to follow, might as well have given my money to charity. So complicated. Not simple. The website should be made simpler. There should be some kind of warning on the website before you commit. It is not designed for people who don't have the knowledge. Tried to register a trade mark which got refused, had a call to say if you change the following etc and then it was refused again, wasted my money. Very bad experience, which will never be repeated.	March14
10	Classes on the website, you have to go into each one individually which is very time consuming, would be useful if you could see it all. That would be ideal.	March14
9	Upfront warning about misleading invoice scams as wasn't aware of it, and received one which took me a while to realise it was a scam.	March14
8	Some more help and guidance on classes would be very helpful. We are very much specialised in what we do and got it wrong when trying to register the trade mark we had. The help we received by telephone was very helpful but more guidance would have been very helpful.	March14
8	I have had to call up on a number of times and the staff have always been very helpful. The reason I have had to call up is because the website has not been very clear. Would be helpful if the website had more information about time, schedules, process in more details rather than generic.	
10	Good service.	March14
8	The time it takes for a trade mark to be registered is long, whether it's because of it being published for other owners to oppose it seems long. Otherwise it was good.	March14
8	All very satisfied, website very useful and easy to navigate. All very good.	March14
7	Confusing on classes, didn't seem to be enough help at the start - but once application filed we had help with the classification - other than that everything went well.	March14
8	It would be helpful if you could provide initial advice before starting the process of registering a trade mark, wasted several hundred pounds trying to register a trade mark for it not to go through. Even if it was for a smaller fee, to have some upfront advice.	March14
6	<i>REDACTED BECAUSE INFORMATION COULD IDENTIFY THE WRITER.</i> When the examination report came back I am now told that there are lots of companies using the same sort of mark, I have to get in contact with all of them. I have had the original trademark registered for many years and this seems like a lot of hard work, resources, and a waste of time and effort.	March14 S.40(2) FOI ACT.

Patents related comments – Representing their client's IP

Score	Comment	Survey date
9	Staff, Examiners and Formalities people very helpful.	Sep13
5	The office has gone downhill in the last 3 to 4 years. Can't get a general question answered through the Information Centre and get put through to 5 different people before getting the answer. Patent searches noticeably worse than other IP Offices. Post grant procedures shaky.	Sep13
8	Don't like the use of the welsh language when you first call. It can be difficult to get hold of people after 5 o'clock.	Sep13
8	Staff are always helpful.	Sep13
9	I find the staff incredibly helpful and polite.	Sep13
8	People very helpful always willing to talk and help much nicer than speaking with the EPO. Sometimes people can't help with your query but they can be complex questions overall on the whole very happy.	Sep13
7	Staff always polite and helpful.	Sep13
8	I find the staff to be polite and helpful.	Sep13
10	Good service. When we contact the office our questions are always answered quickly.	Sep13
10	Very happy with the IPO.	Sep13
8	Withdrawing Patent applications. I spoke with 4 different people to try and get a confirmation receipt to confirm the withdrawal, some staff couldn't understand the importance of this. Also when private applicants phone, I know it can be difficult, but getting clarity with them that you speak about the right cases with them.	Sep13
9	Nice we can speak with the formalities department and they help us a great deal on the manual of Patent Practice.	Sep13
10	Only issue was when my EPO smart card ran out there was a delay.	Sep13
8	All is well. Just a recent Patent hearing case I thought could of been handled better.	Sep13
8	Only issue at the moment is that Patent searches are now taking 6 months instead of 4. When I spoke with the examiner I wasn't happy with their response. Senior management should stop getting rid of staff then having to recruit again as the office loses consistency and that's why things are taking longer. I would say that I prefer to speak with your office than any other IP office.	Sep13
8	Four years is far too long to examine a Patent. Your office is better than most IP offices.	Sep13
8	Very helpful, pleasant and friendly. The only reason for marking it an eight is in the past some processes have been a bit slow.	March14

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8.	When dealing with the IPO always very helpful.	March14
8	We would like to be able to file more online. European you can file absolutely everything. Also aware that IPO are in the processes of changing the website, please do not lose the professional pages as these are very valuable in their current form. Would not like to see these dumbed down. Also, some parts of the website are incorrect and out of date, e.g. ECJ divisions have now changed their name to CJEU and also information about registering UK Patents overseas.	March14
8	Not very clear which department we need to be put through to. Would be good to know the structure of different departments, when asking different questions, many regarding Patents.	March14
9	This is legislation and not sure if these can be changed by the office, but if the 1st examination report could be issued in less than 12 months allowing at least 18 month to sort things out. The office can be slow at getting stuff out giving us less than 12 months to sort stuff out.	March14
9	Issues I have experienced are with the online filing, when there is an issue I am just advised to contact the EPO, who then advise me that I have to contact the UK IPO and end up in an inescapable loop between the two. Also, the quality of UK searches is not consistent with the EPO as once filed in the UK it is then sometimes refused by the EPO un-granted. Seems to be very inconsistent.	March14
8	Online Patent renewals, would be happy to be part of any pilot. Are we considering EPO live/myspace like OHIM, you can also view all your papers and receive notifications of renewals etc this would be very useful. Also, why hasn't the UK become ISA or act as one.	March14

Patents related comments – Representing their employer's IP

Score	Comment	Survey date
7	Staff always very helpful. Can't fault the service.	Sep13
10	NAME REDACTED does a first class job there - he helped us with our application.	March14

Patents related comments – Representing their own IP

Score	Comment	Survey date
8	Put documents online, the EPO systems allows you to print all your documents online.	March14
10	All very good.	March14
10	Would be good to be able to save filings on-line, EPO provides this service.	March14
5	Recent decision that was made did not make sense. I should have been provided with a much fuller explanation (researcher asked if any follow up was required as a result of this, but none was required).	March14

Designs related comments – Represent their client's IP

Score	Comment	Survey date
8	Staff are always very helpful, which is good. Would like to be able to register designs on-line.	March14
8	Filing online - a real drawback is filing designs as some of our clients are forced to file a community design as you can do this online.	March14
10	Would be good to be able to file designs online.	March14

Design related comments – Represent their own IP

Score	Comment	Survey date
8	Suggested examples would be helpful of what you can and cannot do, or more step by step instructions and guidance.	March14
5	REDACTED BECAUSE CASE DETAILS COULD IDENTIFY THE WRITER.	March14 (S:402) FOI ACT)

Comments on a combination of services – Represent their client's IP

Services used	Score	Comment	Survey date
Trade Marks;#Designs	7	Three comments. Consistency of examinations; home workers not always available, asked to call back on a different day; new online forms, had to add a class through an office action but the system doesn't tell you which form it's acknowledging.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	10	Response time very good. Don't like website.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	9	Everything is fine at the moment.	Sep13
Trade Marks;#Designs	8	Website is problematic. Search facility seems to crash a lot more these days. Information on your website not as good. Ordering file copies takes longer. Online form seems to crash a lot. References left of correspondence. Replying to office actions does not allow you to put lots of detail. Notice of publication not consistently informed.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	8	More online forms.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks	9	Its taking a little longer with transfers at the moment.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks	7	Having a lot more online forms is positive. Still having issues around the notification of trade mark publication, the letter still doesn't give you the publication date. Patent forms 51 have problems with unpublished cases as you no longer notify us we don't know whether they have been processed.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	8	More work with the online tools, like being able to see all the correspondence like the EPO system.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	9	Any issues we do have with the IPO are always dealt with quickly.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks	9	It is so easy to file patent and trade marks online it's a joy to do.	Sep13

<p>Patents;#Trade Marks</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Process on trade marks fairly efficient. Have a few issues with the accelerated procedures for patents towards the end for acceptance, this can be difficult to explain to clients. Patent inter parties proceedings always take so long. The online patent application form you have to repeat details, wish it was like the trade mark form.</p>	<p>Sep13</p>
<p>Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Information and updates on website very good.</p>	<p>Sep13</p>
<p>Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Faxed a Design application and followed it up with a confirmation copy, but the examiner said they could not accept the representations and I would have to accept a new filing date even though we sent a hard copy as well which the office said they could not find even though we had proof that other documents sent in with the application were received.</p> <p>Had a patent exam report which took 25 days to receive from its compliance date. We had to apply for extension of time, we got that refunded but it was a lot of work for nothing. Electronic services are hit and miss with patents and trade marks. I think with your systems you should ask more opinions of agents and think how agents systems actually work.</p>	<p>Sep13</p>
<p>Patents;#Trade Marks</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Very good.</p>	<p>Sep13</p>
<p>Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>When you phone sometimes you speak with knowledgeable staff, other times can get vague answers. Website is easy to navigate. The number searches on Patents can be confusing. I like the quizzes on the website, good for training new staff.</p>	<p>Sep13</p>
<p>Patents;#Trade Marks</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>There is a lack of consistency with trade mark examinations, wrong objections being raised which is causing cost to clients.</p> <p>I've been working in IP for 12 years and there has been a decline in the general administration and communication in your office in trade marks. You tell us you can answer questions on the phone then when we ring we are told to e mail. There have been a few occasions when we have received correspondence the envelope has been hand written for patents and trade marks and the hand writing has been of poor quality and has caused problems with mail forwards with the Royal mail and we have been charged. I have raised this before and still keeps happening.</p>	<p>Sep13</p>

Patents;#Trade Marks	7	There are delays in recording patent assignments. There is a general reluctance to increase the fees which would help give a better service.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks	9	The ability to talk with examiners is good, their willingness to help out applicants very good. Web forms ok. Search reports talking a bit longer on Patents. Green channel has caused a few problems. Patent Box the same.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	7	Pretty efficient, sometimes things go missing on the patent side.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks	8	Patent and trade mark examiners are a bit inexperienced.	Sep13
Patents;#Trade Marks	10	Big change of name was the only issue. Were advised to send in a letter, but later received an e mail and asked to send in the form.	March14
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	10	All very positive, staff very helpful and friendly.	March14
Patents;#Trade Marks	9	Went to a Excel Exhibition back in 2012 where we had a stand focused on Start up's, IPO did an excellent job providing information on protection of rights and pit falls to avoid. This is a strong positive. Also been filing online, I paid addition fees to get feedback on my application, online help is a benefit it's very helpful. The service is extremely helpful and cost effective.	March14
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	8	Difficult to talk to the person you want to, get stuck on the switchboard. You used to send out reminder letters which seem to have stopped this is a shame. It would be a good service to do this electronically and wouldn't cost anything.	March14
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	8	We do electronic filing on a daily basis and it is very noticeable that there are notices put up that the UK IPO is down due to maintenance. EPO system is same/similar system and this never happens. Also if you need to speak with an examiner and is not present it would be useful if you were put through to someone that was clear on what was happening and able to give you the information or an exact time when the correct examiner was available. The length of this survey is ideal.	March14

Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	8	Consistency – this would be down to training, for example, I called yesterday and my query was dealt with over the telephone, my colleague called today with the same query and was told to complete a form.	March14
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	9	Online filing for patents is better than online filing for trade marks. Would like to see communised systems between the two systems and even for design's. Trade mark online system is less easy to use.	March14
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	8	Been involved in a hearing and the procedure was very slow, there were not many hearing officers, one was acting up, think two were on maternity leave, so this could just be a temporary problem, but my suggestion would be more hearing officers.	March14
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	8	No issues	March14
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	6	Staff are always very helpful. Process can be very slow, unlike EPO were you can get a lot of stuff online. The delivery of information can be slow.	March14
Patents;#Trade Marks;#Designs	9	The advice given to us and the public can sometimes be incorrect advice. I have an email from the information centre which is incorrect. Don't want to name names but have had incorrect information in the past by phone and email.	March14
Patents;#Trade Marks	10	There is a lot of information on the website which is good, not always easy to find but always been helped and pointed in the right direction and found the information required.	March14
Patents;#Trade Marks	8	Find trade marks efficient, would like to be able to register/renew a patent online, rather than paper form. These types of surveys should be done online rather than the telephone; generally people do not have the time.	

Comments on a combination of services – Represent their employer's IP

Services used	Score	Comment	Survey date
Patents;#Trade Marks	10	No problems, do a lot of filing online which is excellent. Deal with a lot of PCT applications, if they ever have any problems when they call up, always very helpful.	March14

Trade Marks;#Designs	8	Past six months examination practice has been less consistent than previous examinations, we have experienced a lot more objections which has surprised us.	March14
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