PATENT CENTER

USER GUIDE

October 2019

ABSTRACT

This User Guide will provide you with the information needed to user Patent Center to file and view patent applications electronically. A brief overview of the process and screen shots that identify critical components of the tool are included.

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Introduction

Welcome to Patent Center. Patent Center is the new tool in development, which features a unified interface, with all of the capabilities from today's tools in a single place, and so much more. Patent Center will replace the Electronic Filing System - Web (EFS-Web), the current web-based patent application and document submission tool; and the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system, the current web-based solution to retrieve and download information regarding patent application status.

Before you file electronically there are a few important items you should know:

- Patent Center is a web-based tool that can be accessed from any web-enabled computer anywhere in the world.
- Patent Center is a patent application and document submission solution that utilizes standard web-based screens and prompts the user to submit documentation in multiple formats including PDF, DOCX, TXT, etc. directly to the USPTO.
- Patent Center is not a patent application authoring tool. It allows the user to use the same tools and workflow processes used to produce paper-based patent application documents.
- Patent Center is legally equivalent to paper-based patent application and document submission methods and provides filers with the same protections as traditional methods.
    - Submission Receipt – Legally binding proof of the date and time of the submission. (An official filing receipt will be mailed from the Office of Patent Application Processing).
- Patent Center has been designed to be simple to use.
    - In a matter of minutes, the user can complete a submission and receive electronic confirmation that it has been received by USPTO.
    - New incorporated safeguards that alert the user to possible problems with the patent application before it is submitted, providing a flexible and forgiving platform that can ease the submission process.
- Patent Center allows the user to submit industry-standard PDF (portable document format) files.
    - Although PDF is an open standard, not all PDF files are the same. Users are urged to review information about compatible PDF files is detailed in the Quick Start Guide and in other documentation.
- Patent Center incorporates e-commerce capabilities to provide multiple options for paying for the patent application or document submission.

PATENT CENTER – Real-Time Status Information

Patent Center allows Independent Inventors, registered patent attorneys/agents, and practitioner support individuals the ability to access all of the content of Patent Center, as well as real-time status information, application documents and transaction history for pending patent applications using a secure internet connection.

Applications associated to the Customer Numbers listed in a Registered User's profile are available for review.

To access all features of Patent Center, you must:

- Be a registered patent attorney/agent, practitioner support individual, or an Independent Inventor
- Have a Customer Number assigned to the profile
- Have a USPTO.gov login to obtain secure transmission of the application to the USPTO

Patent Center Users

Patent Center allows for both registered and guest users.

Web Access

A computer, a web browser and an Internet connection are all that is needed to electronically file and view applications. Users can access Patent Center by navigating to https://patentcenter.uspto.gov/.

Registered Patent Center user

A Registered Patent Center user has both a USPTO.gov account and is registered with Patent Center. To gain full access to Patent Center features, users must sign in to Patent Center using a two-step authentication process for secure communication with the USPTO.

Complete Two-Step Authentication

User authentication is a safe and secure method which grants access to registered Patent Center users for application submissions and retrieval. Two-step authentication involves providing a valid USPTO.gov account and password, then providing a valid one time pin sent by email or mobile authenticator.

1. Click **Sign in** near the upper right corner of the Patent Center home page. *(Figure 1)*
2. Enter login credentials (USPTO.gov account email and password). *(Figure 2)*
3. Select preferred method and click **Send One-time PIN**. *(Figure 3)*
4. Retrieve PIN and enter where directed in the Two-step authentication window. *(Figure 4)*
    a. Indicate if the computer is trusted and used regularly and click **Verify**.
        i. If the checkbox is selected for "This is a computer that I trust and use regularly", this allows the user to re-authenticate using the same computer and browser within 24 hours, without being required to provide a One-time PIN.

Figure 1

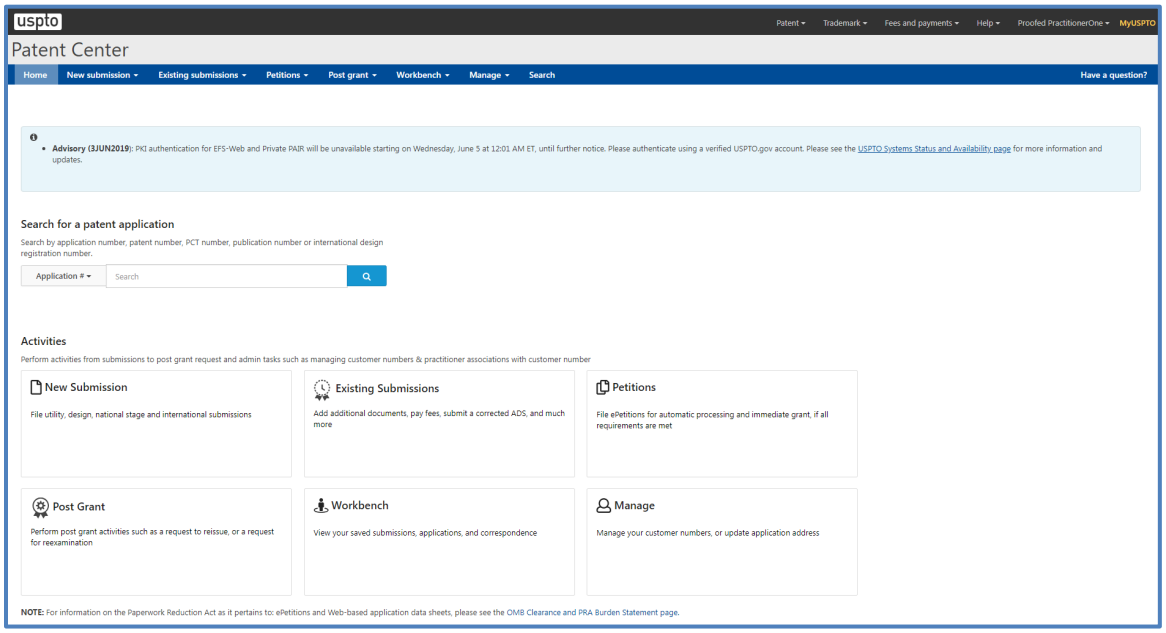


Figure 2

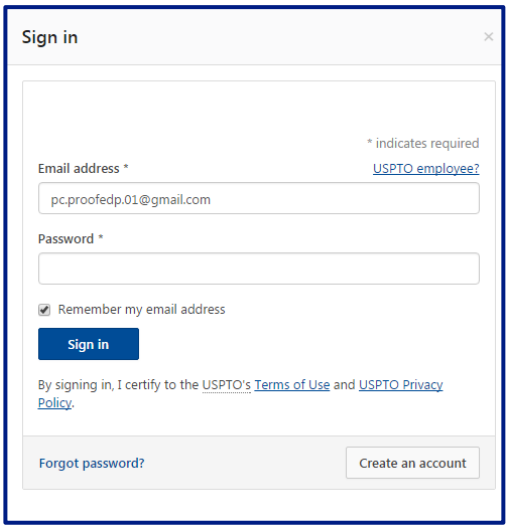


Figure 3

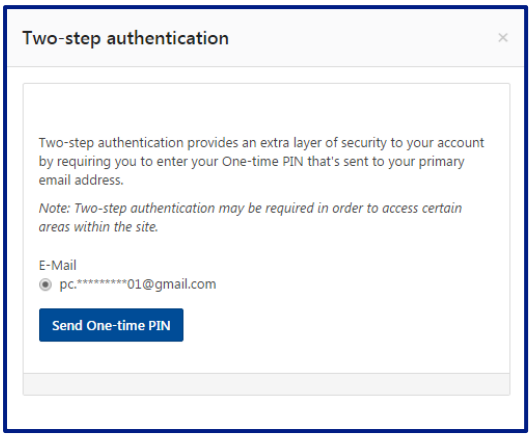
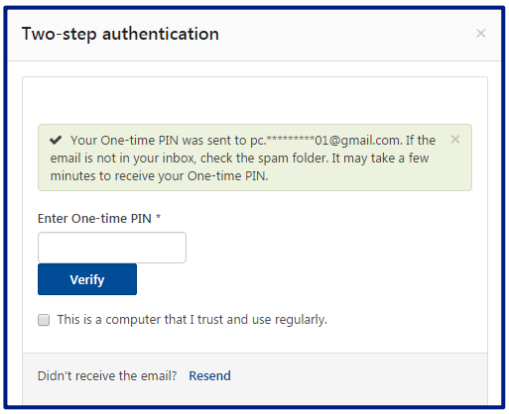
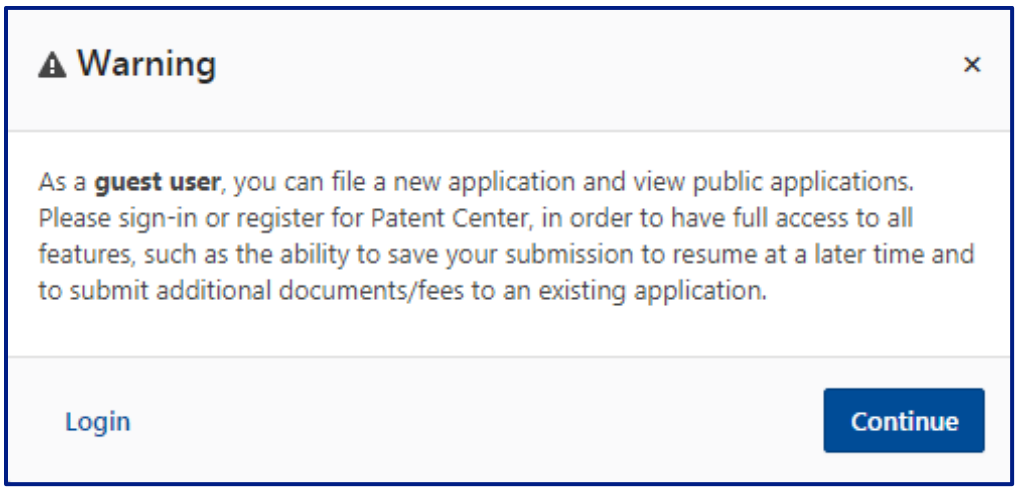


Figure 4



Guest Patent Center user

A warning message appears when a filing type is selected and the user is not logged on. The Guest then may continue as Guest, obtain a Patent Center account, or Login before proceeding through the application process.



Patent Center Viewing and Retrieval

Patent Center accesses patent information held in the USPTO internal Patent Application Locating and Monitoring (PALM) system and presents it in two different views: Public and Private. Patent Center provides web-based access to public and pending patent information and eases the process of tracking patents, patent applications and follow-on documents through the USPTO approval process.

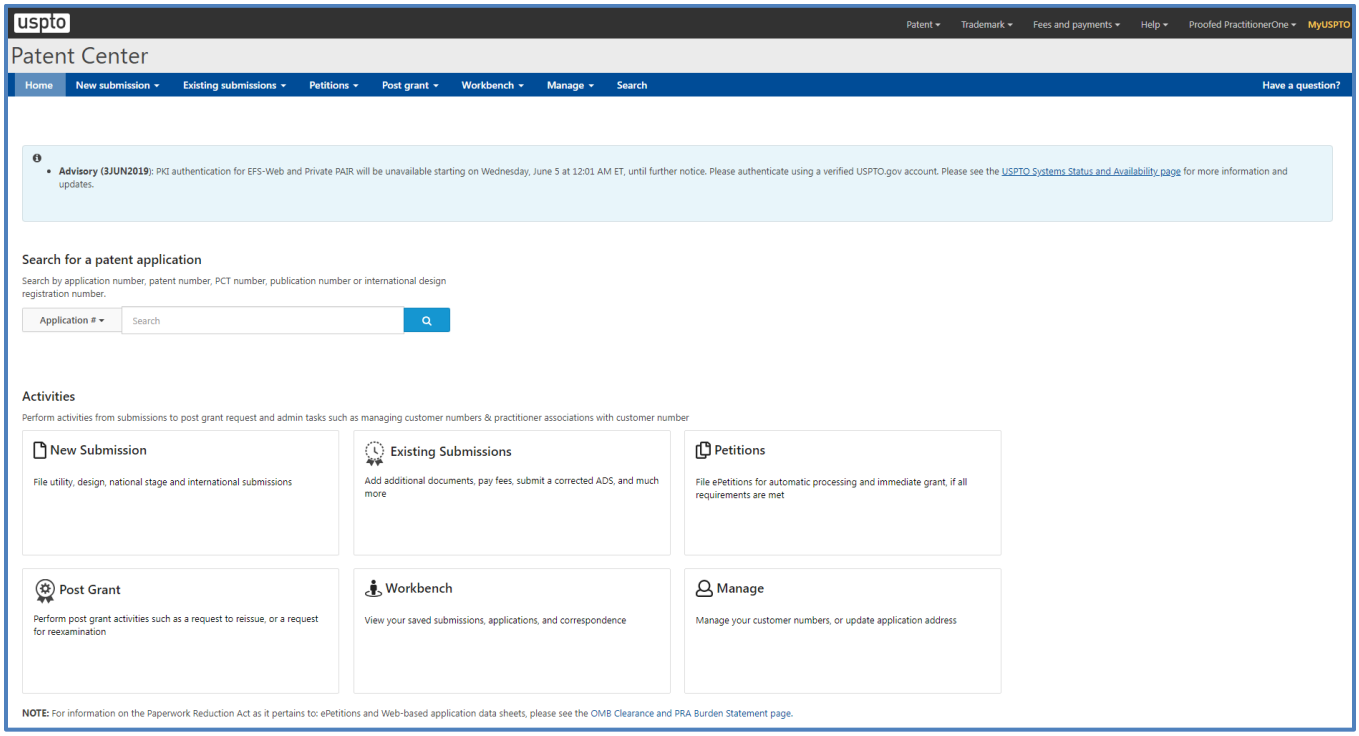
Public view provides access to all issued patents and published patent applications. Some data such as fees are not available.

Private view allows registered users to access application information that has not been made public in addition to what is also available through the Public view. Other private information such as fees are accessible.

Searching

Customers using the Patent Center system can search for patent applications on both the Home page and the Search page. The user will have the option to select Application #, Patent #, PCT #, Publication #, and Intl. Design Reg. #.

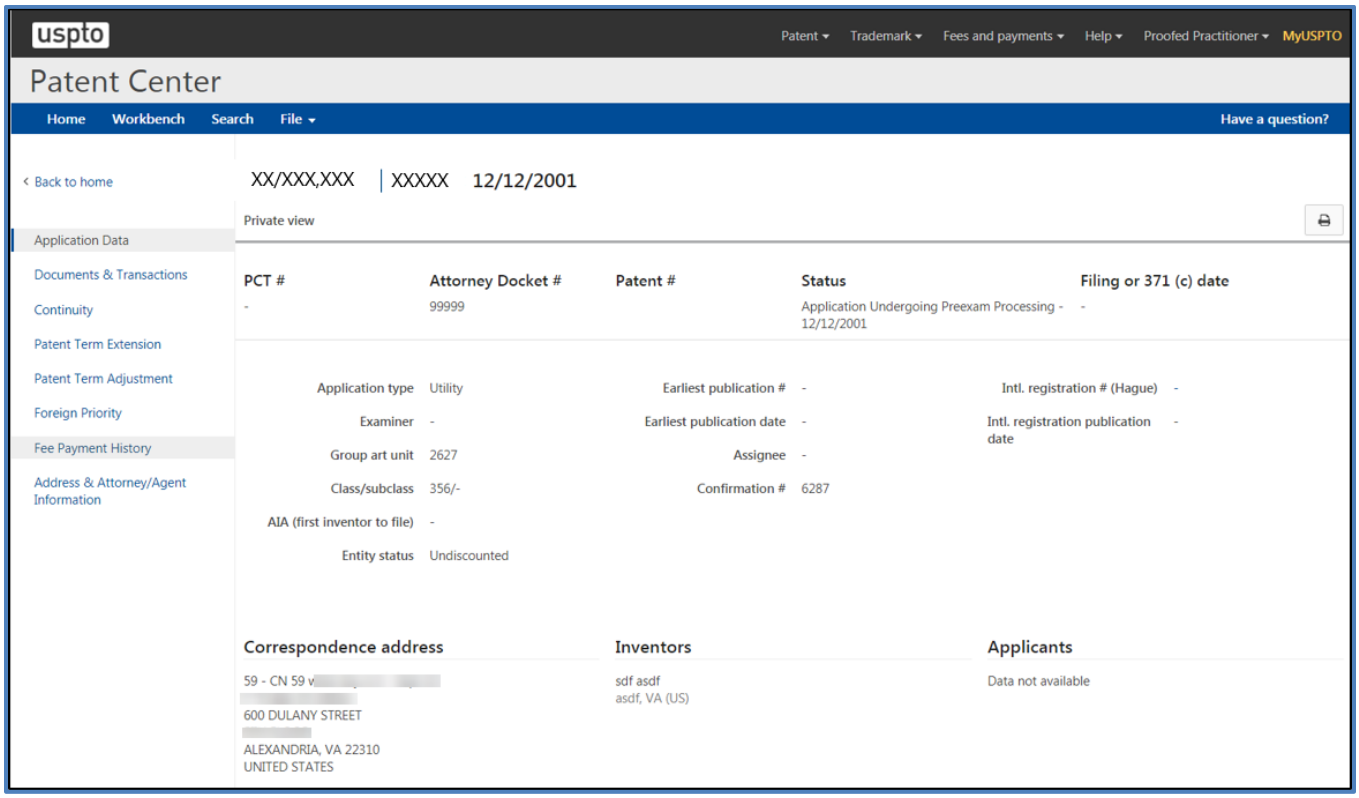
Select the search option, enter in the corresponding number, and click on the magnifying glass to obtain results.



The user is directed to the Application data page after performing a search.

Application Data

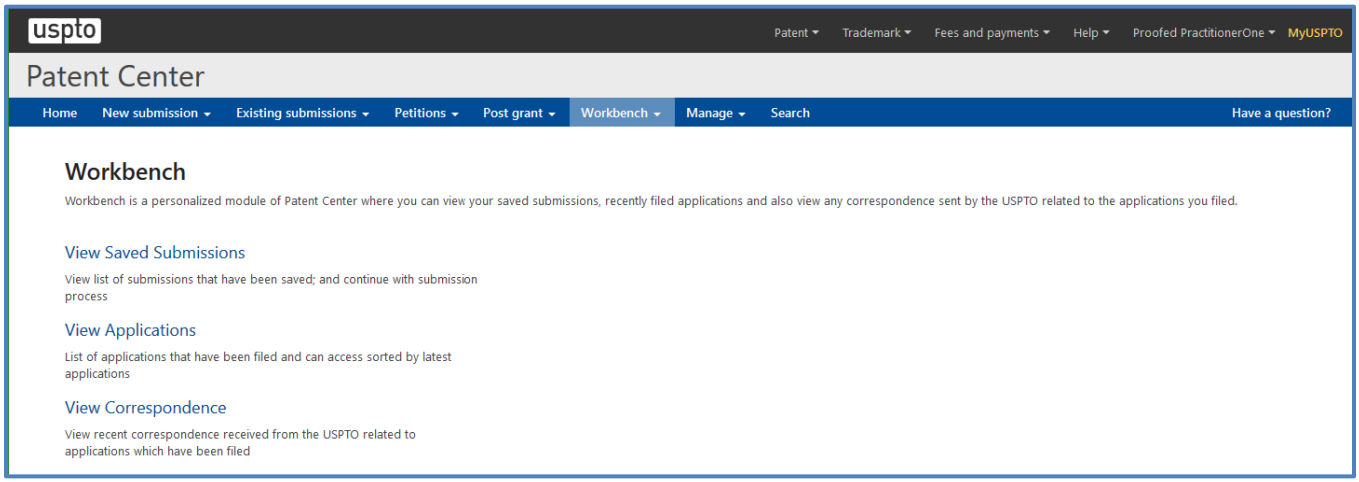
Detailed information for the searched application is displayed. Various hyperlinks provide access to a range of application information that is available to the user.



If the application is associated to the user's profile, a Private view indicator will display under the application number at the top. This allows the user to make changes to the attorney docket number and view additional information that is not available for public inspection. If the application is not associated to the profile, the Public view indicator will display.

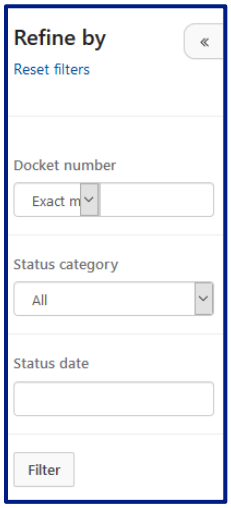
Workbench

Customers using the Patent Center system have access to Saved Submissions, Applications associated to their profile, and Correspondence.



Navigation

Use the **Refine by** area to control the information displayed. Click the expand/collapse button to use the full window to review results.

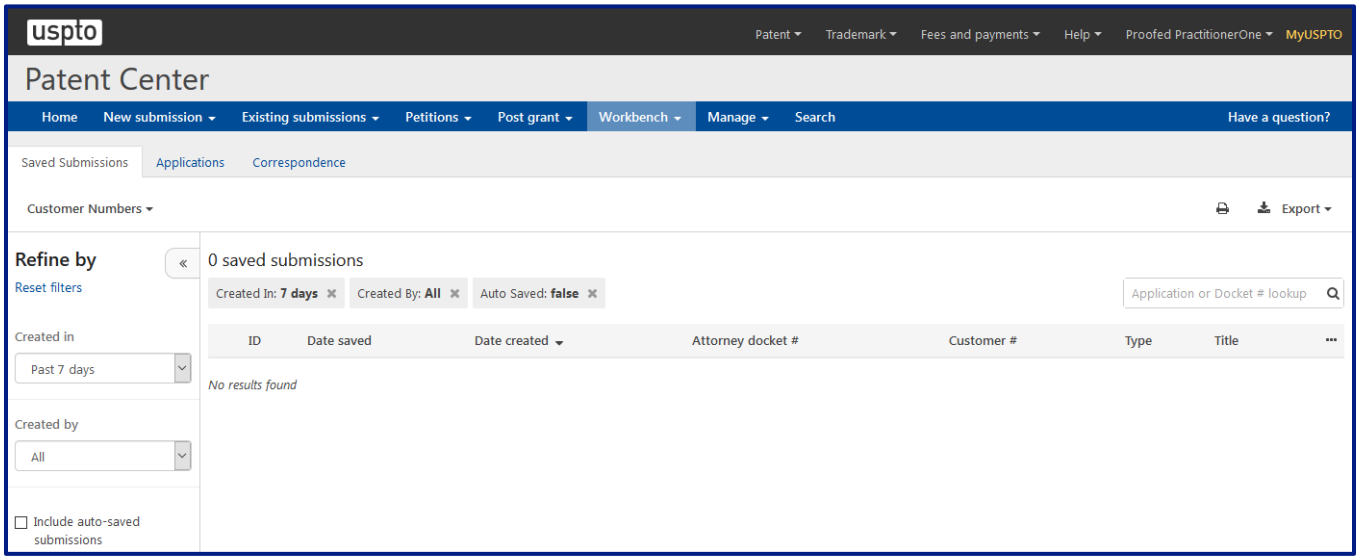


Saved Submissions

On the Saved Submissions tab, users have access to all submissions that have been saved over the previous fourteen (14) calendar day period. Users can continue with a submission by clicking the hyperlink for the Patent Center ID.

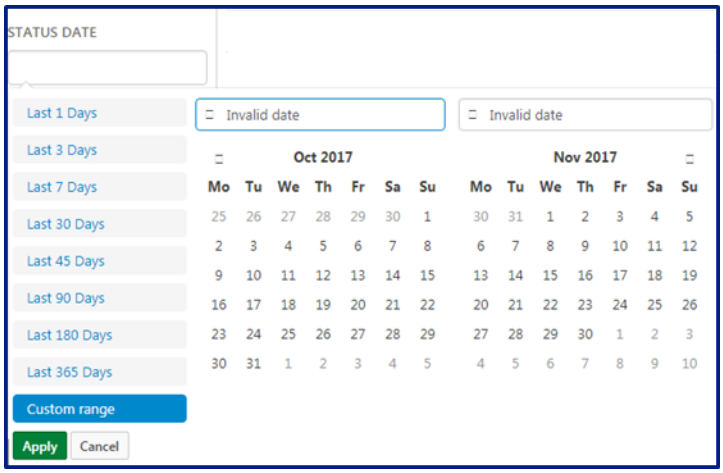
Practitioners will have the option to filter data by Created in and Created by and the Practitioner Support Users have the ability to sort by Created by and Filed on Behalf of.

All data may be sorted by selecting the desired header.

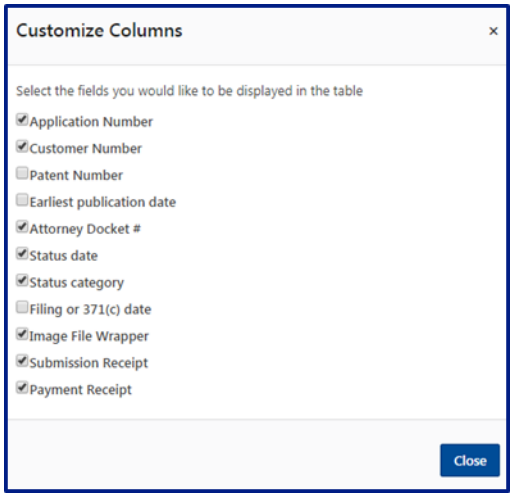


Applications

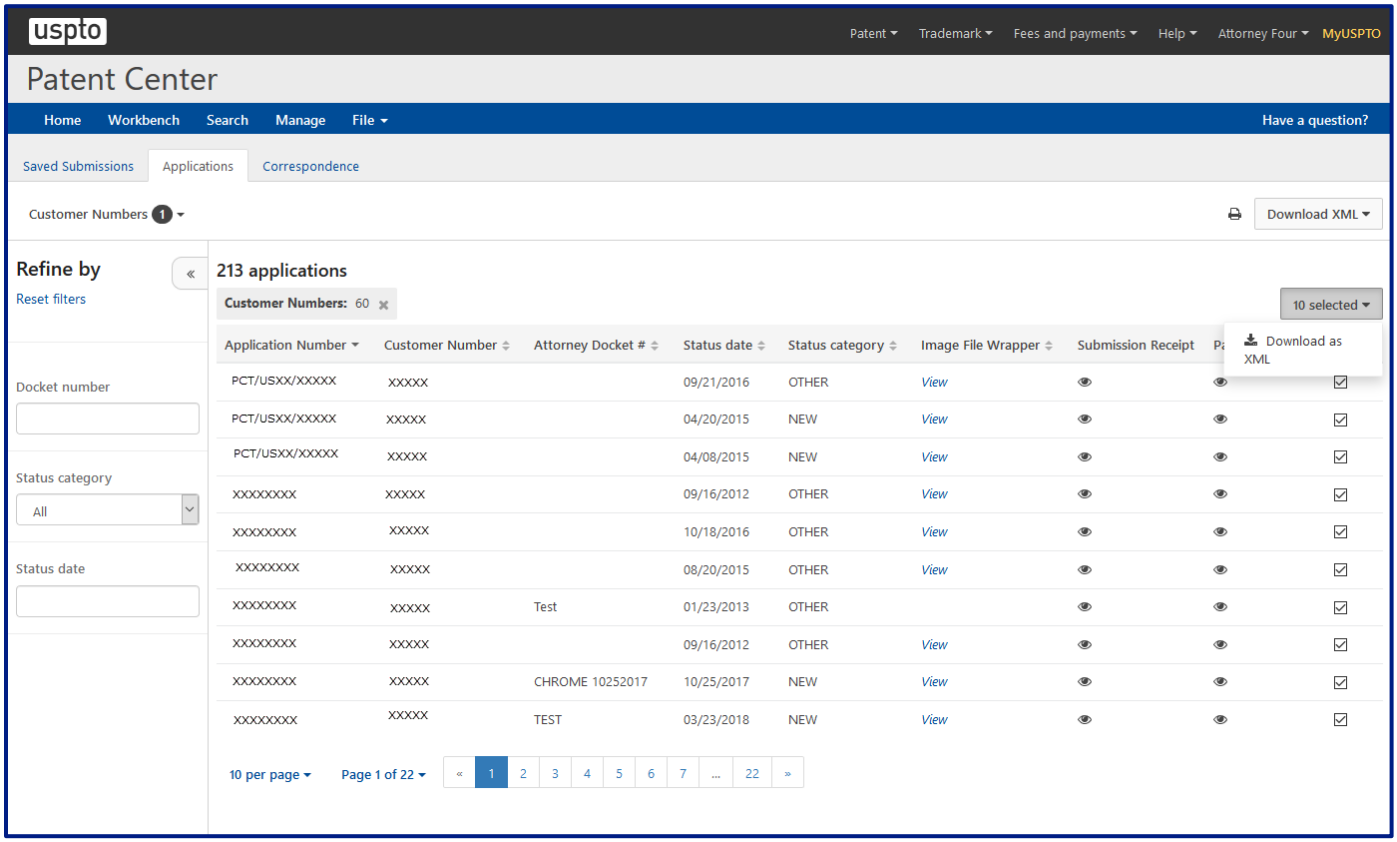
Users have the option to filter by Docket Number, Status Category, and Status Date. The Docket number filter can be used for Exact match, Starts with, or Contains options to sort the list of applications. Status category allows the user to filter based on All, New, Pending, Issued, Abandoned, and Other status for the applications. Status Date provides specific search parameters up to 365 days and includes **Custom range** option.



Columns are customizable and can be added or removed based on the user's preference. Many columns are sortable by selecting the desired header.

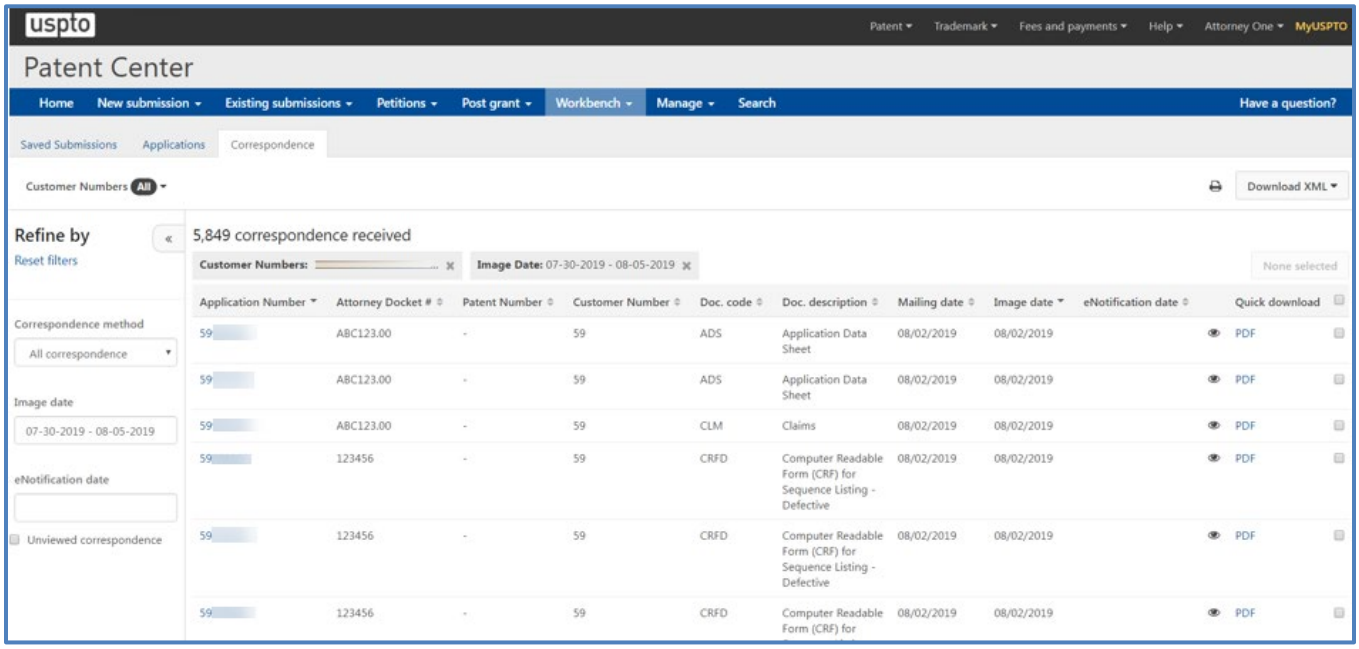


Download bib data in XML for the listed applications by selecting the checkboxes on the right hand column for specific application(s) or the Select All checkbox which will select all applications listed.



Correspondence

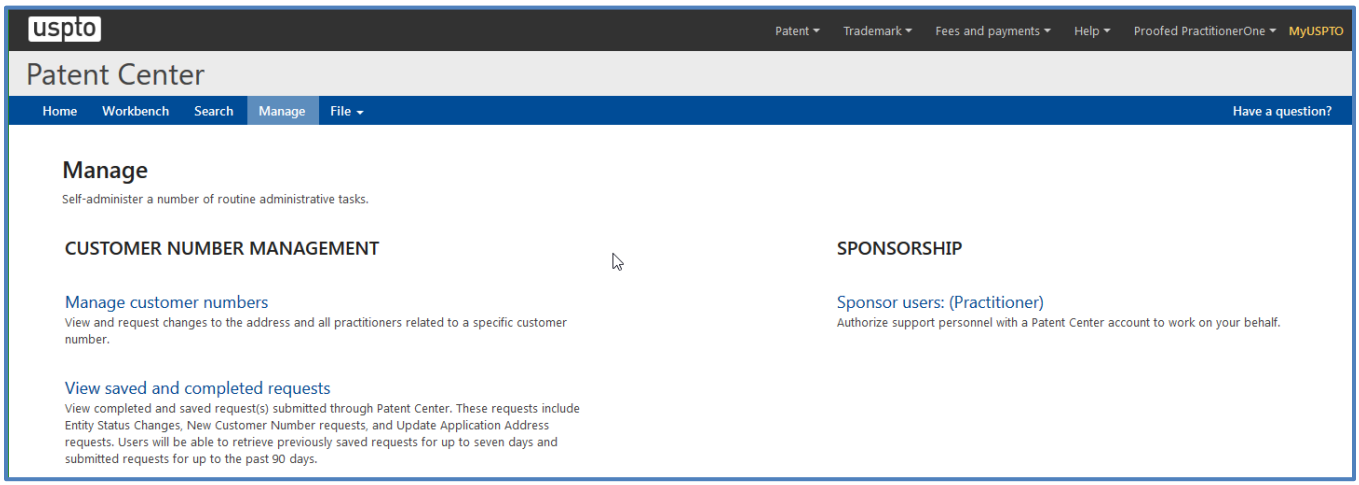
Users have the option to filter by Correspondence method, Date type, and Image date. If the Correspondence method of Regular correspondence only is selected, the user will have the option to filter based on Image date. If the method of e-Notifications only is selected, the user will have the option to filter based on eNotification date. Both the Image date and eNotification date filers provides specific search parameters up to 90 days and includes **Custom range** option.



Manage

Two-Step authenticated Registered Users have additional tools under Manage. Users can manage:

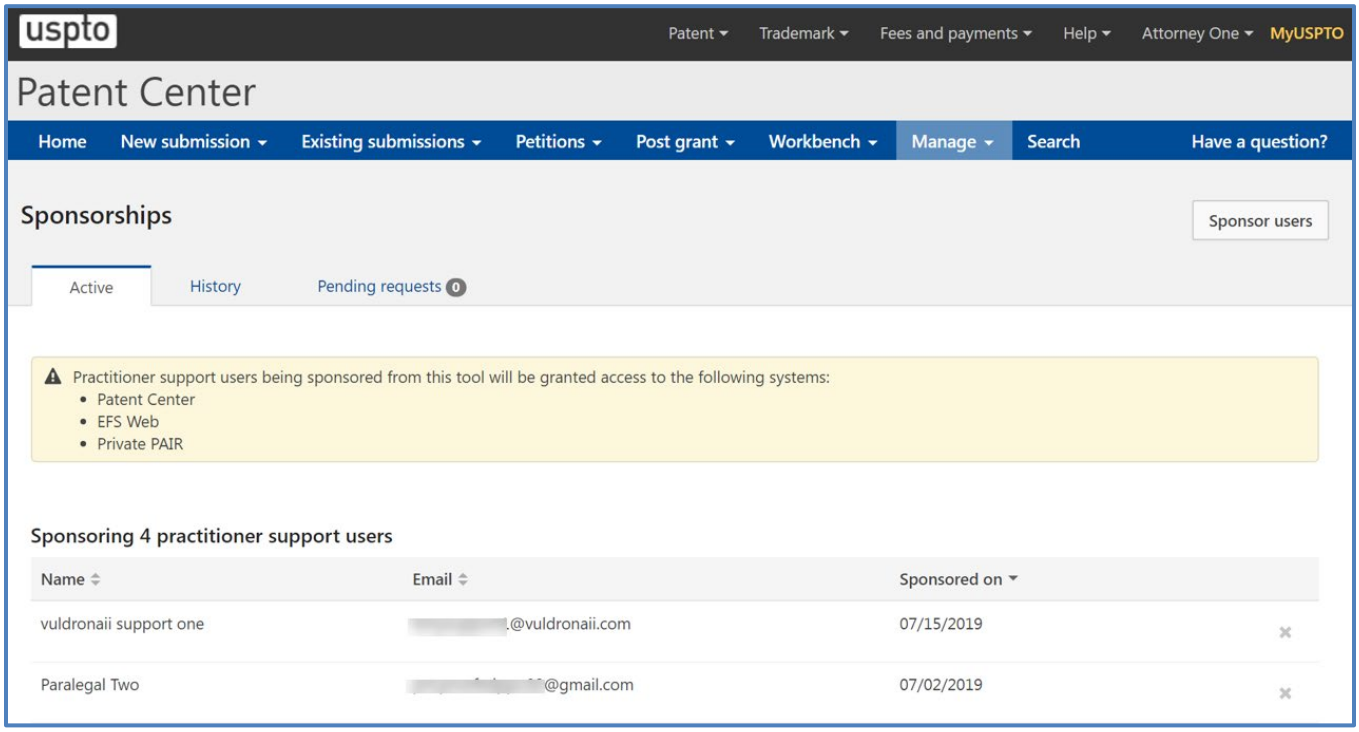
- Sponsorships
- Customer Numbers
- View saved and completed requests; and
- Update application address (Coming soon)



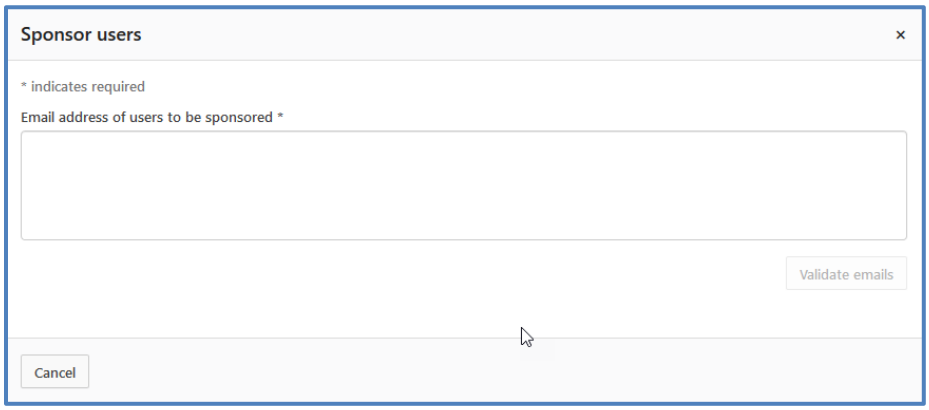
Sponsorships

Once the Sponsors users link has been selected, the user will have access to see all support staff that are being sponsored by their profile, the history of the requests, view any pending requests, or sponsor additional users.

Many columns are sortable by selecting the desired header. Sponsorships can also be removed by selected the “x” next to the practitioner support user information under the Active header.

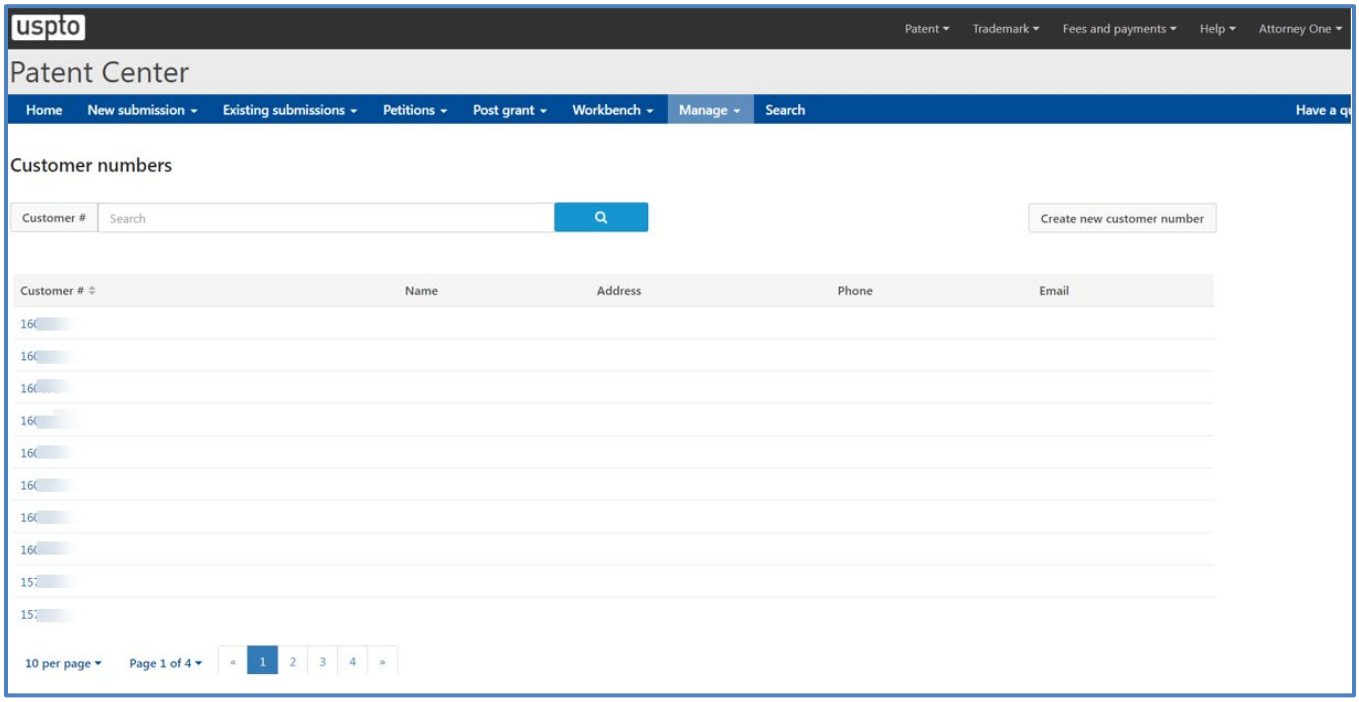


To add additional Support staff personnel, select the Sponsor user's button and enter their USPTO.gov account email address in the provided box. Separate emails by a semi-colon to add more than one individual at a time. More information can be found on the Sponsorship Tool Guide.

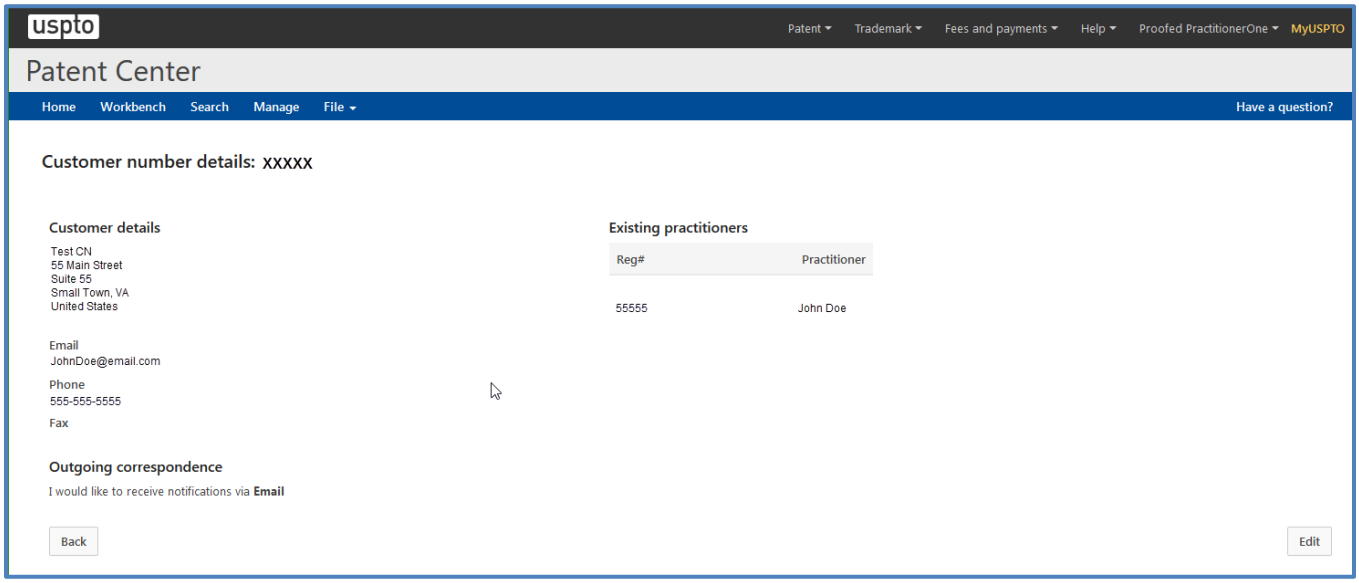


Manage customer numbers

Users have the option to create a new customer number or select a customer number to update the associated information. The customer number column is sortable by selecting the desired header.

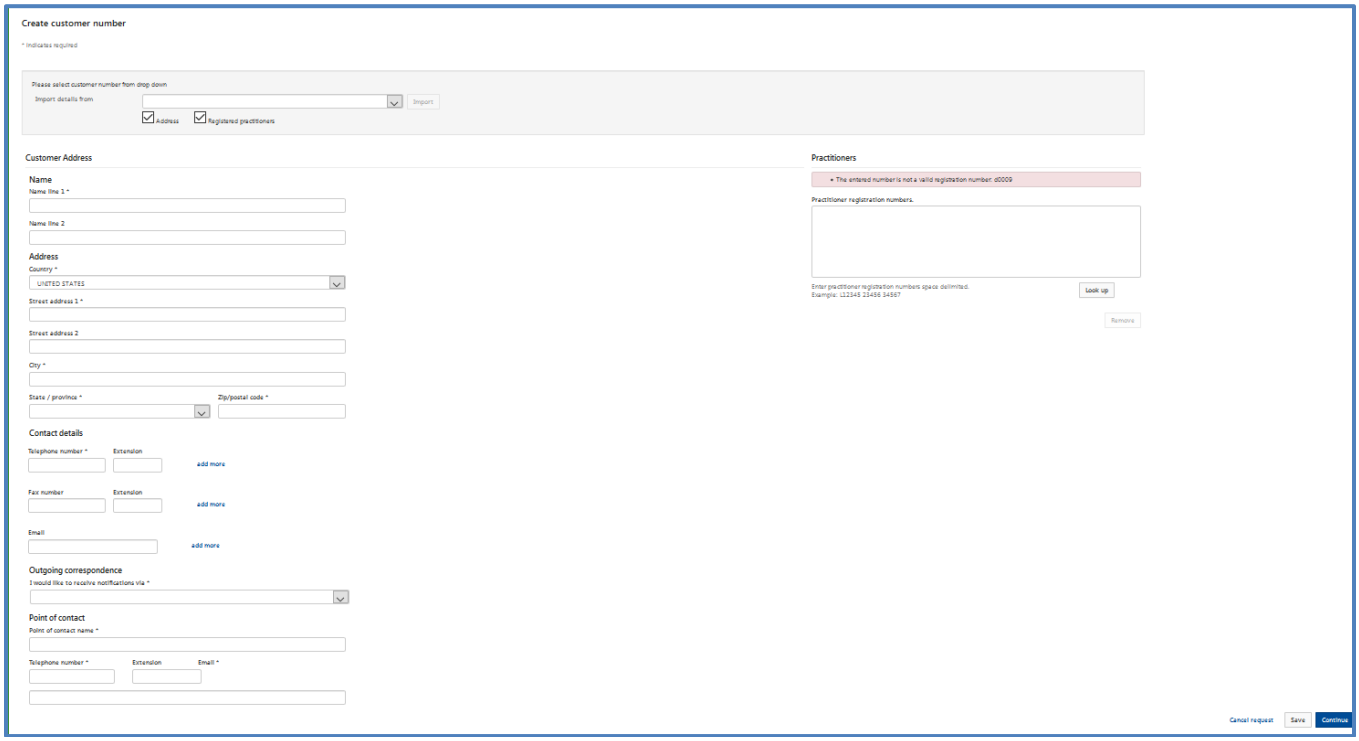


To review or update the information for a customer number, the user will select the hyperlink for the customer number which will direct the user to an edit screen.



If the user selects the Create new customer number option, the user will be directed to the create customer number screen. As a Practitioner, the user will have the option to import the Address and/or the Registered practitioners from a customer number currently associated to their profile. Independent Inventors will have the option to import an Address from another customer number currently associated to their profile.

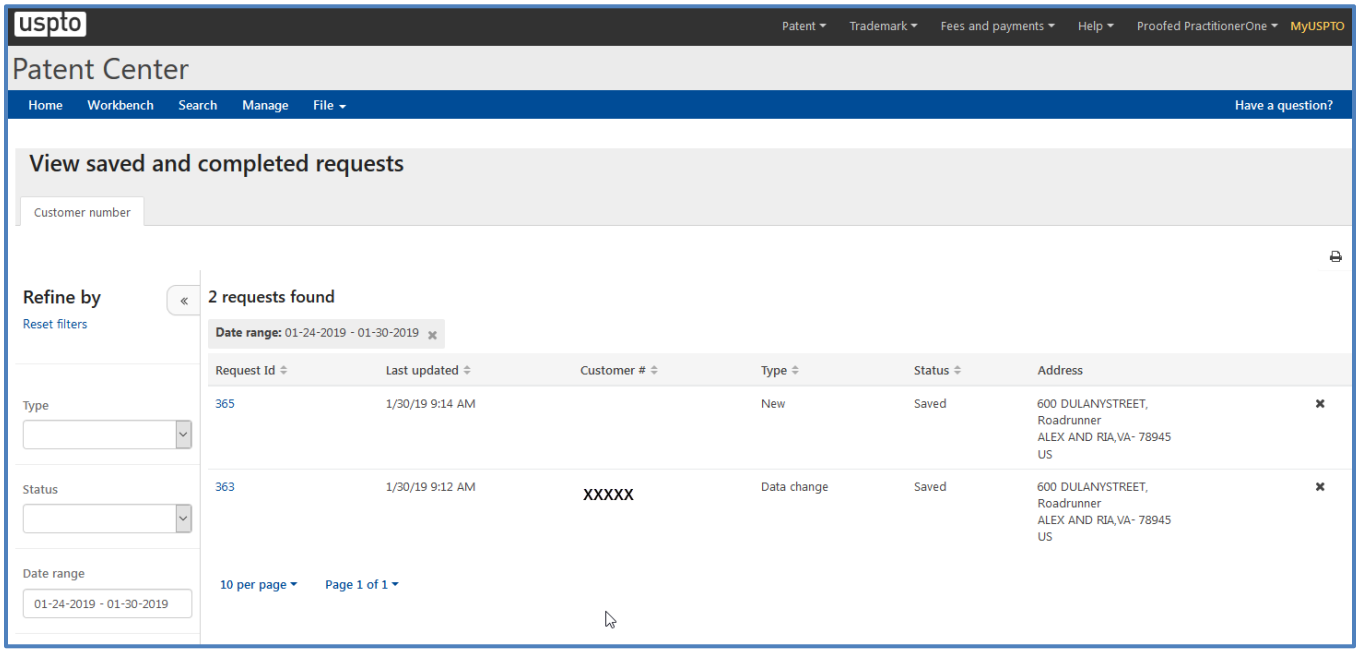
The practitioner registration numbers can be added by entering their practitioner registration number in the box provided. Separate registration numbers by a space to add more than one individual at a time.



View saved and completed requests

Users have the option to filter by Type, Status, and Date range. Type can be filtered to All, New, and Data change. Status can be filtered by All, Failed, Submitted, and Saved. Date range provides specific search parameters up to 90 days and includes **Custom range** option.

Columns are sortable by selecting the desired header. Saved requests can be deleted selected the "x" next to the Request information.



Patent Center eFiling

Application Types

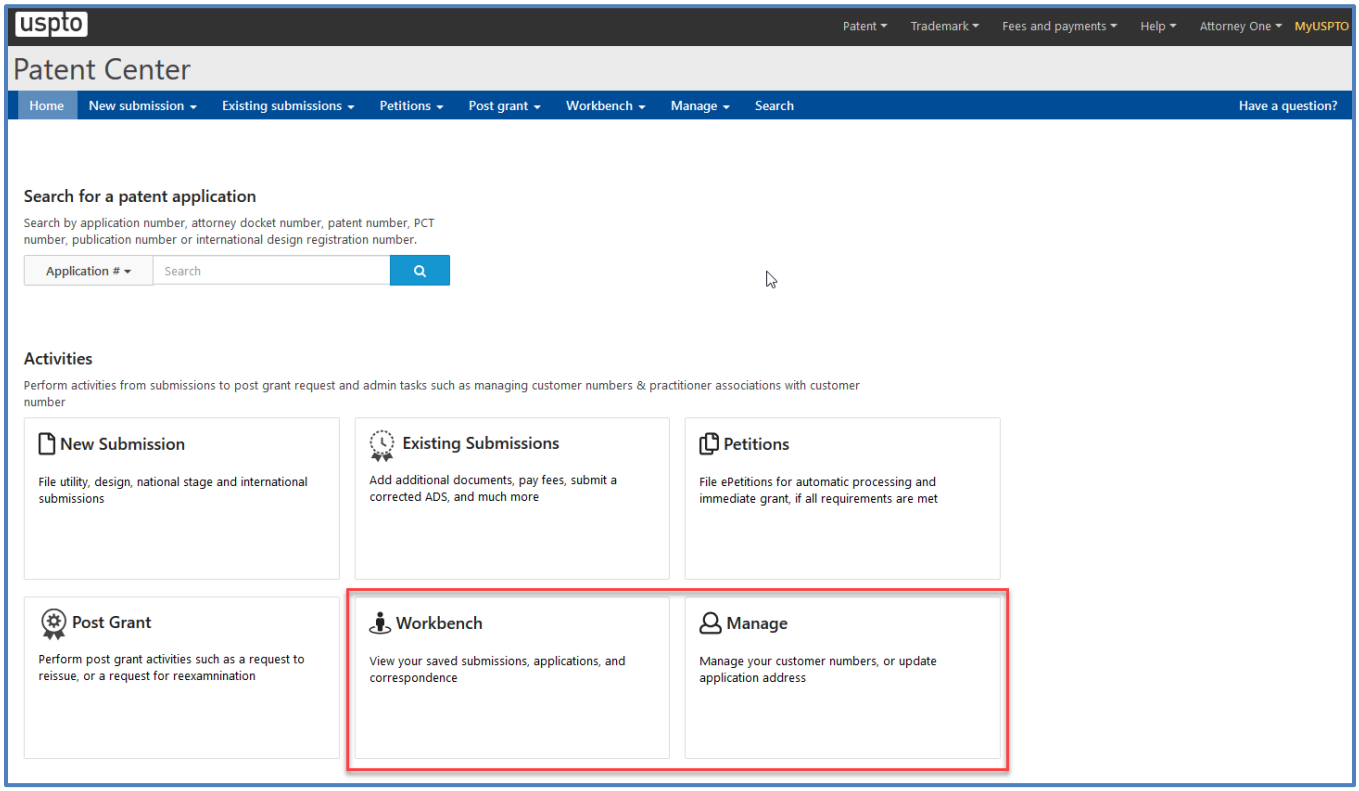
Patent Center accepts new Design, International Application for filing in the US receiving office, Provisional, Utility, and National Stage applications under 35 USC 371.

Patent Center allows both Registered and Guest users to file patent applications electronically.

- New Submissions
    - Regular Submissions
        - Utility Nonprovisional
        - Utility Provisional
        - Design Nonprovisional
        - U.S. National Stage under 35 USC371.
    - International
        - International PCT Application
    - Special Patent Initiatives
        - Track One Prioritized Examination
        - Accelerated Examination – Utility
        - Accelerated Examination – Design
- Existing submissions
    - Upload Documents / Pay Fees
    - Web 85b - Issue fee transmittal
    - eTerminal Disclaimer
- Petitions
    - Petition to make special based on age
    - Request to Withdraw as Attorney or Agent of Record
    - Petition to withdraw from Issue after Payment of the Issue Fee (37 CFR 1.31(c)(1) or (2))
    - Petition to withdraw from Issue after Payment of the Issue Fee (37 CFR 1.313(c)(1) or (2) with Assigned Patent Number)
- Post-grant
    - Request for Reissue
    - Request for Reexam – by Patent Owner
    - Request for Reexam – by Third Party

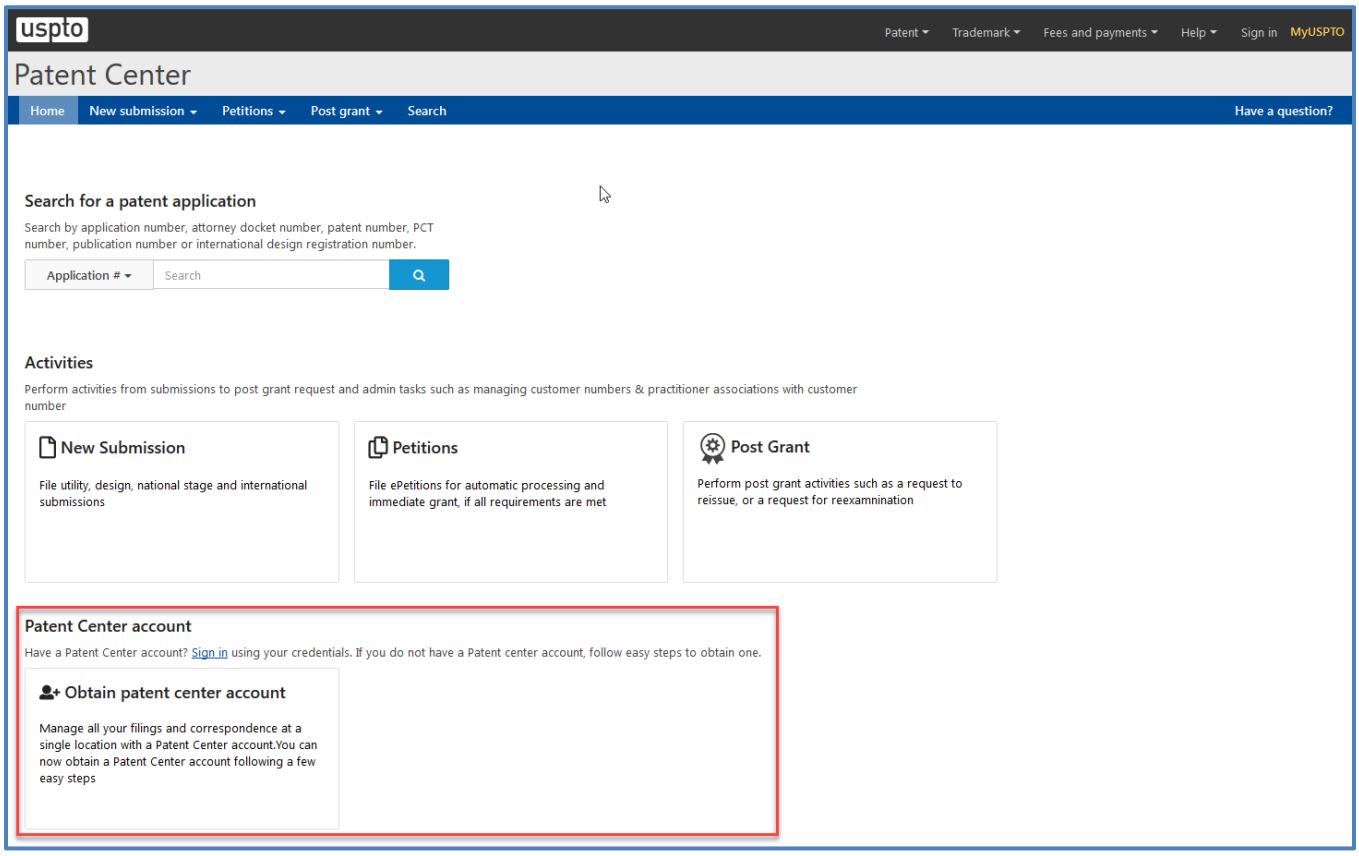
Registered User

Registered Users will see their Workbench and Manage information below the application search field.



Guest User

Guest Users will see Patent Center account below the application search field. This section provides information for obtaining an account.



Existing Submission

Only Registered Users may file documents in existing applications and patents. Patent Center may be used by a Registered User to file the following follow-on documents:

- Upload Document/Pay Fees for an existing application

Patent Filing Navigation

Once the user has entered Patent Center and begun the application process, the train stop feature at the top of the screen expands to show the multiple components of the application process.

NOTE! Use train stops to move forward and backwards within the Patent Center pages. Use train stops to automatically save changes while moving through the filing.

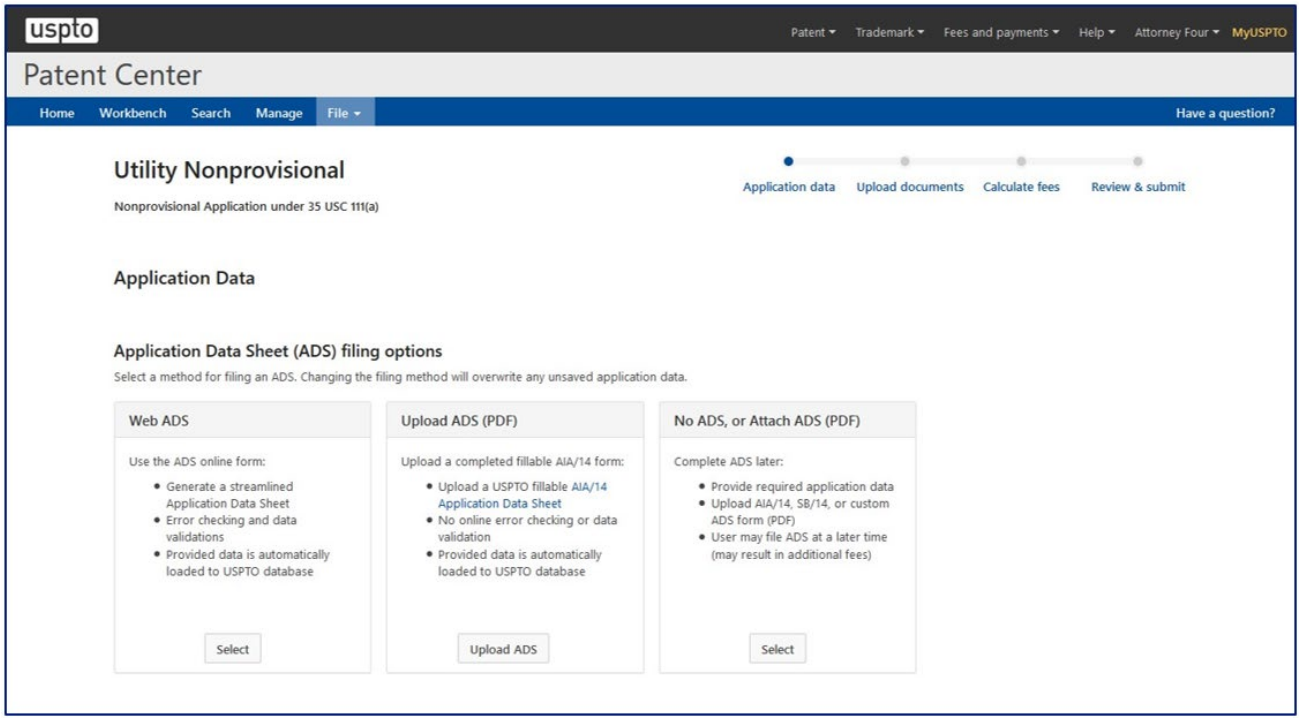
Important Information about Documents

- Upload only DOCX, PDF, TXT or PCT Zip file types.
- Each document **may not exceed** 25MB.
- Sequence Listings in TXT format **may not exceed** 100MB.
- Upload up to 100 documents for each submission.
- Multi-Doc splitting is limited to 60 lines of document description (each line equals a document).
- Patent Center allows for documents to be uploaded via Drag and Drop or Select and Attach.
- Correct document errors by removing the file, correcting the issue, and reattaching.
- Documents are automatically validated when uploaded.

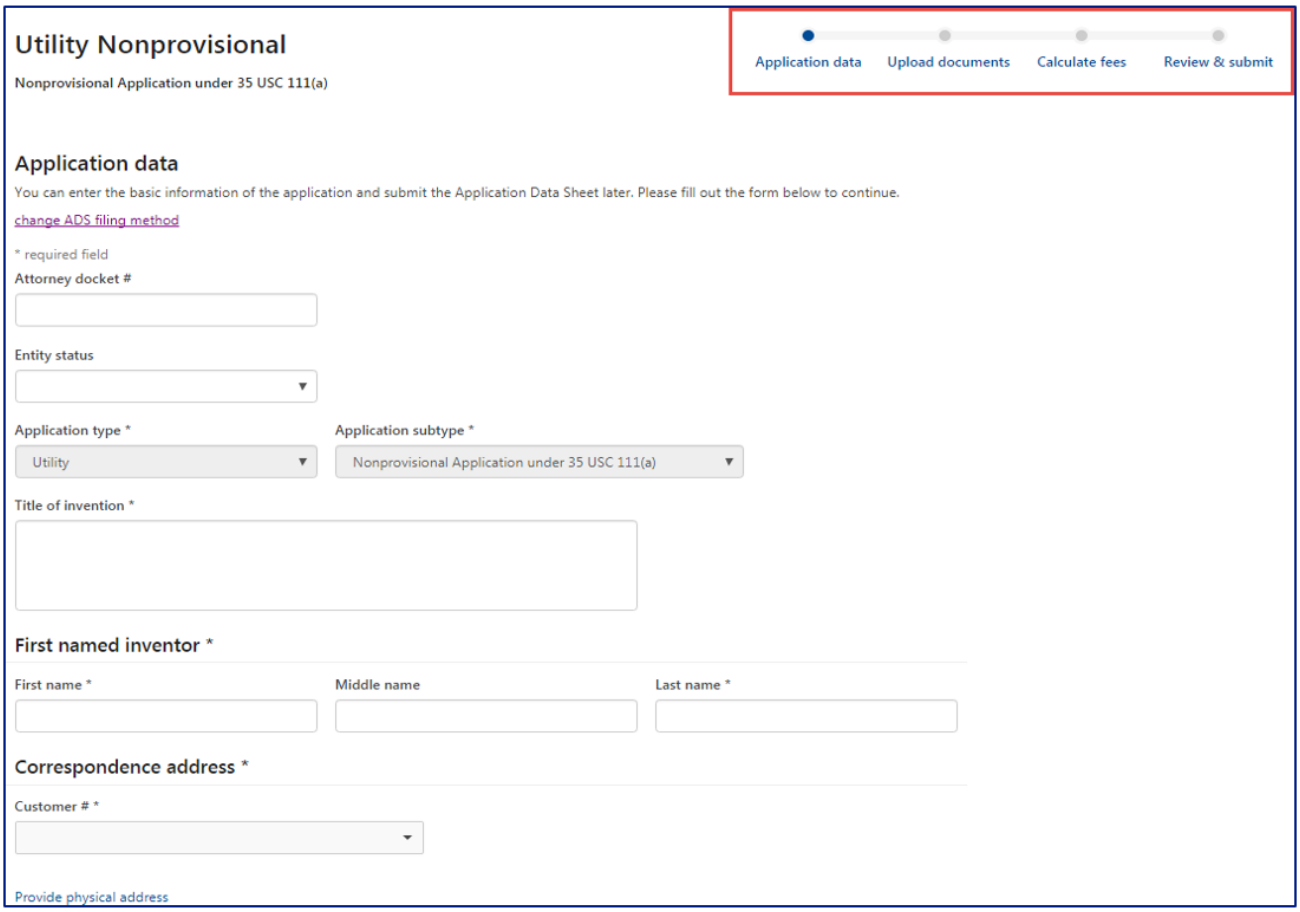
Application Data Sheet

There are three (3) Application Data Sheet (ADS) filing options.

- Web ADS - Provides the user the required sections for completing the ADS.
- Upload ADS (PDF) – User will attached an ADS.
- No ADS – Requires entry of data.



Title of invention, the first named inventor, and the correspondence address are required when the No ADS option is selected.



All Application Data Sheet options provide a link to **change ADS filing method** to allow the user to change the ADS creation or submission method.

TIP! The Tab key on the keyboard can be used to move from one input field or button to the next available field or button. Shift-Tab will reverse the direction of the Tab key.

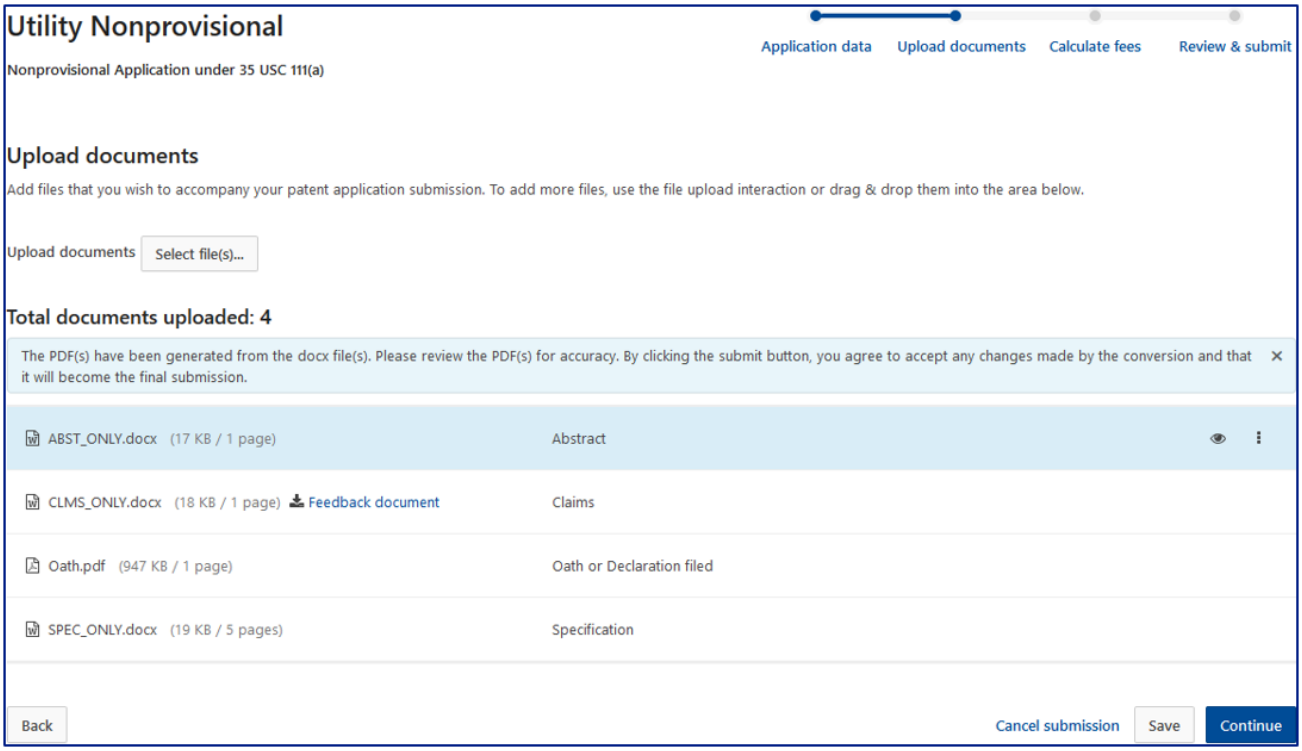
WARNING! Provide Customer Number. The submitted application will not be viewable under the Workbench section when a customer number associated with the profile is not used.

Bibliographic data entered by the user is echoed back after the user clicks **Continue**. If any errors are found, the user can go back to correct them by clicking the **Application Data** train stop.

Uploading Documents

Following the bibliographic data screen is the screen for uploading documents. Users have two options for uploading documents:

1. Drag and Drop; and
    a. Select document(s) and drop into the Upload documents area on the screen.
2. Select and Attach.
    a. Click the **Select file(s)…** button to navigate to document(s).



- Attach only DOCX, PDF, TXT, and PCT Zip files.
- 100 documents is the upload limit.
- Each document may not exceed 25MB.
    - **Exception:** One sequence listing in TXT of up to 100MB may be uploaded per submission.
- For multi-section documents the user will have the option to indicate the document description and the corresponding pages.
- Enter the document description when not detected by the system
- Add more documents by clicking the **Select file(s)** button
- Need to remove a file? Click on the three dot button to the right of the corresponding document and select **Remove**

SEQUENCE LISTING NOTE! A warning will display when an uploaded sequence listing does not conform to the ST.24 or ST.25 format.

Validation Errors

Documents cannot be validated when they do not comply with requirements and limitations. Errors occur for issues such as:

- Uploaded document is not a DOCX, PDF, TXT or PCT Zip file.
- Document file size exceeds 25MB.
- Sequence listing in TXT format exceeds 100MB.
- No document description has been selected.
    - Use drop down list to select description and use type ahead feature.

Multi-Doc PDF

PDF files that contain multiple documents must be separately indexed for proper identification in the USPTO Image File Wrapper. For example, patent applications and amendments which are uploaded as one file, need to be split and labeled as individual document parts, for example:

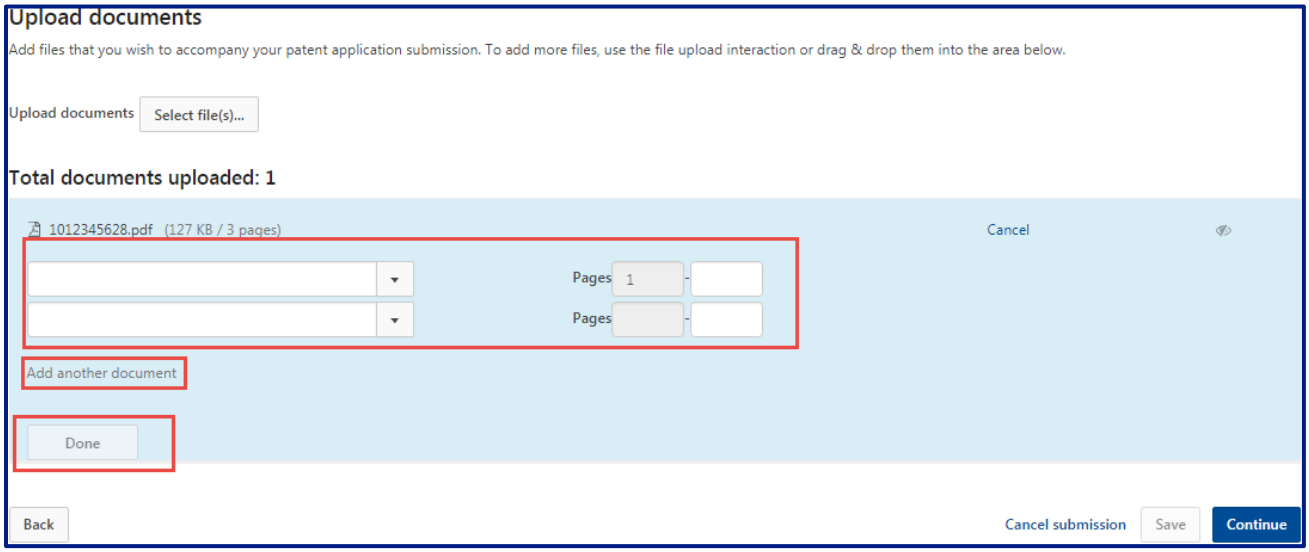
Application Parts

- Specification
- Claims
- Abstract
- Drawings

Amendment Parts

- Response description
- Specification (when amended)
- Claims (when amended)
- Arguments and Remarks

Enter the page ranges for each section so that the documents are properly displayed in the IFW. Amendments should be separated as well.



Add more documents by clicking **Add another document** or select **Done** to continue on with the filing.

> **NOTE!** The Done button needs to be selected after the documents are indexed to ensure the indexing remains in the Image File Wrapper

> **REMEMBER!** At least one attachment other than the Patent Center generated fee sheet is required for New Applications.

Calculate Fees

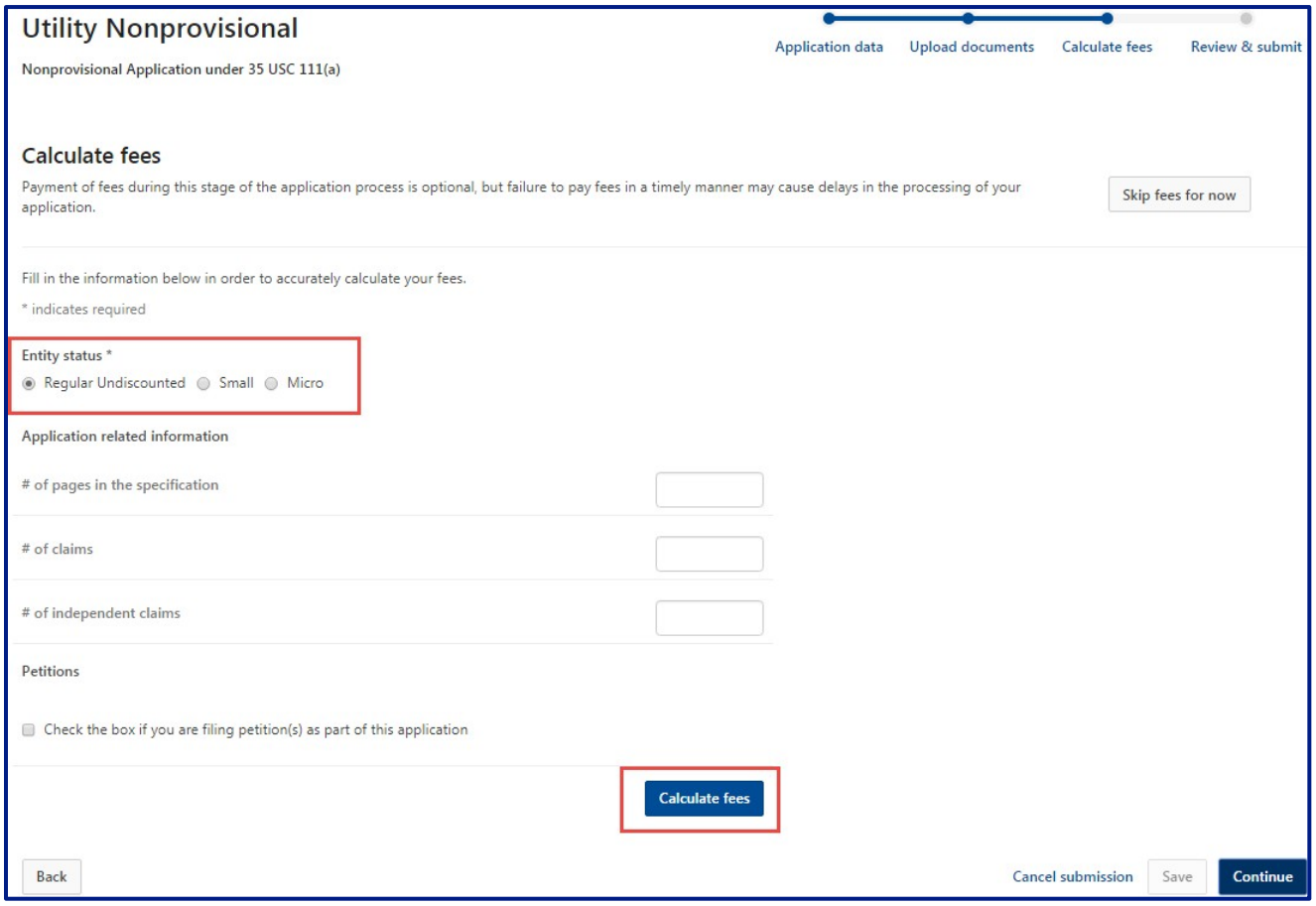
Fees are dynamically generated based on the values entered by the user.

- Indicate the entity status (Regular Undiscounted, Small, or Micro)
- Micro? Applicants are required to provide certification for micro entity status. See PTO/SB/15A and PTO/SB/15B
- Provide appropriate values:
    - Number of pages in the specification
    - Total Dependent Claims
    - Total Independent Claims
    - Identify if Multiple Dependent Claims are being filed
- Check box(es) for other items such as a petition filed as part of the application

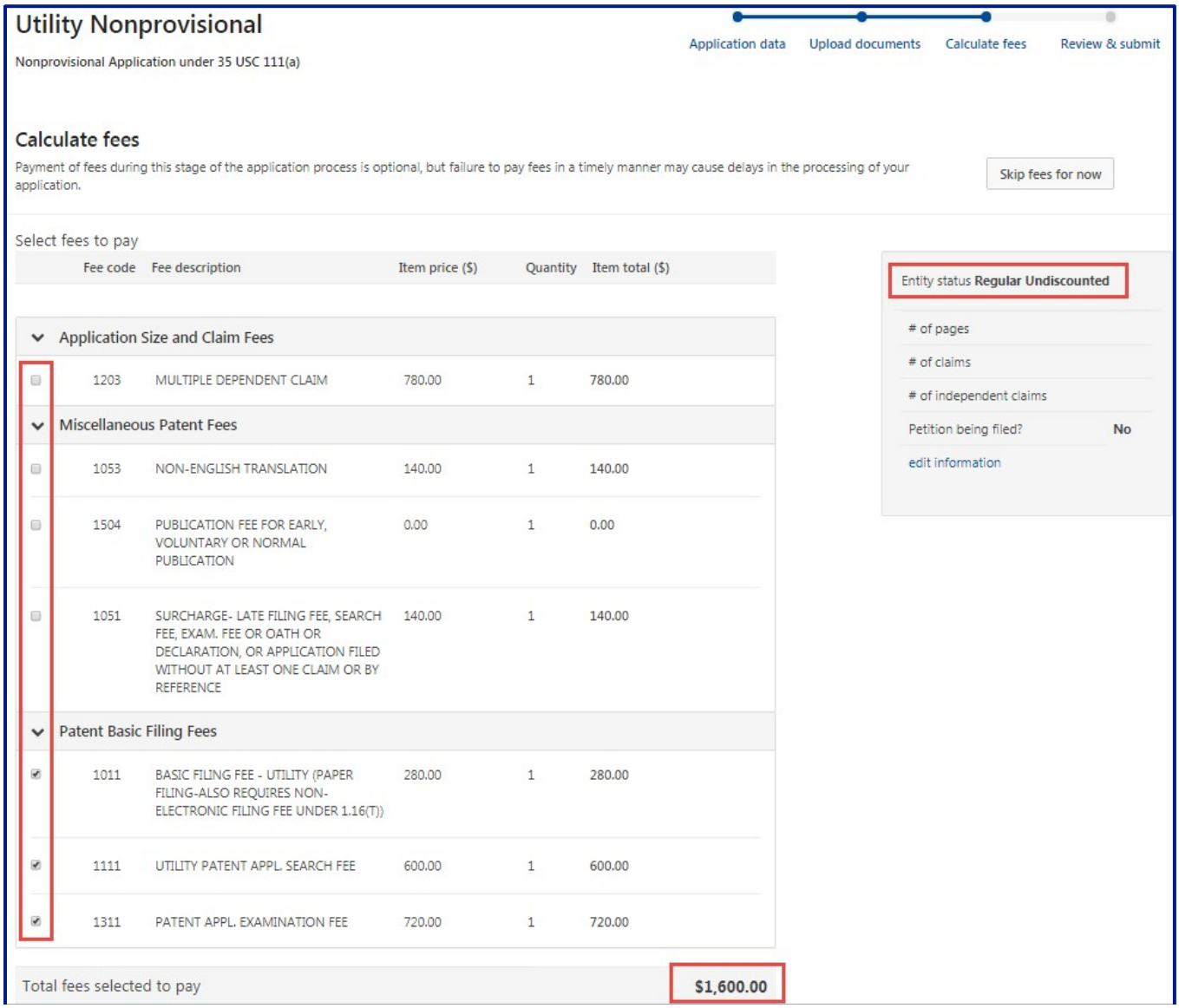
Not Paying Fees?

Click the **Skip fees for now** link or the **Continue** button. Additional fees may be incurred.

Proceed with Fee Calculation and Payment



Click **Calculate fees** to be directed to the next page where the user will select the fees to pay.

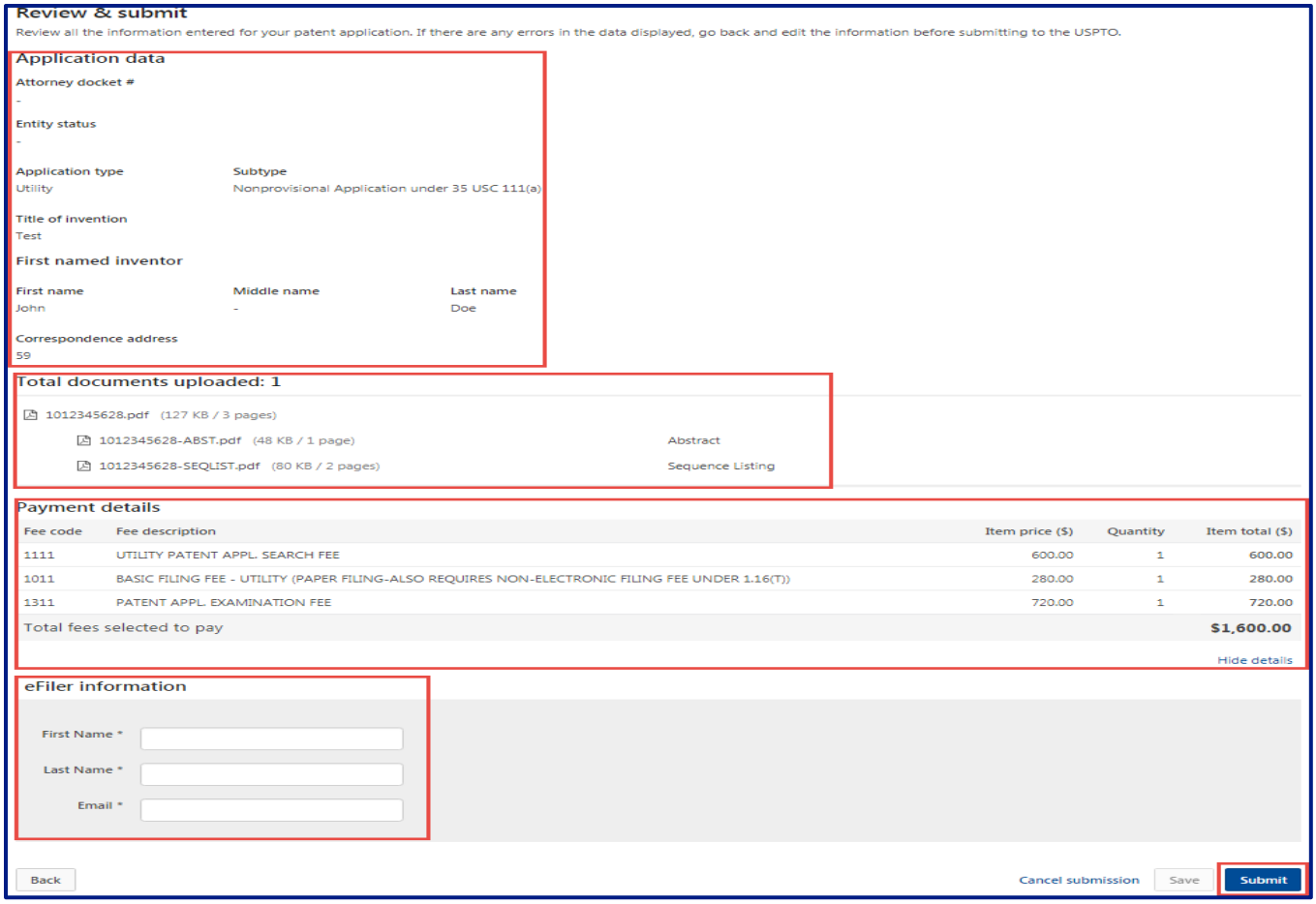


WARNING! Clicking **Cancel submission** on any screen displays a message indicating that all saved information will be lost. User must select either **No, continue submission** or **Yes, cancel submission**. Clicking **Yes, cancel submission** directs the user to the login screen.

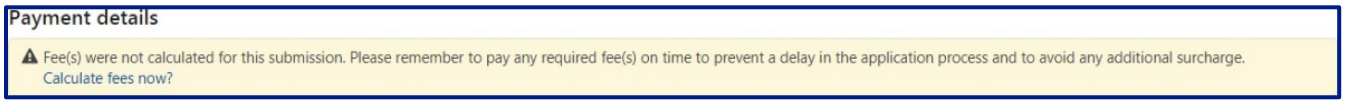
Submit Application

Confirm and Submit marks the final opportunity to:

- Review and confirm or edit application data;
- Edit fees associated with the application; and
- Remove or edit the documents associated with the application.



Attempting to submit without calculating fees results in the below warning. Warning indicates that fees have not been calculated and provides an option to Calculate fees now.



> ***Warning Text:*** *Fee(s) were not calculated for this submission. Please remember to pay any required fee(s) on time to prevent delay in the application process and to avoid any additional surcharge. Calculate fees now?*

eFiler Information

Guest Users Only. Only guest users are required to provide user information on the Submit screen. This information is automatically retrieved from the profile for Registered Users and no additional information will be required.

Submission Receipt

A Submission receipt is provided once the application has successfully been submitted. User may print or save the receipt which provides:

- Application Number;
- Confirmation Number;
- Receipt Date;
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✔ Your patent submission has been received by the USPTO

Application #	Confirmation #	Patent center #	Received
XX/XXXXXX	5066	XXXXXXXX	10/26/2017 6:34:48 PM ET

Submission receipt

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APPLICATION #	RECEIPT DATE / TIME	ATTORNEY DOCKET #
XX/XXXXXX	10/26/2017 6:34:48 PM ET	-

Based on your selection during submission, total fees due at this time

$1,600.00

Pay fees now

(Additional charges may be incured if required fees are not timely paid)

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Title of Invention

Test

Application Information

APPLICATION TYPE	Utility - Nonprovisional Application under 35 USC 111(a)	PATENT #	-
CONFIRMATION #	5066	FILED BY	John Doe
PATENT CENTER #	XXXXXXXX	FILING DATE	
CUSTOMER #	59	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	John Doe
CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS	-	AUTHORIZED BY	

Documents

TOTAL DOCUMENTS: **3**

DOCUMENT	PAGES	DESCRIPTION	SIZE (KB)
1012345628.pdf	3		127 KB
1012345628-ABST.pdf	1	Abstract	48 KB
1012345628-SEQLIST.pdf	2	Sequence Listing	80 KB
N417.pdf	2	EFS Acknowledgment Receipt	17 KB

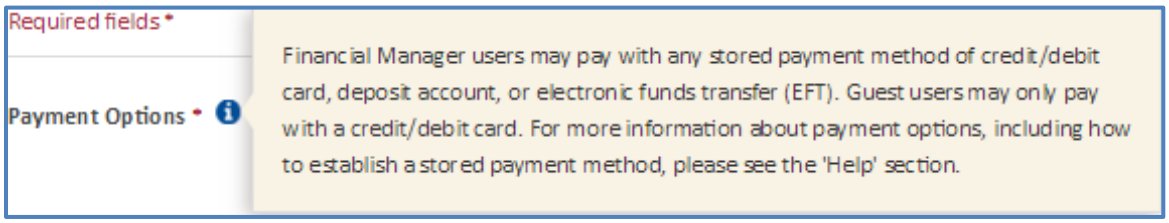
Pay Fees

Users have the opportunity to either pay the fees at this time or indicate that the fees will be paid at a later time. Selecting to pay fees later requires an acknowledgment that additional charges may be incurred by selecting **skip fees for now**.

Registered Users

Fees may be paid to USPTO via Financial Manager using one of three means:

- USPTO Deposit Account
- Credit Card
- Electronic Funds Transfer

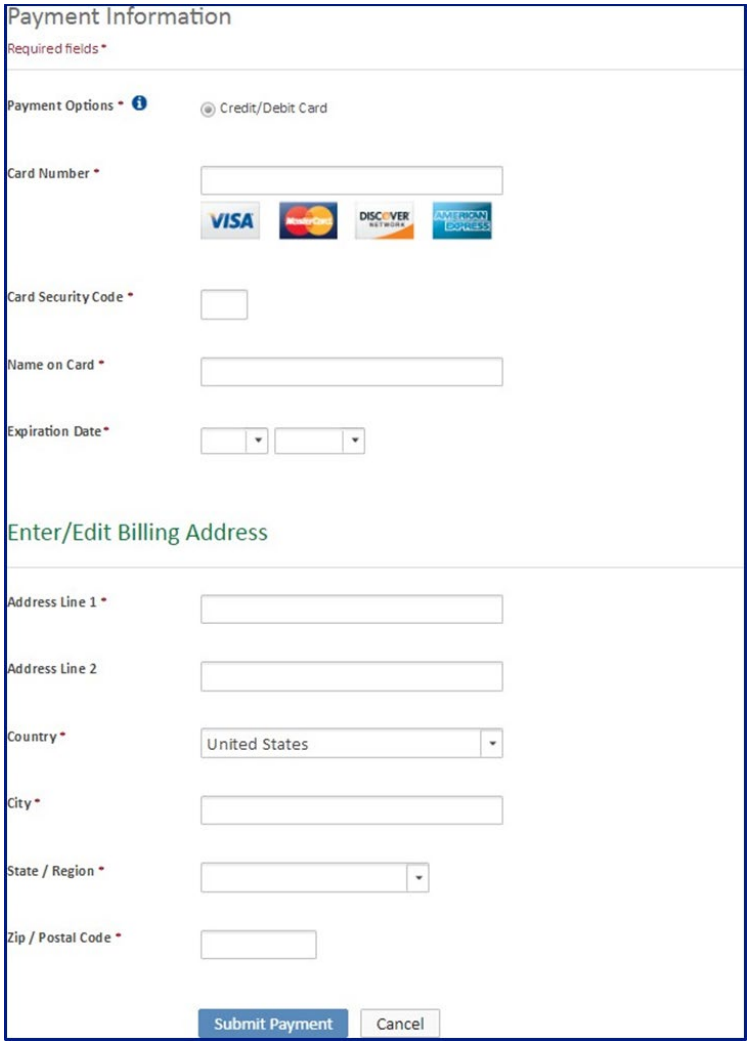


Guest Users

Only acceptable form of payment for guest users is credit card.

Credit Card Payment

Filing fees may be charged to a VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover by providing and confirming credit card and billing formation.



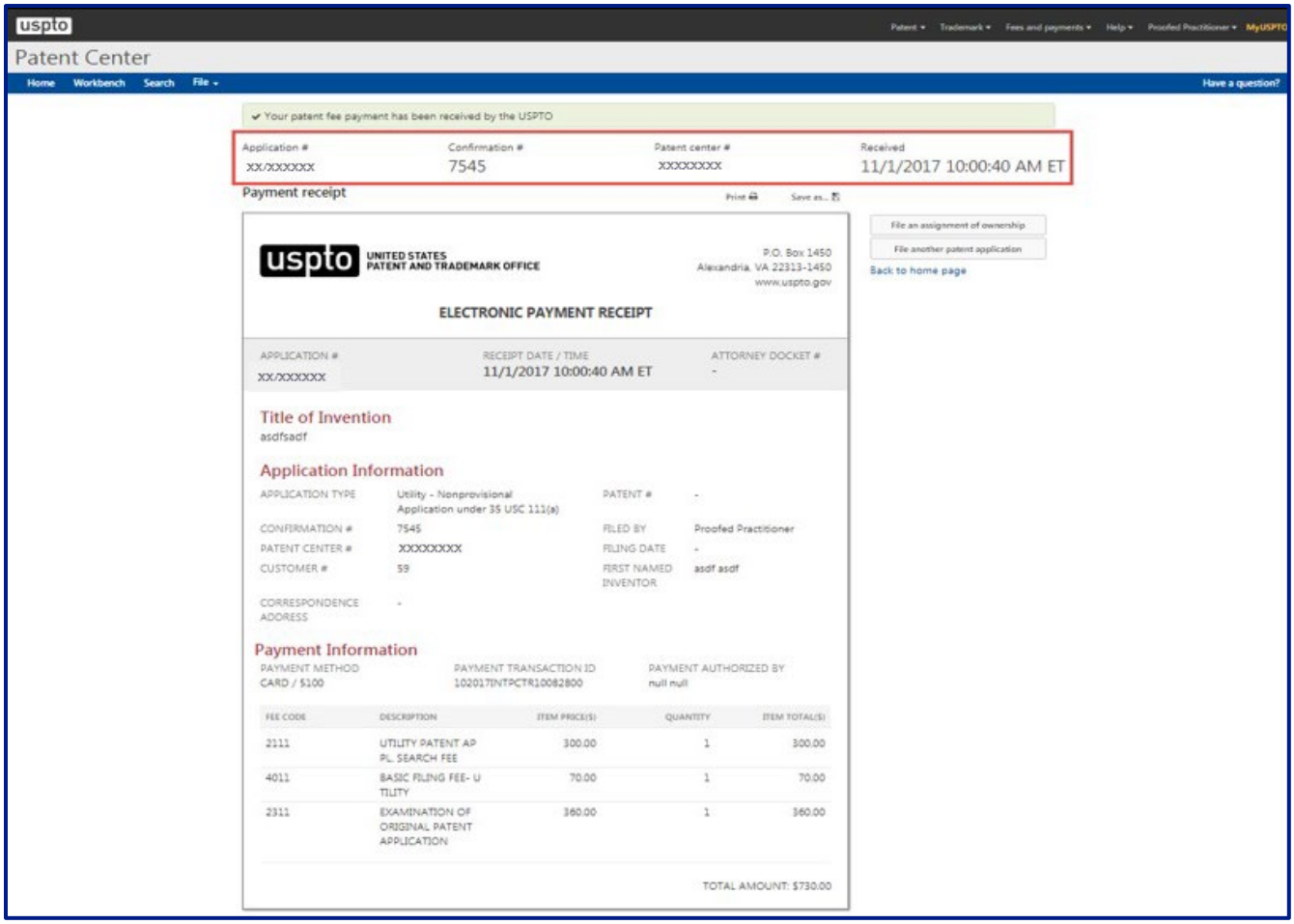
User is directed back to Patent Center once the payment has been accepted.

Payment Receipt

The Payment Receipt provides the time (Eastern Time) and date the submission was received as well as displaying bibliographic and payment information.

The Payment Receipt screen also allows you to do any of the following:

- Print receipt
- Save receipt
- File another patent application
- Access Patent Center home page



File More Papers

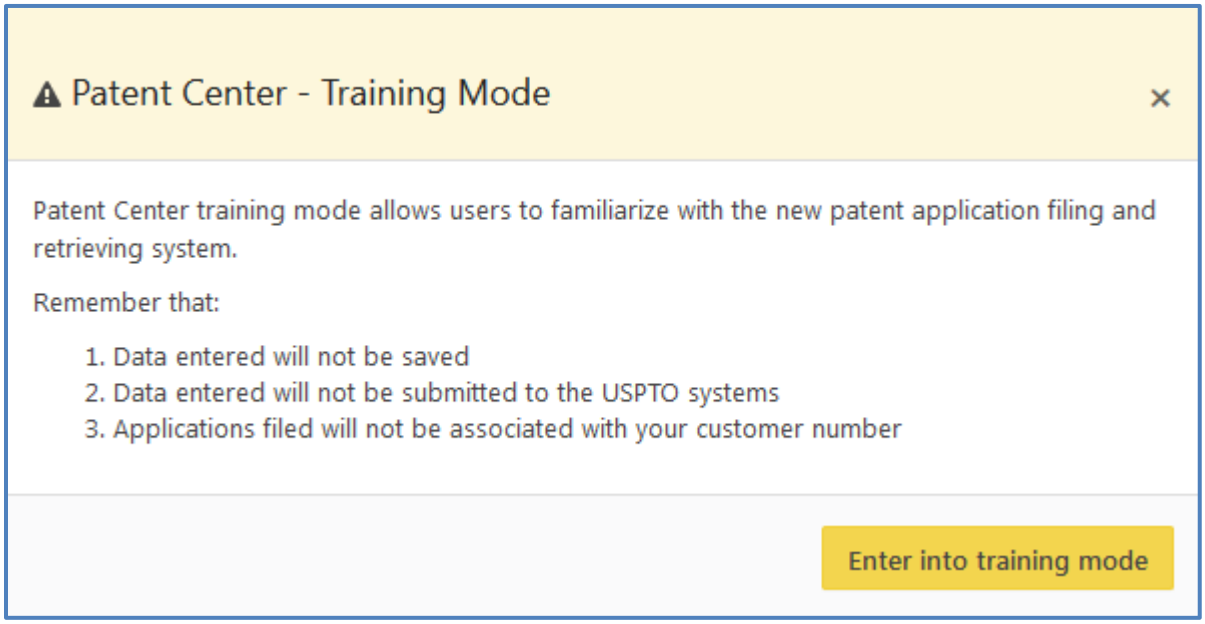
Click **File another patent application** to start a new submission. User is directed to the home page.

FUTURE PLAN! User will have the option to select **File an assignment of ownership** and be directed to the Assignments filing system.

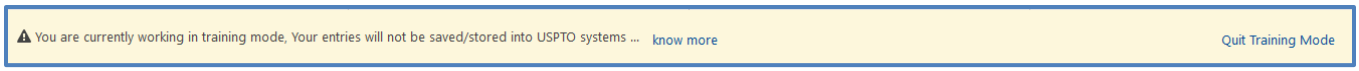
TIP! Confirmation Number and Application Number are both required to file a follow-on submission to an existing application. This pairing ensures documents are filed to the correct application.

Training Mode

Click **Switch to training mode** on the bottom of the Home screen to access a simulation of filing and viewing an application.



Once in training mode, the user will be able to access the steps of filing and viewing an application. The message "You are currently working in training mode." Will display at the top of each screen. To leave the simulation, click **Quit Training Mode** and the user will be directed back to the Home page.



Questions?

Contact Information for EBC

Call, e-mail or send a fax (or letter by regular mail) to the USPTO regarding any questions regarding the Patent Center steps, new features, or related matters. The USPTO Electronic Business Center (EBC) can be contacted directly using the following telephone numbers or address information.

Weekday Operation: Monday – Friday: 6 AM - Midnight (Eastern Time)

Telephone:	1-866-217-9197 (toll-free) 571-272-4100 (local)
E-mail:	**ebc@uspto.gov**
Fax:	571-273-0177
Postal:	Mail Stop EBC Commissioner for Patents PO Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Other Help Guides Available

Several Quick Start Guides are available from the Patent Center website that can help you understand how to use specific features in Patent Center.

- Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) Quick Start Guide
- Submit DOCX
- Retrieve DOCX

Training

Training Guides are provided on the USPTO Patent Center page. Self-paced Computer Based Training is available 24 x 7.