



2017 TELEWORK ANNUAL REPORT

UNITED STATES
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



20 YEARS

TELEWORK BEGAN AT THE USPTO IN 1997 WHEN A PILOT WAS LAUNCHED ALLOWING 18 TRADEMARK EXAMINERS TO WORK FROM HOME A FEW DAYS A WEEK. TWENTY YEARS LATER USPTO HAS MORE THAN 11,000 EMPLOYEES TELEWORKING.

THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL REPORT CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF TELEWORK AT THE USPTO.

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A SINCERE THANK YOU IS EXTENDED TO FRED STECKLER, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, PAUL EHLKE, ROBERTO ORTIZ, LEAD VISUAL INFORMATION SPECIALISTS, AND PIERRE GEORGES, VISUAL INFORMATION SPECIALIST.

Celebrating Twenty Years of Telework at the USPTO



The first trademark to be filed was received on July 28, 1870 from J.J. Turner & Co. for "EXCELSIOR No. 1 Peruvian Guano" for use in connection with fertilizer. It is the 16th trademark registration.



REGISTERED OCT 25 1870

The first trademark registration was issued on October 25, 1870 to Averill Chemical Paint Company for a design mark of an eagle with a ribbon together with the words "Economical, Beautiful" for liquid paint.

The Trademark Work-at-Home project, commonly known as TWAH, began operation as a "reinvention lab" pilot under the National Performance Review in March 1997, and concluded March 1999. The program gave 18 examining attorneys access to office equipment and to the information databases, permitting them to work from their homes three days a week.

Twenty years after the inception of the original telework pilot, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) now has 88 percent of its 13,000 employees teleworking one to five days a week. Between fourth quarter fiscal year (FY) 2016 and fourth quarter FY 2017, the percent of positions eligible to telework increased from 94 percent to 95 percent and the number of eligible positions teleworking increased from 91 percent to 93 percent. Within the last year, telework participation grew by two percent.

To maintain its success, USPTO strives to adopt sound workforce strategies where employees stay productive and connected, regardless of where they are located. The agency relies on training, information technology (IT), and engagement initiatives to support its program. Further, the USPTO depends on proven data to make the best decisions possible for its workforce. The USPTO telework program provides cost savings by reducing the need for additional office space, enhancing recruitment and retention, fostering greater efficiency in production and management, enhancing the resiliency of the agency during continuity events, and providing opportunities for expanded work flexibility.

Telework at the USPTO is a data-driven business strategy, which supports mission achievement and goal fulfillment via a distributed workforce. For all of its stakeholders, it is an established telework success.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARY BONEY DENISON, COMMISSIONER FOR TRADEMARKS

Mary Boney Denison is the United States Patent and Trademark Office Commissioner for Trademarks. Ms. Denison oversees all aspects of the USPTO's Trademark organization including policy, operations and budget relating to trademark examination, registration, and maintenance.

Ms. Denison joined the USPTO in 2011 as Deputy Commissioner for Trademark Operations. She has led outreach to the trademark legal community, small businesses and applicants without legal counsel, and has been an active participant in meetings with the world's largest trademark offices, promoting projects aimed at harmonization of trademark practices and procedures. While at the USPTO she has initiated several projects to enhance and expand internal and external communications as well as employee career development. She has launched an initiative to enhance the customer experience and is moving the user community toward full electronic filing.

Before joining the USPTO, Ms. Denison practiced law in the area of trademark prosecution and litigation, as a founding partner of Manelli, Denison & Selter PLLC in Washington, D.C. from 1996 to 2011, and as a partner of Graham & James LLP, where she practiced for 10 years. She served as a member of the Board of Directors of the International Trademark Association (INTA) for three years, and also served a three-year term on the USPTO's Trademark Public Advisory Committee (TPAC).

Ms. Denison holds degrees from Duke University and the University of North Carolina School of Law from

which she received the UNC School of Law Distinguished Alumni Award in 2016.

Thank you Commissioner Denison for taking time to meet with us today. And, congratulations on the 20th anniversary of the TWAH program.

Thank you for interviewing me today. I am very proud of our telework program and I foresee a bright future ahead.

TWAH started with 18 examining attorneys and today boasts 682 Trademark employees working from home at least one day per week. What was the driving force behind Trademarks starting a telework pilot 20 years ago?

In 1997, as a result of an Excellence in Government project started by former Commissioner Deborah Cohn, the agency approved the first telework program in order to increase retention, minimize or eliminate commuting times, shrink office space needs, reduce environmental impacts, and improve overall employee work-life balance and satisfaction. Trademark management worked in collaboration with National Treasury Employees Union, Chapter 245 (NTEU 245) to develop guidelines and the first work-at-home agreements. Initially, the examining attorneys only teleworked a few days per week carrying their paper files home with them. Today, we are fully electronic and the work space at home mirrors the one in the office. Today, 96 percent of Trademark employees are eligible to telework.

How did Trademarks go about selecting the initial pilot participants?

We selected two attorneys per law office on a voluntary basis. If there were more than two volunteers per law office, we selected the participants based on seniority. Contrast this to now, where once an attorney meets our eligibility requirements, they may deploy. We are able to start attorneys teleworking with our Trademark Examining Attorney Combined Program (TREC) where newer examining attorneys may telework on a part-time basis prior to full-time eligibility and more experienced attorneys may telework on a part-time basis without committing to a full-time program.

How has the TWAH initiative impacted your employees and your overall business unit over the years?

There have been many positive impacts to both employees and the agency. First, we have improved our retention rates. Attrition is very low. Other than employees receiving promotions or retiring from federal service, we rarely see an employee leave. Second, employees who work at home often are able to work more overtime. Without the travel time back and forth to the office, employees have the opportunity to put in extra hours. This helps us maintain our pendency rates. Third, telework is a terrific continuity of operations (COOP) strategy that allows productivity during inclement weather events. In 2016 when the federal government in the Washington, D.C. area was officially shut down due to a snowstorm, Trademark examining attorneys performed more than 92 percent of the work they did on comparable days without closures or storms. Fourth, we have saved the agency a great deal of money in



Mary Boney Denison

real estate costs. By deploying a majority of our employees to full-time telework, we do not have to maintain an office for them on campus. Fifth, and most importantly, we have greatly improved overall work-life balance. The combination of telework plus flexibility in the hours worked, allows employees the freedom to balance their daily lives with their work. Employee satisfaction is a high priority for the agency.

TWAH has been considered a model for other telework pilot programs in the federal government. What is that success attributed to?

I would attribute our success to a number of factors: our attorneys have specific measurable goals, and, with the advent of new technologies, supervisors are able to track an employee's docket and production in real time. We have a robust training program for those contemplating working at home. Employees who are deployed to work at home have a full understanding of their responsibilities. We are also open to new ideas and we are willing to pilot those ideas for feasibility. Also, the Trademark Work at Home working group, comprised of management and union representatives, does a great job collaborating on the details of the various programs. Telework is a win-win for the agency, the employees, and the whole community since we now have teleworking Trademark employees in 30 states around the country.

With so many employees working from home, how do you communicate with them and keep them engaged?

Engaging remote employees can be a great opportunity as well as a challenge. We continue to improve our interactions with teleworkers in a number of ways.

Managers conduct virtual meetings with employees. We have a specific labor/management team working on communication and engagement issues. I routinely visit remote employees when I travel around the country. We have publications, such as our quarterly employee magazine, TM People, and monthly newsletter, Madison Messages available to employees. I conduct two All Hands Meetings during the year that are webcast to all employees, and our collaboration tools are available anytime for employees to interact with each other and their supervisors. Numerous work projects are available for teleworkers and we encourage teleworkers to come to campus for events such as picnics, community day, and training.

What do you think Trademarks' workforce will look like in 20 years?

I foresee our telework program expanding even further over the next 20 years, increasing in numbers of participants and work locations. Opportunities for advancement for teleworking employees will increase as work projects and details become much more telework-friendly. Teleworking management opportunities will grow as well. We have two management telework pilots right now: (1) the Virtual Law Office Pilot (VLOP) where both the supervisor and his/her employees all work at home on a full-time basis and (2) a Shared Telework Hours Management Telework Pilot where the managing and supervisory senior attorney in a particular law office share a bank of teleworking hours. These programs have been successful and will continue to grow in the future. I also envision improved collaboration tools making it easier and easier for us to interact with employees no matter where they are physically located. We have a bright future ahead of us.

Statistics

The USPTO analyzes raw data on telework gathered quarterly with the purpose of drawing conclusions, uncovering hidden patterns, correlations, and other insights. Analytics provide the agency with the information it needs to encourage fact-based management to drive decisions and actions.

RESULTS OF THE FY 2017 USPTO TELEWORK PROGRAMS

Number of Teleworkers at USPTO	11,105
Number of Eligible Positions at USPTO	11,893
Percent of Positions at USPTO that are Eligible	94.66%
Percent of Positions at USPTO that are Teleworking (agency-wide)	88.39%
Total Number of Patent Teleworkers	8,910
Percent of Eligible Patent Positions that are Teleworking	93.94%
Total Number of Trademark Teleworkers	705
Percent of Eligible Trademark Positions that are Teleworking	96.05%
Number of Patent Positions Teleworking 4 or 5 Days per Week	5,712
Number of Trademark Positions Teleworking 4 or 5 Days per Week	491

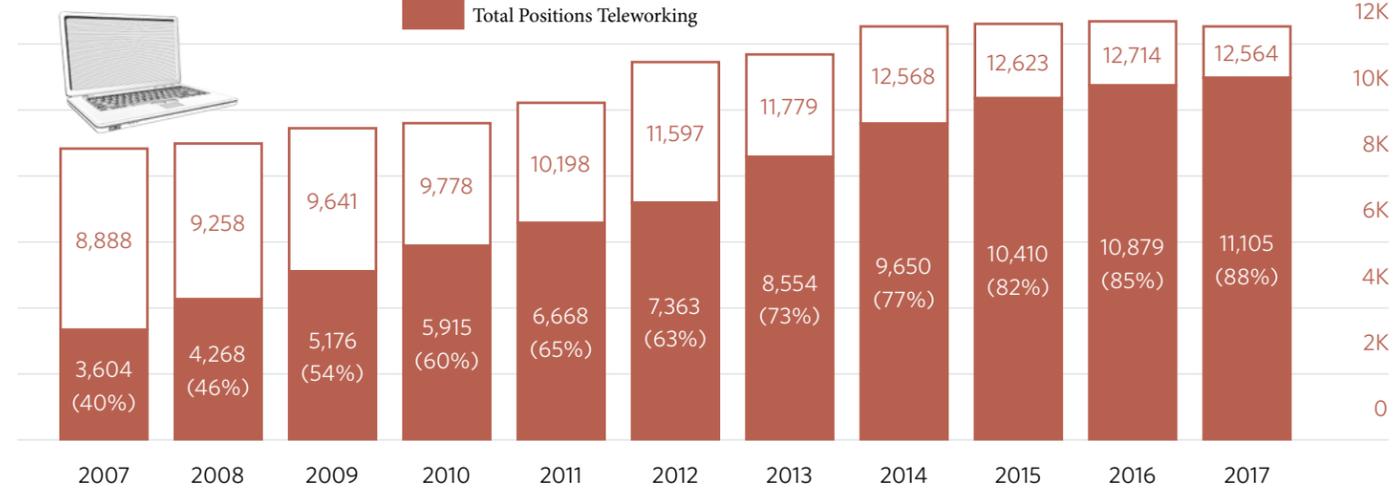


20 YEARS AGO

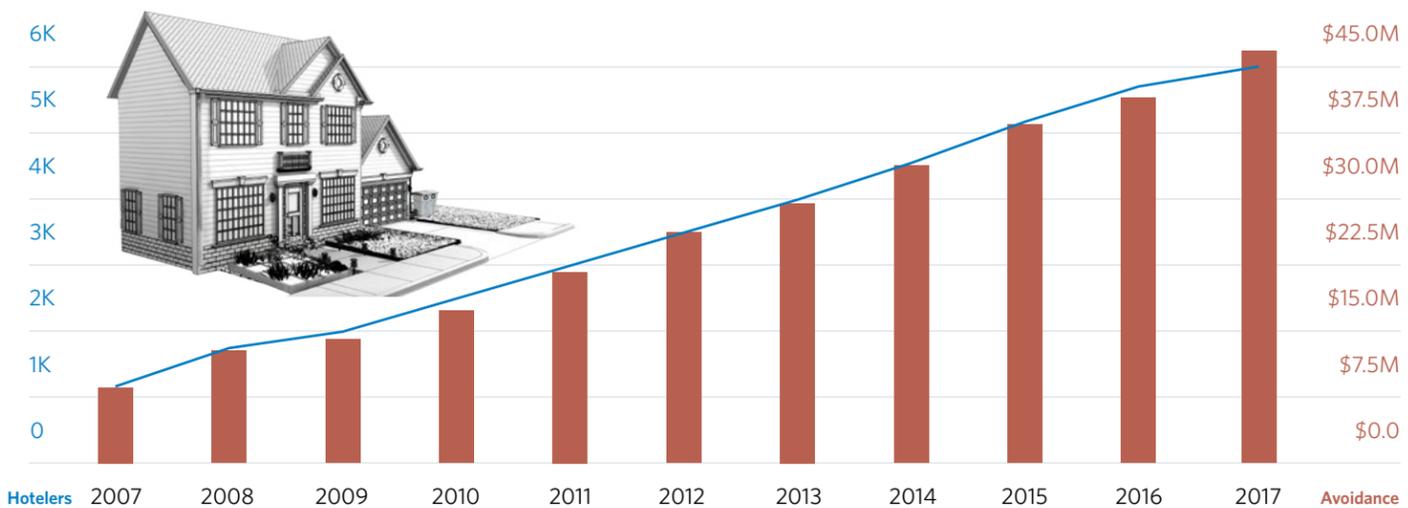
Space Shuttle Atlantis docks with the Mir Space Station.

20

TELEWORK GROWTH



ANNUAL REAL ESTATE COST AVOIDANCE DUE TO FULL-TIME TELEWORK



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF TELEWORK

6,438 teleworkers work from home four/five days per week:

Avoid driving 71,374,905 miles in a year

Collectively saves \$5,559,732 in gas a year

Collectively reduces emissions by 37,530 tons a year

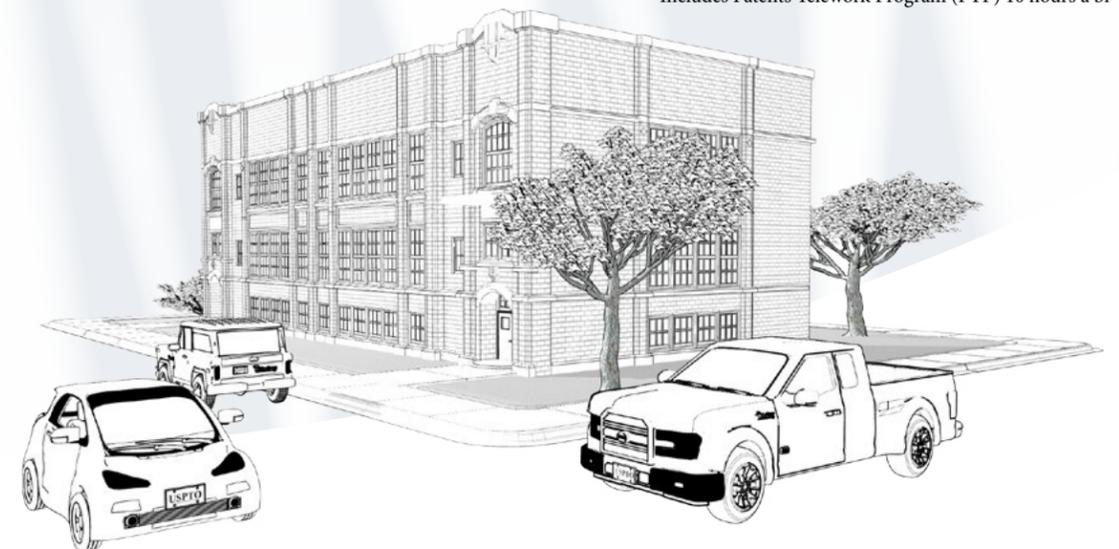
4,401 teleworkers work from home one-three days per week*:

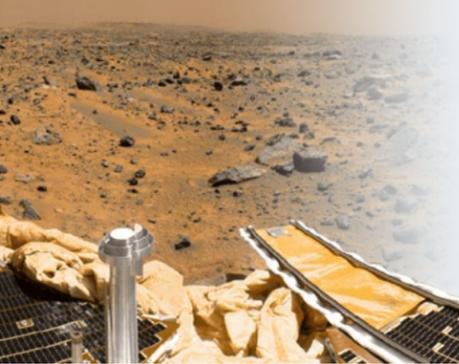
Avoid driving 21,718,935 miles in a year

Collectively saves \$1,701,316 in gas a year

Collectively reduces emissions by 11,402 tons in a year

* Includes Patents Telework Program (PTP) 10 hours a bi-week





NASA's Mars Pathfinder space probe lands on Mars.



20 Year Celebration of Telework in Trademarks

Of the original 1997 TWAH pilot participants 10 are still at the agency and continue to telework. We asked them to share their thoughts on what encouraged them to participate in the pilot and what affects telework has had on their work-life, and how expansion of telework has impacted Trademarks.

The oldest U.S. trademark still in use is trademark reg. no. 11210 which depicts the biblical figure Samson wrestling a lion, registered on May 27, 1884 by the J.P. Tolman Company (now Samson Rope Technologies, Inc.) a rope making company.

SAMSON



1884 Logo



Current Logo

Robert Clark



When the program commenced I had a long commute that required me to awake at 4:30 a.m. I also had a three year old son with a disability that required physical therapy,

occupational therapy, surgeries and rehab. Daycare was not a suitable option so my spouse quit work to care for him.

Working from home enabled me to work longer hours be available at all times of the day. In addition to awards and overtime, I also eliminated commuting expenses, the need for an extra car, parking, gas, tolls, and lunch money. My spouse was able to go back to work, grow professionally, and bring in extra income. I enjoyed a greater work-life balance. I was able to coach little league. When school closed early I was there for the kids. This resulted in a much greater continuity of care. I was a fixture at the bus stop and was able to drive the kids to school when needed. I was a neighborhood resource for other kids, as well. Our home became the neighborhood hangout for my kids' friends, which enabled me to be a more involved parent. We did not need to worry about raising latch key kids since there was almost always a parent at home. At many of our children's events my wife and I were the only parents to attend.

The Trademark office has benefitted as well. The examiners are more productive, happier, more available to the public, and the cost of office space has been greatly reduced as has the cost of supplies which many examiners purchase on their own rather than driving into the office to get these materials.

Vivian First



In 1997 it was rumored that telework would be offered to those with seniority in each law office. I figured I would never get telework because in my law office,

a colleague had at least 25 years of seniority over me. When I mentioned the program to my colleague, he told me he would never apply to work from home because his wife would not want him in the house with her all day! He declined to apply and thanks to him, I was able to work from home.

The TWAH program changed my life! I was able to pick my child up from day care with a two minute drive instead of a brutal one hour commute.

Just a year after I started TWAH, my husband accepted a job in Pennsylvania. I reluctantly called the head of our TWAH program and notified her that I regretfully had to leave the office. Her surprise response was that my move would give the office a chance to see if TWAH could successfully expand outside of the Washington metropolitan area. I was amazed that I was able to keep the job I loved.

The program has been a win-win. I am still with the office after 27 years, exclusively because of telework. For trademark applicants, the time band in which we are available to communicate with them has expanded because we have access to office data from home. Finally, my job as an attorney with a flexible schedule and telework is a wonderful and rare find and I am grateful for it every single day.

John Michos



When the USPTO announced the TWAH pilot program, I was honored to be selected as a participant. I believe that many of us who were members of the pilot

program were proud to be "pioneers" in this ambitious Trademark office initiative. The flexibility afforded by the TWAH program has allowed employees to excel professionally and balance their personal and family life. Participation in the program was an important factor in my decision and that of many of my colleagues to continue our careers at the USPTO. As the TWAH pilot program reaches its 20 year anniversary, the fact that there are now several hundred persons in Trademark Work at Home programs speaks to how transformative and successful they have been for our agency.

Kathy Vanston

Prior to the start of the work-at-home pilot program, I was working part-time with two young children. I couldn't manage full-time work because it was simply too difficult to juggle work and child care responsibilities with my hour long commute each way. But our family finances were tight and our living space was too small for our growing family.

My participation in work-at-home allowed me to resume full-time work without the time waste of commuting. It became much easier to balance work and the responsibilities of parenthood. Moreover, our financial situation improved substantially and we were able to move.

The program also had a benefit to me that I had not anticipated. In 2004, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I

Jeri Fickes



I choose to volunteer for the TWAH pilot program in 1997 because I wanted to be a part of this clear bright new vision where the value of my work was measured

by its quality and essence, and not by where it was produced. I wanted a life where my workday could begin simply and peacefully, without battling traffic, parking, and stress when traveling from place to place. What I have gained from this experience is an easier balance of home and work, a stronger connection to my community, the ability to maneuver my work around obstacles of time zones, weather, illness and equipment outages, and the perspective that my responsibilities are not defined by where I find myself, but by what needs to be done. What I give back as an employee is increased loyalty, reliability, flexibility, productivity, and commitment to success. It has been both a privilege and an adventure to have been a part of this visionary program from the beginning, and I hope it continues to be a shining example of innovation and forward thinking far into the future.

had surgery to remove the cancer and three months of chemotherapy and reconstruction surgery. Given the fact that I could work at home allowed me to weather the illness without having to deplete my leave and possibly affect my benefits contributions. I was able to go through all of this using only two weeks of sick leave.

Work-at-home has kept me at the Trademark office; there are very few legal jobs available that have the flexibility offered by USPTO. This program has had a profoundly positive effect on the quality of my life. I am lucky to have been one of the 'pioneers.'

Nora Buchanan-Will



It was an honor and a privilege to be one of only 18 people chosen to participate in the TWAH program. When the program began in 1997 I really felt like a pioneer, knowing

that no other government organization had a telework program that permitted one to work from home the great majority of their time.

Trademarks now has nearly 88 percent of its positions teleworking. Knowing I played even a small part in this type of work-life enhancement at the USPTO is rewarding. It find it impossible to overstate the benefits the program has conferred on my home life. Being able to be at my children's school events, actively helping with their sports teams and outside activities and just being there at a moment's notice when they became ill - these are just some of the benefits for which I am so grateful. When the unforeseen occurred and my husband became seriously ill and passed away, I was able to spend every single spare minute with him. I will always be indebted to the USPTO and the work-at-home program for that gift of time, our most precious commodity.

Kim Saito

I became a part of the TWAH pilot program a year after it started. A space opened up so I grabbed the chance despite having been at the office for only four years. The work and workload was the same as being in the office but the initial technology issues of setting up and maintaining a workstation at home were challenging. I was initially concerned about feeling isolated because I lived alone in a tiny one bedroom apartment but those feelings never materialized.

Katherine Stoides



The 1997 TWAH pilot initially appealed to me because I was becoming weary of my commute. Once selected as a participant for this pilot program, I

was able to shave almost two hours of commuting time, even more during inclement weather and holidays. I felt more refreshed when I began the work day, and I felt energized when I ended the work day as I seamlessly transitioned into my personal life, having been spared the commute.

After all these years, I firmly believe that the program has been a tremendous success. It affords me the ability to provide great customer service as I typically work a bit later so that I can contact applicants and/or their attorneys in different time zones. I am able to concentrate on difficult matters without office interruptions. I have maintained my high production and quality of work, while achieving a balance between my professional and personal commitments. Moreover, my midday appointments and commitments have impacted my work flow minimally, and I have used less sick leave as I am able to return to work the same day more easily. Being a TWAH pilot participant has enabled me to have that balance between work and life that many strive for but never actually achieve.

It is amazing to see the length and breadth of the current telework program. The program has evolved from a small group of Trademark examiners to agency-wide participation and is now part of the USPTO culture. One of the reasons that the USPTO telework program is successful is because there is a trust between employees and supervisors that the office's mission and goals will be observed and met.

Elizabeth Dunn



In 1997, participation in the Trademarks TWAH pilot promised flexibility that would allow attorneys to meet the growing demand for speed and responsive-

ness by the deluge of new applicants brought by the growing internet. I was performing at outstanding levels of quality and quantity of legal work when I joined the TWAH pilot, and I was confident that the available technology would allow me to perform at the same level if I worked remotely. The Trademarks TWAH pilot provided the opportunity to concentrate without distraction. I welcomed the new ability to return phone calls and conduct conferences outside the usual work band, instead of wasting time on "phone tag" with applicants several time zones away. I also wanted to join the Trademarks TWAH pilot in part because USPTO made clear that participation would not reduce professional opportunities. I could prepare research or presentations on areas of interest to my law office at home, and have never felt that I was less of a colleague because I no longer was physically located in the same building.

Twenty years later, it is clear that the Trademarks TWAH pilot accurately predicted the changes that the whole organization would have to make in the face of public demand. USPTO has gotten faster and more flexible. Applicants get status information in real time, have performance measures to predict wait times, and may communicate with the USPTO electronically in multiple ways.

Sam Sharper



Having an opportunity to work on a groundbreaking project, doing something entirely new and encouraging words from my wife were the factors that

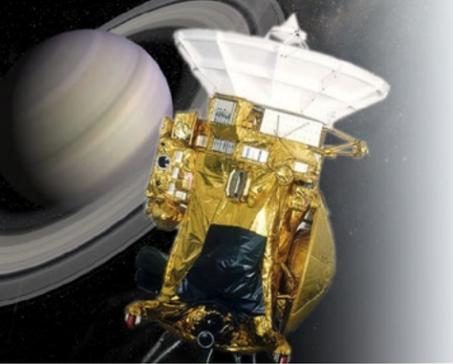
motivated me to participate in the initial TWAH pilot program in 1997.

TWAH impacted the way I worked. I had fewer distractions so I accomplished more, which allowed me to be able to balance my work and life issues. Participation in TWAH has enabled me the luxury of limiting my days away from work, providing greater flexibility in scheduling home repairs, doctor's appointments and other personal matters, without reduction of quality of work and response to work inquiries. Being a part of TWAH has positively impacted my decision to remain at the USPTO.

TWAH has helped transition the Trademark office to a fully computerized operation. I believe the TWAH Pilot provided the benefit of working from home and, in turn, TWAH participants continued producing high quality work, providing exemplary customer service, and maintaining loyalty to the USPTO.

As one of the first teleworkers at the agency, I am proud to see the expansion of telework at the USPTO. It is one of the reasons that the USPTO is considered one of the best places to work in the federal government.

Not Pictured: Glenn Clark, Mary Crawford, Hannah Fisher, Paul Gast, Fred Mandir, Gerald Seegars, Kim Saito, David Stine, Richard Straser, Kathy Vanston, Irene Williams



NASA launches the Cassini-Huygens spacecraft to Saturn.



1997

Number of active trademark registrations in 1997 was 839,000.

2017

Number of active trademark registrations in 2017 is 2,202,390.

**FISCAL YEAR 1997:
THE START OF A NEW ERA AT THE USPTO**

Trademark Performance

In 1997 Trademarks received 224,355 applications up 11.8 percent from the previous year and 112,509 trademarks were registered up 23.2 percent from the previous year.

Work-at-Home Project

The Trademark Work-at-Home project, commonly known as TWAH, began operation as a “reinvention lab” pilot under the National Performance Review in March 1997, and concluded March 1999. The program gave 18 examining attorneys access to office equipment and to the information databases, permitting them to work from their homes three days a week.

Automation of Trademark Operations

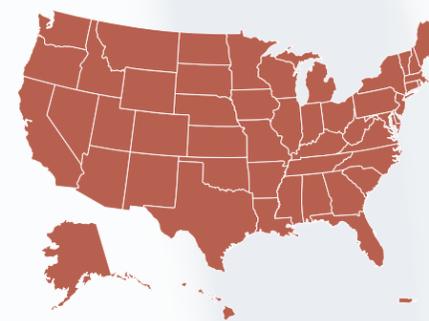
In 1997 Trademarks began implementing a number of changes to automate trademark operations with the changes being implemented in stages over the next several years.

Phase I of Trademark reengineering projects completed during 1997:

- Refunds for applications, petitions, and post registration fees were processed on-site within 24 to 72 hours of the request. The process change followed the implementation of the Revenue Accounting and Management (RAM) system to improve customer service and reduce processing delays. Additional information is provided to the customer to identify the reason for a refund, reducing the number of inquiries for explanations.

- A system was implemented for scanning the drawing page for marks scheduled for publication and registration. Scanned copies rather than originals were sent to the Government Printing Office (GPO) subcontractor for printing in the Trademark Official Gazette. The change improved the process of managing files, eliminating lost pages and extra work.
- The file wrapper label was redesigned with on-site printing. Labels were generated from stock supplies at a lower cost, with improved legibility, including a printed bar code label. Processing time was reduced at least a day, and delays for reprints were eliminated.
- Filing receipts were redesigned to include more data, which improved database quality by providing applicants more complete notice of data contents.
- A new system was implemented for generation of printed bar code labels that include the notice of publication and notice of allowance date on files with registration dates and numbers added later. Labels were generated on-site saving process time by eliminating the hand stamping of dates on files and improving accuracy and file management.
- Final agency decisions on petitions and Trademark Trial and Appeal Board decisions became available over the internet, increasing public access to information.
- The Trademark business implemented personal computer based Trademark Applications Monitoring System (PC-based TRAM) data entry. Application papers were keyed as they were submitted, with coding and capture of data elements performed online. The change in data capture was a first step toward creating the electronic file wrapper.

USPTO Full-Time Teleworkers by State



ALABAMA	20	INDIANA	32	NEW YORK	182
ARIZONA	31	IOWA	9	NORTH CAROLINA	182
ARKANSAS	6	KANSAS	5	OHIO	95
CALIFORNIA	242	KENTUCKY	13	OKLAHOMA	7
COLORADO	95	LOUISIANA	20	OREGON	38
CONNECTICUT	27	MAINE	14	PENNSYLVANIA	207
DELAWARE	29	MARYLAND	1,337	PUERTO RICO	12
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	209	MASSACHUSETTS	61	RHODE ISLAND	6
FLORIDA	319	MICHIGAN	119	SOUTH CAROLINA	53
GEORGIA	101	MINNESOTA	25	SOUTH DAKOTA	2
HAWAII	3	MISSISSIPPI	2	TENNESSEE	24
IDAHO	6	MISSOURI	21	TEXAS	222
ILLINOIS	95	MONTANA	4	UTAH	24
		NEBRASKA	3	VERMONT	5
		NEVADA	21	VIRGINIA	2,215
		NEW HAMPSHIRE	19	WASHINGTON	72
		NEW JERSEY	97	WEST VIRGINIA	23
		NEW MEXICO	8	WISCONSIN	32



IBM's Deep Blue chess-playing computer defeats chess champion Garry Kasparov.



Business Unit Highlights

TRADEMARKS

Since 1997, when Trademarks first implemented telework, the TWAH program has proven its value to employees, external stakeholders, and the agency. The program provides cost savings by reducing the need for additional office space, enhances recruitment and retention, and fosters greater production and high quality work. It improves employee satisfaction by providing opportunities for expanded work flexibility, decreasing the costs and stress of commuting, and improving work-life balance. Importantly, telework enhances the resiliency of the agency by allowing the majority of employees the ability to work during any event that threatens the continuity of operations. For example, during inclement weather, when other federal agencies may be closed for business, our employees continue to work at home without skipping a beat. Of course, telework also decreases traffic congestion and improves air quality.

Meeting Trademark Challenges

The Trademark organization's challenges this year included processing a record increase in trademark application filings, and the consequent need to substantially boost the number of staff, especially the number of examining attorneys. Because telework is an ingrained business strategy in Trademarks, Trademarks was able to maintain a small real estate footprint despite the increase in personnel, and was able to meet all goals including production, quality, and e-government. In addition, Trademarks was able to maintain its emphasis on an excellent customer experience.

At the end of FY 2017, more than 88 percent of Trademark employees in all work units had the opportunity to telework one or more days per week, and 68 percent of Trade-

mark employees participated in full-time telework. These employees only report to headquarters on an as needed basis. By the end of FY 2017, 20 percent of Trademark examining attorneys were participants in the Telework Enhancement Act Pilot Program (TEAPP) in 31 different states. In addition, nine senior staff attorneys from the Trademark Office of Training and Quality Review, the Petitions Office, the ID/Classification unit, and our Outreach office were TEAPP participants.

Expansion of Telework Opportunities for Bargaining Unit Employees

The Trademark Work at Home Working Group, which advises the USPTO on telework programs for trademark examining attorneys, worked hard on a new telework program called the Trademark Examining Attorney Combined Program (TREC). The program was implemented at the beginning of FY 2017. It expands hours and days of telework for our newer examining attorneys not yet eligible for hoteling and allows for half time telework for more experienced examining attorneys who do not wish to hotel. Those employees share offices, helping to address space needs for new hires.

Communication and Employee Engagement

Supervising employees who work remotely requires enhanced attention to best management practices. With 20 years of telework experience, Trademarks was able to continue to work to improve employee engagement and good labor-management relationships, while augmenting telework opportunities. Trademark People Plan teams work on employee training, career development, succession planning, management training, engagement and

communication. The engagement team comprised of representatives from the operations management team and the labor unions focused specifically on engagement and communication issues.

Besides regular meetings with Trademark labor unions, Trademarks has implemented several initiatives to improve leadership communication and employee development. The Trademark Commissioner continued her practice to meet with TEAPP employees whenever she was on travel in their cities. Other communication vehicles include a quarterly electronic employee magazine, TMPeople, and the Commissioner's monthly newsletter, Madison Messages. As always, Trademarks participated in the Green Fair and Community Day. Moreover, many Trademark employees were on hand, organizing and participating in the National Trademark Expo early this fiscal year. All hands meetings and regular staff meetings were webcast and the use of collaboration tools was encouraged among all employees. An all-staff meeting was held with the Trademark Services units to discuss customer and employee pain points and recommend innovative solutions. Trademarks also expanded the number of work projects for employees on TEAPP. Trademarks continues to embrace professionalism, career development, and work-life balance while maintaining high productivity, quality, and customer service.

Career Development through Improved Telework Opportunities for Managers

To address employee satisfaction and retention for managers as well as to attract employees to join management, Trademarks has continued to expand and explore two management telework pilots: the Virtual Law Office pilot (where the managers telework full-time) and the Shared

Telework Hours Management telework pilot (where the managing and senior attorneys share a bank of telework hours). The objective of both pilots is to test increased telework flexibilities for law office management. Evaluations of the pilots include measuring employee satisfaction, recruitment, retention, and job performance. Evaluative data indicate increased or maintained effectiveness of the managers in the Virtual Law Offices in the areas of quality and speed of responsiveness. The employee satisfaction in the pilot offices continues to be high. The Shared Telework Hours pilot program has been implemented as well, and data also appears positive for increased or maintained effectiveness of the managers.

PATENTS

2017 Patents Training at Headquarters (PaTH) Events

Four mandatory PaTH events were held in fiscal year 2017. These events occurred in March, May, July, and August 2017. While the July mandatory PaTH event marked the completion of Technology Center 1700, the August mandatory PaTH event included the first half of Technology Center 2100 examiners and managers. As of the end of fiscal year 2017, more than 3,400 participants attended PaTH events and nearly 850 of these have been TEAPP employees. The Technology Centers in attendance included a diverse selection of employees from Alexandria Headquarters, all USPTO Regional Offices, the Patent Hoteling Program (PHP), and TEAPP.

Event attendees participated in facilitated training which focused on improving work quality through collaboration and enhanced communication skills. Art unit meetings, an Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Town Hall,



The Motorola StarTAC, a personal cellular phone, as it was billed, literally helped put cell phones in ordinary people's hands. It set a new standard for design, perfecting the modern flip phone configuration, and weighed just 3.5 ounces.

Top: Karen Young, Director TC 2900 welcomes attendees to the May 2017 PaTH event. Middle: Gladys Corcoran and Alexa Neckel, Directors in TC 1700 welcome attendees to the July 2017 PaTH event. Bottom: Drew Hirschfeld, Commissioner for Patents welcomes attendees from TC 2100 to the August 2017 PaTH event.

in-house training modules (including career management techniques and a team building exercise), and a Scientific Technical Information Center (STIC) EXPO was provided, in addition to contractor-led training.

PaTH events include members of the Patent Office Professional Association, Office of Patent Training, Office of Patent Finance, Telework Program Office, Office of Equal Employment and Diversity, Office of Patent Information Management, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of Security and Safety, Patents Employee Engagement Team, Nationwide Workforce Team, Patents Employee Engagement Council, Office of Human Resources Enterprise Training Division, and the Labor Relations Division. The PaTH planning team has provided guidance to members listed herein to ensure continued success for each of the upcoming PaTH events.

In FY 2017, event-planning processes for registration, travel for TEAPP employees, Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12/Personal Identity Verification (HSPD-12 PIV) security updates, and employee communications were enhanced. In preparation for the events, the PaTH team assisted guest speakers, acquired meeting space, marketed the event, and volunteered their support. In facilitation of PaTH event logistics, the following pre-/post-event planning tools were utilized:

- PaTH website,
- SharePoint registration site,
- Contractor facilitated and in-house training agendas,
- Event surveys,
- Email communications,
- Talking points, and
- FAQs

FY 2017 PaTH Event Survey Results

The PaTH team delivered a post-event survey to gather feedback regarding training and event logistics. The following items were addressed:

- Logistics: Based on survey results the logistics of coordinating/making travel and hotel arrangements were very successful.
- Facilities: The majority of participants were satisfied/very satisfied with the meeting rooms, cafeteria, and the parking accommodations.
- Agenda: The two-day agenda was designed to maximize individual meetings between examiner participants and their supervisors during their stay. The design also enabled face-to-face meetings at the art unit level.
- PaTH Objectives: The majority of participants believed that the event would contribute to the following objectives:
 - Creating better connected teams
 - Enhancing work product quality
 - Improving communication among the distributed workforce
 - Increasing collaboration
 - Increasing employee engagement
 - Contributing to overall job satisfaction
- Comments: A number of comments have been collected and incorporated into PaTH planning to enhance the format and content of future PaTH events.



TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

During the last 20 years, the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB), has evolved from a small business unit to a critical resource for trademark owners.

The TTAB's overall telework participation, nonexistent in 1997, is currently at 93 percent. The popularity of the telework program and the greater flexibility provided by the Telework Enhancement Act Pilot Program (TEAPP), enables the TTAB to recruit and retain highly qualified, experienced employees from a nationwide pool.

In 2017, the TTAB had 11 administrative trademark judges (ATJs) and three interlocutory attorneys (IAs) participating in TEAPP in 10 different states. TTAB paralegals, all of whom telework, include individuals who have decades of experience with the TTAB and are a source of institutional knowledge. With the exception of the chief judge and the deputy chief judge, every position in the TTAB office is telework eligible and, out of 72 employees, only five individuals do not telework.

TTAB management closely monitors the production and quality of work by all employees, including teleworkers, to ensure standards are maintained. Management also focuses on ensuring that remote employees maintain engagement and connection to USPTO headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia.

Staff meetings, case conferences, training sessions, and performance management usually include a WebEx component in order that remote workers can engage in an interactive exchange. The TTAB also holds two all-hands mandatory meetings annually which may require in person attendance



The Honda EV Plus was at the forefront of the original alternative-fuel revolution. The green Honda featured a battery that could go 125 miles between charges.

at the Alexandria campus or attendance via WebEx. Teleworkers in the D.C. area typically attend meetings in person. TEAPP participants often choose to come to campus for all-hands and some other meetings, to connect with peers, work teams, and colleagues. In 2017, the TTAB's amended Trademark Rules became effective and required numerous training sessions involving the ATJs, IAs, paralegals, and information specialists. In order to ensure seamless, consistent application of the amended rules, sessions were offered via WebEx.

TEAPP enables the ATJs and IAs to represent the TTAB by participating in outreach activities and interacting with trademark practitioners and professional associations in their local areas. They attend USPTO events located near their duty station, such as the World IP Day celebration at the Silicon Valley Office. They may also be invited speakers for various professional associations, such as the Nevada Bar Association in Las Vegas. Additionally, ATJs on TEAPP participate in oral hearings held at the TTAB hearing room in Alexandria, Virginia through the use of video conferencing technology. Live hearings, presided over by a panel of three judges, are scheduled on law school campuses and at professional events throughout the country to showcase TTAB appeal and trial proceedings for educational and outreach purposes. In such situations, TEAPP ATJs, located in the region, are assigned to preside at those hearings, often joined by the chief judge or deputy chief judge from the Alexandria, Virginia office. All of this outreach can be conducted for substantially less expense by utilizing TEAPP staff whose duty stations are closest to such events.

The TTAB has several planned goals for enhancing telework in fiscal year 2018. In order to enhance its ability to serve the remote workforce and stakeholders,

TTAB will be updating its collaboration technology by designing updates to the TTAB hearing room. This will include improved monitors, projection screens, and video teleconferencing equipment. The updates will improve the quality of oral hearings and will assist the TTAB in offering remote participation not only to the TEAPP ATJs but also to practitioners located at a distance from the USPTO Alexandria, Virginia campus. These improvements will reduce expenses for TTAB stakeholders and the agency. TTAB is also in the process of installing collaboration technology in the TTAB team room which will allow staff on the Alexandria, Virginia campus to conduct meetings with remote staff therefore utilizing the improved video conferencing technology

Finally, TTAB intends to increase its focus on engagement for and inclusion of TEAPP participants and plans to create a regular mechanism for feedback and discussion that will enhance the experience for the distributed workforce. TTAB acknowledges that many of the strides made by TTAB over the past 20 years have been enhanced and enriched by the USPTO's telework program.

PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

The Patent Trial and Appeal Board (PTAB) actively provides telework options and other work flexibilities for its employees. During FY 2017, PTAB continued to expand its telework participation as evidenced by the 269 judges who are currently participating in telework and the TEAPP program. These individuals are assigned to USPTO's Alexandria office, as well as the USPTO's regional offices in San Jose, California; Denver, Colorado; Detroit, Michigan; and Dallas, Texas.

PTAB ended the 2017 fiscal year by attaining 98 percent of telework-eligible positions. All of these positions fall under PTABs telework programs for non-bargaining employees and hoteling program for National Treasury Employees Union, Chapter 243 (NTEU 243) with the 50-mile radius option for change of duty station. All new judges are in telework eligible positions and are approved for telework on a case-by-case basis as their familiarity with PTAB processes and procedures increase.

PTAB teleworkers are able to determine their individual telework routines, thus providing needed flexibility without negatively impacting their coworkers or the PTAB business processes. During FY 2017, PTAB conducted training sessions on rules and best practices for telework during the PTAB's All-Hands Conference (AHC) in June 2017. The PTAB will continue to conduct extensive telework training for all PTAB employees on a bi-annual basis, and offer smaller sessions as necessary. The PTAB continues to ensure that employees are properly trained on the suite of collaboration tools and proper telework procedures prior to being deployed to work remotely.

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

In FY 2017, the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) telework program experienced 93 percent of its staff eligible to telework with 81 percent of those eligible taking advantage of the program.

OGC has been under new telework guidelines for the past year that have been met with great success. This has allowed for greater flexibility, productivity, and the ability for OGC attorneys and support staff to continue to provide legal support during government closures and inclement

weather. The work-life balance that teleworking provides has been key to the overall satisfaction of OGC employees and continues to be a major factor in attracting new talent to the office.

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The Office of Administrative Services (OAS) will continue its trend of telework expansion and participation. In FY 2017, 100 percent of OAS staff who were eligible to telework had telework agreements in place to telework one to two days a week and situationally.

Due to improved collaboration tools, current teleworking employees have been able to increase the number of days they can telework and positions previously considered telework-ineligible can now be classified as telework-eligible. OAS teleworkers demonstrate how mission-critical tasks can easily be performed remotely.

Telework has impacted OAS' ability to accommodate work-life balance for its employees. It has provided the flexibility necessary for employees to better manage their commuting time as well as their individual work schedules. By offering employees telework flexibilities OAS recruitment and retention has improved.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

The Office of Human Resources (OHR) offers a variety of telework options to its employees. These options include situational, one, two, and three days of telework, depending upon the position. Currently 100 percent of OHR positions are eligible for telework and over 95 percent of those positions have telework agreements in place.



Scientists at the Roslin Institute in Scotland cloned Dolly the sheep.

In OHR, telework is a recruitment and retention incentive for prospective and current employees. OHR teleworkers report an enhanced work-life balance as a result of the telework opportunities available in this business unit.

In 2018, OHR will continue to utilize telework as another tool to help improve product quality, enhance customer focus, and encourage employee engagement.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

In the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) current telework opportunities are an important component for recruitment, retention, travel, and work-life balance. Telework possibilities have helped OCFO attract and hire highly skilled employees and is a valuable consideration for employee retention. The nature of OCFO work, and OCFO telework opportunities, have allowed this business unit to provide employees flexibility with managing their work-life balance. Teleworking is a seamless option for staff and has allowed for increased engagement; when employees are teleworking they are fully involved with their team and other agency colleagues.

Management in OCFO has also experienced benefits from the telework program through increased employee morale and engagement. Employees have embraced telework tools and schedule flexibilities in a responsible manner. They have demonstrated a willingness to put in time at home during the evenings and weekends to complete work deliverables with short deadlines. In addition, employees have developed different ways to share information, train new employees, have productive meetings, and work together on deliverables. While using the collaborative tools available to USPTO teleworkers, changes to work products can be made

more quickly, which enables more efficient discussions and decisions than what could have been accomplished before teleworking was an option.

OCFO looks forward to increased telework eligibility, therefore allowing employees to telework up to four days a week or even hotel. OCFO is also entertaining more options that will encourage telework schedule flexibility.

OFFICE OF POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

In FY 2017, The Office of Policy and International Affairs (OPIA), had an 80 percent telework enrollment rate. Additionally, in 2017 additional positions were reviewed to determine whether these could be considered for expanded telework eligibility. OPIA seeks to provide flexibility, not only to enhance its employees' work-life balance, but also to accommodate the frequency with which many of OPIA staff travel both regionally and internationally throughout the year.

In FY 2018 OPIA will be rolling out a new Telework Handbook to employees, providing comprehensive guidance regarding the available plans and best practices. Topics include how to plan and apply for telework, equipment and safety procedures, productivity tools, and a quick reference guide with tips and frequently asked questions.

OPIA will continue to promote telework options which provide the flexibility desired by staff, alongside the multiple collaboration tools and virtual meeting options afforded by USPTO. These options allow our employees to provide responsive support regardless of physical location.

The ability to telework has had a positive impact within OPIA since a pilot program was introduced in 2006, and interest has flourished year after year. With many employees managing meetings with partner agencies, participating in training programs, and traveling to promote the USPTO's intellectual property protection interests worldwide, the telework program offers employees the ability to work from the comfort of a home office and the opportunity to occasionally avoid the long commutes that the Washington, D.C. metro area is known for.

The ability to telework has become the new standard for an office wanting to modernize and adapt to the expectations of today's workforce, and is one of the most frequently inquired about programs by prospective hires during the interview process. Through OPIA's available telework options, this business unit has experienced and benefitted from both an increased retention and recruitment of highly talented employees.

OPIA teleworkers are responsible for maintaining productivity, engagement, and effectiveness while operating from an alternate site. They have embraced and responded with increased performance and accountability regardless of the location of their work site.

OFFICE OF EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY

Telework opportunities in the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity (OEEOD) are beneficial for both the office and for OEEOD staff. Telework has improved office productivity by allowing staff to work from home when they would otherwise have taken leave such as when coping with inclement weather or attending a

medical or dental appointment near their homes. Similarly, the availability of telework in combination with flexible schedules has increased office productivity and morale by permitting staff to work remotely either earlier or later and in many instances longer than they would have worked had they commuted into the office. Furthermore, staff have expressed appreciation for the flexibility of the OEEOD telework program by noting how it has improved their work-life balance. OEEOD knows anecdotally, from interviewing job applicants, that the agency's telework program is a benefit that is attractive to potential recruits.

The fact that a significant portion of the agency's workforce has become permanent remote workers has required an adjustment in OEEOD on how services are provided. For instance, OEEOD created a new web-based reasonable accommodation request program to allow employees to seek reasonable accommodations whenever and wherever they need to make those requests. Similarly, OEEOD staff processing employment discrimination complaints, now conduct most of their job responsibilities online or by telephone, a major change from how those functions were performed twenty years ago.

The agency currently has a large remote workforce and OEEOD has the opportunity to develop new methods to assist leadership to both manage the diversity and promote the inclusion of geographically dispersed employees. There were no formal changes to OEEOD's telework program this year. All staff that wanted to telework and were eligible to telework, were exercising that option on at least an episodic basis. And, although not a formal change, OEEOD set a new precedent this year by permitting staff to temporarily telework from the West Coast during two extended absences.



The Li-Ion (rechargeable) battery begins being used for commercial uses.

OEEOD will continue to be a government-wide leader promoting the diversity and inclusivity of the agency workforce to enhance employee engagement and productivity. In addition, OEEOD will continue to ensure equal employment opportunity for its employees and job applicants; and ensure equal opportunity and accessibility for users of programs and services operated or funded by the USPTO.

OEEOD is committed to ensuring that staff is available to meet with our service users when requested. All the staff are aware of this commitment and adjust their schedules to meet the needs of our users. In those instances where physical meetings are not possible, each staff member has a camera and is trained to conduct virtual face-to-face meetings with persons requesting those meetings. If the requestor is geographically remote and lacks the capability to participate in virtual meetings, OEEOD staff are expected to conduct those meetings by telephone.

Subsequently, OEEOD will continue to offer multiple day and ad hoc telework opportunities to staff.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) telework program continues to grow, with nearly 94 percent of positions deemed eligible to telework. OCIO had 526 employees teleworking in FY 2017 as compared to 30 when OCIO started incorporating telework in 2009.



TEAPP Oversight Committee
 Pictured left to right Standing: Pamela Schwartz, Danette Campbell, David Dalke, Jay Besch, Andrew Lawrence, Harold Ross Seated: Howard Friedman, Meryl Hershkowitz, Fred Steckler, Kathy Duda, Bob Oberleitner, Melanie Tung
 Not pictured: Tim Callahan, Deborah Porter

OCIO launched a new two-day telework program for certain eligible positions, which includes NTEU 243, Patent Office Professional Association (POPA) and non-bargaining employees. As a result of the new program, OCIO has 63 percent of eligible employees participating in two day telework, 23 percent teleworking one day with the remainder teleworking situationally.

OCIO's telework expansion has helped promote improved employee work-life balance while maintaining productivity and helping OCIO retain a highly-skilled and qualified workforce. Telework has had a significant impact on maintaining operations during inclement weather and other emergency situations, as well as continuing the delivery of high quality service to OCIO customers.

OCIO's telework program has matured since 2009. OCIO looks forward to continued growth, additional flexibility, work-life balance, and better collaboration for its employees.

Nationwide Workforce

TELEWORK ENHANCEMENT ACT PILOT PROGRAM (TEAPP)

The Telework Enhancement Act of 2010 authorized the USPTO to conduct a test program allowing employees to waive their right to travel expenses for a reasonable number of mandatory trips to the USPTO. TEAPP allows employees to work anywhere in the contiguous U.S. (greater than 50 miles from the USPTO, located in Alexandria, Virginia), and as of FY 2016 Puerto Rico, without a routine requirement to report back to campus. While enrolled in TEAPP, employees will change their duty station to an alternate worksite in the city in which they live. The employee must travel to USPTO when directed by the agency as outlined in the TEAPP agreement. Since its inception in 2012, 1,321 trips have been taken back to campus.

In September 2015, the USPTO submitted a letter to the General Services Administration (GSA), requesting to extend the TEAPP until December 8, 2017. As background, GSA approved the USPTO to conduct a four-year pilot program ending on January 31, 2016. The Administrator of General Services may grant test program extensions of up to an additional 24 months, but not beyond December 8, 2017. The agency received a response from GSA on December 22, 2015 to extend the TEAPP through December 2017.

In April 2017, the USPTO submitted the fifth TEAPP Annual Evaluation to the General Services Administration. The report highlighted the positive impact that the TEAPP has had on agency efficiency, real estate, and continuity of operations (COOP), transit subsidy, and the environment. The report also detailed the cost and benefits associated with the TEAPP and the methodologies used for evaluation.

As of the end of the fourth quarter of FY 2017, the USPTO had 2,668 TEAPP participants across 48 states and Puerto Rico. TEAPP is considered a success by both the employees and the agency.

Notable benefits include:

- In FY 2017, 96 percent of TEAPP participants reported that overall job satisfaction was either slightly or significantly better since participating in TEAPP and 94 percent reported similarly for the ability to balance work and family life.
- In FY 2017, 74 percent of TEAPP participants reported that the volume of work performed (productivity) improved, while 69 percent reported that quality of work performed had improved since TEAPP.
- Environmental impact: In FY 2017, TEAPP participants working from home five days per week led to a reduction of 17,275 metric tons of CO2 emissions in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region.
- Recruitment and retention: In FY 2017, 98 percent of survey respondents feel that TEAPP has a positive impact on employee satisfaction and 93 percent of participants reported that the option to participate in TEAPP would affect their decision to accept or not accept a position in future career choices.
- USPTO benefits: In FY 2017, there was an estimated \$122.3 million total benefit to the agency.



Internet domains Facebook.com, Craigslist.com, and Netflix.com come online – Google.com domain name is registered by Sergey Brin and Larry Page.

Regional Offices

Until 2012, the USPTO operated from one central headquarters located first in Washington D.C, and then in Alexandria, Virginia.

With the signing of the America Invents Act into law by President Obama in 2011, the USPTO moved forward with the establishment of four regional offices. The first of the new offices opened in Detroit in 2012. The USPTO has since established regional offices in Denver, Silicon Valley and Dallas. All the regional offices are staffed with patent examiners and Patent Trial and Appeal Board judges.

Regional Office	Total Employees*	Full-Time Teleworkers	Part-Time Teleworkers
Midwest Regional Office	113	61	37
Rocky Mountain Regional Office	72	17	46
Texas Regional Office	75	1	28
Silicon Valley Regional Office	69	0	26

* Not all employees have telework agreements

In addition to creating a regional presence for USPTO, these offices give inventors, entrepreneurs, and small businesses the added benefit of a USPTO presence in every time zone in the United States. Not only do staff in these offices work closely with intellectual property services, start-ups, and job-growth accelerators in their regions, they collaborate with local science, technology, engineering, and mathematics organizations.

Accomplishments

The following provides highlights for FY 2017 activities and accomplishments:

- Provided expert consultation to five government agencies and institutions.
- Developed the fifth TEAPP Annual Evaluation as part of the USPTO Telework Enhancement Act Pilot Program.
- Participated in the Office of Personnel Management’s Telework Advisory Group.
- Conducted the Telework Recertification initiative to revisit business unit telework guidelines, telework duties, responsibilities, and best practices.

Agency Outreach

The USPTO is often asked to present the USPTO telework strategy as well as provide support and guidance to outside organizations to support various telework efforts.

Agency Assistance

- Department of Rail and Public Transportation- Telework Virginia
- National Labor Relations Board
- Department of the Interior

Media Coverage

- Association for Talent Development, Professional Perspectives TD Magazine (May 10, 2017) Telework at USPTO — Today and Tomorrow

Speaking Efforts

- Partnership for Public Service Excellence in Government (EIG), (April 18, 2017) Building Partnerships

MEDIA

Telework and the USPTO: Living and Working Throughout the United States
June 15, 2017



The United States Patent and Trademark Office’s (USPTO’s) telework program is valuable to employees, external stakeholders, and the agency. The program provides cost savings by reducing the need for additional office space, enhancing recruitment and retention, and fostering greater production and high quality work. It improves employee satisfaction by providing opportunities for expanded work flexibility, decreasing the costs and stress of commuting, and improving work-life balance. Importantly, telework enhances the resiliency of the agency by allowing the majority of employees the ability to work during any event that threatens the continuity of operations. For example, during inclement weather, when other federal agencies may be closed for business, our employees continue to work at home without skipping a beat. Of course, telework also decreases traffic congestion and improves air quality.

An especially innovative telework program at the USPTO was authorized by Congress in December 2010. The Telework Enhancement Act allowed the USPTO to conduct a seven-year test program, referred to as the Telework Enhancement Act Pilot Program (TEAPP). Without new



The ThrustSSC team sets the first supersonic land speed record at Black Rock Desert, Nevada at an average speed of 1,227.985 km/h (763.035 mph).

legislative authority to extend the pilot, the program will expire December 8, 2017. The agency is currently working with Congress to extend the program.

TEAPP allows an employee to relocate, for the employee's convenience, to an alternate worksite outside the local commuting area if the employee waives agency payment of travel expenses for a reasonable number of required trips back to the USPTO headquarters. The test program is designed to enhance cost savings and other efficiencies that accrue to the government. Per the statute, the USPTO tries to avoid frequent in-person travel to the USPTO and often relies on technological alternatives such as teleconferencing and video conferencing. TEAPP participants live in 45 states and Puerto Rico.

TEAPP participation has grown from 611 at the end of FY 2011 to 2,417 as of first quarter of FY 2017, representing 39 percent of all USPTO full-time teleworkers (hotelers). About 20 percent of examining attorneys participate in TEAPP as well as a few other attorneys in Trademarks. In FY 2016, the USPTO directed 449 employee trips to Alexandria for in-person developmental training and for completion of badge renewals. With TEAPP, Trademarks saved \$137,000 in travel costs in FY 2016. Total USPTO estimated agency-wide travel costs saved are \$313,402 for FY 2016.

Trademark employees who chose to change their duty station to participate in TEAPP may be subject to adjustments in their locality pay. Based on Trademark examining attorneys currently participating in the TEAPP, the savings to the agency, in salary differential, during the fifth year of the TEAPP was \$319,615.

Trademark TEAPP examining attorneys tend to produce more work on average (60 more measurable units per person) and work more overtime hours (40 more hours) than the comparable group of non-TEAPP examining attorneys in a year. TEAPP examination quality is high and translates into higher quality bonuses for many examining attorneys participating in TEAPP.

The ability to recoup space from full-time teleworking employees has enabled the USPTO to avoid the acquisition of additional space to accommodate new hires who require office space each year. In FY 2016, the agency avoided securing \$41.7 million (annual) in additional office space (less hoteling office expenses) as a direct result of all of the USPTO's hoteling programs.

Telework has been a highly effective business strategy for the USPTO. The agency hopes that Congress will extend its very successful TEAPP program before it expires in December.

Although every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of items in the INTA Bulletin, readers are urged to check independently on matters of specific concern or interest.

Meryl Hershkowitz
USPTO Deputy Commissioner for Trademark Operations

This article first appeared in the INTA Bulletin and was reprinted with permission from the International Trademark Association (INTA), http://inta.org/INTABulletin/Pages/United_States_1_7210.aspx

Telework at USPTO— Today and Tomorrow

May 10, 2017



Telework, as a business strategy, has changed the way the federal workforce operates by supporting mission achievement and goal fulfillment using a distributed workforce. The option to telework has had a positive impact on recruitment and retention of highly skilled employees, who value flexibility and work-life balance. The option to telework from locations outside the Washington metropolitan area has also expanded hiring pools for many agencies and organizations. New technology has positively affected telework as well. For example, VoIP, instant messaging, and document sharing help enable more effective communication between work teams, employees and managers, and customers.

To ensure the continued success of the U. S. Patent and Trademark Office's (USPTO's) telework program, in 2016 the agency implemented several concrete steps to strengthen its support for managers and employees in areas of communication, collaboration, and training. Notably, the USPTO:

- Required all current teleworkers to review and electronically certify their specific telework guidelines. The computer-based training also contained important information on telework duties and responsibilities and reiterated telework best practices.
- Distributed a management handbook on telework.
- Offered “telework tune-ups” for business units that provide supervisory training on effectively managing a remote workforce.

- Convened patent and trademark examiners who telework remotely or are on-site at the regional offices as part of the Patents Training at Headquarters and Trademark Organization Reconnect and Collaboration Home programs, including breakout sessions on effective collaboration and telework.

However, telework has changed the way workforces are trained. Mobile workers require different proficiencies and skills, and consequently training platforms have changed. Trainers have become skilled in delivering training to distributed audiences and ensuring that engagement is maintained even though participants are not physically present. By incorporating the use of whiteboards, breakout rooms, and virtual group discussions, trainers can ensure that virtual participants are optimizing the training experience while maintaining a high level of engagement.

Additionally, because employees no longer need to travel to obtain “in-classroom” training, travel expenses are minimized. This virtual training allows for more flexibility of training dates and times, so training opportunities are maximized.

For a telework program to be successful, several considerations must be made. Leadership must make sure that telework is a vital business strategy with a quantifiable return on investment, and that the telework program is aligned with the agency's mission and goals.

Just as in all successful initiatives, telework should be a work-in-progress that changes and evolves with the growth of the agency. Position eligibility should be revisited annually, and all teleworking employees and managers of teleworkers should be required to take non-IT and IT



The Sony Mavica MVC-FD5 was hailed by Time as one of the all-time top 100 gadgets, the FD5 solved the problem of sharing digital photos with a 3.5 inch floppy disk! Just snap, save to the disk, remove the disk, put the disk in a computer, upload the file, eject the disk from the computer, pass on the disk to the next person and your picture is viral.

training and recertify that their agreements are current on an annual basis.

To ensure continued success, consider having a telework working group with representatives from each business unit. These representatives should meet at least quarterly to discuss new practices and ideas and share telework highlights from their business unit. These individuals should be responsible for communicating quarterly statistics to their business unit executive. It's also helpful to have a central website on the agency's intranet page, where all telework policies, guidelines, research, and data pertaining to telework is housed.

The future of telework as a business strategy is bright. Organizations understand they must reduce their real estate footprint, reduce fuel consumption (and by extension, air pollution), enhance employee satisfaction, and recruit and retain valued employees. Telework is the most cost-effective means of accomplishing these goals while maintaining employee productivity and engagement.

Danette Campbell
USPTO Telework Director

This article first appeared in the Association for Talent Development (ATD), <https://www.td.org/insights/telework-at-usptotoday-and-tomorrow>

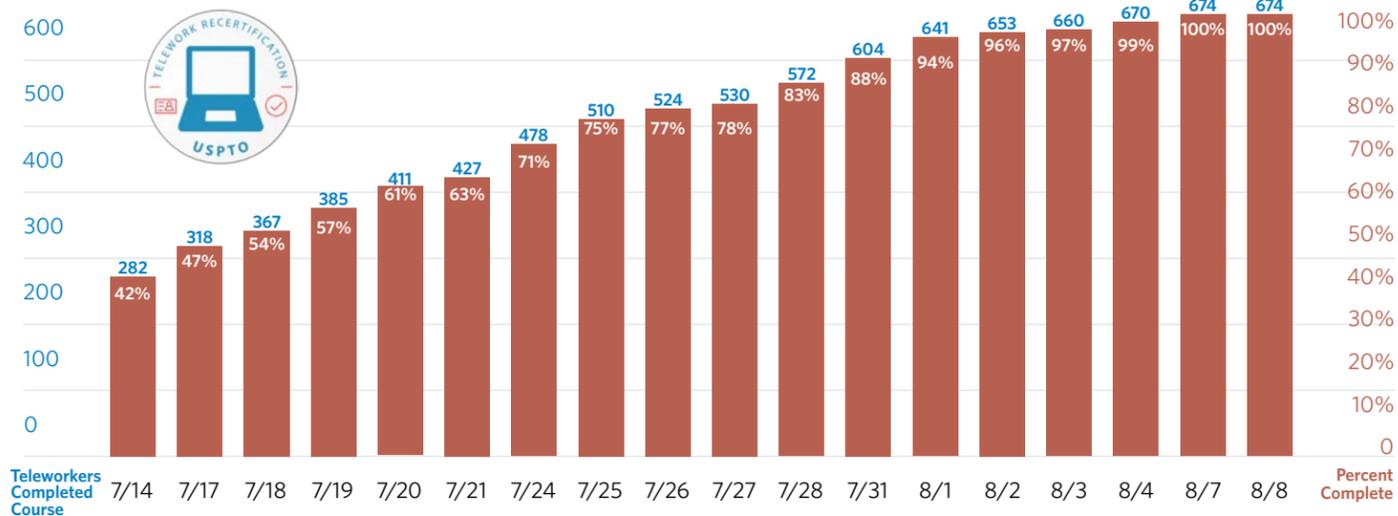
Telework Recertification

As a way to continuously improve the telework process, the Telework Program Office (TPO) created a Telework Recertification initiative, requiring all current teleworkers to review their specific telework guidelines and recommit to the telework program. The recertification is a computer-based module in the Learning Center that contains important information and reminders on telework duties and responsibilities, best practices, and requires teleworkers to review their business unit's telework guidelines/terms and conditions. Finally, the process includes managers' involvement, who are required to acknowledge the recertification in the Learning Center. This initiative is an annual recurring process.

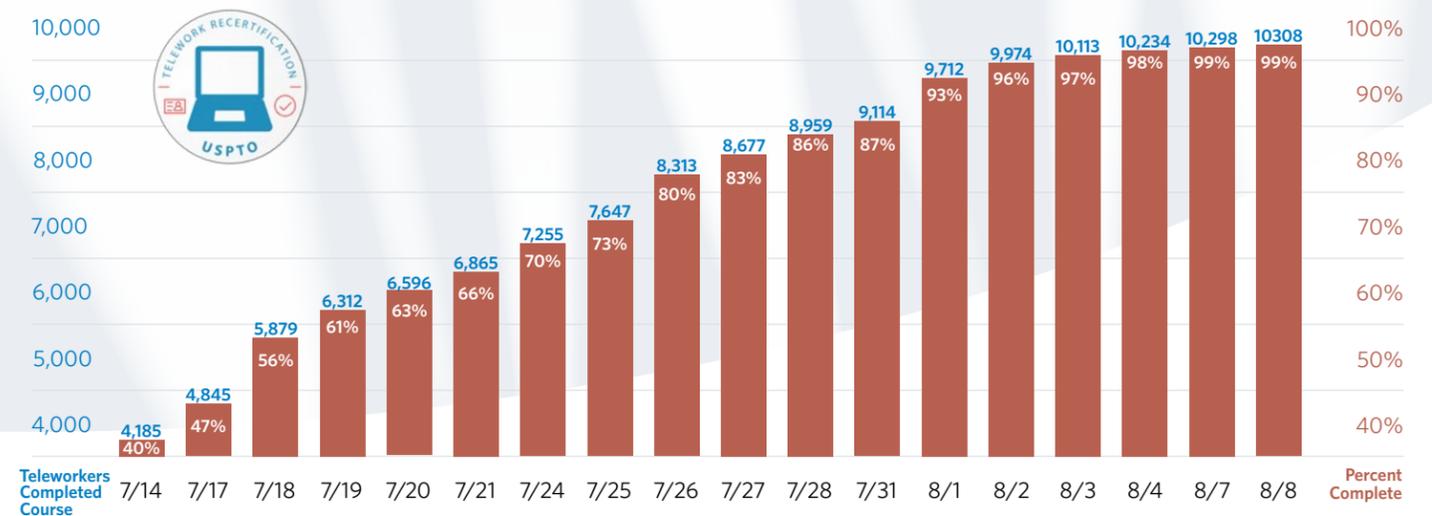
The TPO notifies teleworkers (via Learning Center) of the recertification, offering one month to complete the course. The TPO tracks participation and reports to the business units the percentage complete. Follow-up notes are scheduled through the Learning Center, reminding those who have not taken the module. The TPO requested all business units to communicate this process ahead of the launch. Communications were issued in the USPTO Weekly and on the Telework Resource intranet site.

In FY17, which was the second year of this initiative, almost 11,000 employees successfully completed the telework recertification. Another way of describing this accomplishment is that 100 percent of those who were required to complete the telework recertification successfully completed it.

TELEWORK RECERTIFICATION — TRADEMARKS



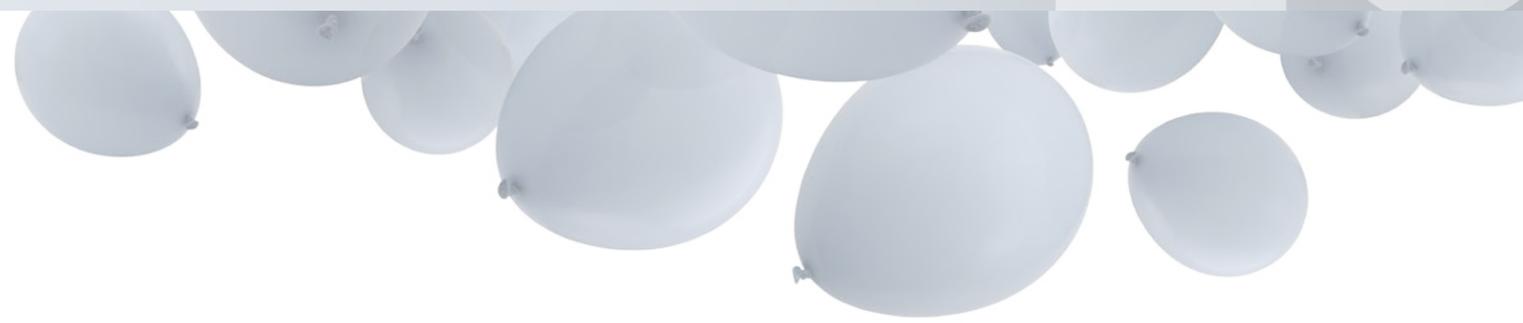
TELEWORK RECERTIFICATION — PATENTS





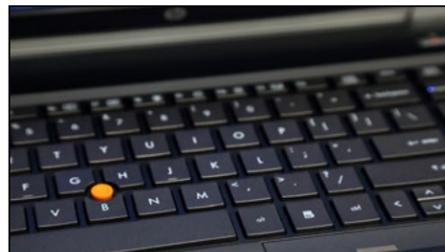
Digital Video Discs aka Digital Versatile Discs (DVDs) first go on sale.

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Technology

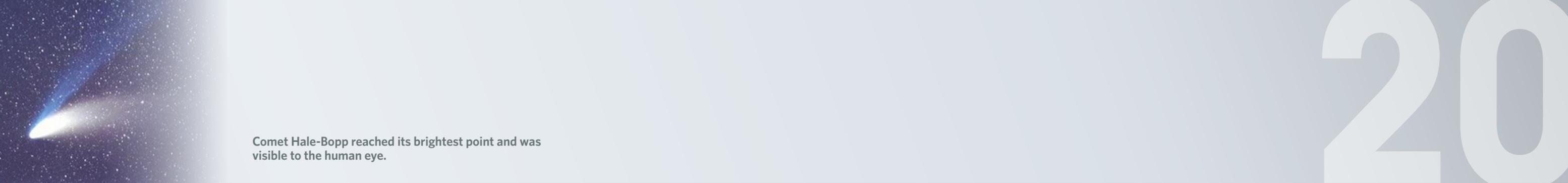
Using a wide suite of hardware and software, teleworkers at the USPTO are able to remain seamlessly connected to each other, their managers, and their overall work environment, regardless of where they are physically located. This suite includes the Universal Laptop, Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection, the Cisco Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), Microsoft Lync, webcam, Cisco WebEx, and small office/home office (SOHO) router.



Telework Champions

Pictured left to right Standing: Back row; Teddy Tadesse, Andrew Lawrence, Tim Callahan, Roberto Velez, Stephanie Murray, Toby Barrera, Eva Montalvo Center row; Khalid Waseem, Shannon Baily, Vincent Rudolph, Clint Janes, Mary Sparrow, Nikki Dunston, Syeda Saleh, Jackie Davis-Maxfield Front row standing; Khalil Naamane, Patrick Barcia, Tamara Spiro, Tung Nguyen, Jay Patel, Danette Campbell, Dawn Moore. Front row seated; Mary Boney Denison and Fred Steckler. Not pictured: Scott Martin, Melissa McGrath, Michael Kazazian, Patricia Beck, Christian Adamu, Sherryl Schoeman, Michael McGill, Jackie Bowen, Van Keane, Chauncey Morris, Kurt Gruell, Al Carter, JohnRae DeGuzman, Wayne Howard, Errica Miller, Robert Childs, Toshia Ross, Michael Neas, Larry Helms, Talya Goodman, Paul Fucito, Karen Sewell, Matt Kim, Fred Turner, Kevin Gilbert, James Nichols, Tim Murphy, Joseph McKane, Gary Benzion, Christina Johnson, Matthew Kim, Meng-Ai An, William Trost, Edan Orgad, Sumati Lefkowitz, Jay Besch, Hezron Williams, Dave Porta, Abdullah Riyami, George Bugg, Ian Simmons, Florian Zeender, Saul Rodriguez, Joseph Hail, Robert Chen, Alexander Kosowski.





Comet Hale-Bopp reached its brightest point and was visible to the human eye.

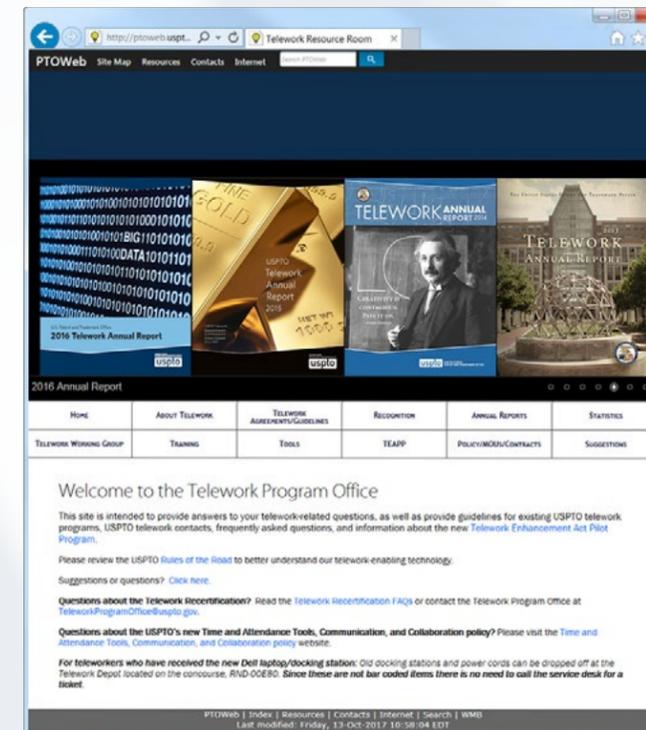
The Future of Telework

The USPTO has demonstrated a strong commitment to telework since 1997. This commitment has translated into increased employee productivity, satisfaction, and retention; helps the agency recruit and retain top talent; reduces costs associated with securing additional real estate; and positively impacts traffic congestion in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. In FY 2017, this commitment continued as evidenced by a rating of 92.8 percent on the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) question, “How satisfied are you with the Telework program in your agency?”

In FY 2018, the USPTO will continue as a best practice model for telework by conducting periodic program evaluations, regular data collection and analysis, recertification activities, and benchmarking with other organizations.

Telework Resources

The USPTO Telework Program Office has developed an internal telework resource center, located on the PTO intranet, to support telework-eligible employees, existing teleworkers, and managers. We encourage you to visit the Telework Program website for various resources, best practices, and tools.



USPTO Telework Awards



20 YEARS

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