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Proposal for study: A quality search results in prosecution focused on the invention, shorter timeline to issuance and higher quality issued patents.

Explanation: Initial searches that do not turn up the most relevant references often result in more relevant references found in a later search being applied after one or more office actions. New grounds of rejection relying on the later found references delay prosecution, increase cost to applicants necessitating more amendments and RCE’s. Measuring the number of second or later office actions containing new grounds of rejection which apply a new reference when there has been no claim amendment may provide insight into the quality of original searches. The results of measurements of RCE filings may also be indicators. Any correlation between search quality and extended prosecution may identify process changes for search procedures resulting in reduced timelines, decreased costs to applicants, and improved quality of issued claims.

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