

Online survey quarterly report for October 2009 to December 2009

Executive Summary

Our online survey has been running since the 30th June 2009 with 123 people responding up until the end of December 2009. To promote customer awareness of the survey we introduced a link on the front page of our website and were encouraged by the increased number of responses. The link remained in place until the end of December and we will consider re-introducing the link, and other promotional methods, to continue promoting the survey in future months.

An increasing number of customers who have filed for a Trade Mark are telling us that the registration process is straightforward, confirming previous feedback we've received from customers at the Olympia Business Startup Event. The new trade mark RightStart service launched in November and we have expanded the survey to gather feedback of our customers' experiences of this new service. Our early findings are detailed below.

Satisfaction with our patent e-services has increased during the quarter, with 13% more customers telling us this compared to the previous quarter. These are encouraging results and we will continue to monitor this area closely as the provision of electronic issues is a recurring theme of customer feedback.

The IPO website receives approximately 350,000 hits on a monthly basis, so it is encouraging that feedback about the website, e.g. on navigation issues, has increased during the quarter. This useful information has been passed on for consideration and further action where appropriate.

Customer Satisfaction

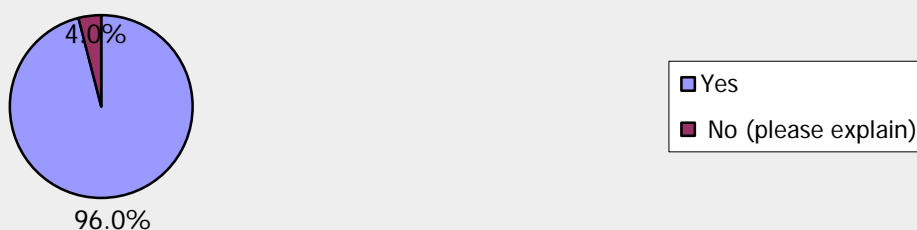
During your dealings with us, how satisfied, or dissatisfied, were you with the level of our performance?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Dissatisfied	3.70%	1
Dissatisfied	3.70%	1
Satisfied	59.26%	16
Very Satisfied	33.34%	9
	answered question	27

A high proportion (93%) of customers who completed this question were either satisfied or very satisfied with their experience of dealing with the office. This confirms the findings of previous customer engagements and exceeds our target of 80% of "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" customer responses in surveys.

Customer Fairness

Do you feel you have been treated fairly by us at all times?

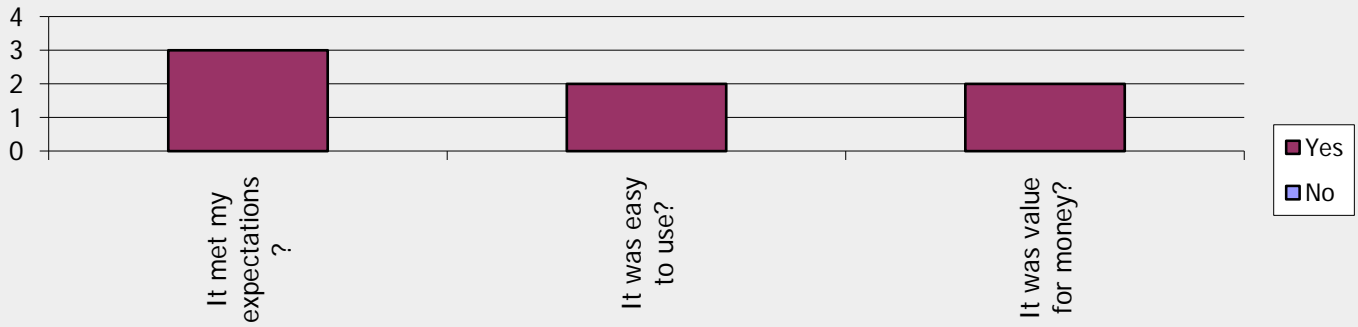


The vast majority (96%) of customers who completed the survey feel that they have been treated fairly by us at all times. There was no one issue that resulted in a small proportion of customers feeling that they'd been unfairly treated, however, where the customer has indicated that they are willing to be contacted we have investigated and replied to their feedback.

Trade Marks

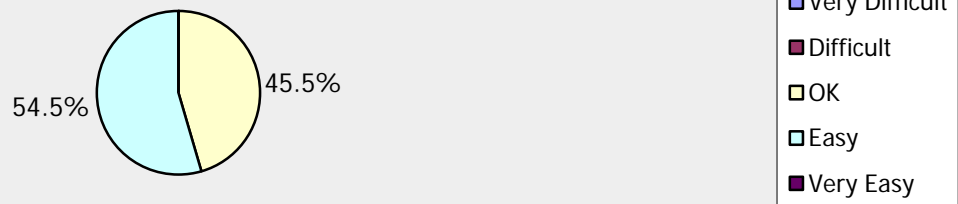
The new RightStart service for Trade Marks launched at the start of November, feedback has therefore been limited to date. The findings in the chart below are very early indications and only based upon 3 users of the system.

What was your overall impression of our RightStart service?



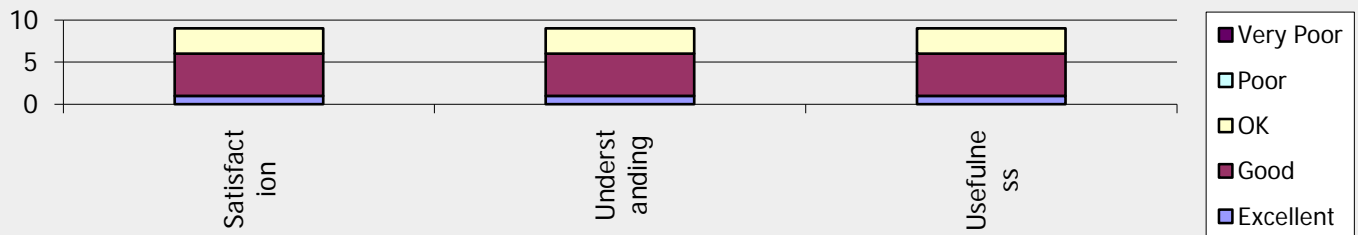
Those that have used the service found that it met their expectations, was easy to use and was value for money.

How would you rate the trade mark registration process?



This question shows us that no respondents found the registration process difficult. This reflects the positive feedback received generally on ease of use and represents an increase on the return for the last quarter where 6% found the process to be difficult.

How would you rate the following aspects of the trade mark examination report or RightStart discussion?

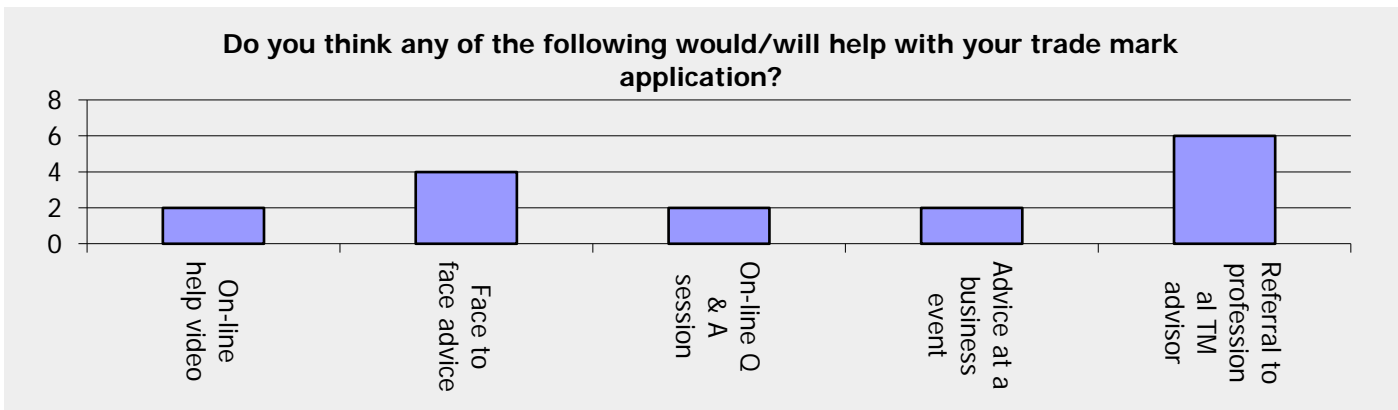


The above table demonstrates customer satisfaction with both the Trade Mark Examination report and also any RightStart discussion with all (100.0%) finding it at least ok, the majority finding it good and some finding it excellent in terms of satisfaction, understanding and usefulness.

Were you satisfied with your experience of contacting one of our trade mark examiners by telephone?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100.00%	9
No	0.00%	0
How can we improve?		0
answered question		9

Another area to see an improvement over the previous quarter is customer satisfaction when dealing with staff over the phone. All customers were satisfied, compared to the last quarter findings of 91% satisfaction.



Customers continue to tell us that face to face advice and referral to a professional Trade Mark advisor would be particularly useful ways of helping with their application. One measure that's been introduced to assist customers are regular advice clinics run with the assistance of the CIPA (The Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys).

What is deterring you from applying for a trade mark?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Cost	0.00%	0
Complexity	28.6%	2
Lack of help / advice	0.00%	0
Other (please state)	71.4%	5
<i>answered question</i>		7

This quarter the emphasis has moved away from lack of help or advice as being the most deterring factor for customers; our Trade Marks team have addressed this aspect recently through a number of initiatives such as an online Q & A session and branding booths at IP events. The "Other" comments did not relate to any one underlying reason for not filing for a trade mark, customers telling us that this was simply not something they needed at the present time.

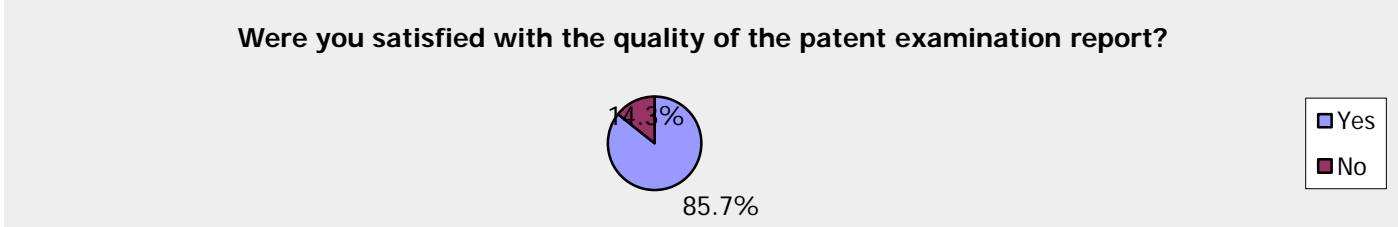
Trade Marks - Comments

The following specific comments were passed onto the relevant staff member(s) for further investigation and formal response as required:

- 1) In response to the question, **"Are there any other comments about our trade mark services which you think can be improved?"**
 - a) One survey respondent advised us, *"The staff have been very helpful on many occasions."*
 - b) Whilst another commented that we need to do more to address the issue of unsolicited mail.

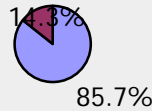
Patents

Customers were asked if they were satisfied with the quality of the examination report..



86% of customers confirmed that they were satisfied, a small increase on the 82% from the previous quarter. One customer commented that they would like examination reports to be issued sooner, and another person raised issued surrounding paying closer attention to the wording of claims. The feedback has been forwarded to the area concerned for consideration.

Were you satisfied with the quality of the patent search report?



86% of customers confirmed that they were satisfied with the quality of the patent search report; an increase since the last quarter (82%). An improvement suggestion was made relating to the prior art for claims and this has been forwarded to the relevant business area for consideration.

Were you satisfied with the quality of the patent electronic services we offer?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	83.3%	5
No	16.7%	1
How can we improve?		3
<i>answered question</i>		6

83% of respondents were satisfied with the quality of the patent electronic surveys on offer, an increase from the 70.0% of those in the previous quarter. Two responses to the question "How can we improve?" mentioned improving online file prosecution and access issues. This is a recurring area of comment and something that we've advised customers is under ongoing review, but that Copyright issues currently prevents us from providing this service at the moment.

All respondents said that they were satisfied when replying to the question about their experience of contacting one of our patent examiners by telephone. One respondent queried the facilities for leaving messages and their comment has been fed back to the relevant business area for consideration.

If you have made use of these services, did you find them useful?



Two thirds of respondents are aware of the extra services that we offer such as mediation, opinions and a tribunal service. Of these, over half have made use of these extra services.

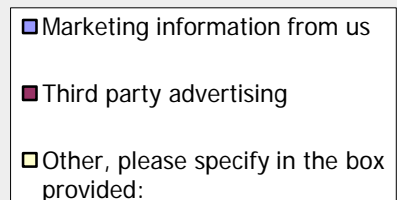
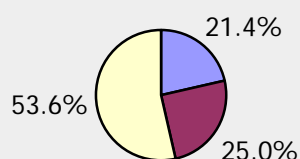
Patents - Comments

The following specific comments were passed onto the relevant staff member(s) for consideration and response as required:

- 1) In response to the question, "**How can we improve our patent services?**"
 - a) One survey respondent told us, "*Already very good.*" and another advised, "*Not much to do, you do a good job.*"
 - b) Another respondent advised us to, "*Clear the backlog? Get prosecution history online?*"
 - c) "*Provide online access to electronic copies of documents from examination files, like the EPO,*" was asked for by a different customer.
 - d) Another requested, "*Speed up the issuing of examination reports, or abolish the Rule 30 period!*"

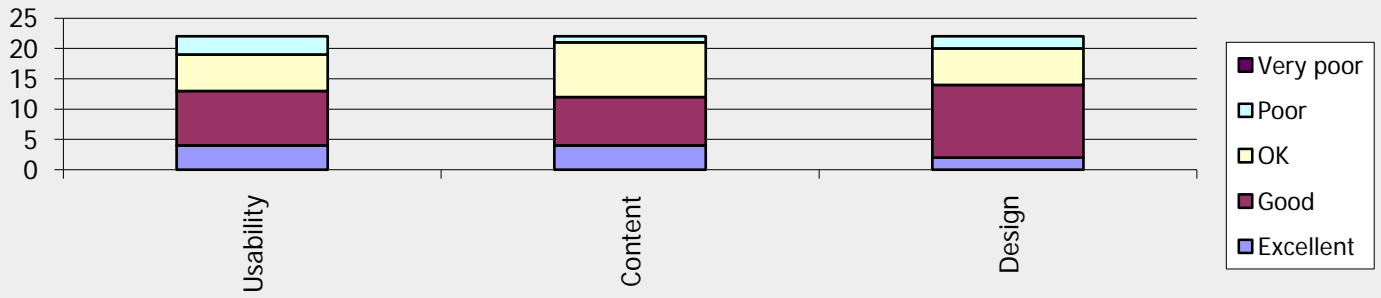
Website

How did you hear about our website?



Nearly half of customers heard about our website via marketing information from us or third party advertising, just over half heard about it from another source including London Business Link, IP Kat and Google.

How would you rate the following aspects of our website?



The results above show that out of the multiple answers received, no respondents found the 3 aspects of our website to be Very poor or Poor; this is an improvement from the last quarter when 16% found some of the three areas to be Poor or Very poor.

Are you:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A private applicant	17.7%	3
An I.P. Professional	70.6%	12
An SME (under 250)	5.9%	1
A Large company (over 250)	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)	5.9%	1
<i>answered question</i>		17

This question gives us an insight into the types of customer who have been completing the survey. The specific views received to date continue to be mainly from IP professionals.

Website – Comments

The following specific comments were passed onto the relevant staff member(s) for further investigation and formal response as required:

- 1) In response to the question, **“Is there anything which we could add to our website to improve it further?”**
 - a) One survey respondent told us that, in their view, the IPO’s association with cartoon characters was not appropriate given that IP is a serious issue.
 - b) Two respondents asked for, *“Easier navigation.”*
 - c) *“Advanced search to improve relevance of results,”* was requested by another customer.