

Bringing New “Life” to a PTDL: Easing the Burden

Jim Miller, Bob Kackley, Damon Austin,
Maureen Cech and Nedelina Tchangalova
Engineering & Physical Sciences Library (EPSL)
University of Maryland College Park MD
April 2, 2009

The Situation

- ❑ Present situation at PTDLA (& elsewhere)
 - ❑ Argument for proactively recruiting new PTDLA members
 - ❑ Putting a plan in action for change with them
 - ❑ Viewpoints from Maureen, Damon, and Nedelina
 - ❑ Jim Miller's conclusion and afterthoughts
-

Reasons for New “Life”

- ❑ Background at University of Maryland’s Engineering & Physical Sciences Library (EPSL)
 - ❑ Exceptionally sharp and experienced cadre of PTDLA members
 - ❑ This core group of members is dwindling, which reduces this quality of P&T knowledge
 - ❑ Washington Post article 1/3 of government employees eligible to retire in 2012
 - ❑ New PTDLA’ers concerns & aspirations
-

Types of Training

- MLS classes covering Patents and Trademarks
 - Self-education
 - USPTO training
 - Peer training
 - Mentoring
 - On-the-job with customers
-

Prior Experience with Patents

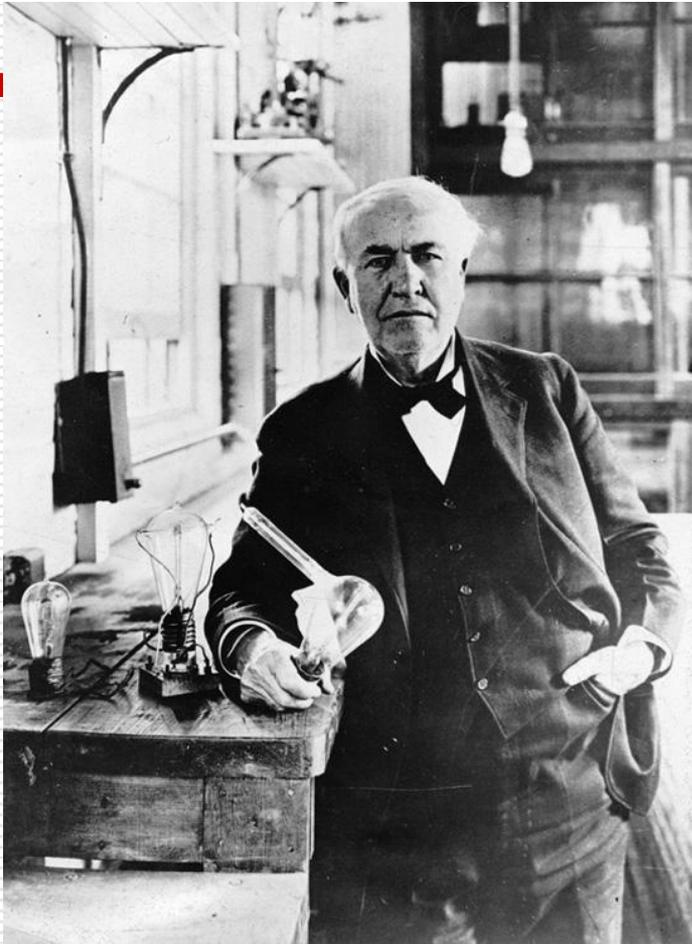
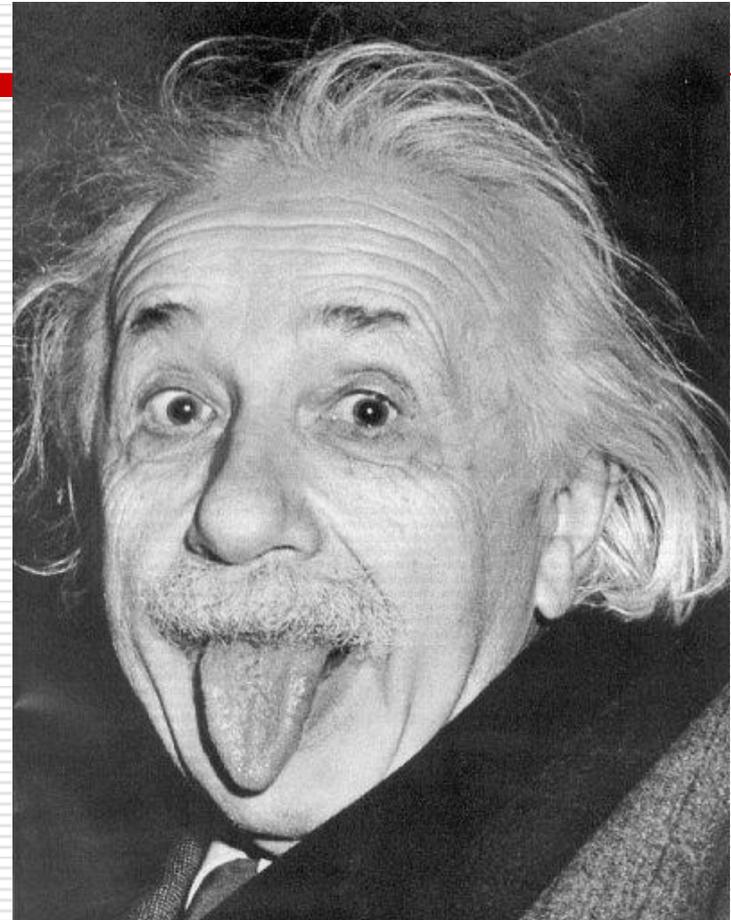


Photo credit: Thomas Edison, c. 1918-1919
Record Group 306, Records of the U.S. Information Agency
(306-NT-279T-20)

NARA

Image retrieved from http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/american_originals_iv/images/thomas_edison/thomas_edison.html



Original photography by Arthur Sasse/AFP-Getty Images, 1951
Image retrieved from wikipedia.org

An MLS Student Perspective on Patents

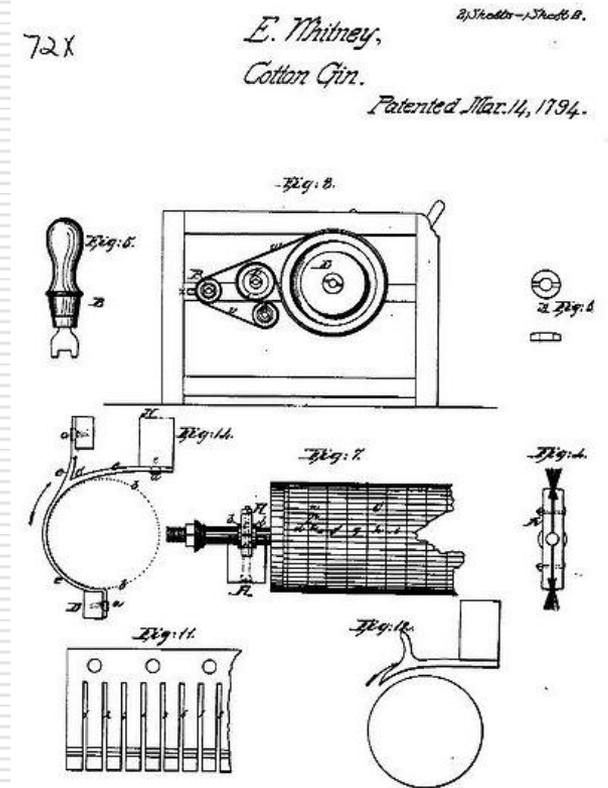
- ❑ Basic reference courses in LIS programs tend to not address patents
 - ❑ On-the-job interaction with patrons
 - ❑ USPTO training: foundational knowledge
 - Tutorials and guides
 - PTDLA conference
 - ❑ Peer training and mentoring @ EPSL: applying that knowledge
-

Personal & Professional Interest

- Agricultural Engineering & Operations Management
 - Library Work
 - Interest in Patents and Trademarks
 - International Agricultural Policy
 - USA & EU biotech in agriculture
 - Humanitarian Efforts
-

Patent/Trademark Applications in Agriculture

- Agricultural Industry as history of the United States
- Agricultural Law
 - E. Whitney



Patent/Trademark Applications in Agriculture

□ Marketing & Industry Growth

- Affects small grower operations
- Individual creativity

□ Current Technology Applications

- Biodiesel/Fuel
- Food & food safety
- Pharmaceuticals

□ Biotechnology/Bioethics issues

- GM crops (Bt) vs. organic -“king corn”
 - Environmental concerns
 - Range from livestock to flu shots
-

A New Librarian's Perspective on Patents

- Library school in USA
 - Chemical engineering study in Bulgaria
 - On the job at EPSL
 - USPTO training (X-search and EAST training)
-

Oh No, Not Patents!



Miller's Mullings

- Jim and Bob's insights into the training sessions afterwards
 - What could we have done better?
 - Seeing problems with technology from a new view point
 - New PTDLA'ers main concern seems to be handling P&T patrons comfortably
-

What could we have done better

- ❑ Hard to organize a VERY complex subject
 - Most common questions
 - Best databases/sites for each
 - ❑ Finding the best “Tips & Tricks”
 - ❑ Staying aware of other PTDLs’ training
 - ❑ Keeping up with changes in databases
 - ❑ Trying out and publicizing new websites
-

Technical & Software problems

- PubWEST and PatFT web TIFF viewers
 - Explaining troubleshooting hints
 - Showing “quick fixes” and shortcuts
 - Seeing the “old BRS search engine” through new users’ eyes
 - Learning from teaching – new users have learned their OWN fancy tricks
-

Making the jump to actual help

- ❑ Hurdle of helping Patent-TM users for the first time; easy to call on the “experts”
 - ❑ Hard to predict when patrons will come in
 - ❑ Experienced folks tend to help right away – rather than give newer folks a chance
 - ❑ But the new librarian already knows:
 - Boolean search
 - Subject classification (call numbers, indexing...)
 - Citation searching
-

Thank you!

LT-301
:5203

SR
OR PP 004,032

U.S. Patent

April 5, 1977

Plant 4,032

