

- The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) (13): It has provided an elaborate and detailed website for invention development; it is worth a detailed look.

2.3.5 Patent Copies and Search Facilities

- Micropatent (14): This is perhaps the most comprehensive service available at a very reasonable cost and is an easy website to navigate. This is a highly recommended site.
- Questel (15)
- Faxpat (16)
- Patentec (17)
- Lexis-Nexus (18)
- Mayall (19)

2.4 Components of a Patent Application

A patent specification (not specifications) is a legal document that gets published as the patent, if granted. Great care and detail go into writing this document in defining the scope of invention, deciding what is claimed, and wording the claims (which are part of specification) such that they can withstand challenges.

Deciding on what is “invented” is the job of the research scientist, but the decision is made in light of prior art; for example, if there is a discovery of a new group of chemicals, the breadth of the group should be ascertained in light of the prior art available, what can be reasonably predicted regarding the structure of chemicals, and the ability to synthesize representative chemicals, if not all. Where a completely new molecular structure has been invented, a broad scope, including all kinds of derivatives of the basic structure that the inventor thinks may be useful, is possible. It is surprising how many times scientists who are sure of the novelty of a structure, composition, or application find out otherwise when a thorough search is made of the possible prior art. It is worth realizing that with the availability of databases in electronic format, the Internet, and generally a faster access to remote publications (even brochures for promotion in remote countries), what a thorough search would reveal; know that the patent examiners have access to these same channels of information and even more. The author has been humbled more than once by what the patent examiner can dig out. So, scientists are advised not to jump the gun in making very broad claims, until advised so by the patent attorneys, after conducting a thorough patent search. Obviously, the scope is narrowed down gradually as more and more prior art emerges. The goal is not to narrow it down to a point where it loses its commercial importance. The scope of protection, which is commercially important to achieve, varies from one field to another. In extreme situations, it is sufficient to have a scope that includes a singular compound, if that is what the company wishes to market. The strength in this approach comes from the regulatory control of pharmaceutical products. Once a company receives marketing authorization from the FDA, at a great expense, imitators would like