

New Manual Codes Mirror Technological Development

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As part of ongoing development of Derwent World Patents Index® (DWPI®), Thomson Scientific has revised its Manual Codes to reflect the latest developments in technology. The final revisions, including addition of brand new codes, expansion or amendment of scope notes, and retirement of old codes, took effect in the first file update of this year.

So why revise the codes?

Manual Codes enable better recall and give more precision when searching Thomson Scientific patent files. So the latest revisions to the indexing system should improve search results, especially in new technology areas, such as nanotechnology.

For example, one area, Scientific Instrumentation (S03) has a new section—General Scientific Instrumentation Details (S03-H). This will give greater depth of detail for new types of instrumentation technology that were previously bundled together.

Technology crosses disciplinary boundaries

Lab-on-a-chip techniques, biochips, and microfluidics were traditionally covered by a combination of codes across both Electrical Patents Index (EPI) and Chemical Patents Index (CPI) sections. As engineering solutions are becoming ever more important to biological or pharmacological areas, Thomson Scientific has now introduced a clear distinction in EPI Codes. Now, by searching using code S03-H01 documents can be returned in these specific areas, in addition to codes highlighting the test types and the chemicals involved.

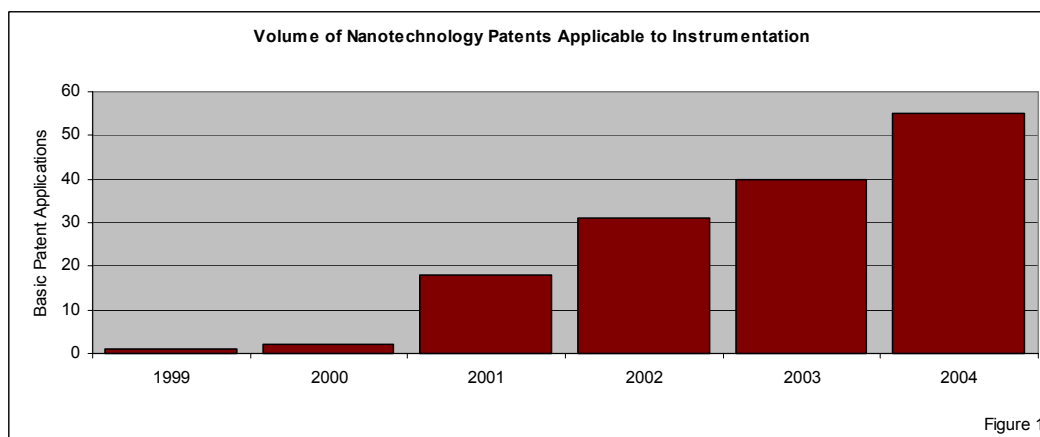


Figure 1 – Illustrating the rise in volume of nanotechnology patents applicable to instrumentation

Tiny technology patenting increases

The furore of activity in miniaturization of technologies is reflected in the rise of instrumentation patenting activity. Patent publications in micro—and nano-sized— instrumentation have seen a continued increase (see *Figure 1*). Inventions such as micro-scaled mass spectrometers or gyroscopes on the order of a few nanometers in size are appearing, and these require more in-depth codes. This technology area now comes under S03-H02.

Developments in nanotechnology have also effected revision of CPI codes. A new code, E05-U03, has been introduced to cover novel carbon nanotube compositions and structures. New codes in both Semiconductor Processing (U11) and Valves, Discharge Tubes and CRTs (V05) classes have also been added, mirroring the increase in scanning probe microscopy techniques for manufacturing small scale devices.

Before the 2005 Manual Code revision, a search for non-application specific patterning techniques using scanning probe equipment would have involved the use of code V05-F01A5. This meant that without further refinement to the search, the results would also have included analysis type microscopy equipment and processing type lithography equipment. Now, the use of equipment as to analysis or processing is clearly separated into two different codes.

Reflecting technology developments

Plasma processing equipment and techniques have become more widespread in manufacturing systems, so Thomson Scientific has introduced new codes to reflect this. For example, V05-F08F has been introduced to cover plasma techniques for the decomposition of hazardous or dangerous materials. Figure 2 features an example of how this code has already been applied for Japanese patent application number JP2004322010A—an invention for the removal of organo-chlorine compounds and dioxins from fly ash using microwave-induced plasma.

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Figure 2 – Example of a Japanese patent application featuring new technology that can be located more precisely in searches using the new manual codes

The recent highlighting of obesity in the news is mirrored in patenting trends, and new Thomson Scientific codes reflect these social issues. These include the addition of manual codes for low-fat and low-carbohydrate foods (D03-H01T3A and D03-H01T3B). How this new low-fat code has been applied can be seen in Korean patent number KR443132B, which is a novel method of preparing low-fat chips.

For more information about the Manual Code revision or to view the EPI and CPI revision lists, go to:

www.thomsonderwent.com/support/dwpieref/reftools/classification/code-revision/