

Boolean Search Enhancements – Introduction of Wild Card Characters and Increased Sensitivity to Spacing

(Circular No. 7/2015, dated 8 Oct 2015)

As part of IPOS’ commitment to provide greater ease in conducting similar mark search on IP2SG, the Registry has enhanced the Boolean search facility by introducing two wild card characters. This enhancement allows users to find a greater range of similar marks with fewer searches.

The two wild card characters are set out below:

- the question mark (?), which represents any single character
- the asterisk (*), which represents any number of characters

These wild card characters are only applicable when “Mark Text” is selected as the *Search Field*, and “Contains” is selected as the *Operator*.

An illustration of the Boolean Search with the above selected fields is set out below.

The screenshot displays the 'Public Search & Enquiry' interface. At the top, there is a 'Disclaimer' section. Below it, there are three search options: 'Fast Search', 'Simple Search', and 'Boolean Search'. The 'Search Category' section shows 'Designs', 'Patents', and 'Trade Marks' with radio buttons, where 'Trade Marks' is selected. The 'Search Criteria' section is a table with columns: 'Bracket (Optional)', 'Search Field', 'Operator', 'Value', 'Bracket (Optional)', and 'Operator'. The first row shows a dropdown for 'Bracket (Optional)', 'Mark Text' in the 'Search Field', 'Contains' in the 'Operator', an empty 'Value' field, another empty 'Bracket (Optional)' dropdown, and an empty 'Operator' dropdown. There are 'Delete' and 'Add New Search Criteria' buttons. At the bottom right, there are 'Clear' and 'Search' buttons.

| Bracket (Optional) | Search Field | Operator | Value | Bracket (Optional) | Operator |
|--------------------|--------------|----------|-------|--------------------|----------|
| | Mark Text | Contains | | | |

In addition, the search field now takes into consideration spaces at the start and end of the search term entered in the Value field. For example, when using “Contains” as the Operator, “ de ” will return “Eau De Frette” as a result, but not “de” or “midea”.

The increased sensitivity to spacing is introduced to allow users to exclude results with longer words that contain the search term. For example, to search for marks containing the single character “Q”, the following search query can be entered:

| Search Field | Operator | Value¹ | Operator |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Mark Text | Starting with | “Q ” | OR |
| Mark Text | Ending with | “ Q” | OR |
| Mark Text | Contains | “ Q ” | OR |
| Mark Text | Equal | “Q” | |

¹ Please note that the search term in the value field should be typed without the inverted commas (“”).

This will exclude results such as “Equitance” and “Quantel” that contain the letter “Q”.

To access the Boolean Search facility, please visit:
<https://www.ip2.sg/RPS/WP/CM/SearchAdvanceP.aspx>

If you have any feedback on how we can improve the search system, please email us at tan_yan_shao@ipos.gov.sg.