Could machines take over the world of patent translations?

MIDDLE EAST
Law firm
RANKINGS
AND AFRICA

Dr Andrea Civera, Senior Associate, and Dr Alexander Frank, Associate, of Reddie & Grose evaluate the capabilities of machine translation to assess whether it is capable of fulfilling the translation requirements set to be implemented with the Unitary Patent system.
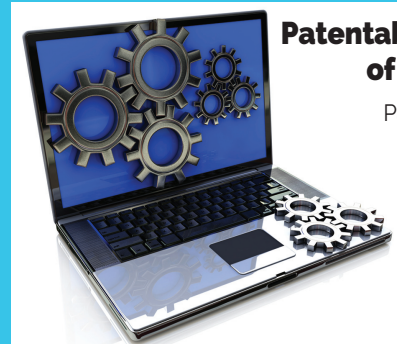
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LiquidText is the document analysis platform of choice for patent professionals worldwide

The winner of Editor's Choice Awards from BOTH Apple and Microsoft, LiquidText lets you do more analytical reading and note-taking with less effort, never lose track of a source document or highlight, and always return to where you left off quickly.

Founded in 2012 and based in New York, LiquidText, Inc., produces and offers its eponymous productivity software to patent attorneys, examiners, and other intellectual property professionals who read, analyze, compare, and collaborate on an assortment of digital documents. Part one of this three-part series on LiquidText, interviews Craig Tashman, founder of LiquidText, to find out what it is and how it benefits patent attorneys and other IP professionals.

What is LiquidText?

LiquidText is software to help people read and understand long, complicated, and interconnected bodies of documents. The genesis for the software resulted from my doctoral thesis at Georgia Tech, which studied how attorneys, executives, academicians, students, and others read, take notes, make comparisons, and analyze documents. I had two revelations: paper does not support readers' needs well, and computers traditionally do even worse.

Why did you look at paper when people create and store documents in electronic format?

Everyone we talked to preferred paper for professional reading. You can highlight content, make notes in the margin, and dog-ear page corners for bookmarks. Still, people need to make comparisons and connections between documents, which is extraordinarily difficult on paper, and worse in digital formats.

Imagine a crime thriller where detectives use a corkboard to post clippings and notes and

Craig Tashman

make critical connections with twine. Professionals do that when they read critically and analytically but without the corkboard and twine. We looked at that and realized many digital reading solutions were modeled on paper, so they inherited the limitations of paper, and made this kind of discovery and capture of connections difficult -you have to keep it all in your head. So, we took a different approach.
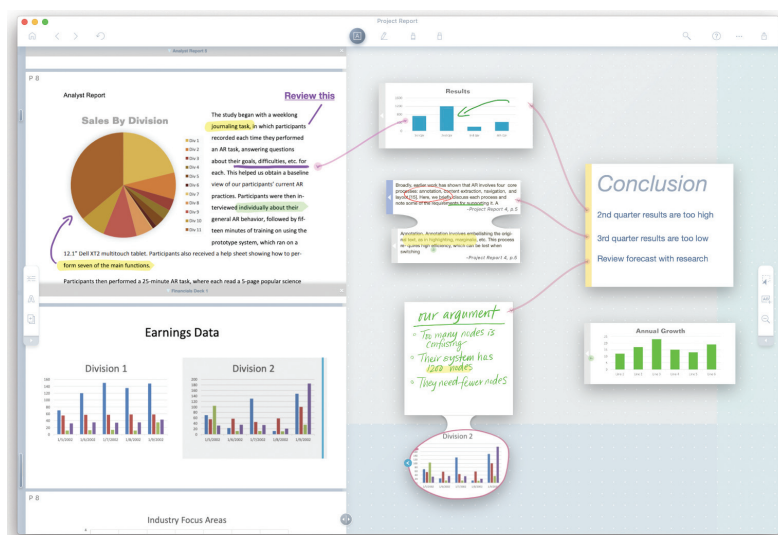
If you did not start with how people use paper, how did you develop LiquidText?

We started with cognitive science and asked what people need when reading. What are their tasks and requirements? This led us down a very different path. We began building prototypes of LiquidText that addressed readers' requirements and embraced critical reading tasks, such as highlighting and annotating text while comparing, contrasting, and making connections among documents. We put the prototypes in front of attorneys, students, and others and got terrific feedback on how professionals read analytically to solve problems. After we released our first product on the Apple iPad in 2015, LiquidText received more than 100,000 downloads in the first two weeks of its availability. From there, we started marketing initiatives for various users and increasingly pressed into the professional space, appealing to attorneys, doctors, and others.

How does LiquidText work?

LiquidText projects begin with your documents. Import from one to thousands, in the most important formats from your file storage, as you

need them. Then you read, underline, annotate, excerpt, connect, observe and comment all within the same app and workspace. But beyond that, as you draw the connections between anything that deserves attention and whatever other information, notes, documents, observations, and others that relate, over time you effectively build a "network" of relationships between source materials and your notes, which is invaluable for continuing analysis.

Overview: A screenshot of LiquidText with the document pane and a workspace open, showing notes and connections.

Users can organize a workspace as they like, making notes and connecting them to others. Or they can draw lines between document text, notes, or anything in the app to create a live, visual InkLink between them.

LiquidText works with PDF, Office 365 Word, PowerPoint, and web pages, among other popular content formats. It also supports content management systems like Box, Dropbox, and iCloud Drive, and exports project materials in popular application formats such as DOCX and PDF.

Does LiquidText replace any existing tools, such as a PDF reader?
LiquidText is unique software. We don't see ourselves as PDF readers. We don't compete with Adobe Acrobat, and they aren't competing with us. We consume PDF files and other digital documents. Although we have a large community of readers who use LiquidText for critical reading, the most significant competitor is paper.

Where can I use LiquidText?
The software runs on Apple iPads, Macs, and Microsoft Windows 10/11 PCs and tablet computers. You get LiquidText free from the Apple App Store or the Microsoft Store and make all purchases through the in-app purchase

> **When we launched the Windows version, the EPO reached out and informed us they were using iPad versions and were interested in licensing LiquidText for Windows.**

function. We also recently launched an Enterprise Edition which is designed for larger deployments.

The versions you get from the Apple and Microsoft stores use Microsoft Azure for real-time synchronization and backup, allowing you to work on multiple devices. We built the backend on Azure using a .NET architecture. This enables us to deliver LiquidText to law firms, regulatory agencies, and other entities on-premises and in private clouds.

How many active users do you have, and how many are attorneys?
Users have downloaded the software from Apple and Microsoft app stores more than five million times. Based on our customer satisfaction surveys, 10% of our user base identifies as attorneys. Of those, we don't know how many patent lawyers there are, but every patent examiner in the European Patent Office (EPO) uses LiquidText.

How did you discover that patent lawyers were interested in LiquidText?
Anecdotally. Due to Apple and Microsoft privacy agreements, we can't know users' demographics who download from the app stores. Attorneys and patent lawyers contacted us through our support desk and through our periodic customer satisfaction surveys. When we launched the Windows version, the EPO reached out and informed us they were using iPad versions and were interested in licensing LiquidText for Windows. We were also getting a lot of inbound demand from patent attorneys and intellectual property firms. Maiwald contacted us when they heard the EPO was using LiquidText. They did not want their regulators to have better tools than their IP attorneys. We noticed a clear trend of patent professionals using the software when BioNTech SE and Genentech employees contacted our help desk for support.

How does LiquidText help patent professionals?
LiquidText can help legal professionals with any task requiring them to read, compare, and analyze multiple documents. It broadly helps patent professionals with patent litigation and prosecution, freedom to operate analyses within a particular technology area, and opposition proceedings or re-examining patents. As soon as you get into any process dealing with more and more documents, patents, cross-referencing, and reviews, LiquidText is a "competitive advantage," as one attorney put it, especially if the counterparty is using paper.

The LiquidText advantage includes unity, idea capture, and accelerated access to information. LiquidText lets you gather groups of documents
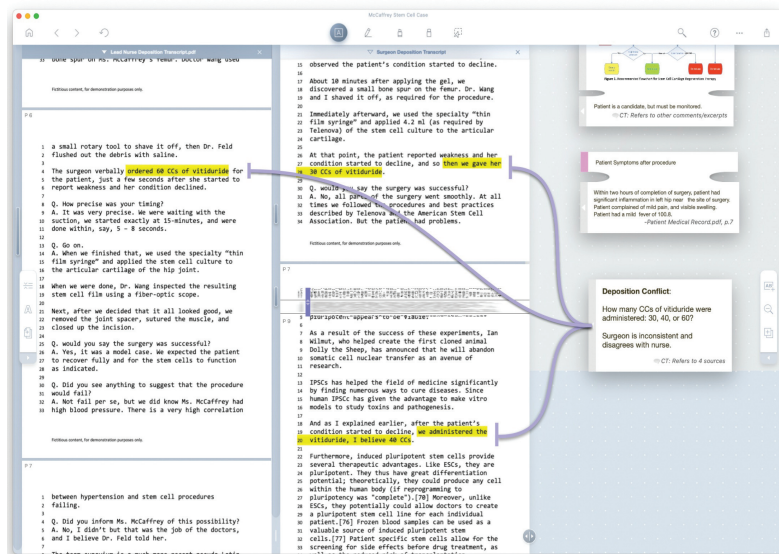
in one unified project so you can replace entire banker boxes of documents. The software helps you preserve the discovery of new connections and relationships among documents. LiquidText lets you take notes in an organized way, linking them in context with source documents, allowing you to return to a project quickly.

LiquidText speeds access to information. You can capture thoughts, link them together, and connect them to text in source documents. In one touch, you can bring conflicting patent claims together in a workspace from multiple documents and draw contradicting statements of witnesses together from several depositions.

As attorneys are always moving between many matters over the course of a day, LiquidText allows them to quickly and easily resume work with all source documents, annotations and previous notes instantly presented exactly where they left off. Attorneys no longer need to pull out document boxes with all the source materials scattered across boxes and pages of paper.
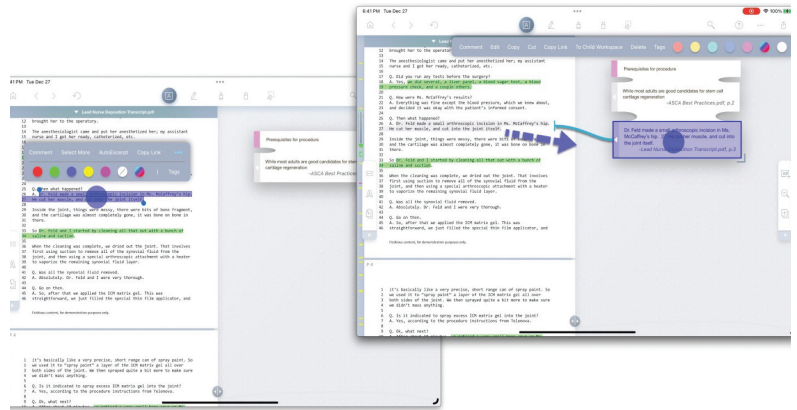
What features excite patent lawyers the most?

The golden feature is creating InkLinks. You can draw lines from a piece of text in one document to another. This can show, for example, how a patent claim conflicts with another. With InkLinks, you can capture all the connections and relationships discovered while reading documents. For example, an attorney can capture inconsistent statements in depositions by drawing lines from the statements to a note in the work-space; they can later retrieve that conflict in court by just tapping the ends of the resulting InkLinks. Interlink anything in documents and workspaces, such as notes, to draw connections – even content outside the project using URL links.
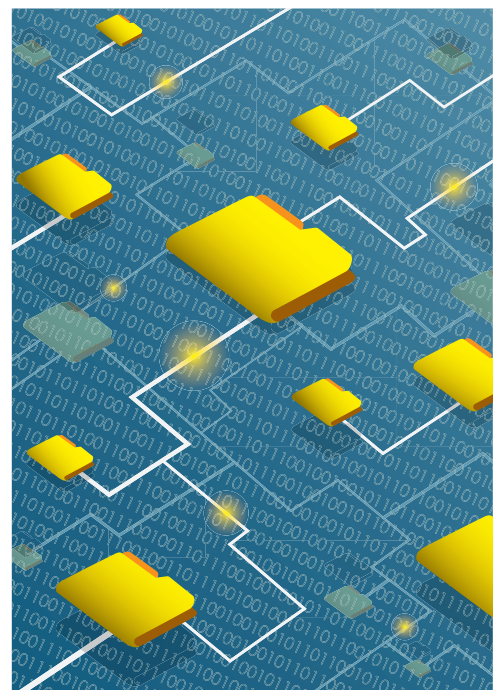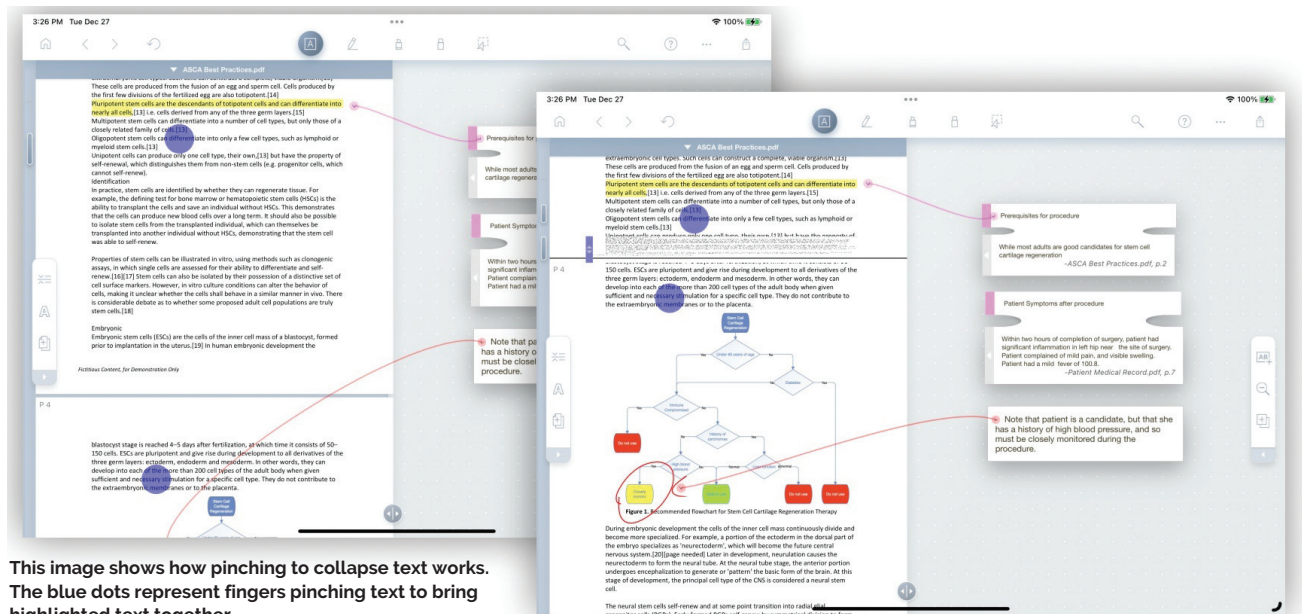
The excerpts are the meat and potatoes in LiquidText to bring together information from different patents or claims. Create excerpts by highlighting text or drawing a circle or box around anything in a document and dragging it to the workspace. The excerpt links back to the exact point in the source document it came from. You can bring together critical information from different records, discover connections, and find inconsistencies and workarounds in prior art. Getting the information together makes it easier for your brain to work effectively.

Excerpts allow users to bring together information from different patents or claims.

Everyone gets excited about the gestural UI for touch devices. A 15-second demo video on Google showed how LiquidText users pinch the UI to bring together highlighted texts; it resulted in five million downloads. Few apps take advantage of ink and multi-touch and how it was meant to be exploited to improve the user experience.

InkLinks, shown here, connect text in one document to text in another relevant document.

This image shows how pinching to collapse text works. The blue dots represent fingers pinching text to bring highlighted text together.

What new features will appeal to patent lawyers?

If there is a new version of a source document in a project that has pages added or removed, you can use it to replace the old version in your project. LiquidText preserves your notes, annotations, links, and markups and carries them forward to the new version. You can create text links across apps, such as with Microsoft Word, and include LiquidText in a cross-app workflow. For example, copy a LiquidText link and paste it into Word; when you click the link in Word, the flow moves to LiquidText.

You recently released a LiquidText Enterprise version. What does that mean for law firms and corporate legal departments?

The Enterprise edition adds manageability, data location controls, and security features typically in enterprise infrastructure and security frameworks. The Enterprise edition will support end-to-end encryption with customer-managed keys (CMK) and include enterprise integrations like iManage. LiquidText supports enterprises with a designated account manager, priority email, Slack channels, and onboarding and training webinars.

Law firms and legal departments face complicated budget planning. Why should they prioritize software tools like LiquidText in a challenging economy?

The only sustainable way for fewer attorneys to do more is with better tools. Acquiring software tools like LiquidText should be a priority. With LiquidText, users can save time and work efficiently to maintain and increase productivity and workloads. It lets users change context

> **"**
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> **"**

easily, take meaningful notes, and find information faster – all core productivity you can't outsource. LiquidText can also improve transparency with multiple attorneys working on projects. And the software is priced as an everyday tool. We also do multi-year deals with organizations to lock in the price over the term of the agreement.

How much does LiquidText cost?

We offer a free (Basic) version of LiquidText and a one-time download to run LiquidText on one device without future updates (Pro 2023) for $39.99. The software-as-a-service (SaaS) offerings include feature sets tiered to user intensity and sophistication. The LiquidText Enterprise edition costs $20 per user per month. A certain level of enterprise customizations is free, but some custom work may be a non-recurring expense.

What features are on your product roadmap?

Besides end-to-end encryption and CMKs, we will add real-time collaboration for workspaces. Collaboration features will allow multiple users access to a single project, providing shared and private workspaces. We will add data analysis and visualization tools to projects for users to identify patterns in documents and notes. We plan to integrate with more third-party content management systems and work with public and private patent databases. LiquidText is also in the process of obtaining an ISO 27001 certification.

For more information, visit www.liquidtext.net or email info@liquidtext.net.