

**Legal**



**Q** With the U.S. Patent and Trade Office commonly taking over two years to issue a patent, is seeking patent protection worth the wait?

**A** Yes. A patent issued after the prosecution of a well-drafted patent application should maintain its value throughout most, if not all, of its lifetime. Preparation of a patent application requires knowledge of technology associated with the apparatus, system, or method being protected; an understanding of equivalents to such technology; and, an understanding of the progression of such technology. Well-written claims of a patent application will cover different exemplary embodiments of the invention, while the specification will provide a detailed description of each exemplary embodiment. By incorporating different exemplary embodiments of the invention, which anticipate progression of technology, and properly drafting claims, a patent application maintains its strength over time. In addition, patents filed on or after June 8, 1995, have a lifetime of 20 years from filing.



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