



Patent Search Vendor Due Diligence Checklist

Use this checklist when you're assessing GPS—or any other patent search vendor.

1. Organization & Team

- Is the core research team U.S.-based?
- Do they have domain-specific analysts (e.g., biotech, software, oilfield)?
- Are you able to speak with an experienced analyst or project lead, not just sales?

2. Quality & Methodology

- Can they describe how they design searches for different matter types (novelty, FTO, invalidity, due diligence)?
- What databases and sources do they routinely use (patent and nonpatent literature)?
- Do they have internal quality control and peer review processes?
- Can they provide examples (sanitized) of search reports appropriate for litigation or IPR?

3. Security & Confidentiality

- Are their analysts and infrastructure located in jurisdictions consistent with your confidentiality and security standards?
- Do they follow recognized security frameworks (e.g., practices aligned with federal/agency environments)?
- Are NDAs and confidentiality clauses standard in their engagements?
- Can they complete your firm's security questionnaire or participate in an IT/risk review?

4. Conflicts & Ethics

- Do they screen for conflicts of interest?
- Are they familiar with, and respectful of, your professional responsibility concerns?

5. Process & Communication

- Do they offer a clear, step-by-step engagement process?
- Can they commit to timelines that align with court/office action deadlines?
- Is there a clear point of contact and escalation path?

6. Pricing & Flexibility

- Do they offer clear, matter-appropriate pricing (fixed fee, tiered options)?
- Can they provide targeted or staged searches if a full deep dive isn't warranted?

7. Track Record & Trust

- How long have they been in business?
- Have they worked with the USPTO or other government agencies?
- Do they have long-standing relationships with law firms similar to yours?