



Insights: Publications

Technology-Specific Patent Filing Trends During the Pandemic

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3 KEY TAKEAWAYS

Technology-Specific Patent Filing Trends During the Pandemic

How might a pandemic impact biotechnology patent filings as compared to computer-centric patent filings? The answer might surprise you.

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New US patent application filings on the whole have fallen modestly across the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, the number of new patent filings has fallen by 8% as compared to the fourth quarter of 2019. This is less than some analysts predicted but larger than similar seasonal variations seen over the past few years.

The extent to which patent filings dropped in 2020 varied dramatically across industries. New filings in the chemistry and life sciences sectors dropped by about 20%, while filings in various computer-related technology were level or actually increased.

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While some may have predicted that COVID-centric innovations may have resulted in stable patent filings in the chemical and biological areas, the societal move to working from home likely was not particularly conducive to the wet-lab experiments frequently essential for these fields. Meanwhile, the ease with which computer-related technology workers have been able to transition to remote work may have supported continued innovation in these fields.

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