

management system; and (3) provide clear indices that indicate the state of utilization of its intellectual properties.

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## Study of US Design Patents for Partial Designs

### Design Committee

With the introduction of a partial design system in 1999, for the first time, protection was provided in Japan for partial designs (“designs-in-part”). However, in the United States, although there exists no independent system specifically for designs as in Japan, protection of partial designs (“portion of design”) as a type of design protection under the Patent Law started much earlier than in Japan.

In this situation, where there are major differences in design protection methods between the U.S. and Japan, it is difficult to obtain effective design rights in the United States through the use alone of know-how fostered in Japan regarding partial design applications.

To gain an understanding regarding partial design protection within the United States, it is first indispensable to foster that understanding through a comparison of partial design protection in the United States with the Japanese design system.

The present report provides a detailed investigation regarding similarities and differences between the Japanese and American systems. In addition, an analysis is made of actual partial design registration cases in the United States, and statements are made from a system user’s perspective concerning application methods for optimal partial designs in the U.S.

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