

Intellectual Property - Mexico

Institute's New Online Services Simplify Industrial Property Management

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The Mexican Institute of Industrial Property has been improving the electronic services that it provides to the public. In recent years it has created Banapat - a patent and trademark database that logs the publication of patent applications and granted patents, utility models and designs - and MarcaNet, which allows the public to access general information online and consult the status of trademark applications and registrations.

The institute has recently introduced a number of other services.

The Industrial Property Documents Viewfinder - known as ViDoc - allows users to search for, consult and download publicly available institute files on:

- applications and registrations for trademarks, patents, utility models and designs;
- litigation (once resolved); and
- bibliographical files on patents.

ViDoc makes consulting files quicker and more efficient, as users need no longer consult MarcaNet and Banapat individually. Moreover, the two databases provided only general information, whereas ViDoc allows users to view complete files online. Thus, original hard copies must be consulted only where there has been a change of ownership or where the file relates to ongoing litigation, as some writs may not have been documented in the electronic search system.

The Industrial Property Information System's website contains virtual copies of the institute's *Industrial Property Gazette* for reference and download. These publications include information regarding:

- publication of patent applications;
- granted and abandoned patents, utility models and design registrations, trademarks, trade names and slogans;
- changes of ownership and trademark renewals; and
- notifications and declarations relating to litigation.

Another online system - the Payment Site and Administrative Services - allows for online payment of government fees. After making a payment using the service, the payer must print a receipt and file it with the institute, together with the relevant briefs. In the event of a payment error or a last-minute decision not to proceed with the filing of a brief, the official receipt can be cancelled and the funds recovered, provided that the receipt has not already been filed.

Solmarnet is a new system for filing trademark applications online. Once the trademark application form is completed online, it is printed and the system generates a reference number. This number indicates the time at which the application was filed with the institute. There is no need to present a separate trademark application, as the Solmarnet application is in the required format. The reference number allows data to be uploaded automatically from Solmarnet and entered directly into the institute's records, which helps to avoid typographical errors. However, the reference number does not constitute proof of filing with the institute. The system can also be used to refile an application in order to correct errors or add missing information.

The institute's new services are free and have been developed to facilitate its management of industrial property matters by making it easier to consult and file information.

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