

Spanish Patent and Trademark Office

Spanish government agency uses Adobe® LiveCycle® Enterprise Suite software to streamline application processing and reduce reliance on paper



Spanish Patent and Trademark Office

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Challenges

- Encourage and facilitate access to services online, complying with Law 11/2007
- Streamline internal processes for handling applications
- Eliminate paper processes

Solution

- Benefits and services delivery
- OEPM uses Adobe LiveCycle Enterprise Suite software to automate the creation, distribution, and approval of applications for new and renewed distinctive signs (trademarks and trade names) as well as industrial designs.

Results

- Achieved more than 70% user adoption of online application processes in just two months
- Improved efficiency of application processing by shortening data validation time
- Achieved significant cost savings that could be passed along to constituents

Improving efficiency, reducing costs

Operating under the umbrella of the Ministry of Industry, Tourism, and Commerce, the Spanish Patent and Trademark Office (La Oficina Española de Patentes y Marcas—OEPM) is responsible for managing industrial property titles, including brands and commercial names (called distinctive signs), inventions, and industrial designs. Approximately 70,000 applications pass through this office annually. With such large volumes of information streaming in each year, office administrators recognized the need to accelerate and improve the internal application management process to provide better service to its citizens, to execute the office's strategic IT renovation plan (OEPM 2.0), and to comply with the Citizens Electronic Access to Public Services Law.

Beginning in the 1990s, the OEPM began offering users application forms in PDF via its web portal in an effort to reduce the office's paper use. However, paper was still required for businesses because the forms needed to be printed, completed, and presented physically to the OEPM on paper. The volume of paper that moved through the organization's offices was extremely high, resulting in inefficient and often ineffective processing and handling. The office was vulnerable to misplaced or lost data and, because paper-based data had to be validated and entered manually, processing time was significantly slowed.

To address these issues, the OEPM's IT team—led by its director, Carlos Turmo, and supported by Alberto Casado Cerviño, director of the OEPM—set out to develop automated business processes designed to manage business-critical applications such as trademark applications or renewal requests and applications for industrial designs. OEPM turned to technology partner Seidor to leverage its team's expertise in predesigned PDF forms and Adobe LiveCycle Enterprise Suite software to develop more efficient and cost-effective processes.

Convenient forms completion

To maximize its processing capabilities and streamline its procedures, OEPM utilized the Forms, Designer, and Reader® Extensions modules in Adobe LiveCycle ES software to revamp its system. Adobe LiveCycle ES software enables the agency to efficiently design and generate secure XML-based forms that automatically pull data from various back-end sources, helping to ensure the accuracy of the forms and shortening the time needed to grant use and expiration licenses.

"The modules included in Adobe LiveCycle ES make it easy for users to complete forms offline and in different phases. This is not possible if you are completing a form online, you cannot leave it until you have completed the required steps," says Yago Seara, a design analyst at OEPM.

The newly automated processes make executing renewal applications simple and efficient. With the Adobe software, users log in to the secure web portal and download dynamic application forms, using pre-populated pull-down menus or manual data entry for online or offline completion. Because the intelligent forms are dynamic, only the sections that are relevant to the type of application being completed are highlighted.

To increase efficiency and reduce costs, OEPM used Adobe LiveCycle ES software to automate business processes associated with business-critical applications such as trademark applications or renewal requests and applications for industrial designs.



"The advantage to users is that they don't need to be connected to our website to complete the forms... Now they have the option of downloading the forms, completing them at any time, and then connecting to the website again to submit them."

Carlos Turmo
IT director, OEPM

"The advantage to users is that they don't have to be connected to our website to complete the forms," explains Carlos Turmo, IT director at OEPM. "These forms include complex information and it is likely that users will need to consult additional data to complete them. Now they have the option of downloading the forms, completing them at any time, and then connecting to the website again to submit them."

An intuitive user experience

With its streamlined business processes, OEPM has eliminated a significant burden to its users by condensing several critical steps into a single function. For example, when a user requests an application, OEPM's system automatically generates a unique registration number and PDF form—created using Adobe LiveCycle PDF Generator ES which may include other documentation such as the Power of Attorney or official seals that may be required for an application. Upon completion of the forms, users need only to upload one file for review and approval rather than multiple forms, as in the past.

"Because our users need only the free Adobe Reader to access the PDF forms, we're able to add more diverse functionality to the forms, recreating a web-like user experience," says César Tejedor, a consultant for OEPM. "The forms are visually engaging and very intuitive. We're also able to add more diverse functionality, like adding watermarks for easy distinction between copies and originals, without adding any confusion."

Rapid delivery of superior service

For years, the OEPM has used other Adobe products to enhance its productivity, reduce costs, and comply with federal regulations. The office produces and distributes daily the Industrial Property Gazette (BOPI) in accordance with Law 11/2007 and has offered PDF copies of all patent application since the 1980s.

With the passing of the Citizens Electronic Access to Public Services Law and the launch of the office's strategic IT renovation plan, new internal processes were needed to achieve the objectives of each measure. OEPM leaders turned once again to Adobe, and Adobe LiveCycle ES software to achieve greater efficiency, cost savings, and compliance.

With the Adobe software, OEPM has dramatically improved the efficiency of distinctive signs renewal applications processing. By automating the data capture and entry with intelligent PDF forms, the agency has significantly decreased the time required to validate data and the expenses associated with paper-intensive processes. The decrease in operating expenses has enabled the agency to pass along the savings to its constituents by lowering the fees for online applications.

Users have been delighted with the intuitive nature and simplicity the software offers. In the first two months of operation, more than 70% of new applications for distinctive sign renewal were submitted online, an encouraging indicator for OEPM managers.

With the success of the initial phase of OEPM 2.0, the IT team plans to roll out other processes for licensing and design renewals, and extend the agency's automation capabilities across the entire department for even greater delivery of services.

Systems at a glance

- Adobe LiveCycle Enterprise Suite software. Modules include:
 - Adobe LiveCycle Designer ES
 - Adobe LiveCycle Forms ES
 - Adobe LiveCycle PDF Generator ES
 - Adobe LiveCycle Reader Extensions ES
- Adobe Reader
- TRESA, a J2EE application developed by the OEPM's IT team
- Web Server and Oracle WebLogic J2EE Application Server
- Oracle Database

For more information
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