

# COUNTRY REPORT NAMIBIA IP OFFICE

WIPO Regional Workshop on Data Quality Management,  
EXCHANGE, and Online Services

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# DISCUSSION OUTLINE

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# IP OFFICE OVERVIEW

- Namibia IP Office is under the Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development (MITSMED)
- IP Office is under Commerce division headed by a Deputy Permanent Secretary followed by a Director who is the Registrar
- Trade marks Act No. 48 of 1973-legislation governing trade mark registrations
- First trade mark was filed on 02 January 1924, granted same day in Class: 42, later re-classified into Class: 30
- Ministry have +-over 400 staff compliment
- Namibia IP Office have 8 permanent staff and 9 temporary staff
- Three (3) ICT Staff for the whole Ministry
- Minimal knowledge of ICT among the IP technical staff
- Three (3) functional IP disciplines at the moment (trademarks, patents and designs)
- We have in total 91252 trade marks on IPAS
- IPAS indicating 3446 marks granted since 2010 and 13420 pending applications/marks in the process
- In total 1211 marks unexamined for 2015 and 911 unexamined for 2016
- +-500 trade marks verified and validated on IPAS
- No digitisation yet although highly desired

# CURRENT AUTOMATION STATUS

- New applications and user documents are received in IPAS by creating befitting daily logs advised by the office date stamp on them and then they are all processed through IPAS as well
- Capturing of back files is giving an error at the moment but it's a process we are comfortable with
- No digitization happening at the moment
- We are only verifying and validating marks that we are processing or working on at a particular moment
- We don't produce any journal inhouse, apart from receiving manual publication copies from the Government Gazette section which under the Ministry of Justice
- We are producing the publication notices (notices of acceptance) and give them to applicants of which they are taking to the Government Gazette section to publish were they are paying a minimal fee
- We don't have data exchange program with any external body yet, although we may entertain such program after we have done data cleansing/auditing/validation and verification
- No online services from the Namibia IP Office at the moment
- IPAS back-up done twice every week (every Wednesdays and Fridays)

## POSITIVE IMPACTS OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF ICT SOLUTIONS TO THE NAMIBIA IP OFFICE

- We have challenges with regard to capturing back files (system giving an error when saving after capturing)
- We don't have unusual ICT related policies apart from the fact that one have to obtain permission from the ICT Colleagues to access the server room
- We have challenges in terms of downloading Madrid applications into IPAS, processing of the same marks (Madrid) although Namibia IP Office managed to conceive their first Madrid application as an office of origin through the International Bureau.

# BENEFITS FROM PREVIOUS WIPO REGIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOPS

- The office benefited greatly from previous WIPO Regional Workshops in the following areas: a) We have divorced all other manual systems that were running concurrently with IPAS and now application processing as well as all other user documents are processed on IPAS only
- b) We also value and appreciate having been taken through proper data management with specific emphasis on data verification and validation which we have implemented on a case by case basis
- c) Previous WIPO Regional training workshops created a lot of confidence and improved efficiency among staff members in terms of processing of user documents on the IPAS system

# FUTURE AUTOMATION PLANS

- **Section 2 of the Business and Intellectual Property Authority Bill, provides that two of the Objects of this legal instrument are to:**
  - (a) Facilitate and promote the efficient and effective registration of business and industrial property in Namibia; and
  - (b) Facilitate, streamline, simplify and harmonise the business and industrial property procedures, registrations, filings and searches to expedite economic growth and development.

# (cont) FUTURE AUTOMATION PLANS

**Section 5 provide for the function and power of BIPA, which amongst other are:**

- (a) Implement, promote and continuously enhance, advance electronic business and intellectual property information and transaction and systems;
- (b) maintain accurate, current and relevant information concerning business and intellectual property;
- (c) Promote, expedite and simply the flow of information between BIPA and the business community, user of business and intellectual property general public, regulatory authorities and institutions of the State;

# (Cont) FUTURE AUTOMATION PLANS

- In view of the above legal mandate, Namibia has adopted an office modernization plan to facilitate a comprehensive business processes reengineering and online services. This plan will be implemented through the Model IP Office Project of WIPO.

## **Short to Medium Term Plans**

- Recruit of qualified staff to support and maintain modernization plan
- Upgrade of BIPA ICT Infrastructure to support the Model IPO project
- Streamline, reengineer, and improve administrative and legal procedures for filings and registration
- Verify and validate trade marks data
- Capture patents, designs and utility models
- Upgrade IPAS from Version 2.7 to 3.1.1 and deploy new Modules required for online services



# (cont) FUTURE AUTOMATION PLANS

## **Medium to long term Plans**

- Create business processes and workflows for Copyright in IPAS
- Digitization of all paper-based documents in the back files
- Review and legal framework (especially pertaining to electronic documents and electronic payments).

# FEE STRUCTURE IN NAMIBIA

- At the moment the fee for filing a new application is N\$ 260,00
- Renewal fee is N\$ 120,00
- Assignment fee is N\$ 60,00 for the first mark and N\$ 18,00 for each additional mark
- Change of Name fee is N\$ 10,00
- Lastly, Registered Users fee is N\$ 60,00 for the first mark and N\$ 18,00 for each additional mark

*THANK YOU!*

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