



- Category name:** The Law Firm Innovation of the Year Award
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- Company:** Fileaway / Woods Hogan Solicitors. Contact details as above.
- Reason for nomination:** Development of Title Deed RFID scanning system

Established in 1991, Woods Hogan Solicitors is a progressive legal practice, which prides itself on offering a reliable, professional legal service to a wide range of clients. A commitment to delivering excellent customer service combined with an ethos of continuous improvement underpins our service delivery and we constantly strive to identify, adopt and develop innovative technologies or processes that will transform the service we provide to our clients.

Woods Hogan have been working with Fileaway; a file storage company specialising in the legal industry; to develop a bespoke software system that transforms our current system for filing title deeds. The system utilises Radio Frequency Identification (RFID); a cutting edge technology that uses an embedded radio wave tag to remotely identify and track items. This technology provides swift and complete traceability of all title deeds within the premises, along with secure alarm systems on all exit points, which prevent unauthorised removal of title deeds by raising an alarm.

Drivers for the innovation

Woods Hogan investigates between 50 and 100 title deeds per week for leading financial institutions in Ireland. This results in almost 2000 title deeds being present in the office at any one time. It is imperative that the whereabouts of every deed is known and can be located at a moment's notice. A misplaced deed can result in wasted staff time but more importantly, can have serious detrimental effects on the smooth delivery of services and ultimately the relationship we have with our clients.

Furthermore, the ability to locate deeds held by members of staff that are on leave or unexpectedly away from the office is essential in ensuring business continuity processes are effective and that clients receive a seamless, high quality service, irrespective of staff absences.

How it works

a) The RFID Tag

When a title deed is received by Woods Hogan an ultra high frequency UHF RFID tag is placed on the front cover. Each RFID tag is encrypted with a unique code that cannot be duplicated.

This tag is then allocated to the file on our bespoke software, at which point the title deed can be easily tracked within the office. Once an RFID tag has been added to the title deed it is stored in our fireproof secure room.

b) Storeroom security

The secure storeroom is fitted with an UHF RFID reader, the ‘read range’ of which is set to completely cover the area of the door. Once the title deed physically enters the room its presence is recorded. No matter how many title deeds are carried through the door at the same time all the tags will be read simultaneously; resulting in time savings whilst also ensuring details are always 100% correct.

Should somebody wish to take a title deed out of the store room they must enter their individually allocated pin number on the screen provided within 10 seconds. Failure to do so triggers an alarm, which is sounded throughout the building and an SMS text is automatically sent to the RFID Manager who will then investigate and rectify the situation.

c) Handheld Scanner

Handheld scanners can be used to locate any tagged title deed stored in the office. The hand held device can find a UHF RFID tag at a distance of 2 meters, which means that a room can be scanned for the title deed in a matter of seconds. The device’s reading distance can be increased or decreased depending on requirements.

d) Exit points are securely monitored

Alarm systems with RFID readers are located at all exit points in the building. Once a file or title deed is tagged with an RFID tag it is impossible for it to leave the building without the alarm being raised.

Woods Hogan has their system set up so that if a title deed needs to leave the building it must be booked out prior to the file being removed. The booking out is controlled by the title deeds department to ensure only authorised files leave the building; ensuring maximum document security and effective document tracking.

Benefits

The benefits gained through our improved workflow processes include:

- i. Improved client communications - staff time is now better utilised to provide timely and comprehensive updates to clients rather than locating misplaced documents.
- ii. Increased Security –RFID technology enhances business continuity and information security arrangements; mitigating the risk of documents being lost, removed or subject to unauthorised access.
- iii. Peace of mind for clients – knowing that critical documents are available at the touch of a button.

Future developments

All Files: Due to decreases in technology costs and the benefits this system provides Woods Hogan plans to ensure all new files are fitted with a separate RFID tag by the end of 2013.

Reading Room: We plan to integrate a locking mechanism via installation of a RFID tag reader on the exit door from our reading room. This will prevent any person from leaving the room if they are carrying a document with an RFID tag unless it has been authorised by the RFID manager.

Planned roll-out of this technology will prevent documents from being misplaced within the office environment or taken off-site without prior arrangement, thus ensuring documents can be tracked and information retrieved swiftly and effectively.

Performance improvements

Since implementating our RFID solution internal workflow analysis shows that time spent locating misplaced files has been largely eliminated; resulting in measurable improvements in timely client correspondence.

We believe this ability to harness technology enables us to transform services and achieve our ongoing goals to deliver excellent client services.

