

Saving money on patent renewals

Background:

IP Pragmatics worked with a leading UK university to provide patent annuity services (patent renewals) for its portfolio of more than 500 patents. These patents, as is often the case with a university client were spread amongst several different firms of patent attorneys and a similar number of disparate renewal providers. Some renewals had been outsourced by the attorney firms, some were handled in-house. The annual cost of carrying out renewals was over £100,000.

Objectives:

The university wanted to streamline its processes and reduce its costs without any risk to its patent portfolio.

Approach:

IP Pragmatics, through its renewals agency, IPRIS, worked with the IP Manager to create a Service Level Agreement (SLA) for the provision of renewals. Key points included:

- IPP provided, free of charge, of an online database that allows the university to easily see its patent estate and to instruct renewals directly
- The university was invoiced on a per project, or patent family basis
- Certain cornerstone technology patents, of huge commercial importance to the university were placed on automatic renew status. Other, more marginal technologies were placed on renew-on-demand status
- The university was assigned a single point of contact at IPRIS who knew the account intimately and was able to respond to late renewal instructions, without surcharges or urgency fees
- All of the university's internal reference numbers were added to the database, providing quick identification of their cases

Result:

By working with IP Pragmatics, the university considerably reduced its spend on renewals. This saving allowed the university to file more applications. Delivery on the key points in the SLA meant that the university considerably reduced the time involved to instruct and process renewals.

Over the first year, the university assessed that it saved over £32,000 on its renewals budget.