

Inprotech

Adapting to a changing landscape

An African IP law firm stays ahead of the curve with configurable IP management

Spoor & Fisher is a top-ranked intellectual property (IP) law firm serving clients globally with their IP needs across the continent of Africa and the Caribbean. Since its beginning more than a century ago, the firm has focused solely on IP. The firm continually strives to stay at the cutting edge of technology to serve the rapidly evolving needs of IP owners. As part of that commitment, Spoor & Fisher relies on Inprotech as its IP management solution.

Customer profile

Spoor & Fisher

African IP law firm

Founded 1920

Offices in Pretoria; Cape Town; Jersey, Channel Islands

Challenge

Continuous change

As a leading IP firm, Spoor & Fisher deals with patent and trademark offices (PTOs) in countries around the world. It also handles matters for foreign IP owners seeking trademark or patent rights in African jurisdictions. Keeping abreast of legal requirements is a key challenge, according to Samantha Shaw, Support Liaison Specialist at Spoor & Fisher.

"We have filings all over the world," Shaw says, noting that the firm has a department dedicated to foreign filings. "Managing renewals and staying current with changing laws and requirements in the different jurisdictions is critical. You never want to miss a deadline."

Shaw notes that the firm is also increasing its focus on digital transformation, optimizing processes to increase attorney and support staff efficiency, while better serving clients.

Solution

Inprotech IP management software

Spoor & Fisher adopted Inprotech in 1999 to meet its IP management challenges. Over the years, Inprotech's capabilities steadily expanded and improved, including its transition from client-server architecture to a web-based solution. Shaw says she started using Inprotech when she joined the firm in 2000. Thanks to her deep knowledge of the system, she now supports Inprotech users across the firm.

**Spoor & Fisher
continually strives
to stay at the
cutting edge
of technology.**

Shaw notes that clients and registries, such as the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) in South Africa, have been modernizing their services and online tools, creating a need for law firms to update their own software tools and internal processes to keep pace. Inprotech's capabilities and flexible workflow engine have enabled Spoor & Fisher to adapt rapidly to new process requirements.

While Inprotech is embedded in all of the firm's IP management processes, Shaw points to some system capabilities that are particularly empowering.

Tracking critical actions

"Actions and policing is one of the most awesome things Inprotech does. It's brilliant," Shaw says, explaining that it enables the firm to create default rules and actions for each phase of the trademark or patent workflow, based on the specific requirements of each jurisdiction. This helps the firm manage large case volumes efficiently.

"Case reports are written based on policing of due dates, enabling users to stay up to date," Shaw explains, adding that this is particularly useful for managing trademarks. "With trademarks, the numbers are big, even more so with territories that are single-class. Without this capability, we would have to open a separate case per class. If we didn't have Inprotech, I don't know how we would keep track. Maybe Excel spreadsheets and Outlook reminders, which is a bit scary."

Simplified reporting

Inprotech also simplifies the process of reporting, Shaw says. "The ability to simply drag and drop display elements makes it easy for users to create their own reports. They can save those reports to maintain the format to meet each client's requirements."

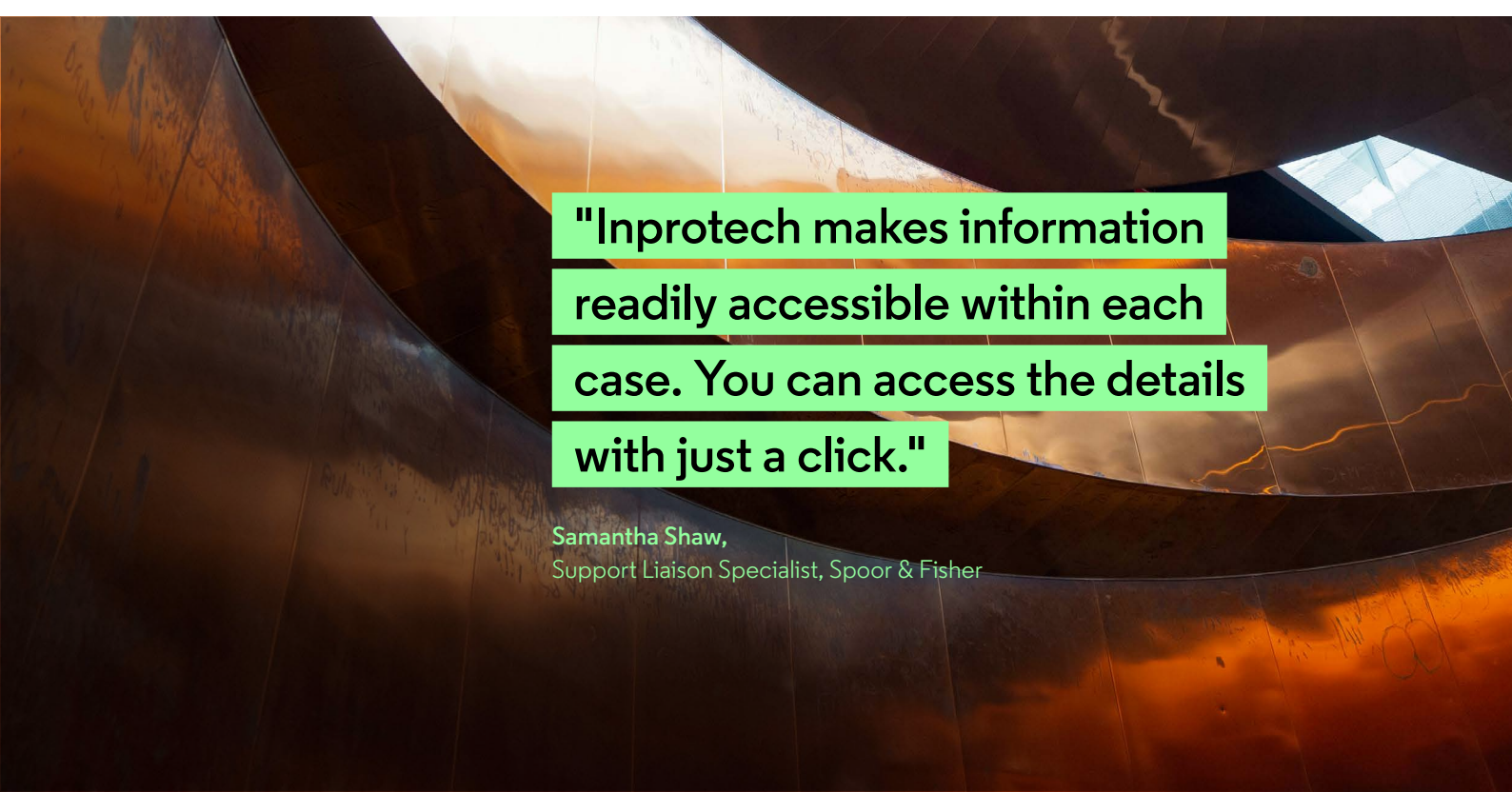
Inprotech also serves as a "single source of truth," providing a secure, centralized, web-based repository for IP information across the firm. This helps ensure authorized users have access to critical information,

regardless of personnel changes. "If someone wins the lottery and leaves the firm, we still know where the information is. What if they have it stored on their desktop computer and it crashes, or they get hacked?"

Time-saving connections

A key advantage of Inprotech is the way everything is interlinked. "For example, the way names are linked to cases and rules. You can link standing instructions to a name, which can then link to a rule. That saves a lot of time," Shaw explains, noting that fees and charges are also linked to cases, saving time and helping prevent human error. In the event that billing restrictions are placed on a client, this information would be accessible across the firm. "That's a huge help."

Inprotech also helps connect users, streamlining collaboration across departments. "As matters flow from filing to examination and beyond, the collaboration is brilliant. Users can easily track when one phase is done and the next can pick it up," Shaw says.



"Inprotech makes information readily accessible within each case. You can access the details with just a click."

Samantha Shaw,
Support Liaison Specialist, Spoor & Fisher

Change made easy

Perhaps the greatest benefit of Inprotech to Shaw is the level of configurability. "That was one of the reasons Spoor & Fisher chose Inprotech. There's so much we can do. We can write our own rules," she explains. "Some other solutions have out-of-the-box rules that you cannot change."

That's a crucial advantage in an IP landscape marked by change, enabling Shaw and her team to respond to requests from internal stakeholders across the firm. "Every month we set aside time to review and update rules to meet any changing needs from the business and copy them into our live environment," she explains. "It's so easy to update rules, I love it."

While the rules capability is powerful, Shaw says it isn't complex. "The way the rules work, we have so much available, but it's not hard to understand. You don't need an IT degree. It's very user-friendly."

Efficiency that works

Shaw says Inprotech has enabled Spoor & Fisher to keep pace with a changing IP landscape, maximizing efficiency throughout the IP management lifecycle. "Inprotech makes so much information readily accessible within each case. If a client has a question about a particular case or a portfolio query, it's easy to pull it out. You can access the details with just a click," she explains. "The way everything is linked is brilliant. It just works."

Interested in achieving similar results?

[Contact us](#) today to learn how Clarivate IP solutions can help give your law firm a competitive advantage.

clarivate.com

© 2025 Clarivate. Clarivate and its logo, as well as all other trademarks used herein are trademarks of their respective owners and used under license.