



In the News

Dallas Law Firm Registers the Nation's 10 Millionth Patent at the USPTO

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By [John Council](#) | June 21, 2018 at 03:19 PM

When Dallas patent attorney [David Doyle](#) got a personal telephone call from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office Commissioner Drew Hirshfeld two weeks ago, he thought he was in serious trouble.

Instead, Doyle learned that he and his law firm, [Munck Wilson Mandala](#), were becoming part of history this week when they officially registered the 10 millionth patent in the United States.

"I was shocked. I knew that we were coming up on the 10 millionth patent, but I had no idea it would be one of ours and it would be for [Raytheon](#), one of our most important clients," Doyle said of the Massachusetts-based defense contractor.

The [patent](#) for "Coherent LADAR Using Intra-Pixel Quadrature Detection" is a new way of using lasers to produce data about physical objects. It was invented by Raytheon optical engineer Joe Marron and is expected to have applications in various fields including autonomous vehicles, medical imaging devices, military defense systems, and space and undersea exploration.

Doyle, along with his firm's founder and managing partner [Bill Munck](#) and partner [Dan Venglarik](#), prepared and successfully prosecuted Raytheon's patent at the USPTO.

And to celebrate the milestone, the USPTO has set up a [website](#) which marks the achievement and celebrates the nation's long history of protecting inventor's ideas through patents.

For some perspective, Raytheon's patent comes 228 years after the [country's first patent was issued on July 31, 1790, to Samuel Hopkins](#) for a process for making potash, an ingredient used in fertilizer.

After Hopkins obtained the nation's first patent (which was signed by President George Washington) it would take 121 more years before the one millionth patent was issued in 1911.

But it took only four years for the country to move from registering its eight millionth patent in 2011 to the nine millionth patent in 2015.

Munck Wilson is one of numerous firms in Dallas that devotes a significant portion of its practice registering patents with the USPTO as well as defending them in IP litigation in U.S. District Courts in the Eastern District of Texas.

"It was no different than grabbing a lotto ticket," Munck said of registering the nation's 10 millionth patent, who notes that his firm employs 65 attorneys, nearly half of whom are registered patent attorneys. "In Dallas we're the second- or third-largest firm with the number of registered patent attorneys," he said.

As for the reason why patent registration has increased over the last four years, Munck explained the people and companies just want to protect what's rightfully theirs.



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"If you think back over 100 years ago, everyone was racing to the courthouse to register their property rights. It's no different than that," Munck said. And most businesses realize that patent protection is crucial to their strength in the marketplace, he said.

"The truth is that any company that gets a defensible well-done patent, it creates a barrier of entry that's very difficult to overcome for a competitor," Munck said.

"From our perspective, it's cool to be a part of this slice of patent history," he added. "When we're long gone, this patent will still be here."

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