

Commercial Taxes Departments enable paperless filing

Legally Valid Digital Signatures helps Commercial Taxes Department go paperless and reduce costs and provide convenience

Industry

Government

State Governments e-Governance Initiative

State Governments of India under the e-Governance initiative undertook efforts to completely digitize and go paperless with periodic tax filings.

Business Need

State Commercial Tax Departments were dealing with a deluge of several million sheets of paper for periodic filing by companies. The need of the hour was a secure long-term solution to achieve truly paperless environment that meets compliance & regulatory requirements.

Approach

Develop an integrated solution to allow companies to digitally sign periodic and annual filings that are legally binding and guarantee authenticity, integrity and confidentiality of data.

**Background**

Commercial Tax Departments of States in India dealt with a huge surge in the number of companies operating in India and this was only expected to grow.

This resulted in huge challenges namely -

- Handle filings from about 600,000 companies in 2006 which has grown to 1,400,000 companies in 2015
- Reduced turn around times because of high volume and physical processing
- Lack of quick and transparent access to historic company data
- Increased real estate cost for storage and archival

To fast track the process of electronic document submission by Companies, a workflow based solution was developed to allow authorized signatories of Companies to digitally sign and submit forms/filings thus completely eliminating any physical paper movement.

It was envisaged that the solution provide a cost effective process for digitally signing PDF/XML forms with a legally valid Digital Signature Certificate which establishes the origin of the documents. The Digital Signature Certificate shall be from a Certifying Authority in India. The solution shall also ensure that the documents are not tampered with to ascertain the integrity of documents. All access to the system shall be with Digital Signatures to ensure complete traceability for audit purposes.

Digital Signature Technology

The Digital Signature Technology works on the Public Key Infrastructure framework which uses a Cryptographics Key Pair – Private and Public Key for secure access and transmission of Information.

The Public Key Infrastructure framework is prescribed in a model law provided by UNCITRAL (A United Nations body).



Benefits

Commercial Tax Departments have reaped significant benefits by implementing digital signature based submission of documents.

These include -

- Ensuring document integrity, confidentiality and authorship
- Curbing the risk of signature forgery
- Eliminating the use of papers and printers, thus, saving huge costs
- Faster turnaround time, increased employees efficiency, productivity and transparency
- Meeting compliance & regulatory requirements
- Going green and reducing carbon footprint in line with the vision of the Country

Solution

eMudhra being a Licensed Certifying Authority in India and a PKI Solution provider issues Digital Signatures to Directors/Authorized Signatories of Companies for company document filings with the Commercial Taxes Departments. As a Certifying Authority eMudhra verifies the identity of the individual as part of the Know Your Customer guidelines before issuing a Digital Signature Certificate. Therefore every digital signature used by authorized signatory provides traceability and is legally valid in lieu of physical/wet signatures.

By using Digital Signatures in PDF/XML documents, the solution was able to validate the signer and contents of the document before accepting submission. This ensured error free filing of documents with the Departments.

The usage of Digital Signatures has now been extended to Income Tax filings by Companies, Customs Department, e-Procurement, Registrar of Companies, Service Tax and several Government to Citizen Services in India.

Adoption in India

eMudhra has enabled Commercial Taxes Departments of several states including Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra etc with Digital Signature usage thereby leading to digital transformation.



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Authority in India
& Mauritius**

**Several Awards
and
Patents**

**An ISO
27001:2005
Certified
Company**

About eMudhra

eMudhra is a technology and digital identity and transaction management company providing solutions which ease financial and statutory needs of consumers. eMudhra was established in 2008 and is a Certifying Authority in India and Mauritius to issue Digital Signature Certificates.

eMudhra's current enterprise and consumer solutions include Digital Signature Certificates, emSigner – Paperless Office Solution, emAS – secure multifactor authentication for banks, emCA for Digital Signature issuance and management and Prism – Voice of Customer Analytics using Semantics.

eMudhra is a market leader in India and has worked with large Banks, Financial Services companies and several Government agencies in India to implement Digital Signature based solutions which include secure access and paperless workflows.

eMudhra won the e-Asia award, an award given by AFACT (A United Nations body) for implementing Digital Signatures based on India's National ID – AADHAAR to bridge Digital Divide.