

Fingerprint System Keeps Track of Building Workers

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A new clocking-in system based on fingerprinting has been developed by a company in Tralee, Co Kerry as an answer to the problem of tracking workers in the construction industry.

The new product, Donseed, has been on sale for six months and in that time, more than 50 companies have adopted the system across 15 sites in Britain and 25 sites in Ireland.

Development for the product started three years ago when Donal Sugrue, owner of DCS Electrical, sought a technological solution to attendance procedure issues for contract workers.

He joined up with fellow Kerry entrepreneurs, Edmond Buckley of accident claims company Assess Ireland and Sean Ryan, whose software company, Aspen Connect, had experience in developing web-based technology.

They developed a system based on fingerprint scanning, which works through the mobile phone network. It can track the attendance of employees on a wide range of remote sites and ensure staff are only being paid when they are on site.

It also has a role in the management of health & safety obligations to employees and members of the public.

In 2006, a management team with significant international business experience was put in place to formally launch Donseed in the Irish and British construction market, with Vincent Lynch, former Kerry Group global risk manager, put in place as chief executive.

Lynch said that a wireless GPRS biometric finger scanner is set up at each location.

Data is recorded and accessed using the latest secure web browser technology. "It removes the need for manual timesheet processing and increases payroll accuracy," said Lynch.

The scanner is the size of a tool box. "It's uniquely mobile and can be used on a site for two days, two weeks or two months," said Lynch.

The company raised €750,000 in BES funding and believes the systems will have many more uses, particularly in the human resources field.

"We have a structured development programme for the next 18 months and will further develop the product to extend its use," he said.

Lynch said Donseed aimed to be the market leader in the provision of workplace management services to the construction industry. The product also expects to establish "a significant market position in a number of other industries" such as retail

and manufacturing.

“This system can be used in any sector which manages large numbers of people,” he said, “and there are no barriers to implementing this in any country.”