

MORRISONS SOLICITORS CASE STUDY



- > **Sector**
Legal
- > **Employees**
140+
- > **Applications Hosted**
Microsoft suite, Axxia, BigHand, IRIS Laserform, HotDocs, MS SharePoint
- > **Project Snapshot**
Transforming IT performance and capability to help drive growth and improvement in a progressive law firm.

CUSTOMER SNAPSHOT

Morrisons is one of Surrey's leading law firms, with over 100 staff based across three offices: Redhill, Woking and Wimbledon. After a period of strong growth, both organic and by acquisition, Morrisons reached an IT crossroads.

An ageing infrastructure, disparate and restrictive software and limited in-house technical resource were conspiring against the firm's continued ambitions and commitment to enhanced performance, efficiency and client service. A managed service appeared the best course of action.

CHALLENGE

The early and mid-2000s saw the firm expand rapidly, a growth fuelled by acquisition as well as a sustained internal growth across its range of private client and corporate/commercial services. But the pace of change had its casualties and in 2007, the firm's Managing Partner, Paul Harvey, recognised that IT had become one of them – and the systems needed immediate and extensive treatment.

There were three main issues:

1. The ageing hardware had been nursed for long enough. Persistent reliability and performance problems made a complete overhaul not just desirable but essential. However, the capital costs associated with such a programme were substantial.
2. The firm's technical and support capability rested in one individual. With three sites to cover and a failing IT estate to cope with, downtime and support to users day-to-day was falling below acceptable standards. That had to be remedied but the overhead of an enlarged team meant yet more cost.
3. Morrisons was keen to build on its achievements by pressing on with projects that would aid competitive advantage, drive efficiency and enhance delivery of service to clients. The deployment and development of new applications such as case management was seen as instrumental; but the concern was that it might prove difficult to recruit and then retain the right calibre of IT/software professionals to set up and stay with this long-term strategic initiative.

SOLUTION

When the subject of IT renewal first came up, Paul Harvey took steps to ensure he had a complete picture – not just of the realities of his own IT systems but also the options moving forward.

A consultant drafted into the process drew up detailed business cases for both in-house and outsourced routes and in early 2008, Paul Harvey made the decision to migrate his entire IT provision to managed service provider Nasstar.

Paul comments:

“At the end of the day the decision wasn't that hard. We were a legal business looking to focus on developing the business and on honing our services and approach to attract and retain clients. We needed to sharpen up our internal systems and processes to

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continued

improve efficiency, productivity, profitability, quality, consistency and risk management. Investing both financially and emotionally in a big ticket IT project, in recurring smaller projects and in an on-going resource wasn't what we wanted.

Entrusting our IT to a specialist provider whose sole role and focus was to deliver a guaranteed service to ourselves sat far more easily; as did the move to a utility-based pricing model. At a stroke, we had moved from the prospect of a six-figure capex project, to tapping into one of the UK's most advanced data centres with all the latest technologies and applications available to us, supported on a 24x7 basis; all for a fixed per user per month fee."

> Nasstar on Morrisons

A law firm that has leveraged the full potential of managed service provision, utilising the available resources to fast-track new functionality and

> Morrisons on Nasstar

A provider who not only understands the drivers and dynamics of the legal market but delivers impressively and consistently when it comes to service, support and client relationship management.

BENEFITS

Paul Harvey continues:

"Looking back on the switch to Nasstar in 2008, it was akin to getting our own high-end IT department without the pain of having to pay for it! Key for us were the following:

- The quantum leap forward in terms of system quality which allowed us to enjoy a stable, resilient and secure platform - essential not just to a smooth day-to-day running but our long-term strategic plans too.
- The move to a whole new level of data protection and disaster recovery, as back-ups and business continuity are an inherent by-product of the service.

- Around the clock support with Nasstar consistently responsive and committed to resolving any problems quickly and efficiently.
- Nasstar demonstrated a degree of client engagement, of understanding and of partnership that has given us both the confidence and the capability to push on strongly.
- IT renewal was never just about playing catch-up or getting to an acceptable level of provision: it was about building a platform that would better support a progressive, ambitious practice. We wanted to introduce new software, new tools and new technologies to help optimise legal service delivery and business performance; in short, creating a modern, IT-enabled environment to empower all the constituent parts of our law firm."

CLIENT VERDICT

Simon Charles concludes:

"Quite frankly, we were in a horrible position with our internal IT and Nasstar steered us very confidently out of that to a place which is very much nicer! Things work as they should, help is always available if we need it, we can get on with our proper jobs without the constant stress of systems falling over and having no real capacity internally to make things better. It works so well and has had such a positive impact on the business and each individual that our only regret is that we didn't do it sooner."

