

Case study: Cripps

## BigHand gets to the heart of the matter with law firm Cripps



### How BigHand SmartNote and BigHand Capacity Manager intelligently fit into the client-centric future vision of law firm Cripps.

In a time when the legal sector is facing unparalleled change through increased merger and acquisition activity; new entrants from both home and abroad; and not least the need for service innovation, forward-thinking law firm, Cripps has a crystal clear vision for the future: to truly put the client at the heart of its operations.

To achieve this vision, the firm with BigHand technology at the core of its plans, is dedicated to a strategy of making itself as agile and efficient as possible by digitising and automating internal processes. Employing BigHand's latest products, namely BigHand Now, BigHand SmartNote and BigHand Capacity Manager, the firm has positioned itself perfectly to manage and adapt to the changing legal services landscape.

#### Overview

Recognised countrywide for its commercial and private client work, Cripps, which is based across four offices in the South East and London, has a particularly strong reputation in real estate, high net worth families and entrepreneurial businesses. In the last 12 months, the firm has seen significant organic growth with staff numbers increasing by 25% resulting in a total team of around 350 people.

With this positive growth comes the need to ensure an efficient and effective organisation, in order to both retain the client focus at the core of its business, and minimise operational costs.

Mike Burton, Head of IT at Cripps, explains: "There is a deliberate intention on our part to put clients at the centre of what we do and to deliver the best legal service possible. We also recognise that doing so in a smooth and agile manner is increasingly important in terms of cost-effectiveness, staff empowerment and operational efficiency. As such, it is our clear strategy to make use of the best possible technology that we can to make that a reality."

#### Powerful technology helping innovative firms thrive

The firm is currently on the cusp of a new wave of innovation as it prepares to bring together five separate office locations into a single, purpose-built facility by the end of 2016.

"The move is part of our longer-term vision to run a paperless operation," Mike says. "It gives us the ability to realise opportunities around the re-engineering of our business processes on many different levels."

Having used BigHand Digital Dictation for over a decade, Cripps has again turned to BigHand, this time with the task of digitising and automating many of its internal documentation processes. To help achieve this, Cripps is investing in some of BigHand's latest offerings; BigHand Now, a task delegation solution; BigHand SmartNote, a tool to automate the transcription and storage of file notes, and BigHand Capacity Manager, a powerful analytics and management tool.

"BigHand is at the core of automating what I call our 'internal post apparatus'", explains Mike. "It's all about making those arguably mundane, but time-consuming tasks seamless and facilitating the effective delegation of tasks, which can have a dramatic impact on cost-effectiveness".

With BigHand Now, Cripps is starting to re-engineer its internal business processes to replace paper-based notes and even some email as an internal communication method. Using template forms within BigHand Now, tasks are seamlessly delegated as is appropriate, with all necessary information required to complete them efficiently, including prioritisation. "BigHand Now also provides full transparency as all the information is in one single place; everyone knows where to find it, so jobs are done more effectively," Mike adds.

#### **Smart automation of attendance notes**

In addition, the firm is recognising significant resource savings from its partial deployment of BigHand SmartNote, particularly in the use of Speech Recognition to automate the production and filing of attendance notes.

Mike says: "Attendance notes are a confined item; we have to produce them. However, in recent years, we had seen more self-service on behalf of our lawyers, which meant they were spending valuable time typing up their own notes. With BigHand SmartNote, we've seen a U-turn, and have managed to reverse that habit with the introduction of verbal attendance notes, as BigHand SmartNote will do the transcription. Moreover, both the audio file and the transcript are saved alongside each other in the relevant case file should we need to refer to them."

"Even though we've only deployed it across approximately a quarter of the firm so far, SmartNote is already saving 10% in transcription effort. If you extrapolate this, it means that 10% of what we do could be delivered in an automated way from the moment a lawyer has dictated it. We're currently planning a full rollout to make it available firm-wide".



#### **The power of paperless**

Currently, Cripps is operating a 'less paper' strategy, however the organisation is striving for a paperless future – and is already on its way to fulfilling this.

"A key stepping stone in going paperless is having an IT platform where the correspondence – both client facing and internal – becomes entirely electronic. We are well underway to achieving this, not least in part due to the best-in-class technology that BigHand is providing," Mike comments.

With a rollout of BigHand Capacity Manager in the pipeline, the firm can look forward to a powerful tool that will enable them to quickly measure the capacity within different teams, and reallocate tasks where appropriate.

#### **Mike Burton, Head of IT, Cripps**

"Making sure our systems are able to work in this environment opens up opportunities on so many fronts as we can be much more agile. We can move team members around to different projects as case loading requires. It ultimately feeds into our core value proposition: because we're more agile and more efficient, we can deliver better service to our clients, and do so more cost-effectively, which really puts the client at the heart of our business".

BigHand is committed to the success of its clients, with a deep understanding of the legal sector and the challenges faced by firms of all sizes, they innovate and produce powerful intuitive technology to help busy people achieve more in less time.